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P.J. O'ROURKE: ON THE ROAD IN VIETNAM

SOUNDGARDEN: ROCK'S HEAVY ALTERNATIVE

INSIDE BATMAN

THE ROLLING STONE INTERVIEW WITH

DIRECTOR TIM BURTON BY DAVID BRESKIN

BEN & JERRY: THE CARING CAPITALISTS

PAULY SHORE: TOTALLY HIP COMEDY

GEARHEADS: THE BIRTH OF MOUNTAIN BIKING

RINGO STARR, SOCIAL DISTORTION,

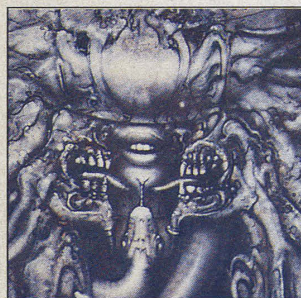
HAMMER & LINDSEY BUCKINGHAM



known for its eco-political agenda, but *Scream in Blue* — culled from live performances dating back as far as 1982 — is the first Oils album devoted to the band's sheer, stampeding force.

Eschewing greatest hits ("Beds Are Burning" excepted) for enduring showtime fireballs like "Sometimes," from *Diesel and Dust*, and the prophetic "Powerworks," from their 1978 debut album, the Oils damn the popcraft and turn up the rage. Vocalist Peter Garrett, a daunting presence even in sensitive-ballad gear, has to fight hard to ride the tide of the band's *Live at Leeds-ish* attack, in particular the vigorous dogfighting guitars of Jim Moginie and Martin Rotsey. He barely gets a breath in edgewise amid the torrent of flinty power chords, Rob Hirst's mule-kick drumming and the brassy choral hurrahs in "Read About It." "Only the Strong," recorded at a 1982 show in Sydney during the band's first flush of superstardom in Australia, is an archetypal Oils stage raver, spiked with stop-start rhythms and spooky a cappella harmony breaks, while Moginie's and Rotsey's guitars echo Garrett's vocal psychodrama with their own saw-toothed howls of indignation.

The orange-flame incandescence of these performances will be nothing new to anyone who's been torched firsthand at an Oils gig. Recent converts swung over by the more refined agitation on *Diesel and Dust* and *Blue Sky Mining* may be taken aback by the clatter of the damn-near-atonal opening title track and the desperate hammering of "Progress" (recorded at the infamous 1990 lunchtime protest show at the foot of Exxon's Manhattan HQ), but they'll get over it. The noise is contagious, and the sense of purpose coursing through it has its own locomotive tug. The album actually ends with an unlisted, acoustic studio reprise of "Burnie," from the 1981 LP *Place Without a Postcard*, but don't be fooled by the throaty introspection in Garrett's singing. The theme, as always, is No Surrender; the only difference is in the volume. — DAVID FRICKE



★★★★

DANZIG III: HOW THE GODS KILL
Danzig
Def American

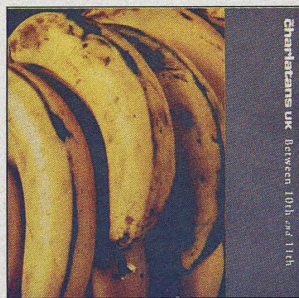
GLENN DANZIG WAS ALREADY RAGING at the heavens when he fronted his punk-era band the Misfits. Except for the Sex Pistols, no other punk band vented its

sociopathic spleen so explicitly. Danzig sang the chorus of the Misfits favorite "Astro Zombies" like he meant every word: "I'd do anythin' to exterminate/The whole fuckin' human race!" But he borrowed his imagery from grade-Z movies and old EC horror comics, which served as a distancing device. When he sang "Astro Zombies," he was assuming the persona of a creature in a film by cult director Ted V. Mikels. His next band, Samhain, celebrated the mysteries of the pre-Christian earth religions and went way over the nogginns of the headbangers. Now Danzig rages full on.

But amid the rage lurk sadness and regret. Danzig may have given up on the church long ago, but the way he tells it in "Godless," the stunning opening track of *How the Gods Kill*, that wasn't a casual choice. "I can't believe in all your pain/Under the draining of a Christian deities blood," he sings. "You tell your children they're insane... I had to listen to my heart... and so you leave me goddess."

For years now, Glenn Danzig's preeminence as a singer has been one of rock's best-kept secrets. The passion, vocal musicianship and drama of his singing on the title song elevate this mix of metal, brooding balladry and unforgettable imagery to sublime status. After starting out sounding like a straight-ahead metal band with affinities for both blues and thrash, Danzig the group has evolved, in the course of three albums, into a resourceful, tightly meshed unit, still rough and raw (no "power ballads" or sweet vocal harmonies, thank you) but with range and assurance.

