



= **MARCH 2007**

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**Written by:**

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### **TANAKH – SAUNDERS HOLLOW**

(CD on [Camera Obscura](#) P.O. Box 5069, Burnley VIC 3121, Australia)

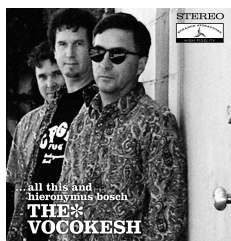
When is Tanakh, not really Tanakh? When guiding light, Jesse Poe elects to hop in the back seat and let his bassist, Michele Poulos drive, as is the case on this, their fifth album and first for Australian indie, Camera Obscura. A companion record to last year's 'Ardent Fevers' (in fact, this was recorded a week earlier), 'Saunders Hollow' opens with Dan Calhoun's gentle violin strains, Brian Jones' shuffling drums and Poulos' breathy vocals on 'Ladybird,' as she adds a tender, feminine touch to Tanakh's typically elaborate backing, with Phil Murphy adding softly plucked ukuleles and no less than four acoustic guitars jockeying for position. Like a barefoot stroll through tall, soft grass on a lazy Summer afternoon, the song sets the mood for a relaxed, laidback effort. Poe and Poulos duet on 'Marcel Proust,' a lovely lilting pop song driven by Murphy's lap steel.

Poulos' hesitant, little girl vocals on 'Where Our Gardens Grow' reminded me of the giddy, girly pop of Olivia Newton-John, but ex-Belle & Sebastian sprite, Isobel Campbell adds another layer of sensuality, and Curtis Fye's upright bass

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solo and Poe's Garcia-like guitar licks assure us this is not aimed at the Top 40, teeny bopper crowd. The title track calypsos its way around several of those acoustic guitars (from Poulos and Clarke Hedgepath), while Poe's intricate electric guitar lines hint at a touch of Fahey's blues, Basho's eastern mysticism, and the back alley mystery of his adopted Italian homeland.

Fans will still enjoy the usual excellent arrangements they've come to expect from a Tanakh recording, including Pete Mathis' harpsichord dancing around the room with Bryce McCormick and Craig Harmon's B-3 organs on the country-tinged waltz, 'Longer Than Sorrow.' And while the swaying, Leonard Cohenesque 'Down' could have used Poe as a male foil for Poulos' romantic pleadings, the song nevertheless benefits from her emotional reading, which haunted me long after the album drew to its noisy conclusion on the slightly out-of-place skronkfest, 'Illusions of Separation.' I also think the syncopated fits and starts of 'Kept' have too much of an awkward, in-between-takes, improvisational feel that distracts from the album's otherwise tightly focused arrangements. Still, it's a bold move for Poe & Co. to follow up arguably their most critically acclaimed release with such a 180° about face that borders on a Poulos solo album. But that's just the sort of loose camaraderie that has infected all of Tanakh's releases and this brave step forward ensures that even the staunchest fan cannot predict Poe's next move, which I eagerly await. His recently announced US/European solo tour even hints that the next Tanakh album may be as different and unexpected as this one. (*Jeff Penczak*)



### THE VOCOKESH – ... ALL THIS AND HIERONYMUS BOSCH

(CD from [Strange Attractors Audio House](#) P.O. Box 13007, Portland, OR 97213-0007, USA)

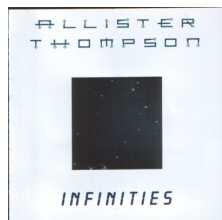
This power trio (inexplicably adding the definite article to their name) have been going strong for over 15 years now, ever since Richard Franecki departed Milwaukee's legendary psych outfit, F/I. Their eighth album (and third consecutive release on Portland, Oregon's Strange Attractors Audio House) opens with a Banshees-like, percussive howl ('Eddie Makes the Scene'), featuring an eardrum-curdling, Hendrixian guitar solo from John Helwig and Rusty's incessant skin pounding. This one will have fans of my other favourite power trio *du jour*, Bevis Frond wetting their collective undies. Franecki's sitar trades barbs with Helwig's meandering notes on the reflective 'Gazing at the Dust,' perhaps a 21<sup>st</sup> century update on the beloved shoegazing phenomenon that adds a new term to the musical lexicon, let's call it sandalgazing!

The trio change the pace slightly for 'Once More Near The Beginning,' which paints an expansive, sun-drenched, Western landscape...like a psychedelic Ennio Morricone soundtrack to one of Sergio Leone's spaghetti westerns. 'Blue Light Dharma Shuffle' is another introspective soulsearcher, perhaps something the Christ might've composed whilst wandering around the desert for 40 days and nights, dazed and confused on peyote dust. This one is right up the alley of those other psychedelic desert stormtroopers, Black Sun Ensemble. Our hero, Eddie (remember him from the opening track?), returns to blow his mind out on the swirling colors and sitar delights of 'Eddie's Freakout,' suggesting a thinly-veiled concept album may be at work here. Coupled with the title, perhaps our participants have been sucked into a Bosch (pronounced like 'boss') triptych (perhaps not coincidentally, also the title of a Bevis Frond album) and this is the soundtrack to their wanderings and desperate attempts to escape.

