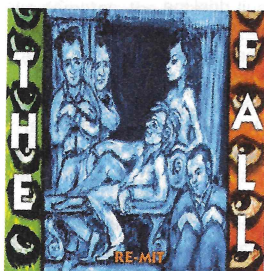


a Jesse Jackson cause, 1985's *Sugar Ditch Revisited* boasts two lost Sir Mack Rice songs unearthed in Stax's vaults by Dickinson (Money Talks and saucy Tina, The Go Go Queen), Memphis Horns Andrew Love and Ben Cauley, New Orleans jazz bassist René Coman, drummer Ross Johnson and Alex Chilton on stinging guitar form. The stellar ensemble also tackle Bobby Lee Trammel's Arkansas Stomp, Charlie Feathers' Working On A Building and Doc Pomus' Lonely Avenue, the mighty Dickinson frequently astonishing on keyboards.

With Chilton staying home, 1986's *Shake Rag EP* was recorded by just Falco, Dickinson and Johnson, but Cuban Rebel Girl and the moonshine sizzle of RL Burnside's Jumper On The Line pack the energy and primal shimmer of Falco's *Beyond The Magnolia Curtain* debut long-player. If only these EPs had stretched to the same length...

However, the lavish package also includes a riotous 1989 show at Vienna's Messeplast, along with Falco's customary eloquent sleeve notes. *Kris Needs*



### The Fall Re-Mit

★★★★

Cherry Red CDBRED 580 (CD / LP)

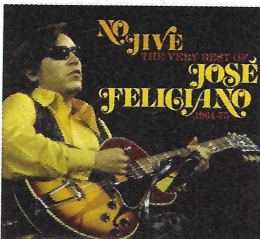
**Thirtieth time's the charm**

The Fall's second album for Cherry Red starts like the kind of live music you hear bands play before American chat shows cut to the ad break: punchy, thematic and jolly – none of which are charges you'd usually levy at Mark E Smith (except punchy, perhaps). But *Re-Mit* is full of surprises like that; amazingly, it's also the band's 30th album.

Smith's desire to make heavy metal seems to have now subsided, replaced by an often disturbing version of events inside his mind. He speaks of airports, LCD Soundsystem's James Murphy, MDMA and plenty more that's as hard as ever to catch, but he also sounds rejuvenated, channelling demons, overlapping his voice

a Wild Man Fischer for the modern era.

But vitally, *Re-Mit* sounds alive, funny even, as if Smith has made peace with something – possibly his own genius. The Fall are still a one-man band (cruelly for the others, who deliver a broad, engaging palette of sound that veers from rock to ambient field recordings and found sound), but this time it feels that we're closer to Smith than ever. *Jake Kennedy*



### Jose Feliciano

**No Jive: The Very Best Of 1964-75**

★★★★★

Salvo SALVOMDCD 35 (2-CD)

**A comprehensive Feliciano best of? No way Jose!**

Though Jose Feliciano is best-known here for his celebrated cover of The Doors' Light My Fire he enjoys a near-mythological status in the US and Latin America, having sold millions of records over a lengthy career. This collection, covering his decade-long tenure at RCA, aims to redress that balance and celebrate a talent of extraordinary depth and versatility.

Beginning his career as part of Greenwich Village's legendary folk scene, the influence of contemporary Bob Dylan is keenly felt on If I Really Bug You, Then You Don't Love Me. Later work profiled here benefits from increasing maturity and versatility as a highly distinct voice emerges across a myriad of genres: there are impressive slabs of funk such as No Jive, and intricate jazz-inflected guitar-work on the delicate Nature Boy.

