



CLASSICS CL149 95c



Production by Mary M. Threapleton COMPLETE AND UNABRIDGED



Neeneh Cherry

Raw Like Sushi

(Virgin Records)

There's a pastel interlude to the manically jiggling kisses on the wind that is in a lightening flash quickly terminated by a spine-snapping KERRR-ACK! and whallop - the keyboards and percussion go mental. It is perhaps one of the perfect moments in pop. One of those moments where your spleen does the conga in an anatomically incorrect location and the hairs on the back of your neck land like tiny darts on a wall on the opposite side of the room. I have about five of these experiences every year and these usually culminate with me rushing into the nearest outlet of Ratso Records with a flame-thrower screaming something like "Give me this album or the Osmonds bargain bin gets it!"

But isn't it always the case that once have without any serious criminal charges laid against you, most of the record is completely dull by comparison to the initial knee-jerk stimulus? Yes.

So now does Neneh fare? At the moment she's up in the air - it's almost taken for granted that nothing will be as good as kisses in the wind but "Buffalo Stance" comes pretty close and "Manchild" is an interesting amalgamation of creepy cum soulful ballad with a sudden burst of staccato rap thrown in at the end. Some of the songs on the album are however rather trite and irritating. These include the AM friendly inner city, which is something Ms. Cherry would have spat on in her Rip, Rig and Panic days, and the nagging yo-girl rant of the Next Generation. The latter has the effect of being rather annoying but nooky enough that the listeners catch

themselves allowing the phrasing to run an interminable loop through the subconscious. Heart fits rather nicely in the same category using playground rhymes in sporadic bursts of toasting that never really recommends itself except to produce a flush of something resembling eczema.

But all in all this is an extremely impressive solo debut. Neneh is very deft at turning a nuance on its head and spinning it into another corner. Basically, when it does work the effect momentarily catches you gloriously off-guard. As with most of the so-called progressive soul acts, Neneh and her boys voraciously gobble up house, funk and rap as well as using the de rigueur samples that pop up on every other blasted record these days (token gripe - given the infinitesimal richness of dialogue and noise to be sampled why does everybody still use the same tired old crap). The effect approaches the closest thing to an accessible particle of late eighties black music that I've heard to date and I believe she will do very well. No doubts from the trough, this gal is dangerous and needs to be watched.

Steve Griffiths



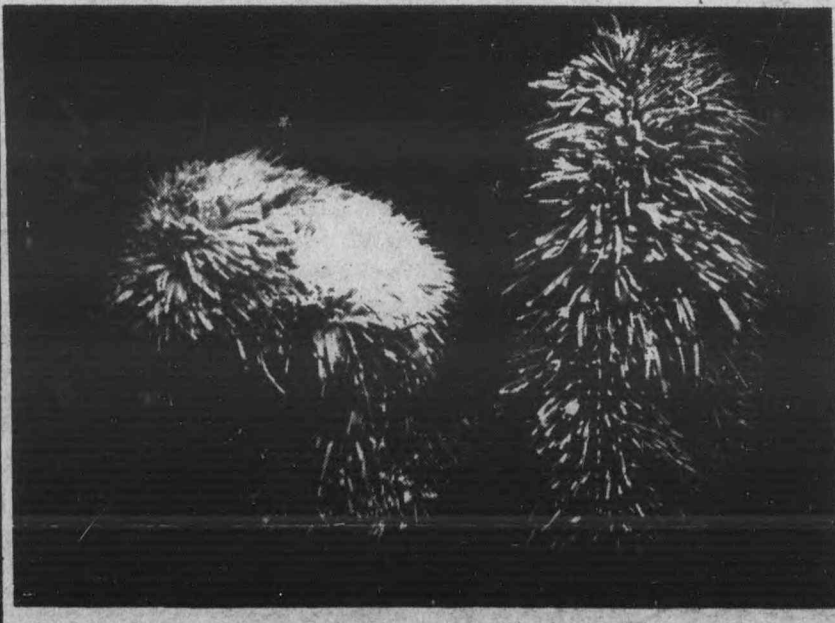
AIN'T NONE MEANER THAN NENEH. MISS CHERRY DARES ANYONE TO CALL THIS PHOTO EXPLOITIVE

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