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'Vibe #8' (which the band have frustratingly decided to sequence as track #9) opens with the ominous, stalking, descending guitar riff from Bauhaus' 'Bela Lugosi's Dead,' and then snakes around the inside of your brain playing musical chairs with the likes of Nick Saloman, Mason Jones (SubArachnoid Space), Eric Arn (Primordial Undermind), and Jesus Acedo (Black Sun Ensemble). But fret not (pun intended), this psychedelic, surreal nightmare has a happy ending as the album closes with the sitar-drenched, 'Eddie Makes an Exit,' and our friends say goodbye to the worlds of Hieronymus Bosch, but for you, the journey is only beginning. A welcome addition to the collections of air guitarists everywhere, particularly fans of The Bevis Frond, Black Sun Ensemble and label mates, Primordial Undermind, Paik, and Kinski. (*Jeff Penczak*)

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## **ALLISTER THOMPSON – INFINITIES**

([www.transmedia95.com/astronomy](http://www.transmedia95.com/astronomy)) [allistert@hotmail.com](mailto:allistert@hotmail.com)

Mixing delicate Nick Drake Guitars with a beautiful and haunting voice, reminiscent of Alisdair Roberts or Alan Davidson, this is a high quality selection of songs that is timeless in its subtle enchantment.

Opening with "You Will Return", it is immediately apparent that here is an artist with rare talent, the gentle rainfall guitar blending wonderfully with the contemplative lyrics to create a mesmerising slice of acoustic wizardry.

Featuring some delicately poised vocal overdubs and just the right amount of instrumental ornamentation, the album seems to flow like a river, gently caressing your soul as it talks of the joys and tears of existence, and our place in the universe, the lyrics dealing with melancholy in a sympathetic and beautiful way.

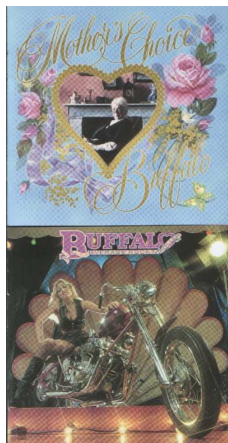
Possibly my favourite track on the album is the poignant "My Name Is Death", concerning a farmer's meeting with death and the inevitable outcome of such a meeting, the tale orchestrated perfectly by the playing and quiet arrangement. Elsewhere on the album, "Judgement Day" is a mellow tune with some rustling percussion and a west-coast feel, whilst "Galaxies" is so beautiful it almost hurts.

With so much to enjoy and explore, this is an album you will find yourself returning to again and again, if only for the majestic "St George's Hill", another song tinged with sadness whilst being blessed with magic and a heart-stopping vocal delivery to take your breath away.

Available as a download from Allister's website, this is a classic in the making from an artist you will be hearing more about. Do yourself a favour and jump in early, you won't regret a moment. (*Simon Lewis*)

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## **BUFFALO – MOTHERS CHOICE/AVERAGE ROCK'N'ROLLER**

(CD from [www.aztecmusic.com](http://www.aztecmusic.com) )

Having released three primal slabs of rock and roll without ever gaining any real reward for their efforts, guitarist John Baxter was sacked from Buffalo and band and management sought a more commercial sound. Featuring slide-guitar from Norm Roue, and some excellent fretwork from Karl Taylor, “Mothers Choice” is a noisy slice of heavy blues riffing with a rock ‘n’ roll heart, that suffers unfair comparisons with earlier albums due to its more structured approach.

On reflection the band could never sound the same without Baxter’s monumental guitar playing and what we have here is a band searching for a new direction whilst hoping to keep the original spirit alive. By and large the band succeed, the songs are strong and the playing tight with a rousing version of “Little Queenie” showing the band could still turn it on when needed. I guess the problem is that when choosing a Buffalo album to play then this is not going to be the one, as it does lack the unpredictable genius of the earlier albums, seemingly more formulaic than previous efforts. Mind you, it still stands proud in comparison to many other bands of the period as does “Average Rock ‘n’ Roller”, the band adopting an even more commercial (almost funky) edge, resulting in an enjoyable slice of heavy rock that once again failed to set the world on fire. Having lost both guitarist after the last album, London-born Chris Turner was drafted in to mould the band into a commercial unit, something that he succeeded in doing, the album being full of shorter songs with catchy chorus’ and a warmer, softer feel. With songs like “Rollin” sounding like CCR, it is obvious that the band was searching for a hit, as they competed in a very competitive market, although they continued to gig heavily during this period.

With only “Hero Suite” drawing comparisons with the early albums, long-time member Pete Wells found the new direction hard to stomach and he left to form cult rockers Rose Tattoo and the band folded with only a 1980 compilation released after the split.

Of the two album the second is the more cohesive although both have their moments and credit is due to Aztec Records for the care they have taken in re-issuing all five album from one of Australia’s most hard-working bands. *(Simon Lewis)*

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## **GIANT SKYFLOWER BAND – BLOOD OF THE SUNWORM**

(CD from [www.softabuse.com](http://www.softabuse.com))

Fans of the Incredible String Band looking for a fix of quality acid folk need look no further than this startling album which bears all the hallmarks of classic 60’s psychedelic folk whilst remaining fresh and retaining its own identity.

Actually the work of Glenn Donaldson (Skygreen Leopards) with help

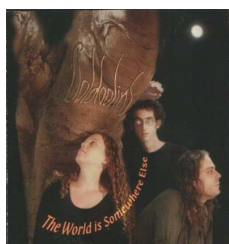
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from Shayde Sartin, the album opens with the wonderful “Oh Mary Green”, a sparkling Slice of Poppy folk complete with ringing sitars and melodies to die for. After the brief and haunting “Starbeams”, things get all mystical for the acid colours of “Time Wont Sing A Song For You”, a song which weaves and swerves out of the speakers sounding like classic ISB. Throughout the album, the gorgeous stringed instruments create a perfumed haze of sound, conjuring up the nostalgic feel that the psychedelic sixties invoke in so many people, the marijuana flowing freely and dreams of freedom so close at hand. Nowhere is this feeling stronger than on “Bitter Wild Rabbits/Builds The Bones” a haunting, aching instrumental giving way to some wistful lyrics carried by a magical tune.

