

The Hangmen

"Lost Rocks - The Best Of" CD

(Acetate Records)

★★★★★



Raw and honest garage/roots punk from Los Angeles, these guys (and girl) have all the rock swagger and snarl of the greats. There's some Stooges, some Stones, some punk, Johnny Thunders...you get the picture. "Bent" is a junkies lament, with a good amount of Americana thrown in for good measure. This is top-tier, high-octane rock. Some tracks are produced by Mike Ness (of Social Distortion), so you know the pedigree must be good, and fans of Social D will easily appreciate these gritty and streetwise songs. "Desperation Town" is nothing but a classic rock song you don't yet know. Ditto for "Wild Beast". "Rotten Sunday" carries a massive guitar riff that's as ugly as the Stooges and that's a great thing in itself. If you're looking for balls-out rock without pretension, this is it. All hail the Hangmen!

- **Todd Zachritz**

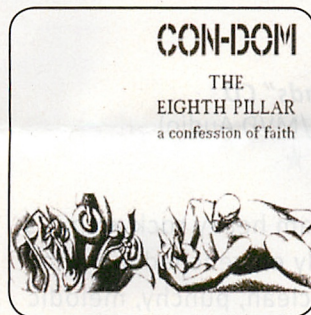
Con-Dom

"The Eighth Pillar

A Confession Of Faith" CD

(Tesco)

★★★★★



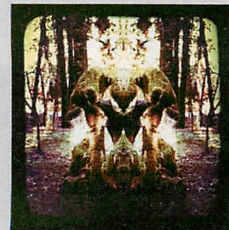
Originally released in 1992 by a small French label, this 5-track album by English noise artist Mike Dando is 41 minutes of old-school industrial. This is raw and primitive noisemaking, of a similar vein as early Throbbing Gristle or SPK. "Seven Pillars Of Wisdom" opens with an ominous gray static, punctuated by declarative and reverbed shouts with cascades of ghostly drone. "Triumph" is more gray static with similar violent tendencies. "Confession Of Faith" pulses for almost 17 minutes with odd and seemingly random sounds, including a choir, what seems like engine noise, drones, TV & tape voices, and Dando's atonal yells. "The Eighth Pillar" closes it out with a collage of distant bells, howling winds, and calliope sounds in the distance -- at once lovely yet haunting. A fine album with plenty of mystery and sinister darkness to wile away the late late hours to.

— **Todd Zachritz**

Feersum Ennjin

"Feersum Ennjin" CD

(Dissociated Press)

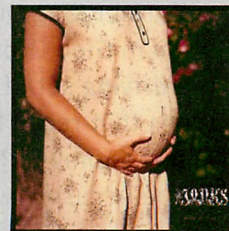


Cheesy band names aside, Feersum Ennjin is Paul D'Amour, a founding member of prog-metal heroes Tool, and this is his first full-length solo release. No surprise that there are several Tool-style rockers here. In fact, the opener, "Fishing Grounds", will quickly appeal to fans of his old band. "The Wilderness" is an epic rocker that brings to mind Failure -- anthemic (and melodic) modern rock with progressive elements.

The Janks

"Hands Of Time" CD

(Sprouted Records)



Los Angeles-based indie pop band that channels both Freddie Mercury and Thom Yorke on "Billy The Kid", which is both daring and pretty damned impressive. Other cuts of note include the rockier "Rat Racers", the theatrical "Separation From Your Body", and the playful "Child Prodigy". Imagine if a less pretentious Muse were an American band, and you wouldn't be too far off. Enjoyable.

aTelecine

"The Falcon And The Pod" album

(Pendul Sound Recordings)



Featuring well-known actress Sasha Grey (look her up if this name doesn't ring a bell), this avant-experimental noise group crafts twisted electro-horror and post-industrial sounds that you won't hear anytime soon in your gothy club. "A Secret Ratio" is like prime Throbbing Gristle or early Chris & Cosey, with otherworldly oscillators and submerged female voices. Other cuts are more ambient ("4AM"), but this whole release echoes the dark and primitive electronica vibe of TG or early Cabaret Voltaire. Enjoyable. — **Todd Zachritz** 4U