

Marillion and New Order: The versatility of radio

by psychedelic eric for ckdu

I recently read an article which accused today's radio of being stagnant in comparison with its Sixties counterpart. Alternative campus radio charts, the article stated, show very little diversity in musical styles.

Upon studying current alternative record charts, I noticed two albums doing quite well and chose them for a case study.

Script for a Jester's Tear, Marillion's debut North American LP,

is Seventies rock in its purest form--progressive rock influenced more by mediaeval theatrics than the overblown synth regalia of eighties commercial-progressive rock.

It would be pointless to review this band without recognizing the uncanny similarity in sound Marillion shares with early Genesis. Vocalist Fish's raw tone is a clone of Peter Gabriel's singing style during Genesis' Trespass - to - Selling England by the Pound

era. Fish, however, only manages to capture Gabriel's vocal characterizations through computer effects (reverb, echo). As well, Mark Kelly's keyboard work closely resembles Tony Banks' (Genesis) sound.

Guitarist Steve Rothery and drummer Mick Pointer give Marillion a heavy metal accent Genesis never had; a sound as metal as any Seventies hard-rocker could ever ask for.

From the very beginning of

New Order's life, the band's promoters have been pushing the attitude of positive change. They state that New Order has finally escaped the image of "bleak imagery, stark, melodic soundscapes and existential angst," and are now "yearning joyously for a positive future." This year's release of the 12-inch single "Blue Monday" suggested that New Order was indeed changing drastically, with a sound incorporating their unique lethargic riffs into a highly-synthesized dance format.

With the release of *Power, Corruption and Lies* (FACD 11), however, the listener is relieved to find that the sound hasn't changed as much as he was led

to believe. One track, "586," is similar to "Blue Monday" while the other seven show a gradual progression from last year's *New Order* (FEP 313). The sound has broadened, due to a greater emphasis on synthesizers, and the vocals are closer to being in key.

Half of the tracks on *Power, Corruption and Lies* are as melancholic as ever. Three songs are more energetic than the others, and more energy would normally suggest that New Order does have a more positive outlook. But two of these three derive their energy from their slight punk influence. When has punk ever been associated with positive outlook?

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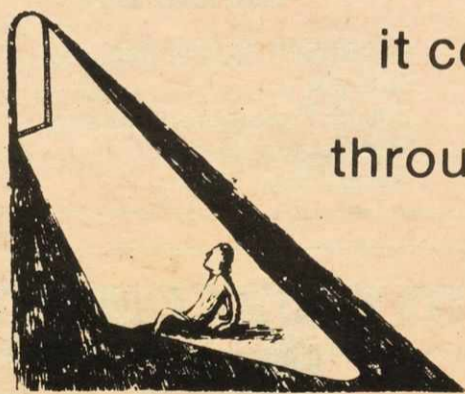
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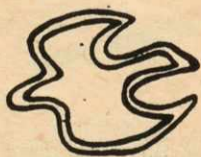
I close the door on Reality,

it comes in

through the window.



...Maybe it's time to come in and meet the campus chaplains



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SEPT. 12-17th
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THERE WILL BE NO MOVIES THIS
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