Having given us nine songs in 23 minutes, the musicians are suitably limbered up for the eleven minute “Meditations On Christ And The Magi”, the piece opening with a droning sitar and distant drums that slowly build into a magic carpet of swirling instrumentation, a soft pillow of warmth that will engulf you in its sun-drenched power.

It may only be March, but I have a feeling that this one will be still there, as I decide some of my favourites for 2007, such is its timeless beauty. Mind you, I still haven't figured out why there is a picture of Peter Gabriel circa 1972 on the back of the sleeve, maybe I'll never know. *(Simon Lewis)*



## **GOLDOOLINS - THE WORLD IS SOMEWHERE ELSE**

(CD from [www.goldoolins.com](http://www.goldoolins.com))

With a West Coast, acid-folk vibe, “Songs From The Turly Crio” the 2005 release from Goldoolins was one of my most played summer records, the gentle songs the perfect accompaniment to some warming rays. On this Record, however, the band have stretched their musical wings to produce a more complex, mature and thoughtful album that has shades of Earth And Fire or Renaissance running through it. Using a wider palette of sounds, including oboe, Zither, Kalimba, Viola, Trombone, Tamboura and Musical Saw, the band have composed a rich tapestry of songs, full of tight harmonies, flowing melodies and dazzling arrangements, giving the songs a timeless beauty.

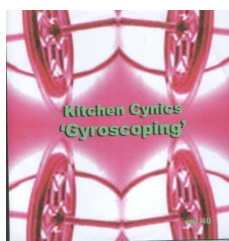
After the gentle folk-rock opener “Nother Day”, the band pull out all the stops for the eight minute epic “Ah!, I See Horizons”, with some wonderfully inventive playing and gorgeous vocals ensuring that the song is never dull or predictable. A lazy summer groove is present on the laid-back “Buky Where Art Thou?”, before some soft piano ushers in the mystical charms of “I Am The Grass” with its swirling lysergic arrangement perfectly suiting the surreal lyrics.

Containing elements of psych-pop in its three-minute duration, “Green” is a sparkle of light in the forest with some charming lyrics and a distinctive whistle that adds strangeness to the song. This approach is in complete contrast to the more electric art-rock approach of “One Shot”, which could be Be-Bop Deluxe, or Early Eno. Ensuring the listener never

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gets complacent or bored the next song “Buky, Lead The Way To Highway 40” is a brief exercise in wyrd-folk, held together by a repeated wordless vocal line, before “My Song” re-introduces melody and some fine piano playing.

Leaving the best to last, the band take all these influences and blend them together on the outstanding title track, a ten minute swirling folk-prog triumph complete with ecstatic vocals, chiming guitars and an air of mystery, giving the song a spectral feel, as if shrouded in mist. *(Simon Lewis)*



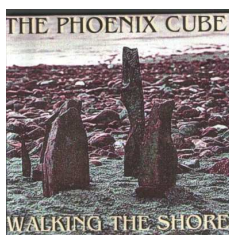
### **KITCHEN CYNICS – GYROSCOPING**

(CD-R from [kitchencynics@ecosse.net](mailto:kitchencynics@ecosse.net))

Before embarking on the mammoth subscription only project “A-tune-a-day-the Kitchen cynic-way” (which involves a song for every day of 2007), Alan Davidson had the blatant audacity to release this album at the end of 2006. Long time fans of The Cynics expecting the usual home-spun folk loveliness will probably be surprised however, as this is a collection of experimental, psychedelic and plain weird instrumentals. Showcasing Alan’s love of the absurd (and Ivor Cutler in particular) each piece is almost charming in its weirdness, reminding me in parts of the music from long forgotten children’s TV programmes such as the Clangers or Noggin The Nog (Composed by Vernon Elliot).

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Certainly the oddest thing Alan has recorded (although echoed coughing comes close), this album can be seen as some strange country cousin to “Dumbfoundlings” (2006), and is yet another example of the wide-ranging musical universe that The Kitchen Cynic inhabits. Never Dull and never predictable, every album is a delight and long may that state of affairs continue. *(Simon Lewis)*



### **THE PHOENIX CUBE - WALKING THE SHORE**

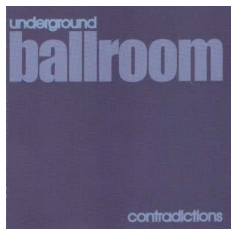
(CD from Barl Fire Recordings BF020)

Walking the Shore starts in familiar Phoenix Cube territory, with the twelve minute epic 'And spirits wake' being called from its slumber by some gentle bamboo flute. The piece gradually builds, with the introduction of various looped industrial sounds and some truly cavernous drums. Some sprinklings of guitar and keyboards add subtle textures before everything dances into the distance accompanied by krautrockian drum patterns.

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The contemplative voice and guitars of 'Like a ghost' acts as a bridge, cautiously leading the listener towards the retro synths'n'beats of 'Working, not working' and the dark unsettling mood piece, 'Dark embalming'. Then, just as the shoreline will change from dangerous cliffs to gentle beach, the music evolves into seductive folkpsych, with some sweet storytelling from Susannah Lewis paving the way for the soothing 'Love is an anchor', all gentle strumming and bongoes.

Things get very trippy with 'On the bus (going nowhere)'.....this bus seems to be going through fields of mushrooms, before arriving at the home of the Aphex Twin! The beautiful 'Desire' has a gorgeous melody and vocals that are achingly delicate, not unlike Robert Wyatt. Then we have the title track, which swells, swooshes and ripples engagingly, followed by 'The silence grows', taking us almost to the end of our coastal visit, tired but with our souls recharged. We leave to the sounds of 'Dry', a dream-souvenir of a wonderful trip. *(Alan Davidson)*



## UNDERGROUND BALLROOM – CONTRADICTIONS

(CD from [www.undergroundballroom.com](http://www.undergroundballroom.com))

With swirling Hammond, upfront guitars, solid rock drumming, some jazzy blues basslines and cool vocals, this album belongs firmly in the late sixties British blues boom, you can almost see Alexis Corner grooving in the corner (no pun intended) of the room. The fact that it was recorded in 2006 is something of a surprise, the fact that it is bloody marvellous is a miracle considering how badly this genre is regarded these days.

