

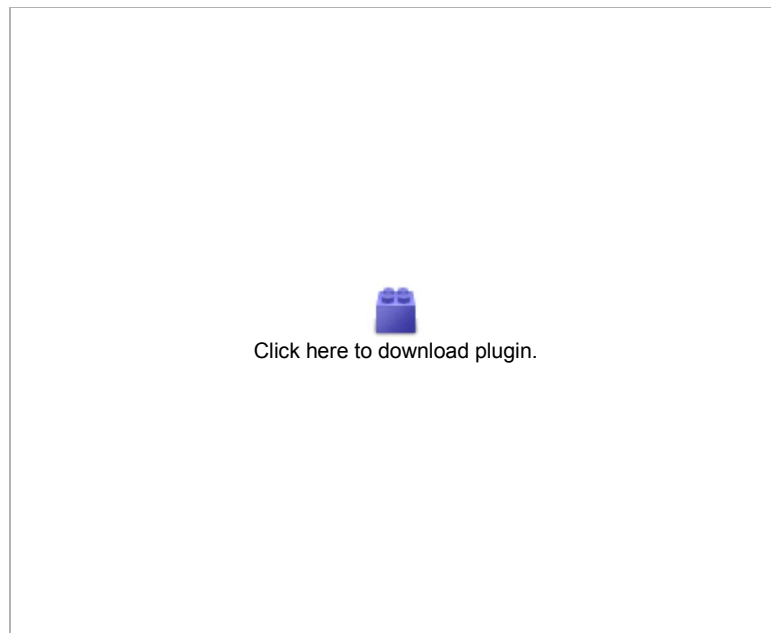
Reviews ---



Grant Hart – Hot Wax (Con D'or Records / MVD Audio)

This is a long review (for us) so have a listen to this while you're reading:

Grant Hart – 2541



I used to love Husker Du. I saw them at the old Marquee on their New Day Rising tour. In fact I spent a large chunk of the evening with my old chum, the late John Peel, explaining just how great Husker Du were (not that he needed much telling), and needless to say they were absolutely on fire that night. Of course, when the band broke up in 1987, songwriters Grant Hart and Bob Mould fell out and the fussin' and a feudin' begun. As far as I know, it never stopped. Personally, I didn't pick sides. I liked what they both contributed to Husker Du, and I occasionally (and enthusiastically) dipped into both their solo recordings. Hart's latest, *Hot Wax*, is his sixth solo release, and like everything else he's done, he can't help but bring his exceptional pop aptitude to the project. The man's understanding of how a tune works and how hooks get under the skin is unsurpassed in what we laughingly call alternative music. The collection kicks off with "You're The Reflection Of The Moon In The Water", a title inspired by a comment made by a monk during the selection process to find the next Pachen Lhama (and Hart's love and devotion for Patti Smith), and it's a beautifully gutsy, unrefined rock 'n' roll song, underpinned with what sounds like a meaty Hammond organ, though I couldn't find one credited. Anyhow, think The Band if they'd looked East instead of West, and got cranked up on bathtub buzz. Next up; "Barbara" is a far gentler affair, with an arrangement and instrumentation that George Martin could instantly identify with. "Narcissus, Narcissus" carries on Hart's interest in the ancients, mythology and rockabilly – honestly, the man's a genius – and "California Zephyr" and "My Regrets" are the sort of no-holds-barred power pop that Foo Fighters fill the world's stadia with. Undoubtedly a cohesive and brilliantly entertaining collection, which might just be the best things he's done on his own. I'd certainly have no hesitation in recommending it to anyone who hadn't heard Hart before.

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Rob F.

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