Danzig embodies the best in contemporary hard rock while displaying an originality that transcends genres. The group's music may explore dark corners of the human soul, but it does not glamorize the darkness; Glenn Danzig is a realist, not a nihilist. His fundamental themes are spiritual death and rebirth, the liberation of the individual, the search for beauty and truth in the shadows of a cynical world. Rock is alarmingly short of visionaries these days; Danzig is the genuine article. — ROBERT PALMER



★★★

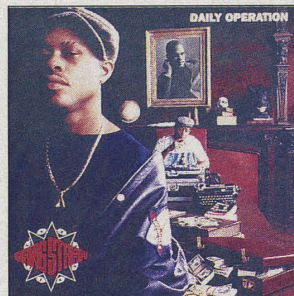
BETWEEN 10TH AND 11TH
The Charlatans UK
Beggars Banquet/RCA

THE CHARLATANS UK HAVE NOTHING to say, and they're saying it — via a sound packed with psychedelic intricacies

and subliminal pop hooks. Anyone looking for a narrative or point of view will be baffled by the lyrics. Like most bands from the Manchester scene, the Charlatans view the singer's voice as merely another instrument in the mix; the lyrics exist mainly to give the singer something to do.

Between 10th and 11th, the Charlatans' sophomore effort, expands on the promise of their 1990 debut, *Some Friendly*. While *Some Friendly* contained hooks that immediately demanded your attention (generously supplied by Rob Collins's trademark Deep Purple Hammond organ and now-departed John Baker's echoey wah-wah guitar), *Between 10th and 11th* works on a subtler level. The mix is more densely layered. Baker's replacement, Mark Collins (no relation to Rob), plays along similar lines, emphasizing chiming guitar strokes (often buried in the background) and a well-placed sense of drone, as Rob Collins's organ becomes less central, more a part of the overall effect.

Repeated listens are required to discern the music's charm. Once you're properly acclimated, however, the fun begins. Taken together, the Creedence-style, tremoloed guitar of "Can't Even Be Bothered," singer Tim Burgess's repetition of the phrase "Leave me alone/I can't take forever I know" ("Ignition") and the intoxicating hum of guitar and organ throughout "I Don't Want to See the Sights" deliver a musically powerful if verbally inconsequential punch. But the Charlatans prove that talkin' loud and sayin' nothin' can be a statement unto itself. — ROB O'CONNOR



★★★★ 1/2

DAILY OPERATION
Gang Starr
Chrysalis

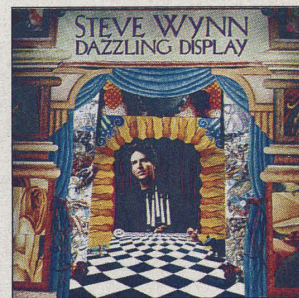
GANG STARR'S 1990 EFFORT 'STEP IN the Arena' is a masterpiece — jazz and hip-hop soldered together so cleanly that the line is invisible. Gang Starr's new album is, by comparison, a smaller effort, less swift and slightly tinged with nihilism. But *Daily Operation* is hypnotic and pensive — throbbing in a spare, intimate way.

Daily Operation is, in fact, a remarkably good sequel. Like *Arena*, it could easily be mistaken for a boastfest ("The Place Where We Dwell," "I'm the Man"), but DJ Premier and the rapper the Guru continually "Flip the Script" and segue into songs that careen and question, that

calmly lambaste everything from the Persian Gulf War to the idea that the government created AIDS. All the lyrics are spoken in the same tone, an effect that leaves you wondering where the bullshit stops and the acid irony begins.

The music is muted — oblique in the way that understatement usually is. The violins on "Soliloquy of Chaos" are elegantly frantic as they frame the Guru's autopsy of a party aborted by a shooting. On the one song in which women are the point, "Ex Girl to Next Girl," the Guru is more hopeless than he was on *Arena*'s "Love Sick." While the song could easily be heard as a chauvinistic tirade about the interchangeability of women, a closer listen reveals a look at the discouraging game of searching for love and the easiness of getting caught up in the *idea* of a person, rather than the person herself. That hopelessness carries over into "No Shame in My Game" as well: "But what the hell's success/If the mess ain't changing... Stick up kids still stickin'/Nasty hookers still trickin'/All the pimps still pimpin'/All the crackheads trippin'/While the dealers still sellin'/So I'll refrain from the yellin' and the preachin'/Cuz who the fuck would I reach?"

The boasting on *Daily Operation* serves as a comic relief from this comment on the futility afflicting urban America. And to its credit, the compelling *Daily Operation* rises above most of the assembly-line, new-school hip-hop being churned out by most artists and labels — big or small — these days. — DANYEL SMITH



★★★★ 1/2

DAZZLING DISPLAY
Steve Wynn
RNA/Rbino

STEVE WYNN ROSE TO PROMINENCE as part of L.A.'s Dream Syndicate, a band that started out as a sort of alternate-universe Velvet Underground, then purveyed skewed heartland rock and finally evolved into a hard-edge guitar-pop group. Since the Syndicate's demise, Wynn has continued his stylistic somersaults. On *Dazzling Display*, his second solo effort, he sounds exhilaratingly close to having found his true voice.

Drawing on the talents of a number of guest stars — most notably R.E.M. guitarist Peter Buck and Concrete Blonde frontperson Johnette Napolitano — Wynn has crafted a shimmering pop album of