But it's his ability as an interpreter for which Feliciano is justifiably famous, and there are numerous prime examples present. Stevie Wonder's Golden Lady is given a highly effective Latin makeover, while The Beatles' And I Love Her is used as the springboard for some astonishingly intricate fret-work. Meanwhile, his peerless version of California Dreaming mixes lush orchestration, Latino stylings and Feliciano's achingly beautiful vocals to make the song entirely his own. Beautifully packaged and with informative

**These New Puritans**  
take the Rhodes less travelled

### These New Puritans

Field Of Reeds

★★★★★

Infectious, cat no tbc (CD / 2-LP)

... How to reappear completely

Despite across-the-board praise and rightful appearances at the top of end-of-year lists, These New Puritans' 2010 album *Hidden* remained just that for most record-buyers presumably distracted by the deluge of far lesser musical accomplishments that year. What? Was everyone waiting for a new Radiohead album or something?

Well, that very thing came, underwhelmed and went in early 2011, leaving the distinct feeling that Radiohead had become bored with themselves. And while it would be pushing it to suggest that These New Puritans began writing *Field Of Reeds* that year in response, it isn't pushing it to praise them for taking Yorke and co's place and creating what's arguably the musical achievement of the 2010s so far.

There are no simple entry points – it demands engagement, and to be taken as a whole. You may think, mid-way through second track Fragment Two, that they're picking up from where *Hidden* left off, but then it's like a trapdoor opens into a frankly indescribable audio vortex. Modal Miles Davis rubs up with late-period Scott Walker; the ghost of Talk Talk's *Spirit Of Eden* skulks around in the background while banked, Gregorian chant-like vocals keep making appearances to create some heavy, heavy atmospherics.

Yet this is far from abstracted noise – it's absolutely concrete: the minutest detail is accounted for, giving the album its own internal logic so that listening to *Field Of Reeds* becomes like entering some sort of dream state. It's a feeling perhaps best expressed in a lyric from Fragment Two, capturing precision and ambiguity in the same image: "I swam towards your ship like a missile

### John Fogerty

Wrote A Song For Everyone

★★★

Columbia, cat no tbc (CD / LP)

**Old flannel-shirt opens up his wardrobe**

Now, much as John Fogerty deserves all the credit and should be cut even more slack for masterminding the heyday of Creedence Clearwater

enough to accommodate the array of guests who interpret his songs here.

Fogerty and the flipping' Foo Fighters kick-off with the epic Fortunate Son. Is that a great idea, or merely a rather irritating coupling, given Dave Grohl's penchant for reinventing himself as rock'n'roll saviour? Almost certainly not. The album's

country dullard Alan Jackson and the foolish Kid Rock, interest turns to incredulity.

There are decent moments: two, in fact. Fogerty's solo Mystic Highway and a lovely take on Proud Mary with Allen Toussaint, Jennifer Hudson and the Rebirth Brass Band are worth a listen, though they remain

guided by vague feelings." Elsewhere, frontman Jack Barnett sings of uncovering "something" "in crushed glass by the train line"; throughout, he's constantly searching for a place where "the way to get there is going round in circles", at one point asks for "a prayer that just for a moment real life and dreaming swap places". By the time you're caught up in *Spiral* and *Organ Eternal*, the latter's descending sequencer motifs interrupted by unsettling otherworldly effects, you wonder how the hell you got there yourself.

The whole album is a voyage of discovery for both band and listener: the former pushing themselves out into uncharted waters, the latter happy to be led along on an astonishing feat of imagination, of composition and performance. Trying to describe the nine-minute V (Island Song) in words written on a page would be fruitless. But perhaps this helps: the press release swears "virtually every sound heard on the album is as it was played" but, really, it sounds like it could only have been captured as intangible thoughts turned directly into sound. (Even some of the instruments sound made-up: Professor Andrew McPherson's Magnetic Resonator Piano, anyone?)

Crucially, though, this isn't a bunch of smart-arses' musical equivalent of, "Look, ma! No hands!" There's depth here, too. If the song title The Light In Your Name doesn't make your heart tremble a little, then Jack Barnett and jazz singer Elisa Rodrigues' duet will, their vocals melting into and pulling away from each other like two apparitions weaving a love song.

Fail to fully engage with the album and you'll have scant chance of comprehending it, but therein lies *Field Of Reeds'* compelling beauty. Give yourself over to what's not only a 21st-century masterpiece, but also something timeless that will resonate whenever you find it. *Jason Draper*