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Music Pick

L.A. Weekly, November 6-12, 2009

Thursday, November 12, 2009

GRANT HART AT THE VIPER ROOM

People sometimes forget that there were two great songwriters in Hüsker Dü. Bob Mould, whose scabrous vocals and distortion-saturated guitar distinguished the influential Minneapolis trio's sound, got most of the attention and has since gone on to a critically lauded solo career. But drummer Grant Hart actually wrote and sang many of the band's best songs, even if his own solo work has been largely overlooked in the years since Hüsker Dü's breakup in 1988. It probably didn't help that he battled drug addiction, but he eventually got himself cleaned up and released several underrated albums under his own name and with Nova Mob. There's a certain irony that Mould still performs in large concert halls while Hart plays bars, because the latter is the much more interesting songwriter these days. Hart's latest CD, *Hot Wax* (Condor/MVD Audio), was recently released with little fanfare, but it's stacked with a pleasing variety of catchy hooks that range from the Elvis Costello-style piano ballad "School Buses Are for Children" to the trumpet-laced '60s pure pop of "Barbara" to the exhilarating garage-punk rush of "You're the Reflection of the Moon on the Water." As Hart sings, "He's a silver nitrate shadow," but perhaps it's finally time to let him come back into the spotlight. (Falling James)