

## HIS NAME IS ALIVE

**Livonia (4AD LP/Cassette/  
CD)**

YOU WOULD never think that a record which sounds so much like The Singing Nun could be so good.

His Name Is Alive are a new discovery from America, with an album which has all the trappings of 'The New 4AD Band'.

They begin with 'As We Could Ever', and a few off-notes. It improves, with sustained, proper singing, mature phrasing, close harmonies and vibrato, even if Karin Oliver and Angie Carozzo's voices are so high and shrill that the notes they scale are scarcely bearable.

The whole album was recorded deep in a coffin echo chamber, all moody and far away, and the guitars strum away so unassertively, it's easy to drift off and forget they were there. If it wasn't for the controlled barrage of effects which soften their pitch, then they would sound twee and school-girly as well, but the comforting sound-splashes of distant choirs, ghostly guitars, and soothing helicopters (how come helicopters are *soothing*?) prevent your head splitting under the strain. Those noises make this album.

There are all the usual 4AD trademarks: the aforementioned noises recurring on a loop, the individual naming of the arty instrumental interludes in between tracks, the gentleness—it all smacks of both This Mortal

Coil, and 'Le Mystere Des Voix Bulgares', but strangely, His Name Is Alive are not derivative.

'How Ghosts Affect Relationships' is a chilling, stand out track, about the dream of seeing a lover dying and watching him buried, with a new, and truculent, twanging voice to sing it.

By the time 'Livonia' is half over, most sensitive people will be found sitting cross-legged on the floor, with a constant, benign smile on their faces, taking in the atmosphere with gratitude. (7)

**Penny Anderson**

## VARIOUS ARTISTS

**A Constant Source Of  
Interruption (Rough Trade  
CD only)**

ALTERNATIVELY TITLED 'A Constant Source Of Infuriation' depending on which side of the Rough Trade supporters fence you sit, this is a collection of "summertime" sounds from the label's back catalogue, cunningly designed as (a) a half decent compilation in its own right *and* (b) a flagship for RT's mid-price CD reissues.

To fill you in on the 16 tracks: imagine label boss Geoff Travis, resplendent in Hawaiian shorts, nonchalantly pilfering his way through the RT warehouse for his warm-weather collection. Something for the patio or the open top motor. Hence 'ACSOI' is, with a couple of exceptions, the *not-very-disturbing side* of