

Miscellaneous

by Mike Graham

hHead - Jerk. 1/3 Nirvana. 2/3's Pearl Jam. It's that simple. Last year they won \$100,000 from CFNY in Toronto to make this album and it is one hour of unassuming, monotonous guitar rock. They are an OK live band, but *Jerk* is pretty disappointing. 3/10

The Mutton Birds - Salty. This cd evokes the worst of mid 80s REM. It's a real chore to listen to the whining, and the mandolin playing... but if you like Michael Stipe's whining on say, *Fables of the Reconstruction*, then you might like this. I didn't. 2/10

Body Count - Born Dead. Ice T, one of the

most powerful voices in rap, has embarrassed himself again by fronting another Body Count album. Like their first one, *Born Dead* is weak as far as metal goes. It has no intensity, no big power chords or killer time changes. There are no standout tracks except for their bludgeoning of "Hey Joe" which Ice T tries to sing (the horror!). And Jimi Hendrix thought that his voice was bad... 2/10

Luscious Jackson - Natural Ingredients. Wanna know why "Loser" by Beck and "Daughters of the Chaos" by Luscious Jackson were big hits on the dancefloor last spring? They both sampled or reproduced James Brown's funky drummer groove of course. On *Natural Ingredients*, Luscious Jackson shows that

without that groove they are at somewhat of a loss. "Summer Song," "Find your

Mind" and "Surprise" are OK tunes, but the rest of the album meanders in hip-hop-talk/disco/rap/pseudo-funk land with no direction. 4/10

Positively Stompin - Junk Drawer. It's country so it sucks.

But seriously, this isn't a bad little cd. It is country, but not of the Garth Brooks variety which makes me sick. This band is more easily compared to someone like George "Bad to the Bone" Thorogood or Hank Williams Jr. It's half-decent-backwater-drinkin'-music. Not really my cup o' tea, but it's OK for what it is. 5/10

Maniac reviews 22 cds...deal with it.

by James Beddington

Digable Planets, Blowout Comb. I will never understand why people can get away with openly admitting they hired someone because they were black. If someone was hired for being white it would be racist. Musically not worth picking up in a 50 cent bargain bin. 0/10

Urban Species, Listen. Interesting but far from greatness. the music has an ethereal quality to it and the lyrics are far and away more heart felt and sentimental than is fashionable in rap or house. 6/10

Noise about Noise

Strangelove, Time for the Rest of Your Life. Depressing, dark lyrics that flop around dead fish style in a puddle of posturing and melodic almost rock background. 4.5/10

Delirium, Semantic Spaces. Melody-driven, and electronically synthesised trancy ambient stuff with strong "angelic" vocals and intricate structures. 7.5/10

Bloodline, Bloodline. Another pack of want to be pretentious guitar rockers with as little interest in fresh ideas as in originality. 2.5/10

Downset, We The People. Five guys that although they appear to have the traces of intelligence, spent a lot of time focusing on undirected anger. If they want to change things they should start by focusing on what is wrong. Hip Hop 5/10

Orbital, Sniivilistation. A strange, slightly trancy techno. Neither captivating or boring. 5.5/10

Pato Banton and The Reggae Revolution, Collections. The same Pato That worked with the english beat, and from Manchester. Some songs of earlier albums. Worth looking into. 7/10

Ngoma, Culturally Modified Stone. A music that is quite unlike anything I have heard although a variety of influences are identifiable. Mostly Canadians working in Vancouver and very interesting. I wish that I knew more, and I'll definitely line up for tickets if they play within reach. 7/10

No Means No, Mr Right and Mr Wrong; A Musical Magazine; One Down and Two To Go. These Cana-

dian artists who spawned the Hanson Brothers are at it again marketing there utterly unique combination of musicality, social commentary and self reflectivity. 7.5/10

Various Artists Rewind, 12 Dance Hall Hits Straight From The Yard. Mixed artists and mixed emotions. Some interesting stuff and some formula-written junk. 4/10

BBM, Around the Next Dream. Pretty well summed up by guitar-oriented Blues with edges of jazz and rock. 5/10

Jeffrey Gaines, Somewhat Slightly Dazed. A nice voice and sentimental but melodramatic lyrics musically wet and flat. 2/10

The Verve, No Come Down. I think that the drummer must be bored out of his skull or asleep because all you ever hear is guitar. They probably think that Aerosmith is alternative. 1/10

Spearhead, Home. Fairly typical but well done. Reminds me a lot of Arrested Development. 5.5/10

Whycliffe, Journeys of the Mind. He seems to think that he is Prince. 0.5/10

Scarface, The Diary. Strange boy...trying to be worthy of controversy but isn't. 1/10

Big Chief, Platinum Jive. 1969-1999 Why! after 30 years are they still doing the same thing this so called alternative has not improved with age and seems to be corporate ditto rock in a not-so pretty package. 2.5/10

Various Artists, Scoop This Too. Oh look they can follow corporate orders. Can I give it a negative rating?

