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Hot Wax, Grant Hart

February 5, 2010 | by Skope Staff



"All limits are self imposed." Icarus*

After Hüsker Dü split, Grant Hart moved from drums to singing and playing guitar. He's been of working on his sixth release Hot Wax for the past few years.

Featuring appearances from members of Godspeed You Black Emperor, Silver Mt. Zion and Rank Strangers, Hot Wax has some catchy toe-tapping tunes, that all seem to have a British influence to their rockabilly hooks with comedic lyrics.

The songs all have a "feel" to them: from "School Busses are for Children" with it's Elvis Costello "Shipbuilding" influence, "You're a Reflection of the Moon on the Water" with it's Patti Smith style mixed with the organ from The Doors to "I Knew All About You Since Then" with it's Parisian impression.

The songs are multi-layered, and lyrically draw major influence from Greek mythology. When listening to this album again (I'm sure you will) still find lyrics like : "Barbara always avoids unpleasant situations/ She rides next to me between the streetcar stations/ Her knees are big and bony she takes up all

the cushions.” and “ I have to drive just to drink alone/ Charles Hollis Jones/ Men in Plexiglass Houses / Best be advised not to throw stones)” as funny as the first time they hear them.

People expecting another Hüsker Dü album might be sorely disappointed, but you can hear it’s influence of Hart. Grant Hart has struck gold.

Some stand out tracks include:

- “Narcissus, Narcissus”The most hummable tune on this album. You will catch yourself humming this tune for days to come. I wonder what Ovid (or even Aesop) would think of it.
- ”California Zepher” A mans love affair with San Francisco and his preferred mode of transport. It’s ironically upbeat.
- ”Sailor Jack” A great Brit Pop song. Done in the traditional English style of the musical character sketch (e.g. “Tracy Jacks” by Blur and “Grocer Jack (Excerpt from A Teenage Opera)” by Keith West (Don’t ask me why they all have to be about Jacks, must be easy to rhyme Jack)) that could easily be found in heavy rotation on your Ipod.

Review By: Shawn Alexander Roy

*In Greek Mythology Icarus, while escaping from Crete, took some wax and feather wings made by his father Daedalus, and flew too close to the sun melting the wax the wings from and then he plumaged into the Aegean Sea.

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