

Black Eyed Man
Cowboy Junkies
(BMG)
by Kirby Ferguson
The Cowboy Junkies
1988 release *The Trinity*
Session is one of the
most unique albums of
recent years. Fearlessly
intimate and provoca-



tively quiet, the album is
held near and dear by many people and is certainly
essential mood music. *Black Eyed Man* is the sound
of a more mature, musical act. Adding new detail and
animation to the same musical idea, the Junkies have
taken their brand of very Velvety worldweariness to a
new level, and in doing so have created the best album
I've heard, possibly, since Sinead O'Connor's *I Do*
Not Want What I Haven't Got--which gives me an
opportunity to leap off the beam for a while. If you
want to hear an incredibly beautiful piece of music,
check out Sinead's version of Elton John's "Sacrifice"
on the *Two Rooms* tribute: when the two
overdubbed Sinead vocals intertwine for the cre-
scendo, it is to die for. You gotta hear it; it's abso-
lutely fantastic (don't buy that album though, it's got
tons of turds).

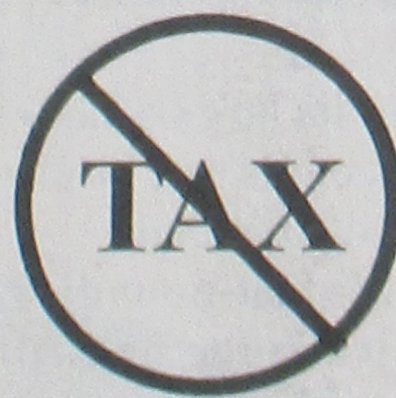
Back to the Junkies--*Black Eyed Man* is the work of a
dramatically advanced band sporting their most de-
tailed musical palette and a new confidence, as we can
hear in Margo Timmins' most assured singing yet and
brother Michael's eloquent guitar work. Featuring
gorgeous textures of mandolin, harmonica, fiddle and
cello, this is a country album with a heart (and a
brain). Several of the album's many high points
include "Oregon Hill," with its New Orleans horns
and Margo Timmins dual vocals, "Murder, Tonight,
in the Trailer Park" and the two Townes Van Zandt
compositions, "Cowboy Junkies' Lament" and "To
Live Is To Fly."

Lyricaly the album bears remarkable similarities to
Bruce Springsteen's *Nebraska* (one of rock's lyrical
masterpieces); "livin's mostly wastin' time," "this
world's lost its mystery" and many more sound like
outcasts from that album. Though he may not be
dazzlingly original, Michael Timmins' folksy romanti-
cism/pessimism, broken dreams and yearning for
release stand up as one of music's more interesting
views. (I can't leave this comparison alone, but if you
want to hear a devastating poetic statement, check out

Nebraska; the man is without pretension.) (Speaking
of Bruce, did you know he has two albums, *Human*
Touch and *Lonely Town*, coming out in the early
spring? Supposedly they are actually two separate
albums, unlike *Use Your Illusion*, which was really a
double album.) (Speaking of new releases, Sonic
Youth should have a new one out by the summer. Oh
yeah, Neil Young's got a new one, supposedly a
Harvest sequel [oh joy!], coming out real soon.) (And
where did all this fascinating info come from? Yes,
that glossy, cologne smelling, hypocritical, sixties
worshipping magazine: Rolling Stone. Did you see
their critics' picks of '91? Bullshit, I say! Where's
Storyville! And what's *Nevermind* doing there! And
Out Of Time number one! And who are the American
Music Club? Never heard of 'em. Terrible name.)
(What was I talking about? *Nebraska*! Fantastic
album. When it comes to the writin' lyrics thing,
Bruce is the king of 'em all y'all. Wait a minute...)

Yes, the Junkies! *Black Eyed Man* is a wonderful
album (and Canadian); buy it. And don't forget *Ne-*
braska (Bruce should be paying me for this); it'd
make a great companion piece. In case you haven't
noticed, this review is completely spontaneous. This
buck shot approach to journalism must be really
tedious reading, so I'll just end it. (But speaking of
tedious reading, the new Alter Ego is out [may as
well cover everything while you're here], and it's
pretty sharp. It's available in very limited quantities
around campus and at various businesses around
town. Shit, you'll have *Nebraska*, *Black Eyed Man*,
Alter Ego--oh yeah, and Sinead's "Sacrifice"... wow,
what life affirming culture!) (I apologize for this
verbal vomit. I hang my head in shame.)

For a listen to the Cowboy Junkies' *Black Eyed Man*,
tune in to the Island's only alternative, CIMN, 104.5
FM cable or 700 AM on campus.



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