Various Artists, 10 Years In 70 Minutes. This is the Record company saying, "Look: in ten years we have produced this." wow? 3/10

Megadeth, the one in the silly package. This has already gotten more words than it deserves. ∞/10

Elastica, Stutter. Fairly common elements and a very unusual sound. 6/10

Make that 23 cd reviews...

by James Beddington

The latest release from Consolidated, *The Business of Punishment*, contains many complex layers. The album is a well thought out and highly controlled work. This is also among the most emotionally charged material released to date.

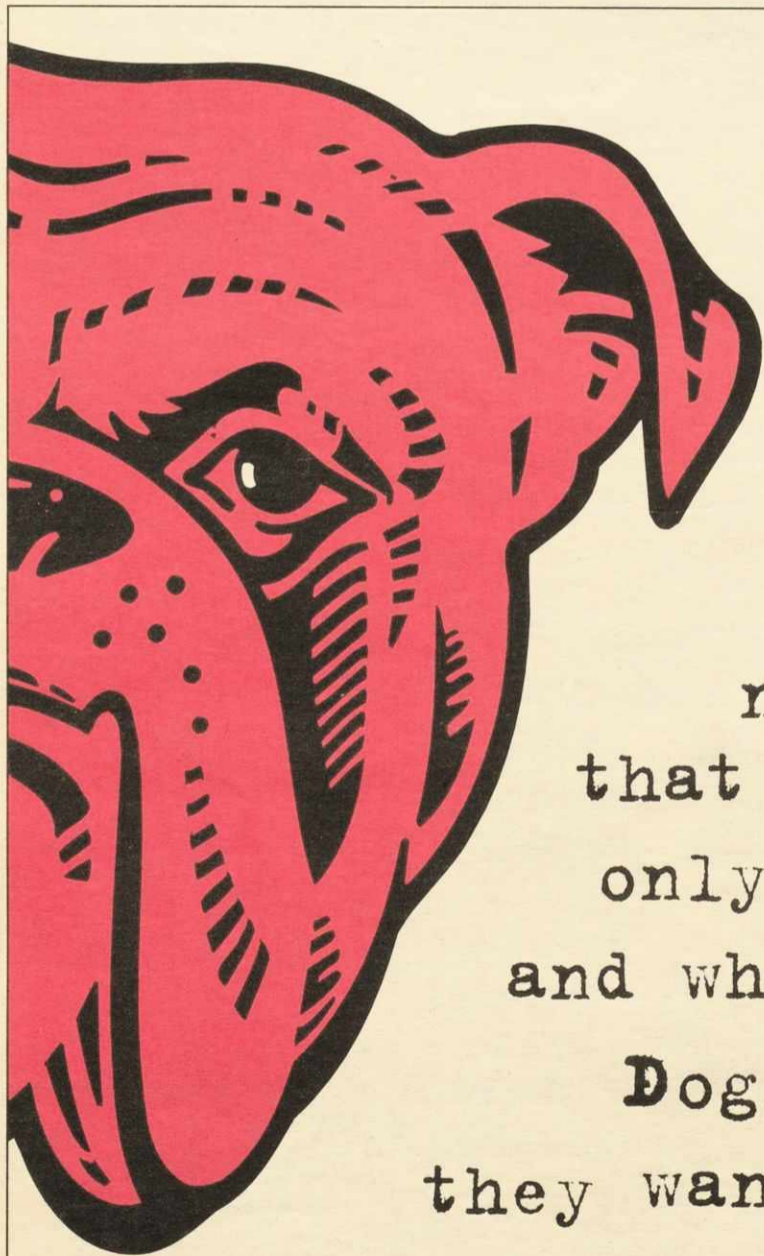
Consolidated
The Business of Punishment
London 9.5/10

To start on the outside, with the cover art. The visual component of the album is a mix between college and photography. In every section the art is a visual realization and representation of the lyrics.

In musical terms Consolidated have matured, refined and continued to experiment. This album contains a fascinating milieu of styles. The band mixes traditionally opposing styles of music to create a unique sound. There is little or no distortion on most of the tracks. As a whole *Business of Punishment* is cleanly and well mixed. With a solid driving beat and a strong felling of momentum the music drives home their message.

Consolidated are known for the sometimes controversial nature of their songs. The band's out spoken politically and socially oriented lyrics are as forceful as ever. Among the causes championed by the boys from Consolidated are, women's rights, safer sexual practices, and vegetarianism. Some issues that come under attack are US foreign policy, pornography, ethnic cleansing, censorship, the music industry and corporate oppression. The lyric, "They must remain sick so we can continue to treat them" rings true for many of the above situations. As well as giving the sense of corporate/government control, pervasive in the album.

Among the people thanked by the band are over twenty other groups and musicians. In the varied ranks are Miles Davis, Rage Against the Machine, Primus, Beastie Boys and The New Fast Automatic Daffodils. Also mentioned are the Yeastie Girlz, whose highly controversial song "You Suck" was influenced by Consolidated. It was also brought up in the CKDU licensing debate by the CRTC. These self-confessed white male liberals, are expressing their hopes and fears for society. Their enemy is ignorance and the system. With fifteen tracks and over an hour of music *The Business of Punishment* is a strong voice.



"It's
not true
that dogs see
only in black
and white.

Dogs see what
they want to see."

You are your own dog.

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