

bad way) and some solid guest guitar work by Moby Grape's Peter Lewis, hold up much of the ensuing affair. The band (finally!) got to write nearly all their own material (barring a cover of Ray Charles' "I Don't Need No Doctor" which rocks pretty good, Phay's screaming vocals the unheard predecessor Steve Marriott's later, far more successful take with Humble Pie. Still, it plods on for a while, and suffers, like much of this LP, from muddy production). Drummer Gary Andrijasevich really comes into his own as a songwriter, though most of the existing band wrote or co-wrote most of the songs. The group sets about to find out what their next move is. Sometimes, it's Folk-Rock (the lovely, if somewhat off the cuff, "Flowers") or Heavy Rock (the devastating "Devil's Motorcycle," which seems to be an indication of the much heavier style the group reportedly got into for the remainder of their tenure, when they became popular among bikers). You can hear a less focused, more introspective band at work. Still, despite the somewhat "downer" vibe (the very first line is "What would you do if my life was almost through? What would you say if my life had gone away?") of this album (which Aguilar once told me he'd never heard) it remains, as the Midnight Records catalogue once put it, "Burned out, but still great." In a bizarre experiment conducted a few years ago, Aguilar went into the studio and sang his own lead vocal where Don Bennet's had previously been. IT WORKED! Of course, his vocals sound radically different than they did almost 40 years ago, but his still pissed-off macho swagger makes plenty of sense in the trappings of the original recordings. While I've dreamed of the day that a take of "Let's Talk About Girls" with Dave singing would turn up I quickly learned I'd have to settle for this (I'll settle! I'll settle!), I'd heard the new version of "Girls" a while back, but this mix is a vast improvement. It sounds more like he's actually there. There are also covers of The Standells' "Medication," with a new Aguilar vocal, and The Kinks' "'Til The End of The Day," which is Dave singing over what was originally an instrumental track, once again, snatching victory from the jaws of defeat. Now, we get into sheer weirdness. The instrumentals released, fraudulently, under the CWB banner, by and large, have proven to be favorites with fans of the real group. Some have even spawned cover versions, like "Expo 2000" (Nervebreakers, Chesterfield Kings) and "Dark Side of The Mushroom" (13 Frightened Girls). However, the more sitar and sax laden "Voyage of The Trieste," which, along with the title track and an excellent remake of We The People's "In The Past," make up side one of the second CWB album, "The Inner Mystique," will probably never be covered, unless the hipster Psychedelic Jazz crowd picks up on it. These tracks, actually recorded by an L.A. group called The Yo-Yoz (Even their name sounds 21st century!) are, like the other misleading titles, treated with respect, as they should be. You will want to go run and buy some incense, though. An earlier version of "Voyage Of The Trieste" (As "The Uncharted Sea") also appears here, as do two takes of a very credible (though hopelessly out of date) version of "Let's Go, Let's Go, Let's Go" by Hank Ballard and The Midnighters, recorded by The Inmates (not the British Pub Rock faves) the erstwhile Don Bennett appearing on the released version, sounding more comfortable than usual, barring "Let's Talk About Girls." Ed Cobb can be heard telling The Inmates, "Don't talk, GROOVE!" Throw in some great photos, the usual informative liners by Alec Palao (*Ugly Things* contributor, ex-Stringrays, and currently with the reformed Watchband), two (Previously released) rarities, "Psychedelic Trip" (an early instrumental variation on "No Way Out," and I swear that the film, "The Love-Ins" contains different versions of it and "Are You Gonna Be There (At The Love-In)?," and you have the whole picture, so far, I'd like to say.

**James Christian** "Meet the Man" (Locomotive) Christian, from House of Lords, is making rock that Kenny G. would like.

**Clear Static** (Maverick) If this hits then people are stupid.

**Coffin Lids** "Round Midnight" (Bomp) Tonight I'm gonna die in their garage - - and I'm gonna like it! Party music for a swinging funeral!

**Comet Gain** "City Fallen Leaves" (KRS) They sound like they are making pompous arty music (or maybe I'm reading too much into his English accent) yet somehow all these songs are pretty down to earth and moving. Balancing short poppy structures (even on the slow jams) with lyrics and singing that has a yearning earnestness, this Comet gains a new fan in I.