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I imagine that for a lot of Terrascope readers these tunes will sound familiar, even though they are originals, but hey, so did so much music those days, and here the top-notch playing and bright production lifts the songs above the herd, with Mike Athertons guitar work shining like a guiding star throughout. That is not to say the other musicians don't know their way around their respective instruments, they do! meaning the playing is tight but loose, just the way we like it.

After a couple of fine tunes “Devil My Deceiver” turns on the charm, the whole band seeming to meld as one, creating a classic rock song that must be storming in a live setting. In fact, the stage would be the perfect place to catch up with the band, the music being dynamic and perfectly crafted, filled with tension and soaked in emotion. All this is ably demonstrated on “Here, Looking In Your Eyes”, the band going on an extended workout during the middle section, finely balanced, with no instrument drowning out the others, sweet harmony indeed.

So, classic British rock, with a blues heart and the occasional jazz chord. Open a beer, turn it up and let the good times roll. *(Simon Lewis)*



## WILDLIFE – WILDLIFE

(CD from Bodies of Water [www.wildlifemen.com](http://www.wildlifemen.com))

Sounding creepy as hell, Wildlife are slow and noisy, Black Sabbath at 16 rpm, the Jesus Lizard meeting ancient shaman in a sacred forest. This is music to fuck up your head, the ghosts in the machine running rampant as the band go for the sonic jugular at every opportunity.

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After the ghost story of “Sit On The Ground”, the band go further into the psyche with the primitive ritual of “Drum Prayer For The Whooping

Gods”, a short burst of atmospheric magic that leads us into the brutal yet beautiful riffing of “Love” a dark psychedelic plea that creeps like a spider through you hair. Here repetition is all, the guitar driving for the darkness without pause, slowly falling to pieces leaving a wall of noise and primal therapy that is unsettling and paranoiac in its intent.

Final track “My Song” is an acoustic piece that seems to come from another planet, or maybe the bottom of the ocean, the sing-along chorus and strummed guitar almost lost in a wash of reverb, as though the reception on the radio is not quite tuned to the same frequency as the rest of us. The band managing to make even simplicity sound dark and brooding.

For most records 26 minutes is not long enough, for this album it is almost too long as the band mess with your mind with an intensity rarely heard, possibly drawing comparison with the equally short but scary “Reign In Blood” by Slayer, another album that feeds the psychosis in our lives.

So, do I actually like this album, yes I do, I just think I won't be playing it too often, so bleak is its power. (*Simon Lewis*)

*Addendum April 2007: Mat informed us that, "we used to be called wildlife, now we are **wildildlife**. some band tried to sue us so we needed an extra ild..."*



## **RICHARD PINHAS - METATRON**

(double CD from [www.cuneiformrecords.com](http://www.cuneiformrecords.com))

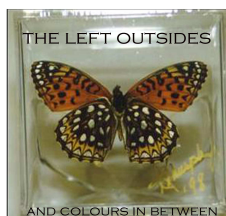
As far as I know the last time guitarist /composer **Richard Pinhas** received a Terrascope salute was in Issue Number 35, where I noted my good fortune in nabbing Red Lounge's limited repro of the self-titled 'Schizo' EP - the only recorded traces of a short-lived unit that existed just after The Blues Convention and preceded the mighty Heldon (whose critically lauded albums, from 'Electronic Guerilla' to 'Stand By' are readily available on Cuneiform). After they came to a premature halt in 1979, Richard's solo work continued for another three years, whereupon music composition was put on the back burner in favour of writing and co-editing a couple of philosophical tomes focused on his friend and mentor Gilles Deleuze. In 1992, he returned to music with 'D.W.W.' on the American Cuneiform imprint, a productive alliance that has flourished to the present day.

Pinhas' latest 'Metatron', a double CD set, clocks in at over two hours and is made up of twelve pieces: two co-written with long-time collaborator Jerome Schmidt ('Tikkun' parts 1 and 4) and one, the frantic 'Babylon Babies', by noted cyberpunk scribe Maurice Dantec. Informed by the esoteric Jewish doctrine of the Cabbala, the "religion" of choice for Madonna and other vapid Hollywood cronies, this, unlike previous solo outings, ratchets up the "school of Fripp" styled outpourings (although Pinhas really has entered a fifth dimension since that epithet was first

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coined), while visibly reducing the usage of effects and processing a.k.a. the "Loop Metatronic System". His mastery of delay systems however remains in evidence and is still something to behold, especially in 'The Double Face of Metatron' and 'Tikkun' part 3. With assistance from kindred souls such as ex-Heldonite Patrick Gauthier (moog), Didier Batard (on 'splendid bass') and Djam Karet's Chuck Oken Jnr and Magma's Antoine Paganotti (on 'fabulous drums'), this set shows itself to be one of the most far-reaching and fully realised points in Pinhas' fertile, thirty year plus career. *(Steve Pescott)*



## THE LEFT OUTSIDES – AND COLOURS IN BETWEEN

( CD from [www.theleftoutsides.com](http://www.theleftoutsides.com) )

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It's almost ten years since the Stormclouds released 'Sleep No More'; long enough to wage two wars since I sat in the rain outside Ladbroke Grove tube station in London clutching a newly acquired copy of said LP and a tear-smearred letter from an empty-handed heart, the former purchased from one or other of the two Bills in the old Plastic Passion shop and the latter found fluttering on the ground like a broken-backed butterfly. I can still smell the distinctive mix of kebab, patchouli and diesel oil that I always associate with that moment and with that record. Time passes, calibrated not in terms of hours and solar cycles but in words and smells and sounds, the rhythm of the rain and the beat of the earth, and all are long gone now – not least the Stormclouds, singer Melanie Townsend sacked from the band just as Louise Allen had been before her; I really must ask Steve Lines what his secret is sometime.

