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Music Review: Grant Hart - *Hot Wax*



When Hüsker Dü split due to mounting tensions within the band, the future of Grant Hart seemed somewhat cloudy. He was suffering from some very public addictions, and things seemed a little sketchy for him at first. Thankfully, he was able to get clean, and go on to form the excellent Nova Mob.

The nine tracks that make up *Hot Wax* seem to have been recorded under a number of different circumstances. There are two producers listed, and the sound quality varies wildly from track to track. As a whole though, the record hangs together in a remarkably cohesive fashion.

Hot Wax opens up with "You're The Reflection Of The Moon On The Water," which is a garage-band extravaganza. There is a great vintage organ sound on it, similar to that of the legendary Them's "Gloria." It is a great way to kick off a record.

The garage band vintage organ echo continues on a number of tracks, including, "Charles Hollis Jones," and "Sailor Jack." Actually, "Sailor Jack" is sort of an unholy spawn of The Beach Boys and Question Mark And The Mysterians.

I have always been hard pressed to describe Hart's voice, as he uses different inflections depending on the song. But on *Hot Wax*, there is a notable similarity to that of David Bowie, certainly of the way he intones "Changes." A quick listen to "School Buses Are For Children," and "My Regrets," will confirm this.

One of Hüsker Dü's all-time greatest songs is "Diane," off *Metal Circus*. Grant Hart wrote it, and it shows off his way with a melody spectacularly. He still has the gift, as "California Zephyr" shows. This is sort of a Big Star meets the Dü kind of tune.

I'm not really sure what all the Greek mythological references are about, but they are here. The title of the album, *Hot Wax* is illustrated on the cover not with a melting LP or something similar. Rather, it features a rendering of Icarus flying too close to the sun. If you remember, the wings Icarus flew on were made of wax, and his flight melted them.

There is also a song here titled "Narcissus, Narcissus," a mid-tempo rocker that sounds like a kiss-off to an ex-lover.

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