

Notes



by V. Corzen

Compiling my May list of new release was extremely difficult. Not because of a lack of material but rather the abundance of it. Several talented women have albums that are scheduled for late April, early May releases. I'd suggest carefully reviewing the new release section of your local record store. Meanwhile here is some of the new material released.

Joni Mitchell
Night Ride Home
Geffen Records

It's unusual to find a theme that runs through the lyrics of an album. However, *Night Ride Home* has a theme. It has a strand of Joni's life that connects the songs. The title cut "Night Ride Home" is one of the strongest links of that chain. "Passion Play" and "Come In From The Cold" are also examples of this.

As usual, Joni's vocal talent and instrumentation were phenomenal. The music appeared to be a combination of folk and electronically created rock rhythms. That is the only disappointing aspect of this album—it was too refined. It sounds like the cuts were mixed and remixed until perfection. A computer couldn't have done any better.

The best cuts on the album are: "Passion Play," "Come in From The Cold," and "The Only Joy In Town." *Night Ride Home* is a great album. I just wonder how it will sound live.

Alix Dobkin
Yahoo Australia
Women's Wax Works

After *Night Ride Home's* focus on relationships, Dobkin's *Yahoo Australia* was a welcome relief. *Yahoo Australia* is a live recording of Alix's performance in Sydney. In her liner notes, Alix describes the title cut "Yahoo Australia" as "loud and clear to everyone who hears *Yahoo Australia* especially to Aussie dykes whose support, enthusiasm, love, boldness, and brilliance made this tour exceed my wildest most ambitious expectations, an unforgettable commitment to the new decade." Some statement. I played the CD to see if the music lived up to the words.

The title cut "Yahoo Australia" is okay. It is as close to a love song as you're going to get out of Alix. Her strong voice clearly conveys the passion Alix holds for the land down under.

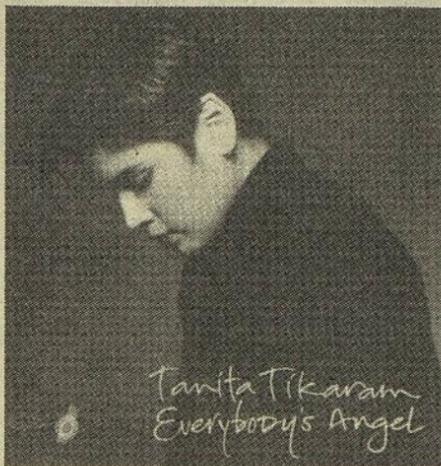
Other choice cuts are "Intimacy," a song asking how does one get close to a woman, and "Crushes," a Dobkin tune in the genre she's most famous for—a musical retelling of stories of Lesbian life. These stories of crushed retold with all of their passion and a sense of humor. It's amazing how after all these years Dobkin can still recreate the youthful naivete we all have experienced. "Hedda On TV," a piece about Hedda Nussbaum, is a feminist analysis of the media coverage surrounding Nussbaum.

Yahoo Australia is another in a long line of Dobkin's albums which document Lesbian lives. It's fun, funny, creative, political and strongly lesbian identified.

Tanita Tikaram
Everybody's Angel
Reprise Records

Tanita is not known for her vocal talent. Her deep raspy voice leaves much to be desired. She sounds out of breath and in deep depression. However, this is not why you should buy her album. Her lyrics are great. After reading them listening to the songs became much more bearable. I felt I was listening to poetry set to music. I feel the same way about Dillon's work.

Some of the select cuts on this album are: "Deliver Me," "Mud In Any Water," "Sun-face," "Never Known," and "Hot Pork Sandwiches." *Everyone's Angel* is a good album. However I do recommend you read the lyrics.



Harriet
Woman To Man
East West Records

As the title suggests—*Woman To Man* is a collection of songs about the love/sex relationships between men and women. The cuts in *Woman To Man* run the gambit from newly found "intense" love and a love that's dying because she is fed up.

The songs on the album were okay. I had problems with the title cut "Woman to Man." The arrangement was fine. The lyrics however, were too self depreciating. "Every woman needs a man to hold. Every man needs a woman sometimes," is just one example of the internalized misogamy within the song. Frankly, I would not waste my money on this album. Hearing a woman beg for a man is not entertainment, at least not for a feminist woman. Pass this one over.



Muongano National Choir
Missa Luba
Philips Records

Missa Luba is a Zairian style mass for a mixed chorus which includes ten folk melodies. The mass starts with the *Kyrie*, a familiar part of the American Catholic mass but the instrumentation is changed. There is no pipe organ or orchestra. At least not as we know it. The instruments used are shaken gourds, and drums. The song is performed in a call and response style. It was definitely one of the highlights of the album. The album then travels through the *Gloria*, *Credo*, *Sanctus*, and *Agnus Dei*. Then the chorus jam.

My favorite cut on the album was "Vamuvamba," a call and response style song about Jesus Christ being on the cross waiting for redemption. What was the best part of the song was the women's duets. The harmonies of the piece were intense. Another select cut from the album was "Bwana Ni Mani," a song about borrowing from neighbors. The text was taken from Psalms 15:1-2 and 84:1,4 and 10. It is a slow call and response song with beautiful unison and harmonized singing.

If you can get around the religious content of this album you will definitely enjoy the music. I know for some people it might be a hard thing to do but the music is well worth your effort. ■