So anyway, there I sat with the rain trickling down the back of my neck not knowing and never guessing that a hundred months or so later I'd be back outside Ladbroke Grove tube again, this time waiting for a friend and armed with a copy of the aptly named Left Outsides debut four-track EP, 'Leaving the Frozen Butterflies Behind', which I'd been blown away enough by to circulate to all and sundry and anyone really who'd listen, including the good Mr George Parsons, who kindly went so far as to feature them in the latest issue of 'Dream' magazine as a result of my pointing them in his general direction. The Left Outsides reminded me then and they remind me now of the Stormclouds, all folky, dreamy, hypnotic psychedelia with flashes of Opal, Clay Allison and Mazzy Star, yet quintessentially English and pastoral too. Luckily vocalist, guitarist and multi-instrumentalist Mark Nicholas decided against sacking saintly vocalist, ace viola player and musical saw player (hurrah!) Alison Cotton after recording their debut however, and instead married her in time to record this, their first album. A wise move.

I was transported immediately back to Ladbroke Grove on hearing 'Now it's Over' (originally by 1960s San Francisco band Living Children, and the sole cover version on here; they also covered Mercury Rev's 'Goddess on a Hi-Way' and the Brian Jonestown Massacre's 'Ballad of Jim Jones' on their debut EP) which begins with the sound of traffic and Big Ben. OK so you

can't actually hear Big Ben from Ladbroke Grove, but you get the general idea. Mark's voice also sounds like Nick "Bevis Frond" Saloman's on this, which is no bad thing (and also reinforces the Londonesque idiom somewhat). 'The Chameleon' is another of mark's vocal tracks, this time early English psychedelia is the trigger and I suspect the Pretty Things' 'SF Sorrow' is the key – you almost expect the sound of laughing schoolchildren to weave through the mix.

According to the aforementioned 'Dream' interview, 'Dog Leap Stairs' which opens the album was inspired by walking in the countryside during a thunderstorm and coming across monks chanting in a secluded candlelit abbey, while 'Clouds Hill' is a song about impressionable youth in the first person. Again, it summons churches looming like petrified galleons in a milky, mist-clad landscape.

Along with the title track, 'Fallen by the Wayside' is a personal favourite; jaunty folk-psych led from the front by Alison's winsome vocals and lilting viola refrain, while 'The Other Side' showcases Mark's acoustic guitar work while 'I Fear That I Have Lost My Way' is an all too brief instrumental, a meditation on an Sunday afternoon spent picnicking with a lover beneath a windblown suspension bridge (I'm making this up, but you can conjure up your own imagery to suit).

The fuse is still burning and the colours of the sun still glow while in some strong hearts the honesty of love and truth remain. Open the windows wide and take the Left Outsides to the people, this is music they richly deserve to hear. *(Phil)*




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### **BABY GRANDMOTHERS – BABY GRANDMOTHERS** (CD on [Subliminal Sounds](#))

One of Sweden's most obscure psychedelic treasures, Baby Grandmothers evolved out of the T-Boones in 1967 and only officially released one single in Finland (Eteenpäin!, aka Forward!, May 1968) during their lifetime before the power trio of guitarist, Kenny Håkansson, bassist, Bengt "Bela" Linnarsson and drummer, Pelle Ekman joined forces with Mecki Bodermark in the reincarnated Mecki Mark Men, a highly prized, Swedish psych outfit that released a much-loved 1969 album for Mercury, 'Running In The Summer Night.' (MMM, rumoured to be Hendrix favorite Swedish band, were also the first Swedish band to tour America, where they recorded their final album, 'Marathon' at Chess studios in Chicago, later to be released by Sonet in 1970.) This archival release (which marks the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the band's formation and was compiled with detailed, historical photos and liner notes by Dungen guitarist, Reine Fiske) includes various live recordings of mostly soundboard quality (although the source tapes appear to have been sonically washed for improved presentability – these are definitely not your dodgy, microphone down the pant leg audience recordings), which only scratch the surface of conveying what the band sounded like, but will be of much interest to fans of fellow Swedish psych monsters, Pärson

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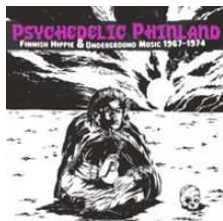
Sound and their myriad offshoots such as International Harvester and Träd, Gras och Stenar. A taste of the band's mind-melting attack is evident the A-side to that single, 'Somebody Keeps Calling My Name,' wherein Håkansson moans the title like some psychotic patient in a mental ward before ripping off a brain-bending solo for a track that's much more focused (but no less psychedelic) than the hippy-dippy assaults of their fellow countrymen. Imagine vintage Cream and Syd Barrett-led Pink Floyd morphing into a primeval Hawkwind sonic brain attack and you're on the right track.