**The Committee** DVD (Eclectic/MVD) I never heard of this 1968 movie, and that's my fault, I suppose. But then again, one question asked earnestly (and answered convincingly) in the "making of..." extra feature is, "How do we know this isn't a hoax, how do we know this movie actually existed?" That question was a lot more valid before this DVD release, but even after seeing this movie it is hard to believe it was made. A remarkable 60s period piece, *The Committee* tells the story of a young man (Paul Jones, Manfred Mann's dashing singer) who commits a beautifully brutal (and surreal) murder, and then must face the philosophical consequences when he serves on a "committee" meeting on a retreat that invokes *The Prisoner*. Though beautifully, enchantingly and jarringly visual (the director went from this art film to making *The Avengers*), the movie is mostly about talking. People who talk and talk about sublimely intelligent and interesting things like Bergman characters are of value (though not above judgment) and people who blather about pop culture and nothingness like Tarantino characters are somewhat deserving of decapitation (or are they?). The reason you, I, and all the music lovers should have known about this is that in addition to Jones, the film also features The Crazy World of Arthur Brown and the in-Syd-transition Pink Floyd. Brown appears performing at a party (not "Fire" as the video box states, but "Nightmare," a better song in this context) and it is amazing. I was a little disappointed to learn that his famed fire helmet, that had flames coming out of his cranium, wasn't self-fueled - after he comes on stage alit it quickly extinguishes. But then he takes off the hat (leaving on an MF Doom metal mask) and starts go-go dancing during his song! Psyche-pop go-go dancing!?! I have a number of Brown's records and consider myself a fan, but I never knew he had this kind of magnetic charisma and stage presence. His number alone is worth the price of the DVD. But the Floyd's presence is likely a bigger selling point. The band recorded original, somewhat improvised instrumental music to accompany the film, and considering they had just lost their muse in Barrett, it is remarkably evocative and powerful. Though the film was such an unusual project they seemed to fully grasp how to enhance the many non-verbal sequences (the photographer on the film had a field day). Despite opening with a jarring act of violence (you really have to see it, and its aftermath), it is subsequently an action-free film. Yet the music, dialogue and visuals never allow you to be bored. The "Making Of" documentary (really just two interviews with the writer and director interspersed with footage from the film) is interesting, as one of the creative forces on the film was, and is, a renowned scholar who took only this single, satisfying foray into film. But the heads talking may not satisfy rock fans, as the musical aspects of the film are barely addressed, and dubiously so. Though the accounts of the Floyd's recording sessions seem accurate (if incomplete), the report that the Brown performance was a real concert seem wrong, he's clearly lip-synching (though maybe it is overdubbed atop a live performance, but I doubt it). The bonus CD included has Paul Jones singing a very explanatory movie summary song (it reminds me of Bill Murray crooning "Star Wars, nothing but Star Wars..."). Of course, if the CD contained the original, never released Pink Floyd master recordings they would sell thousands of more copies of this, but maybe those tapes don't exist anymore. Of course, a legit DVD of this film didn't exist til now, so anything can happen. Essential viewing.

**Ralph Covert** "Good Examples of Bad Examples" (Waterdog 329 W. 18<sup>th</sup> St. #313 Chicago, IL 60616) This is pretty funny. Covert had a solid career with a cult following in the 80s and 90s as a power pop rocker then became a really big star with the kids by making children's music, so now he's re-recorded his best grown-up hits in squeaky clean versions so grown-ups can play them around their kids. He's helping adults play something they find less annoying in the car - no insult to Ralph intended, if you've ever heard a kiddie album 280 times in a row you know what I mean -- even the Chipmunks can be grating after the third straight hour on a road trip!). The nuttiest thing is that I like this record better than the original versions and better than his Ralph's World kiddie CDs. The moral: keep it clean, rockers!

