



CRANES: Inescapable EP
(Dedicated)

The mad cousin of Harriet Sunday gets strangled on a spiral staircase of Hammer Horror guitars which slither and scrape into the inky blackness below. Just as she breaks free, a giant mutant lizard made from former Mary Chain members swallows her whole. All is not peaches-and-cream in the Cranes kindergarten. A fine record.

C: I like the way the band sounds. The singer sounds like she has part of her tongue cut off. I can't figure her out yet, maybe I need to listen to it more.

D: I like the gloom intent of it.

MANIC STREET PREACHERS: New Art Riot EP (Damaged Goods)

Amphetamine guitars skidding across jagged MC4-style melodies, a late '70s up-against-it stance and a sloganeering sleeve. Imagine Sham 69 with balls and brains.

C: Yeah, a kinda socialist punk rock band. Which really bums me off usually, just the look, but it sounds pretty good. A little on the vague side, seems like they could be really good if they had the right song. It's nice because it wasn't modern-sounding, but it just didn't suck me in.

CABARET VOLTAIRE: Easy Life (Parlophone)

You said it. Program the Magimix for "wordless Acidic snowscape" and piss off home. I'd love to hear this in a club, which is an Equity Culture euphemism for "this record is a steaming turd but I feel duty bound to make excuses for it". Is there a shovel in the house? D: I shouldn't slag them but I found it really lame. I really liked the Cabaret Voltaire of old, when they were harder, but this just did nothing for me.

WHERE'S THE BEACH?: Suakin (Mantra)

A bizarre single choice from these ambient Liverpoolian types. Boingy Acidic effects and gliding ghostly vocals fail to disguise a totally undanceable mid-tempo carthorse beat. Even more strangely, the flip side is the brilliant floor-filling siren attack "Tripping The Luv Fantastic". Charles, meanwhile, is pulling Miami Vice poses.

C: It starts off really Jan Hammer-ish, but I have to give them credit for not using that damn snare drum pattern: duh duh dun duh duh. I give them two for that.

D: Instead of being on Ecstasy and dancing to it I would be on valium.

IMPOSSIBLES: How Do You Do It? (Fontana)

Not like this, sadly. Two swirly gurlies far removed from the hurly-burly of great pop. Skimming acoustic guitars just don't cut it on their own, not even with a cheeky Dinosaur Jr cover on the 12", not even if your record sleeve is designed by someone called Pants (true).

C: Girls with acoustic guitars usually really bum me out, but I didn't want to shoot them like I do most girls with acoustic guitars. It was too vague.

What about the Dinosaur Jr song? D: That was even worse for me. If I was a girl in a field and I was menstruating and I was happy, that's the song I would listen to.

ANASTASIA SCREAMED:

Samantha Black (Roughneck) Huge and unfocused clattering racket with Prince-in-a-car-smash vocals and angry, lumpy guitars. But it's got something.

D: If I was a guy and menstruating in a field... C: I couldn't keep up with the

**Reviewed By
DAVE & CHARLES
OF THE PIXIES****Your Host:
STEPHEN DALTON****SINGLES****Pixie picks: Charles (left) and Dave pass judgement**

poetry he was furiously scribbling down into the microphone, man.

JAM ON THE MUTHA: Hotel California (Wau! Mr Modo)

The acid burn-out sleeve promises great things, but this remoulded techno-dub Eagles cover is scarred by ham-fisted piledriver percussion which loses all of the original's decaying elegance. D: It wasn't jamming enough. I like the original a hell of a lot better, it just makes it plodding with that dance beat. They did it well but it just doesn't work.

C: I think 'Strawberry Fields' was probably a better remake than this. They picked a good song but it was the wrong one to do it to.

DAVID J: I'll Be Your Chauffeur (Beggars Banquet)

His remarkably inoffensive solo

single, a wistful minstrel strum, harmless and fleetingly pretty like a fast-fading sunset.

C: Nice guitars. One of the few people in the world that can actually not totally nauseate me with a 12-string acoustic guitar.

JON BON JOVI: Blaze Of Glory (Phonogram)

Jon lives out his cowboy wet-dreams with a tired and turgid respray of 'Wanted: Dead Or Alive' from Young Guns 2.

C: Well I'm glad they finally reintroduced the Jew's Harp into the world of ballad rock. It's total, absolute shit, really f—ing bad. The rest of Bon Jovi should kick him out of the band and go for it.