The flip side is up next ('Being Is More Than Life'), presented here (as was the opener) from a live Finnish broadcast on March 24, 1968. It's a meandering, freeform improv, which is essentially an elongated Håkansson guitar solo. Surely, one of the most unusual (and, at nearly six minutes, one of the longest) singles, psych or otherwise to come out of the Scandinavian sixties scene. A two-song, nearly 40-minute(!) live performance from late October, 1967 at the legendary Swedish psychedelic underground club FILIPS (where the Grandmothers were the house band) yields the 17-minute 'Burgakunden' and a nearly 20-minute version of the single's B-side! The former is a rafter-rattling chunk of heavy psychedelia and together they just may be the most impressive examples of vintage Swedish psychedelia you're ever likely to hear. Although it's unknown whether this was one such recording, but the band did share the FILIPS stage for all-night jam sessions with the likes of Hendrix and The Mothers when they rolled through town, and Jimi's influence, particularly on Håkansson's amazing guitar work is immeasurable. Throughout, Håkansson dons the guitar God crown, exploring every nook and cranny of sound he can emit from his guitar, although to label him a "Swedish Jimi Hendrix" would be unfair, as he, perhaps intentionally, lacks or avoids the blues' structures underlying many of Jimi's solos.

Stretched out to sidelong proportion, the single takes on a life of its own and, despite the somewhat dodgy condition of the source tape, whose historical importance far outweighs its lack of pristine quality, is 20 minutes of sheer Hendrixian mayhem which actually precedes Hendrix' guitar-burning performance at Monterey by two months. The fact that this is performed in front of what sounds like an audience of about 5 is not only shameful, it's downright criminal, so mucho kudos to Fiske for rescuing this from oblivion. (And, oh, that video footage of the Grandmothers should someday surface, although, interestingly, Fiske suggests in his liner notes that this segment, which was provided by film-maker Stefan Jarl, was originally intended to form the soundtrack to the first film in Jarl's Mods trilogy, 'Dom Kallar Oss Mods' ('They Call Us Mods'). The slot eventually went to the Lea Riders Group, but we're lucky to finally be able to hear this amazing piece of history.)

The band's September 30, 1967 performance at FILIPS gives us 'St. George's Dragon,' which finds the band in fine improvisational flight, with

Linnarsson's rolling bassline more prominent around Ekman's galloping drum rolls and Håkansson's by-now familiar fire breathing guitar bursts. So if you're in the mood to experience the ultimate in six-string manipulation and total guitar destruction, you owe it to yourself to add this to your collection of vintage psychedelia, Scandinavian or otherwise. (*Jeff Penczak*)



**VARIOUS ARTISTS – PSYCHEDELIC PHINLAND: FINNISH HIPPIE & UNDERGROUND MUSIC 1967-1974**  
(CD on [Siboney/Love](#))

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With all the recent excitement centered around the early Swedish psychedelic underground scene (predominantly directed towards the work of Pärson Sound and their myriad offshoots such as International Harvester and Träd, Gras och Stenar), little has been said or written about the neighboring scene in Finland. Thankfully, Jukka Lindfors (lovingly detailed track annotation) and Love Records' subsidiary, Siboney (which was set up way back in 1989 to reissue Love's 60's and 70's catalog on CD) have rectified this oversight with this amazingly eclectic, 2xCD collection, which runs the gamut from blues, proto-prog, and jazz to avant garde experimental theatrics a la The Mothers and The Fugs and mellow, headswirling folk and Eastern-flavored rock during Finland's psychedelic heyday, which faded in the mid-70's under a barrage of the left-wing political song movement and, ultimately, apolitical rock and punk in the latter half of the decade. The set begins with the ominous, humming drone and pealing bells of Topmost's 'The End' (from their 1968 debut, English-language LP on Westerlund) that deteriorates into studio shenanigans a la The Fugs and Mothers. Next up is the pleasant pop of folkies, Hector & Oscar (aka Heikki Harma and Sakari Lehtinen)'s unintentionally psychedelic, 'Savu' ('Smoke' – Westerlund, 1967), the first mention of marijuana on a Finnish pop record! Although the tale of a young Finn hooked on grass was meant as a cautionary tale, the government banned the record for the mere reference to drugs! It's got a nice, Spanish guitar motif flowing through Bacharach & David-ish pop.

Another ex-folkie, Jukka Kuoppamäki's 'Kukkasen Valta' ('Power of the Flower,' from a 1967 broadcast of the popular Jatkoaika TV talk show) is quite loungey – imagine Elvis tackling flower power! A previously unreleased alternate version of Jorma Ikävalko's 1968 anthem, 'Hippijortsut Pöhkölässä' ('Hippie Ball at Nutsville') is exactly what it sounds like: Spike Jones or Monty Python doing the psychedelic polka! Next, one of Love's biggest acts, Blues Section delivers the delicious 1968 B-side, 'Cherry Cup-cake Twist,' which throws Hasse Walli's wah-wah guitar and British expatriate vocalist, Jim Pembroke's wacky (English) lyrics into a blender with Sinikka Sokka's backing vocals, Otto Donner's mournful piano and Eero Koivistoinen's sax embellishments for a groovy, jazzy blend of The Beatles and The Blues Project. Most of the band also back Koivistoinen on his 'Valtakunta' ('Kingdom' – Otava, 1968) album, from which we get 'Pientä Peliä Urbaanissa Limousinessa' ('Small Games

in an Urban Limousine'), a snarly fuzzfest of garage psych with brainfrying guitar destruction from Walli.

Sadly, by 1968, Blues Section were no more, having left behind just one self titled album. Pembroke and drummer Ronnie Österberg then formed Wigwam, whose funky, bluesy 1969 debut single on Love, 'Must Be The Devil' opens with a riff that eerily predicts Lennon's 'I Found Out' and then heads off in a jazzy direction reminiscent of Donovan's 'Season of the Witch.' It also features some wonderful soloing from guitarist Nikke Nikamo and, yes, this is the same band that evolved into Finland's finest prog band. We've reviewed Baby Grandmothers' archival release above, and here we have the official Eteenpäin! (i.e., Forward!) single version. Here you can enjoy the long, drawn out, sinewy slice of psychedelia in all its original glory, and if your grooving on this for the first time, by all means go out and get the full length. Heavy metal heads of the Zeppelin and Steppenwolf variety may dig Apollo's 'Ajatuksia' ('Thoughts' – PSO, 1970), a throbbing, heavy blues track that is ruined (for me) by the overly theatrical presentation of the anarchistic lyrics about overthrowing parliament and rejecting money and the Church.

