



Sound

Opinions

by Mike Beagan

Howdy there, loyal readers. I have another strange, international ensemble of artists to review this week. I don't have any colourful anecdotes or segues into the action this week, so I'll just shut up and start.

Boukman Eksperyans *Libete (Pran Pou Pran'!)* / *Freedom (Let's Take It!)* (Mango/Island) is an interesting release from Haiti. The lyrics are all in Creole, but they are very melodic and skilfully sung. The music relies heavily on a plethora of percussion instruments, as well as guitars, keyboards and a female chorus of background vocals. With each of the band's nine members playing several instruments (they all play percussion) the sound is very full, and pleasing. Most of the songs are political in nature, and the last track (*Jou Male*) was banned by Haiti's military government. This fantastic and informative album is dedicated to the band's bass/drum player who passed away due to the lack of medication caused by the American embargo against Haiti. I recommend *Libete*. . . to all who want something different.

"And now for something completely different," as John Cleese used to say. *Spinner* (All Saints/Gyroscope/BMI) is a "reapproaching" of **Brian Eno's** original film score to the movie *Glitterbug*. Eno has allowed bassist and producer **Jah Wobble** to reapproach the score with a pretty free hand, with less than wonderful results. I was surprised that artists of this skill could produce an album so poor. These instrumental tracks come off as very plastic and boring. They convey no emotion to the listener, and therefore are completely forgettable. **Brian Eno/Jah Wobble** *Spinner* is one to be left on the shelf.

Thin is how I would best describe the sound of *Life* (Stockholm/Polygram), the debut release from Sweden's **The Cardigans**. The Cardigans fuse pop and jazz into a sixties sounding style of their own, which reminds me of a bad lounge act. Wire thin guitar sounds, elevator music keyboard harmonies, and Nina Persson's babyish vocals combine for the most superficial album I have heard in years. Needless to say, they are chart toppers in Europe. I was completely disgusted by their sacrilegious, muzak cover of Black Sabbath's classic metal anthem "Sabbath Bloody Sabbath". What did Ozzie ever do to them.? *Life* is sad, and I wish it would end.

Lastly, I have **Papa Wemba's** *Emotion* (Virgin/Realworld). Although a gifted singer, Zaire's Papa Wemba is a little misguided with this release. Papa wants to be a star, and has therefore intentionally created a commercial album. The music is bouncy and very percussive in a pseudo-dance style, but comes across as superficial. Although most of the lyrics are in Papa's native Lingala, he includes a few English verses as a "wink at the international market I'm aiming at." Papa even attempts Otis Redding's "Sad Song" in his native tongue. It doesn't work. Despite the skill of musicians featured, this release has little of the *Emotion* that the title promises.

That's all that I have on tap for this week. Hopefully the next batch of discs will be of higher quality. Until next time, Peace & Love, and keep your stick on the ice.

"It Only Happens In The Night"

by Steve Ellis

I have never felt so much like a voyeur as I did while watching *The Night Room*. This production, staged by Primus Theatre, is an exploration of the deeper and darker aspects of love and sexuality. Watching it, you get the feeling that you have stepped inside of a man's dreams. Uninvited.

Viewing the performance really is an experience which must be described from the start. When the ticket purchase is made, each patron is assigned to one of four colour groups with no explanation given as to why. Participants wait in a room away from the actual performance venue, until one by one each colour group is led away to the staging area.

The staging area itself is a marvel of sorts. It is a white tent containing a labyrinthous array of white sheets leading into a central burlap-covered square with athletic-type stands in each of the four corners for seating. The seating is such that you can watch the reactions of people who are across room from you. The lighting is dim, adding to the mystery and anticipation.

Then the performance starts. A man, the dreamer, wanders in. He enters and exits the central square through the white sheets. In his travels he encounters spirits and a host of bizarre human characters all of whom share with him

words of wisdom and experience. Whether they actually help him or confuse him is not entirely clear. What is clear is that each encounter uncovers a weakness or desire in the dreaming man.

The story is told mostly through dialogue and expressive vocalizations. Few props are used and each one serves multiple purposes. Efficient, yet sufficient.

Themes alluded to in the play include homosexuality and love-inspired murder. In one segment, love is compared to a bull-fight.

I was really impressed by the performance. I was amazed at the intensity with which the five actors, Donald Kitt, Tannis Kowalchuk, Stephen Lawson, Karin Randoja, and former PEI resident Ker Wells, performed. Equally amazing were the vocal abilities of the actors. Some sounds erupted from their bodies that I didn't think a human was capable of making.

Primus performed *The Night Room*, subtitled "a labyrinth of desire", in the Alumni Gym from January 19-21. They are an eight year old company which has been described as "Winnipeg's leading alternative theatre" by the *Toronto Star*. They are currently on a cross-Canada tour.

WIN FREE MUSIC

One of the most overlooked bands of 1995 is becoming one of the most sought-after bands of 1996. **EVERCLEAR** is the band, *Sparkle and Fade* is the album, and the *Panther Prints* and EMI Music Canada want to give you the chance to own your very own copy of the CD.

Rolling Stone said: Everclear's music, like that of Nirvana and Sugar, conveys a palpable sense of fury and frustration.

Austin Chronical said: Everclear is one of the best live bands touring the country today.

Panther Prints said: *Sparkle and Fade* is an outstanding release virtually exploding with raw emotional power. Heavy guitar driven sounds combine successfully with deep and realistic lyrical poetry to form a very fulfilling album.

You can win one of five copies of **Everclear** *Sparkle and Fade* by naming two of the **Panther Prints'** former names, and dropping your entry in the mail slot of room 06, Main building