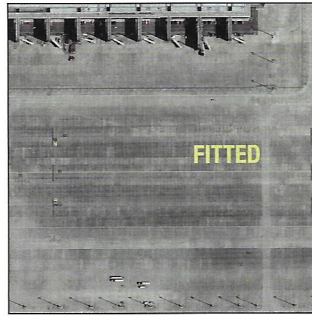




**ELECTRIC CAKE SALAD**  
LIVE! TERREMOTOUR  
(Flicknife)

*Inspirational psych-rock.*  
**8/10**

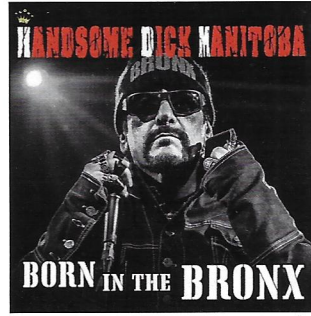
For a three-piece, contemporary acid-rockers Electric Cake Salad certainly pack a punch. It's very much in evidence on their fifth album, 'Live! Terremotour'. Recorded at Tannerfest, Northamptonshire in July of last year, the fourteen cuts succinctly capture the Electric Cake Salad zeitgeist. Encompassing clear influences from the likes of Hawkwind, they also bring to mind Nirvana, The Stooges, and even Depeche Mode – on 'Over The Wall'. Their aural wall-of-sound assault is at times reminiscent of Killing Joke's more commercial and lighter moments. Their versatility and musical adventurousness is a real bonus – a track like 'Tina' coming across like a mutant hybrid of dub and stoner rock, while following track 'Everything' demonstrates their inventiveness, grafting electronic dance elements within their sound. Live albums can often be very much a case of 'you should have been there' but throughout, 'Live!...' is uniformly exceptional.  
Sean McGhee



**FITTED**  
FIRST FITS  
(ORG Music)

*Legendary post-punk names fit neatly together.*  
**9/10**

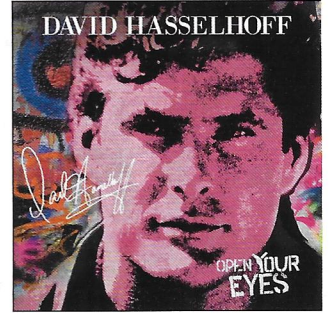
Fitted is a collaboration between Graham Lewis and Matthew Simms (Wire), Mike Watt (Minutemen, Stooges, FIREHOSE) and Bob Lee (Fearless Leader, The Frecks). This debut six track album is a clear demonstration of the depth of experience and talent of its individual members. Lewis and Watt trade lead vocal duties over a taught, melodic backing clearly reminiscent of their other bands, but with an identity all of its own. Second track 'The Legend of Lydmar Lucia' features a spoken word poem from Lewis, reflecting on an art event 25 years ago in Stockholm, over a moody, dub-heavy, textured backing, while 'The Chunk That Got Chewed' and 'Magically Blessed' demonstrate Watt's love of interwoven melodies and repetition to great effect. Supergroups don't often work in practice, but the individuals here have managed to create something even greater than the sum of its parts.  
Russ Bestley



**HANDSOME DICK MANITOBA**  
BORN IN THE BRONX  
(Liberation Hall)

*Dictators frontman delivers his first solo album.*  
**7/10**

NYC proto-punks The Dictators have had something of a chequered career lasting the best part of four decades. Now with the band having seemingly breathed their last, charismatic frontman Handsome Dick is back with, surprisingly, his debut solo release. With a CV that includes stints as a wrestler, bar owner and radio DJ, we can be sure that nothing he turns his hand to will be ordinary and this is no exception. Recorded in Nashville, it features an all-star cast including members of Santana, Free and hippie songwriter PF Sloan, who guests on his own 'Eve Of Destruction'. Those expecting the sound of his old band may be disappointed, but 'Born In The Bronx' is as fine a late-period offering as can be hoped for, taking its lead from classic 60s pop. Similar releases from the likes of Dion and Del Shannon have been highly lauded. This deserves no less.  
Gerry Ranson