GO WEST: The King Of Wishful Thinking (Chrysalis)

Beelzebub has a devil put aside

for suit-wearing Wogan-friendly ponytails like Go West with their castrated and club-footed lumpy manure music, especially when no-nothing Hollywood executives temporarily rescue them from FAILURE and OBSCURITY with a juicy soundtrack deal. And

whoever made the appalling (and no doubt criminally expensive) video for this festering offence against all moral and musical values should have their eyes poked out with rusty knitting needles. A sure-fire hit. C: Bad all around but good chord progression on the chorus. D: I've heard it all before.

KALIMA: Shine (Factory)

Housey, jazzy, sinewy, nothingy wash of sub-Yargo sophisto-pop with comatose girly vocals. More garlic bread please, waiter.

C: The singer sounds like Kim Gordon but I don't like it because it's fusion, and they also use that beat. Plus it has a saxophone in it. D: Yeah, that kills it. Acid House meets New Age.

RAINTREE COUNTY: Take (Native)

Is it my imagination or are all Manchester bands required to do a song called 'Take' at some stage? The Raintrees get theirs out of the way early with this spangly strum of Orange Juicy cuteness.

C: I liked it pretty good until the guitar solo. The singer's quite good, the guitars are recorded well but the playing's too blah. Sounds good from a distance.

D: Aztec Camera meets Depeche Mode.

THE LIBERTIES: Lonely Tonight (Chrysalis)

A scuttling mix of oompah basslines and rippling banjo from Edinburgh's top C&W pastiche merchants. Pleasant but unambitious.

D: Very easy listening... if I was digging for oil or something. C: I would sort of halfway like this if I was driving somewhere, if we had a long way to go, I could get sucked in.

PREFAB SPROUT: Looking For Atlantis (Kitchenware)

Forget Atlantis, Paddy, what about finding the tune submerged beneath this Thomas Dolby (over)produced vat of stupidly fast drums and spine tingling backing vocals? Meek, mild and mediocre.

C: I don't know how much I like the actual song but I like the pulsating beat. And I like all the wah-wah-wooh-wooh, the happy little things. It's kind of dreamy and dancey.

D: The Thomas Dolby influence. Yeah, it was a fun song.

PAULA ABDUL: Knocked Out (Virgin)

The re-release. The LA & Babyface credits. The Shep Pettibone remix. The thumping slab of lifeless disco-rock. The horror, the horror

C: It's a lame single as far as her other singles go, but she's definitely trying to break out and get a little more sexy. I really liked the sampled grunts at the beginning. I got a little hard-on.

D: My dad would really like this.

BOB GELDOF: Love Or Something (Phonogram)

Definitely something, Bob, I'm afraid. Something being a clumsy cod-Cajun respray of an old Boomtown Rats B-side co-written by the godawful Dave Stewart. C: To me it's Traveling Wilburys without a good, hooky chorus. I liked the other single, the Irish polka song, that was weirder. But this is just too even.

D: Sounds like the new Adrian Belew/David Bowie single with an accordion.

WET WET WET: Stay With Me (Phonogram)

D: Boring boring boring. No soul whatsoever. C: Radio soul... it's like they're performing underneath a blanket or something, really muffled and really happy. And that keyboard sound always bugs me. I thought I was going to halfway like them when I heard that acoustic guitar riff, but they didn't milk it enough.

GENE LOVES JEZEBEL: Jealous (Beggars Banquet)

Still around, like shit on your shoe, the Genes pump out another bucket of yawningly competent

heavy rock with lumbering goth-poetry pretensions and squealing skidmarks of squeaky-clean MTV guitar.

C: Definitely too long. They should have made it more Aerosmith, a little more hard-rock funk. Plodding is the word for it. D: It's a continuation, but I don't think it's as good as their early stuff.

LOVE/HATE: She's An Angel (CBS)

Four more po-faced US poodle-heads grinding out every imaginable wank-rock cliché and grunting at the minuscule effort involved. Deconstruct it with your caustic tongue, Charles...

C: A really bad use of the word "yeah". I mean "yeah" is a pretty good rock chorus word, but that's a bad use of it. It's a good crunchy sound, and it might be alright if we had a really nice convertible with a good stereo.

LENNY KRAVITZ: Let Love Rule (Virgin)

D: I like his attempt at trying to do what he's doing.

C: Yeah, I give him a teeny-tiny bit of credit for not having that modern sound, but everything else makes me want to shoot him. Maybe he is genuine, it doesn't bother me that he's ripping people off but the rip-offs aren't quite cool enough. He's heading towards the right territory — John Lennon, Billy Preston, all that shit — but I like that song better when I can sit and watch the video.

