



'The Factory,' The Factory (Acetate Records, 3 1/2 stars)

'Top of the Rocks,' The Superbees (Acetate Records, 4 1/2 stars)

The first of these two Sept. 7 CDs features a band popular around the late 1980s Washington, D.C., scene, opening shows for Iggy, The Ramones, PiL, and others. They were led by Vance Bockis, formerly of doom metal pioneers Pentagram; and claimed to be an extension of Rolling Stones albums like Tattoo You.

Bockis and band (guitarist/vocalists Robbie Limon and Bruce Katsu, saxophonist Bill Massey, bassist Steve Sartorius and drummer Mark Keranj) were courted by major-label A&R men but never released an album on those labels due to self-destructive lifestyle issues. Highlights include the propulsive "Self-Submission," the country-rocking "Misfortune Son" and the oddly predictive "Six Feet Down."

The Superbees are presenting this six-song EP as the long-awaited follow-up to their debut, High Volume. I didn't hear that one, but this one is full of punk-flavored rock 'n' roll and hook-filled high-powered tunes. Highlights for me are the pile-driving opener, "Silver Jet," the dismissive "Bad News," the Inmates-like "Greyhound Tooth" and the slightly sped-up cover of Aerosmith's "S.O.S. (Too Bad)."

Both of these releases are worth seeking out.

- Ricky Flake