**DAVID HASSELHOFF**  
OPEN YOUR EYES  
(Cleopatra)

*'Baywatch' legend covers rock 'n' roll.*  
**7/10**

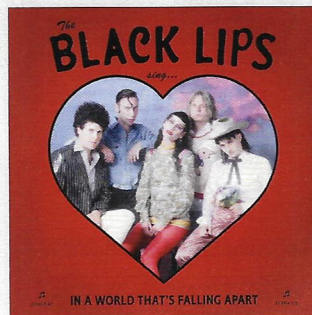
Marking the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, The Hoff releases 'Open Your Eyes', his latest album of covers. Artists appearing include Todd Rundgren, The Cars' Elliot Easton, A Flock Of Seagulls, industrial pioneers Ministry and even country legend Charlie Daniels. The Hoff's music career took off in the late '80s when his album Looking for Freedom which went triple platinum in countries across Europe. The album brings an overall mainstream rock sound with a killer tight band and Hoff singing avidly with deep, strong melodies. A cover of Neil Diamond's 'Sweet Caroline' is included mixed by Al Jourgensen of Ministry. The Hoff also teams up with The Stooges' James Williamson on the title track, written by The Lords Of The New Church. You have to admire such a hardworking pop-icon at age 67, currently starring in Dolly Parton's '9 To 5' in London's West End!  
Tom Chance

**BLACK LIPS**  
SING IN A WORLD THAT'S FALLING APART  
(Fire)

*Rasp infused punk eclecticism.*  
**6/10**

Atlanta's Black Lips reinforce their punk-eclectic reputation with their ninth studio release, the country bastard and western twang of 'Sing In A World That's Falling Apart'. The crimson lipstick smeared slurred opening of 'Hooker Jon' rides into town on a sleazy yet inventive lyrical horse. Armed with dead flowers under one arm and a cow-punk pistol under the other the Black Lips are here to "dance" with quips such as "everyone thinks they know what turns me on, she thinks that I'm a hooker he thinks that I'm a Jon." Second cut 'Chainsaw' has a more traditional cattle herding spine of steel guitars, mournful words and a laconic tambourine tapping chorus. The glass clinking back bar anthem of the infectious "ride, ride Rumbler ride leave them good 'ole' boys behind" chorus partners the quickly spoken and quick-witted 'Rumbler' and it leaves a smokey timber taste in the listener's dry mouth while 'Holding Me, Holding You' is diner jukebox perfection.

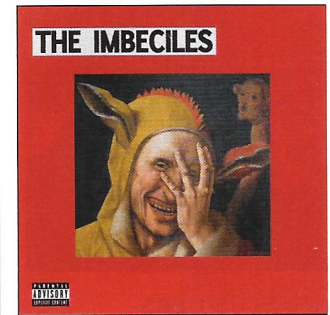
The bird-flipping 'Gentlemen' purrs with a cocaine 'n' beer anti celebration of broken teeth, hearts and drunken promises. A rasp infused 'Get It On Time' jabs with a gently disarming beat before the Bowie meets Faster Pussycat brass rocker of 'Angola Rodeo' evades the clichés and kicks some serious hide. An uncomfortable 'Georgia' is paired by the Little House on the Prairie party of 'Odelia'. A final trio of 'Dishonest Man', 'Locust' and the bourbon-soaked 'Live Fast Die Slow' stick a smiley face tablet on the tongues of both country and western.  
Guy Shankland



**SOFIA HARDIG**  
THIS BIG HUSH  
(Comedia)

*Dark, atmospheric alt rock with a goth edge.*  
**7/10**

Album number seven sees the Swedish born multi-instrumentalist continue along the darkened path of alternative rock. With an overtly cinematic quality each of the tracks paints its own complex diorama with Sofia narrating the scenes which fluctuate from sparse desolate desert roads to the insanely claustrophobic streets of huge cities. Musically 'The Big Hush' is extremely multifaceted and pulls together hints of Siouxsie and the Banshees, dark Americana and occasionally the fuzzed-up alt noise of Sonic Youth's alter-ego Ciccone Youth whilst bathing in the gothic melodrama of Chelsea Wolfe to create an interestingly diverse album which is easy to become lost in with tracks like 'Camera Queen' demonstrating perfectly the multitude of influences and styles Sofia remoulds in her own distorted yet magnificent image.  
Lee Powell



**THE IMBECILES**  
THE IMBECILES  
(Delta)

*Warped New York post punk.*  
**8/10**

This 15 track album comes from the nine members of New York City group The Imbeciles. It's a garage rock psych out with short snappy tracks that delve into grunge ('Blind') and '80s punk ('Stalking Boy') but mostly ride in the post punk lane. D.I.E is about man's destruction of the environment, accompanied by a Spade Oddity inspired video. Fans of Gang of Four, Wire and The Birthday Party will appreciate the anglar post punk experimentalism of opening tune 'Panic'. Warped feedback of an electric guitar starts up the track which develops into a two-minute jam before fading out. The steady drums are produced like an old hip hop record and the drummer toys with time signatures alongside the basslines, giving it a striking math rock feel. A strong debut album.  
Tom Chance