Finland's answer to The Mothers and The Fugs (with a liberal dash of The Firesign Theater and San Francisco's Diggers thrown in for good measure) was surely the wild and unwieldy, Suomen Talvisota 1939-40 (The Finnish Winter War 1939-40), an anarchic, anti-establishment collective inspired by Dada and Surrealism who published an underground magazine, staged absurd theater and strange lectures, and even ran a short-lived radio show. They are represented by three tracks of zaniness with titles like 'Kasvoton Kuolema Ja Sirhan Sirhan' ('Faceless Death And Sirhan Sirhan' from their lone LP, 'Underground-Rock,' Love, 1970) and 'Flaggorna Fladdrade I Gentlemannens WC' ('Flags Were Waving in the Gentlemen's Toilet' – Eteenpäin!, 1969). Syncopated, psychotic jazz with psychotic sax bursts throughout mark their work, which will definitely appeal to Zappa and Tuli freaks everywhere. The latter track, for example, is written and sung in Swedish and concerns a group of rocking lavatory anarchists urinating in front of a group of authority symbols, while a band of pot-headed snow guerillas elect a pig for president. Sample lyric: "Smell, smell, smell the toilet wall...Hash, hash, hash in the head!" Zappa & Kupferberg couldn't have said it any better! And for a change of pace, check out their 80-second, boogie woogie jam, 'Tehtaan Vahtimestarit' ('Factory Doormen' – Nuoren Voiman Litto, 1969), an absurd polemic about doormen who poison their bosses and then celebrate with an all night party fueled by pot, LSD and booze – all sung at about a hundred miles an hour in a melody that had me thinking I was listening to the Finnish version of R.E.M.'s 'It's The End Of The World As We Know It'!

Things calm down considerably on the late Pekka Streng's 'Olen Erilainen' ('I'm Different') from his 'Magneettimiehen Kuolema' ('Death of the Magent Man' – Love, 1970) album. It's a mellow, Eastern-influenced

head trip, backed by premiere Finnish progsters, Tasavallan Presidentti, who provide bongos, tabla, and cello swirling throughout. It's one of the set's best tracks and I'll definitely be checking out his full length, which Love reissued in 2003. Juice Leskinen & Coitus Int[erruptus]' 'Zeppellini' ('Zeppelin' – Love, 1973) is an example of the laid back West Coast psychedelia that the Airplane and Country Joe were giving us and despite its late release date, it kept the spirit alive with sample lyrics such as "When you pump the Zeppelin up again, we'll take another trip into psychedelia." And any double entendres you come up with are purely intentional!

Hector (see above) is also represented by a solo track, 'Meiran Laulu' ('Meira's Song') from his 1973 album on PSO, 'Herra Mirandos.' It boasts some groovy, bubbling electronics (à la Emerson, Lake & Palmer) around a mellow, swirling backing as Hector sings (in a voice not unlike Greg Lake) of escorting visitors to the land of Aslan. According to Lindfors' liner notes, it's part of the flowering of C.S. Lewis' Narnian hippie spirit at the dawn of indigenous Finnish rock. I think it will appeal to fans of Donovan's hippie dippy psychedelia. So this is another album (reissued in 2001) that is worth investigating.

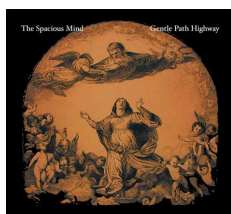
Disk 2 leaves the traditional song structures in the dust and presents much more experimental and avant garde groups, with four of the tracks stretching out to the endurance-defying 10-16-minute mark. But for jaw-dropping weird, nothing could be much stranger than the teenaged quartet, Those Lovely Hula Hands, whose 1968 Eteenpäin! single (a medley of E.R. Burroughs' 'Tarzan Apornas Apa/Tarzan Gregah/Jane Porter Sivistyksen Muurilla' ('Tarzan, The Ape of Apes/Tarzan Gregah/Jane Porter at the Border of Civilization')) recounts several Tarzan tales over recorders, clay whistles and chirping bird calls. The even manage to toss in a few sound effects of grunting gorillas which makes the whole thing sound like a stoned day at the zoo! The short 'Menevät Miehet' ('Go-Getters') finds the precocious little brats zeroing in on a short, simple melody and repeating it on violin and recorder until you can't get it out of your head. On top of all this, the lyrics are apparently a "satire on perspiring go-getters."

Next, one of the disk's most avant garde tracks comes from Pekka Airaksinen, leader of one of Finland's most notorious underground groups, The Sperm. 'Fos 2' consists of the composer using two tape recorders to overdub guitar over prerecorded feedback. It's both confusing and scary as hell, but not something I'll probably listen to more than once. Originally composed for Mattijuhani Koponen's 'Sisyfos,' a psychodrama performed at the one and only Sperm Festival in 1968, wherein a shroud-clad actor tried to climb onto a stool for 30 minutes – unsuccessfully, of course!

