



REVIEWS, ETC.

Henrik Schwarz

DJ-Kicks

!K7

Germany's own Henrik Schwarz takes the reins for the latest in the DJ-Kicks series and truly delivers the goods. His is a diverse mix that redefines what soul is and what it can be. Obviously, it can be found in his inclusion of artists like D'Angelo, James Brown, and Marvin Gaye, but it also appears in the machine-driven techno of Drexciya and the off-center disco of Arthur Russell. Schwarz's ear is fine-tuned for startling segues, such as the transition from Robert Hood to African chants to the spiritual jazz of Pharoah Sanders. Such a blend is worth the price of the CD alone. Henrik's original work is stellar in its own right. The live version of "Jon" is a sprawling house tune that almost feels orchestral in approach. "Imagination Limitation" (a DJ-Kicks exclusive) is hypnotic tribal techno, warm and inviting. His poignant touches to Coldcut's "Walk A Mile In My Shoes" adds emphasis to the song's meaningful lyrics, and is the perfect halfway point for the mix. Top notch from beginning to end, you'd be hard pressed to find a better mix compilation this year. —JRS

Holy Smokes

Talk To Your Kids About Gangs

Skin Graft

With Holy Smokes, members of Hella, Pinback, and the Flying Luttenbachers team up for a panoramic tour de force of abstract post-punk noise rock. The Pavement-colored opening song "The Big Picture" sets the scene. Then "Too Many Wives" rolls by in a car with a drunken Dean and Gene Ween at the wheel. "Pretty Much None Of Us Know Anything" is one of the best song titles ever, and it's a healthy example of their musical dexterity. The vocal tone is creepy and the percussion is metallic and rough. "Missed Connections" dispenses with structure almost completely. "Quantum Leaper Of Los Angeles County" captures the gist of what electro-noise should be. I don't care for the

computerized beat-driven dance songs, but the surrounding elements are almost always interesting: the harsh wind swirling through the mix, a transistor short circuits, the guitar amp sizzles, a trumpet chokes itself in the distance, the keyboards sound like jammed car alarms. There's nothing here that hasn't appeared elsewhere on record in numerous forms. (Does anyone recall Lake Of Dracula?) Nevertheless, this record held my interest throughout. —AMH

Honeycut

The Day I Turned To Glass

Quannum

Hot Chip might get all the acclaim in 2007 for fusing dance rock, '60s soul and electronica to create what many have lauded, including myself, as a potential record of the year, but Honeycut is the underdog that might have the better record that everyone fails to mention or even hear. Honeycut's debut, *The Day I Turned to Glass*, is an earful. The Quannum hip hop influence is strong in these three white musicians. Do not be fooled by any band photos, Bart Davenport sounds nice and comfy in the band's elegant, sometimes mood setting arrangements. "Silky" puts a turntable twist on what could have been the Isley Brother's "Between the Sheets Pt. II," while "Crowded Avenue" is another stroll through the streets to see that chérie amour. Honeycut has created a debut so funky, so sensuous and so soulful, that the ghosts of all the fallen soul singers must have inhabited these three musicians. *The Day I Turned to Glass* is soul electronica at its finest. Honeycut has created the natural progression of R&B that never was. It is about time someone pumped the soul and the sound back into it. —BG

Indian Jewelry

Invasive Exotics

Monitor Records

Under the influence of a dump truck's worth of peyote, Indian Jewelry's level of intensity would be near fatal. Sans



Isis

Clearing the Eye

Ipecac Recordings

Right now Isis is near the top of the list for bands that I have to see live. For anyone else who is in this same sinking boat, or even if you've already swum ashore, *Clearing the Eye* is a must have. It features almost 2 1/2 hours of live performances, from CBGB's to Club Quattro in Tokyo. As it goes from earlier material to the more recent, you get to experience the band in their live setting as they continually evolve into a more mature band. Instead of plowing through like many metal bands, Isis is shown to be unafraid of jamming a song out. The performances range from 2001 to 2005 with single songs selected from a handful of shows, including a twelve minute version of "Weight" at the Troubadour in LA. The true jewel for those who've missed out so far is a full hour and a half set filmed at the Annandale Hotel in Sydney in 2003. *Clearing the Eye* changes stride with two full picture galleries to scroll through and a music video for "In Fiction". Isis is again on the road in support now of their newest album, released on Halloween. The sheer power of the quintet comes through sonically fulminating on this feature, but it only whet my appetite that much more to see them in the flesh. —JJ



New York Dolls

All Dolled Up

Directed by Bob Gruen and Nadya Beck
MVD

Having the forethought to make reservations at Max's Kansas City in advance to see the New York Dolls of the early 70's would put you up with Carnac the Magnificent. Right from the start, they were a revelation and a revolution wrapped up in makeup. The New York Dolls didn't evolve into an image, they began as one with their high heels and fantastic hairdos. *All Dolled Up* takes off with the first spray of Aqua Net and documents their early rise all on glorious black and white celluloid. Bob Gruen and Nadya Beck had a unmatched rapport with the Dolls which allowed them to capture the band at their most preening and foreign moments. The Dolls were always prepared for anything, whether it be one of their shows at Max's stretching into the small hours or their first trip to LA to play at the famed Whisky A Go Go. The looks on the regular folks' faces are priceless. Looking at the Dolls today, they may not be much of a visual statement, but in the mid and early 70's, it was moral-shattering. This culminates in the best line of *All Dolled Up*: "You guys ain't really men, are you?" The formative performances interspersed with the behind the scenes looks create a narrative that eliminates the need for any voiceovers. The New York Dolls were what you saw. They didn't get dressed up when they took the stage like many poseur acts today; they were constantly smoking, drinking, primping and teasing their hair during the down time. So even you weren't there for Max's, you can relive three years chronicled by Gruen and Beck in 6 hours, including a full color booklet, extensive photo gallery and twelve full, glam inducing performances from the New York Dolls. —JJ