

EDITORIAL FLUFF

The last Import/Indie page of the year is at hand, and I'm distraught by the number of good records left unmentioned. It seems like we never quite catch up, but space is limited, so if you sent something and it didn't get any attention, maybe we didn't have room. Then again—maybe it s**ked. You might notice that a couple of the releases on this page have been out for a few months. These are records that took awhile—that slowly grew on their respective reviewers, and we humbly submit them (albeit lately) for your consideration. Maybe, like us, you missed them the first time around. Then again, maybe we s**k. I really hate year-end Top Ten lists, so I'll just mention a few of the things that made me really happy in 1991: **Unrest** - "Yes She Is My Skinhead Girl" 7" (single of the year!), **WEEN**, **Nirvana**, **Barbara Manning** - *One Perfect Green Blanket*, **Yo La Tengo** - *That Is Yo La Tengo*, **Smashing Pumpkins**, **Toiling Midgets** - "Golden Frog" 7", **American Music Club**, **Pavement**, **Sleepyhead**, **Love Child**, **Uncle Tupelo** - "Still Be Around" from the disc *Still Feel Gone*, **John S. Hall And Kramer** - "The Birds," **Texas Instruments** - "Crammed Into Infinity" (the song more so than the album), **Matthew Sweet** - "Girlfriend" (ditto), **Pouch** - "Mr. Rabbit," **Scrawl**, **Fugazi**, the **Soul Asylum** demos, the **3-Ds** and **Drunken Boat**, **Beat Happening**, the **Finger and Metal Flake Mothers** singles, **Les Thugs**, **The Picketts** - "Should I Stay Or Should I Go," **X-Tal** (recent shows indicate that their next record should be godlike), the lyrics to **Thin White Rope's** "Dinosaur," **Buffalo Tom**, and local unsigned acts **Little My**, **The Billy Nayer Show** and **Starpimp**. And, **Ice-T** and **Chuck D.** were downright inspirational at their press conference (and not at all inspiring at the Artist Encounter) at CMJ. I'm sure there's more, but most of it's white, most of it's American, and quite probably it's pop. No diversity. No apologies. Happy Holidays. SEANA BARUTH



SUPERCHUNK - NO POCKY FOR KITTY (Matador Records, 611 Broadway, Suite 712, New York, NY 10012, (212) 995-5882)

Peering out from under youthful guitar verve, endlessly cascading cymbal crash and feedback is a sound not unlike Dinosaur Jr. high on No-Doz. Although considerably more alert than the aforementioned group, Superchunk is nonetheless nearly lost inside a storm of instrumentation. Meanwhile,

import indie

Edited by Seana Baruth

harmonies on songs such as "Sprung a Leak" mesh spontaneously, reinforcing the unrehearsed-yet-intense sound the band wears like a pair of worn-through-in-the-butt jeans. On their latest album, *No Pocky for Kitty*, Superchunk ends up with a sound as completely realized as a pop band can manage on an indie-level production budget. Exploiting their fullness of sound, the band nearly sinks into a kind of Nikki Sudden bog on the song "Seed Toss," only to find their way back into a conclusion that disposes of all ambiguity and speaks from a position of power. The good-time, sing-along feeling generated by the first track, "Skip Steps 1&3," shows that despite occasionally jarring guitar tricks, the upbeat would prevail even if the lyrics—could we discern them without spraining something—proved to be as life-affirming as a poisoned well. KIRSTEN VORIS

MY DAD IS DEAD - CHOPPING DOWN THE FAMILY TREE (Scat Records, P.O. Box 141161, Cleveland, OH 44114, (216) 341-4843)

Some things are worth waiting for. While the rest of the world was holding out for the new U2 or the new MJ, I was pining for the new My Pops Is Dead, and it doesn't disappoint. "Deliver Me Home" cuts straight to the chase with desperate guitars and a puncturing bass drum. The elephantine cry of Mark Edwards' guitar kicks off "Journey," and the chorus vocals swim and glitter. Beginning with "Come To Me" the guitar becomes docile and it's hard to recall its earlier fury. "Come To Me's" background organ chords and "Without A Doubt's" backing vocals are details that add a lot to these songs. While Edwards' introspective lyrics can get preachy at times, there are silver linings of a carefree "it doesn't matter what happens next" attitude that shine through. The music maintains this freshness throughout and renders *Chopping Down The Family Tree* not a chore, but a pleasure. DAVID BERAN

SOMA HOLIDAY - (Tapestry Records, 2269 Chestnut St., #143, San Francisco, CA 94123, (415) 771-5290)

The Gammas and Epsilons of Aldous Huxley's Brave New World ingest the drug soma recreationally and embark on soma holidays, raising an impenetrable wall between their minds and reality. Soma Holiday's sound explores this in-between terrain—the shadows, doors and twilights that fall between things. "Hegemony" embosses a chanting

guitar onto prodding drums and reveals Michelle McTamane's brimming vocal spectrum. The most fetching of these dozen tracks is "Mary" in which endearingly melodic guitar combines with the hypnotizing bass to spirit us into another realm. Ethereal vocals disclose that "Mary's not breathing anymore" and complement the instruments perfectly. Straightforward simplicity and jubilant keyboards make an appearance on the churning instrumental "NRF," and the guitar's simple progression in "Looking Away's" refrain leaves a memorable impression. Treat yourself to a soma holiday, for hearing this has the effect of disarming reality and exalting what really counts in life—the mystery. DAVID BERAN

EAST ASH - ELLIE (C'est La Mort, P.O. Box 91, Baker, LA 70714, (504) 774-8286)

From demented minds come demented sounds. Witness the odd collaborative effort known as East Ash. On their second release, this four piece takes on subject matter that is, at times, downright frightening. Here's a cheery bit from "Push!": "My mother's only daughter/Fishin' for her bleeding baby in the water/I think I'd better go now/'Coz I'm the one who shot her." The eerie "Break Your Back" is the standout track on this release. With slow and building fury, it creates an atmosphere not unlike the notoriously offcenter The Mission. By glancing through the lyrics, it is evident that singer and songwriter Jeff Rogers likes the dark side of things, and the odd "Green Chevy" and the chilling "North Pole Butterfly" only add to the mad nature of this out-of-control *Ellie*. Though twisted, this East Ash effort is well worth a moment of your otherwise well-balanced, politically correct time. BRETT DURAND ATWOOD

IMPORT INDIE

SUPERCHUNK - No Pocky For Kitty
(Matador)

LORDS OF ACID - Lust (Caroline)

REVEREND HORTON HEAT -
Smoke 'em If You Got 'em (Sub Pop)

DEAD CAN DANCE -
A Passage In Time (RycoDisc)

PEGBOY -
Strong Reaction (Tough & Go)

TAR - Jackson (Amphetamine Reptile)

SCRAWL - Bloodsucker
(Feel Good All Over)