YOLANDA: Wild Child (Pacific)

Stunningly unoriginal title, pouting cover-girl pose and sub-Technotronic Hip-House chatter. This is the woman who apparently turned down the revived Bionic Woman role to 'concentrate on her singing career', a decision she may regret in the very near future.

C: I like the cold, mindless production. All she did was a little rap at the beginning.

D: Yeah! That's really bad. I could pass out to it, I started feeling a little faint.

RICHARD ROGERS: Can't Stop Loving You (BCM)

Imagine the studio boffins responsible for the above monstrosities being sacked for their obvious stupidity, moving to another label and making the same mistake again with Marshall Jefferson producing a brown-leather-jacket cocktail crooner from the planet Bland.

D: It's the kind of song I only ever hear when I'm shopping with a girl in those girls' clothing stores. This is really bad.

C: It reminds me of fluorescent lights.

WHIPPING BOY: Whipping Boy EP (Cheree)

Numbly mumbled rumble of fixed-bayonet feedback attack over a wild whirlpool of grating guitars, missus.

C: I liked their influences, namely My Bloody Valentine and The Jesus And Mary Chain, but it's not cool enough or something. If the production wasn't so thin, maybe the dirginess would be more enjoyable.

CLAUDIA BRÜCKEN: Absolute (Island)

Ex-Propaganda girl in sluggish slap-happy New Beat disco shock. Decidedly dull, even compared to the contrived Euro-decadence of her past projects.

C: Generally I get a kick out of English-as-a-second-language disco, so I'm prejudiced. I get a kick out of it even though I don't like it.

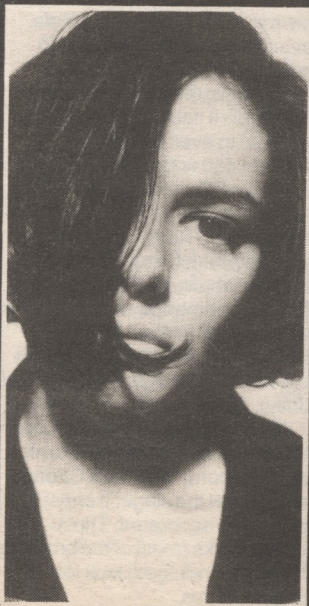
D: I liked Propaganda better. It sounds like she got married and just toned down.

POP SINGLE OF THE WEEK**BETTY BOO: Where Are You Baby?** (Rhythm King)

Josey And The Pussycats found alive on Mars! Georgie Fame joins Technotronic! Shangri-Las go dancefloor! "All I want to do is kiss you/I've used up all my tissues": Brilliantly crap rhymes! A garish pink Cadillac convertible of a record, with ickle-wickle fluffy bunnies dangling in the window and GIANT KILLER SPIKES mounted on the front bumper. Subterranean boogie-rap rhythms shuffle and shake beneath a mountain of strawberry milkshake melodies while a crackly wireless picks up distant antennae-wobbling space-girls whistling the Clangers theme. Betty's rapping is more loose and melodic than ever with a wistfully romantic chorus, authentically swirly organ and tinny guitars twanging in the technicolor '60s backdrop.

While a glassy-eyed Dave is more concerned with sleeve photos of Ms Boo herself, at least we can trust Charles to be the sensible muso...

Charles: It's like 12-bar blues, so I don't know if it was the right thing for a single, but I like the production on it. And she can't rap, but she's really cute when she tries. Thumbs up for trying to do regular 12-bar blues in a pop song. Dave: She's a babe.

**Ooh Betty****ROCK SINGLE OF THE WEEK**

SILVER CHAPTER: Teenage Screamer (Bopasonic)
From the bowels of Sonic Boom's new label erupts a trash-punk glam-rock sci-fi sensation for the '90s, or this week at least. Recycling battered Bolan riffs like they're going out of style, this brazen Brixton trio love TV and love T-Rex but are ragged enough around the edges to avoid coming over all cynical and contrived. Random chunks of chainsaw guitar dodge spaced-out laser effects and synthesised kazoo riffs while street-bitch vocals display just the right amount of throwaway attitude.

Memories of more blatant excursions in this general direction — Boys Wonder, Queen B — harden my critical judgment but Chas and Dave

insist this is the peak of a very lacklustre pile.

C: It's kinda nice, kinda Gary Glitter-ish. The drums could be a little more kicking, but maybe I'm just going deaf. This is the first actual rock song we've heard today, that actually sounds like rock music as

opposed to all that other modern stuff. It's good, it's kind of... English.

D: I don't know if they're making a joke out of it or what, but it comes across like that. It's the most catchy, there's something in there that's irritating, which is good.

**"We're the leaders, we're the leaders..."**