Airaksinen's full band is up next with his 16 minute guitar concerto, 'Heinäsiirakat I' ('Locusts I'), which is actually the result of an incorrect bias

setting on his old Akai tape recorder. Again, aside from the most staunchest proponents of the 'OHM: The Gurus of Electronic Music' compilation and other electronic music composers, this piece may have a rather limited audience, although the adventurous may find the repetitive guitar loops soothing and meditative – like listening to a fetus' heartbeat through a stethoscope. And speaking of which, check out the two lengthy, 10-minute 1970 singles from Sikiöt (Fetuses), “an indefinite collection of artists and potheads, many of whom had no musical skills....” Light up, lie back and decide for yourself what to make of the hypnotic tribal repetition created by violin, guitar, flutes and percussion on ‘Trippin’ Together,’ a particularly tasty head treat. Give a bunch of hippie potheads access to nature’s finest and set them loose with instructions to make some noise and this is probably what they’ll sound like. I’m sure Jan Anderzén and his current Finnish avant wyrdfolk experimentalists, Avarus and Kemiälliset Ystävät may have found some of their inspiration from these pieces. Just how they managed to squeeze 10 minutes onto a 7” slab of plastic is another mystery unto itself. Let’s just say that the “cannabis-scented giggles” throughout the recording say more about the band and their aesthetic than anything I could describe!

So while the second disk is geared towards the tastes of fans of Love’s previous compilations of early Finnish electronics and experimental music in the ‘Artic Hysteria’ series (as well as Avarus, The Anaksimandros, Spires That In The Sunset Rise, Sunburned Hand of the Man, No-Neck Blues Band, Jackie-O Motherfucker, et. al.), the first disk is definitely required listening to anyone interested in the Scandinavian psych scene, particularly all you guitar heads, who will drool over the amazing guitar work from folks you’ve probably never heard of and who would have been lost to the ravages of time were it not for this essential release. (*Jeff Penczak*)



## THE SPACIOUS MIND – GENTLE PATH HIGHWAY

(CD on [Goddamn I'm A Countryman](#))

For their tenth album (excluding their five live CD-Rs), our favourite Swedish psychsters have decided to adjourn to their Space Your Face studios to formally lay down tracks which had formed the basis of their recent live gigs. In fact, those of you lucky enough to have caught their breathtaking performance at Terrastock VI in Providence last April may recognize opener, ‘Rider of the Woodlands,’ which was still trading under its original title, ‘E6.’ For those who missed it, a live version (still with that title) is available on the CD-R, ‘Club Rothko 050905,’ which we reviewed earlier [here](#). Opening with a simple, repetitive melody from keyboardist, Jens Unosson, the track slowly bubbles up with drummer, David Johansson’s tick-tocking backbeat and bassist, Henrik Oja’s melodic bassline (think of Adam Clayton’s riff on U2’s ‘Seconds’ from the ‘War’ album) stalking around in the background, creating an ominous, ‘Riders of the Storm’ groove. The twin guitar attack of Thomas Brännström and Niklas Viklund serpentine their way around Oja’s headnodding stomp, as

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(mostly unintelligible) gruff, sandpapery vocals (the lyrics in the CD gatefold are a plus) about one of the Mind's favorite topics, the constant rape and pillage of Mother Earth, foment in the background.

After 12<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> minutes of semi-restrained, sprawling improvisations, the band crank the freak metre up to 12 for a full-on aural assault. It was during this segment at Terrastock VI that I could literally feel my chest start to cave in as the sound waves permeated my skeleton. And the aftershocks are no less impressive here, even when couched in a studio setting. You'll need to take a deep breath to recover your senses before continuing with the title track. However, the band won't give you much time to get your shit together, as they dive right in, seemingly mid-jam, with Johansson rattling off a quick drum intro to clear the muck out of your head and prepare you for some blistering Brännström and Viklund soloing, with a swarming, whooshing affect and full-throttled, dive-bombing guitar runs once again transporting you, transfixed and somewhat slightly dazed, back to 'Space Ritual'-era Hawkwind.

Five minutes on, the sonic brain sandwich evaporates heavenward into the almost angelic chorus of peace, with a calming, meditative passage as soothing and celestial as the cover art suggests, yet as expansive as all Mother universe. 'Honja' opens with eerie, cautious violin scrapings, like Godspeed! You Black Emperor cuing up in the wings. My mind also drifted off into a Floydian, 'Wish You Were Here' mood, with Unosson's vibratoed keyboard tinkling imbuing the track with a delicate, Doors-y vibe. This is the mellow, melancholic part of the trip where The Dead usually go all spacey on us, but The Mind are more rooted in the ground...in the Earth...and you can almost feel your centre of gravity drop to your loins, as that pit in your stomach and lump in your throat simultaneously dissolve. When the Jew's Harp trickles into the arrangement and the band start chanting the title in 'OM'-like meditative fashion, all your trials and trepidations just seem to flow out of your body like blood from an open wound. At Terrastock VI, this segment was met with almost pindrop silence and awe! I don't want to ruin the surprise of the extended code, other than to say you'll never see it coming. I experienced it at live Terrastock and had forgotten where they took the song, so even in the studio they manage to disguise the transition quite well.

Your trip along this gentle path highway ends with 'Civilization Blues,' described by Oja in the accompanying background material as "what you could call a late night studio jam." Keyboards and harmonica waft across the studio on breezes of patchouli, accompanied by shrieking, shards-of-glass string bending. It's that hesitant, introductory portion of the jam where the band members, who've worked seamlessly for so long, have the confidence in each other's glue to pull everything together as individual members – here mostly Brännström, Viklund, and Unosson – throw some ideas out, awaiting the other members' ears to pick up on something, as the myriad strains of disparate sounds gradually morph into a cohesive



whole. Johansson's tribal tom-toms extract wolf-like howls from Brännström and Viklund's guitars, as primordial yelps leap from your speakers and images of Kubrick's 'Dawn of Man' sequence from '2001: A Space Odyssey' float across your mind. It's a challenging piece of work that can either be tossed off as 14 minutes of "nothing happening," or appreciated as the aural equivalent of 'Waiting For Godot,' an existential, musical treatise on *ennui*, the likes of which these ears haven't heard since the vintage Cure of '10:15 Saturday Night.' (*Jeff Penczak*)

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