

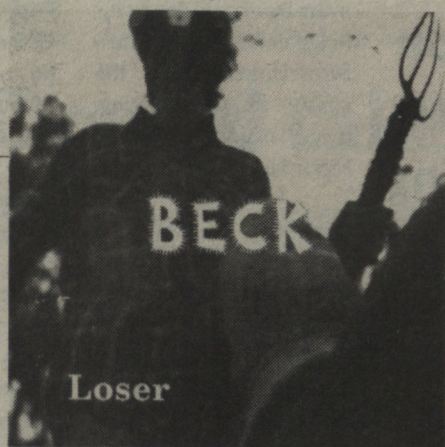


**Under the Pink**  
Tori Amos  
(Warner)

Tori Amos's 1991 effort, *Little Earthquakes*, displayed loads of potential, but it seemed to smother under its own cold, arty weight. *Under the Pink* (3) suffers from the same malady and is even more diffuse and ornate--and when she does strip things down she's sorta dull. But the real problem is Amos's voice, which isn't distanced enough, resulting in some rather indulgent and even unpleasant emoting. Her compositions are still disjointed--hence, the moments are more impressive than the whole: the moody ambience of "Space Dog," the mournful chorus of "Past the Mission," the tense rhythm of "God." I admire her guts, though--the woman will say anything, she just doesn't give a damn: "God sometimes you just don't come through," "I believe in peace/I believe in peace, bitch." The potential is still clearly there, but Tori Amos has yet to add substance and heart to her artiness.

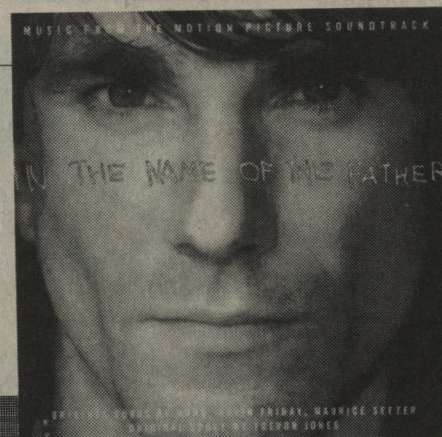
**Loser ep**  
Beck  
(MCA)

"Loser" is a classic play-it-play-it-play-it-throw-it-away single featuring some wonderful tossed-word salad: "spraypaint the vegetables," "save all your footstamps and burn down the trailer park." The rest of the *Loser ep* (3) drubs the elemental and irresistible formula into the ground, but it is unreleased stuff; the upcoming full-length album, *Mellow Gold*, could still be worth checking out.



**In the Name of the Father**  
Music From the Motion Picture Soundtrack  
(Polygram)

The *In the Name of the Father* soundtrack (2) is a rip-off and makes me want to puke. An obvious attempt to sell a soundtrack without enough songs to justify one, the album features ringer tracks from Bono, with two atmospheric songs, and Sinead O'Connor, with "You Made Me the Thief of Your Heart," the only thing here anyone could possibly want. The rest consists of compositions with titles like "Interrogation" and "Passage of Time," obviously not intended to function independently of the film, along with cuts from Jimi Hendrix, the Kinks, Bob Marley and Thin Lizzy--fine songs one and all, but who knew they'd ever share the same album? *Caveat emptor.*



**Mirror Blue**  
Richard Thompson  
(EMI)

The disparity between Richard Thompson's critical adoration and public indifference has now reached ridiculous proportions. With the release of last year's career retrospective, *Watching the Dark*, and now yet another sterling release, *Mirror Blue* (4), Thompson seems poised for a public breakthrough, if only on the merits of his reputation.

There is a certain modesty and purity to Thompson's

music that suggests he'll never reach his deserved audience, but for those willing to listen closely, Thompson consistently produces some of the smartest rock'n'roll out there.

As usual, *Mirror Blue* features a panoramic range, from the buoyant pop hooks of "For the Sake of Mary" and "I Can't Wake up to Save my Life," to the poignant melody of "King of Bohemia." Separating the album from his other recent releases is its steely, mechanical drive, no doubt the contribution of producer Mitchell Froom (Suzanne Vega, Los Lobos, American Music Club). For rock

scholars, *Mirror Blue* is a stunning display of songwriting, guitar playing and texture; those who demand a more immediate appeal from their rock'n'roll may want to look elsewhere. (Thompson's music hasn't always been so humble: *Shoot Out the Lights*, recorded with his ex-wife Linda, exudes all the grand inspiration of *Abbey Road*, *Exile on Main Street* or *The Joshua Tree*. I highly recommend that record.)



**ratings:**

- 5. woo-hoo-wee
- 4. ooh ooh
- 3. hmmm
- 2. eeeah
- 1. blaach

sound  
SALVATION

by KIRBY FERGUSON