

CD Reviews



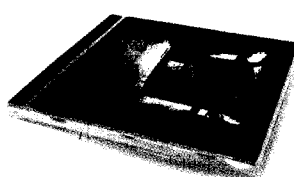
Ako
The Last Goodbye
EP

● As disquieting as it is to hear of anybody being 'beaten up and left for dead' - the unfortunate fate that befell Ako guitarist Tom Gunningham earlier this year - one struggles to justify its place on a press release advertising his band's single; perhaps this is intended to hone the ever-vague sense of disillusioned injustice one gets from music like this into something more specific, who knows? Thing is, Ako don't really need it, 'cos they're all right. Ignoring the usual overwrought multi-tracked vocalisms and unnecessary janitorial job done behind the boards, there's a certain arresting, uptight urgency about the title track, while b-side 'Thank You' marries tunefulness to crunchy riffage in a manner that manages not to sound entirely like it's casting amorous black eyeliner glances at the pop racks of Woolworths. Ako: OK. Know any good T-shirt printers, fellas? (John Stevens) ★★★★★



The Palominos Internazionale
Goodnight Loving Trail
EP

● If you can't be original, be preposterous. That's the diktat The Paliminis Internazionale appear to work by, and admirable devotees they are too, with their name translatable as 'International Golden Horses', and press release boasting 'Tekeli-li! Tekeli-li! Ethulhu fhtagn!'. One wills this EP to combust in a gloriously asinine shower of aural prog-juice, yet instead we get a wilfully (?) naff 70s power anthem ('Retribution Song'), a brooding micro-soundtrack to a sub-standard spaghetti western ('Victoria'), some dubious cod-gospel fumbblings ('Jesus Shaped Hole') and 'High Times', a closer that begins in agreeable one-chord fashion before careering off the rails into Quo Country. The Palominos Internazionale have an inspired concept on their hands, but musically it will take a drastic change of tack for these international horses to take flight. (John Stevens) ★★★★★



Chris Pritchett
Waiting in Line
LP, HRCD

● Fans of simple, uncluttered folk and lovers of fey English whimsy should find some nourishment here. Pritchett's from the same stable as fellow Bristol acoustic Roger Tarry, but while the latter's songs are light, limpid affairs, Chris tends to overegg the pudding with tricky metaphors. Delicate finger-picked numbers - with occasional piano, strings and tabla adding texture - in the key of the lovelorn wandering minstrel make for something closer to James Taylor. These songs are about feeling out of joint, left behind, eclipsed by others: the man's a dreamer, and sometimes you're dreaming with him, at others you just want him to get up off his ass. A couple of numbers are more optimistic: for 'I'll Find a Way' and 'Flow' he manages some simple, heartfelt lyrics and his voice, as if it knows it's struck lucky at last, reaches some strong, plangent heights. (Steve Wright) ★★★★★

MUSIC DIARY

DEADLINES: You're already too late for next issue but please send information and pictures for issue 633 (8-17 Oct) by Mon 27 Sept at the latest.

Friday 24

ROCK

VENUE CHOICE **Juana Molina/Gravenhurst/ Francois** The Cube, Dove St South (off the top of King Sq), Bristol, 8pm, £5. Ffi: (0117) 907 4190 • Darn fine Argentinian singer/songwriter - see preview on page 63. Plus further support from Stitch Stitch Records' French boy wonder F.

★ **Gisli/Termities** Louisiana, Wapping Rd, Bristol, 8pm, £5 adv. Ffi: (0117) 926 5978 • G: Icelandic singer boasting of influences from Iron Maiden to Justin Timberlake, and Dinosaur Jr to Beck. T: Heavily tipped garage-psych-gaping-death-pop for the hard of living.

★ **Fuzz Against Junk/Sergeant Major** Bunch of Grapes, Denmark St, Bristol, 8pm, free. Ffi: (0117) 987 0500 • Invada Records follow up a highly successful event last time out (a sell-out Gongga gig with as many people in the street trying to get in as there were in the pub), with FAJ: Rather fine purveyors of freeform, psychedelic jazz, blues and funk. SM: Members of the Voices Of Kwahn explore acoustic pop culture.

Soul Destroyers Fiddlers, Willway St, Bedminster, Bristol, 7.30pm, £5 adv/£6 door. Ffi: (0117) 987 3403 • Blistering soul standards - Wilson Pickett, Otis Redding, Marvin Gaye, James Brown, Aretha Franklin, etc - driven by a seven-piece horn section. **Stereotronics** Fleece and Firkin, St Thomas St, Bristol, 9pm, £7 adv. Ffi: (0117) 945 0996 • If that pseudo 'aching' voice and those seventh-hand riffs are too much for you in their purest form, here's a more palatable watered-down version.

The Forster King Band Marlows, 1 New Market Avenue (off Broad St), Bristol, £5. Ffi: (0117) 930 0805 • From Chicago blues to New Orleans funk.

Fat Man Swings Prom Music Bar and Cafe, 26 The Promenade, Bristol, 8pm, £4. Ffi: (0117) 942 7319 • Top line jive, jump-blues and boogie.

Elkie Brooks Cheltenham Town Hall, Imperial Square, Cheltenham, 8pm, £17.50/£15.50/£8.50. Ffi: (01242) 227979 • Touring new, post-'Reborn In The USA' material, as well as older standards such as 'Pearl's A Singer' and 'No More The Fool'.

Hells Bells Corn Hall, Cirencester, 8.30pm, £9 adv/£11 door. Ffi: (01285) 654180 • Widely regarded AC/DC tribbers.

JAZZ/WORLD

★ **Toto La Momposina** invention.arts, Lower Borough Walls, Bath, 8pm, £7/£5. Ffi: (01225) 421700 • The magnificent figure of Colombian diva Toto La Momposina is a truly memorable world music experience.



"A searing player of great power, who has played with Stevie Wonder."
STAN WEBB'S CHICKEN SHACK, THE ARTS CENTRE, SWINDON, SAT 2 OCT.

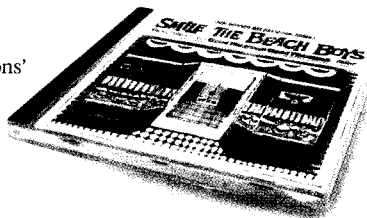
The Longest Player A favourite album

No. 16 Musician SJ Esau 'Smile' - The Beach Boys

● I'm cheating because the album doesn't exist. It was scrapped about halfway through production in 1967. The tracks that were finished and many that weren't have been bootlegged, tacked on to other Beach Boy albums and speculated on endlessly. I first picked up a 'Smile' bootleg while suffering from 'flu and medicining myself with a potent skunk/hot milk/honey concoction. I was expecting some fun surf pop with nice harmonies, what I got was something totally different.

The result of Brian Wilson's desire to make an album using the

song fragments idea he had developed with 'Good Vibrations' and his increasingly erratic mental state, these songs are unlike anything done before or since. 'Wonderful' and 'Cabin Essence' mix impressionistic but ultimately nonsense lyrics with intricate instrumentation and structures as loopy as the man himself. Wilson's talent for complicated harmonies are pushed to the limit on 'Vega-tablets' where conventional parts give way to excited yelps and celery being rhythmically munched.



This month a re-recorded version of 'Smile' is released. A shame, as one of the great things about its state of non-completion is that it forces the listener to obsessively hunt down the comprising parts and jigsaw the pieces together.

MUSIC

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