**Covington** "devised without a plan" (Phraty POB 14267 Cincinnati, OH 45250)  *Loving-it-a-ton!*

**The Deacons** "Brooklyn Towne" (Made In Brooklyn, 1005 Foster Ave Brooklyn NY 11230) Brooklyn street punk that is a few Oi's and soccer chants away from turning the BK

into the UK. Usually punks reject the hippies, so a highlight here is a raw punk cover of "Ohio."

**Dead Drive Fast** "Solstice of the Soul" ep. "Dead Drive Fast" (deadrivefast.com) This St. Louis band plays the kind of radio-friendly, integrity-laden Midwestern rock that is too earnest to ever be hip, but too real to ever disappear. The mature, straight-ahead rock music stands out for its interesting lyrics, like a spaceman song on the new ep, or the story of an angry kid growing up angrier on the full-length. If this was the band playing at your bar you would be a better man for their rocking.

**Dean Dirg** "26 Kicks to Make the Whole World Pay" (Dead Beat POB 283 LA, CA 90078) 26 songs, 26 minutes, about a million silly, angry, awesome punk rants. One song was about cholesterol! One lyric was "\$4.95 - I won't pay! \$3.95 - I won't pay! \$2.95 - I won't pay! \$1.95 - I won't pay! I won't pay! I won't pay!" That's fucking poetry!

**Deerhunter** "turn it up faggot!" (Stickfigure) Frazzled, ugly dance music that doesn't sound like dance music with rock/punk layered on, or just thought about, but rather sounds like genuinely fucked music with a groove. Note: I don't think it actually says "turn it up faggot" anywhere on the cover art, but the record label claims that's the title in the press material, so if they want to alienate the dick-devouring dissonant dance demographic, that's their decision.

**Dr. Israel** "Patterns of War" (ROIR) Israel, whose great "Inna City Pressure" was just reissued, is an American reggae artist with a worldview (both musical and political) that goes beyond Jamaica. This rock and dance music drenched dub album features two female vocalists supporting the good Dr., including a Hebrew-singing diva named Chemda from Israel who's on Dr. Israel's musical treatise on Israel. Two other songs about war and peace, "One" and the spare, old school-rap-inspired "Patterns of War" are the outstanding tracks here.

**The Drones** "Miller's Daughter" (Bang) Intense, ominous songs that sound powerfully creepy, and also powerful enough to make its creepy ideas reality. This Aussie band plays twangy, echo-drenched, every-day-is-Halloween music with slurred lyrics and powerful guitar sounds. The 10-minute closing track sounds like Jandek composing for Cream!

**Paul Duncan** "Be Careful What You Call Home" (Hometapes) Meticulously crafted music that would be perhaps too precious and pretty, if not balanced deftly with spare lyrics that are poetic and engaging. Not for AC/DC fans.

**Early Empire** "resolutions and a gun" (myspace.com/earlyempire) Drawing from the ultra-rehearsed, dynamic tension of emo, but discarding the whiny singing, this is dramatic, impressive, and ass kicking.

**Echo and the Bunnymen** "Siberia" (Cooking Vinyl) Ian McCulloch moody voice is flawless here, but like this album, that perfection seems to mark a tame maturity that is a bit removed from the creepiness of early Bunnyrock. But the songs here are all solid, and since I suppose most of the band's fans probably have kids now, it's nice to have something you can play in the car without creeping out junior. The guitar sounds great here (Bunnyman Will Sergeant is still onboard), but my only complaint is that the rhythm section, made up of new, young bunnies, seems to be playing really mannered 80s impersonation music. But I guess that's the echo part.

**echo is your love** "paper cut eye" (stickfigure) Finnish Freakout music that sounds like Bizarro World bubblegum Psychedlia. Completely futuristic, yet touching upon every record you ever liked, this chaotic musical car crash is by default the greatest record ever made in the genre for which this is the only example.

**Mark Eitzel** "Candy Ass" (Cooking Vinyl) Contains the most moving tribute to a suicidal pet rat I've heard in years. If Brian Wilson ever were as miserable as that rat he might have made an album that sounds like this.

**Electrical Eel Shock** "Beat Me" (Gearhead POB 421219 SF, CA 94142) What can we learn from this thundering, ragged Japanese stoner rock album? First of all, when