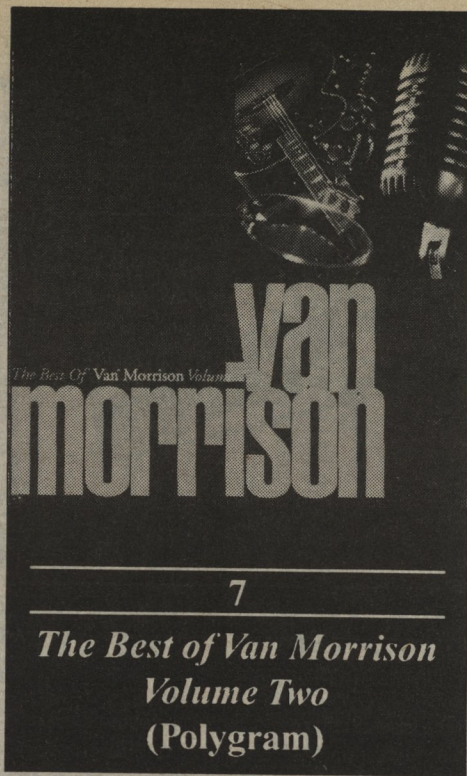


High Fidelity

by Kirby Ferguson



7
The Best of Van Morrison
Volume Two
 (Polygram)

Hard to believe it's been over a year since Van Morrison has released an album. To fill the gap we get this compilation, released to a substantial, if not chart topping, audience. *Volume One* (double platinum in the U.S.) is Van's biggest seller ever. That first one needed to up the number of discs or tighten the scope, though, which is what this one kinda does, concentrating on Morrison's Polygram material. Unfortunately, stuck in the middle of everything we get two Them tracks (but they do sound nice here.) Why? Same label. Meanwhile, left out is Van's stunning Warner's material. Also excluded are the Polygram tracks that appeared on *Volume One*, but I don't know about you but I can live without 'em. Anyway, this is a pretty exploitative little compilation, and, as far as I can see, arbitrarily selected. But since Van's recent music is more mood than song oriented, a random selection will suffice. Exciting this is not, but it is appealing, for this sort of thing. So, y'know, slip it on and... water the plants, or whatever.

Unlike Van Morrison's recent music, his prime material is both gentle and powerful. *Astral Weeks*, as I've said a million times, is my favourite album ever, and *Moondance* and *St. Dominic's Preview* aren't far behind. *Veedon Fleece* at its best is really beautiful and *Into the Music* is great. Anyone with any kind of interest in this man, one of the greatest and most original vocalists rock has ever produced, should skip his barely there newer stuff and check out the awesome emotional kick of these albums. Still, I'm going to go so far as to say that this rather trashy anthology is all you need of his Polygram stuff.

Lucky Thirteen
Neil Young
 (MCA)

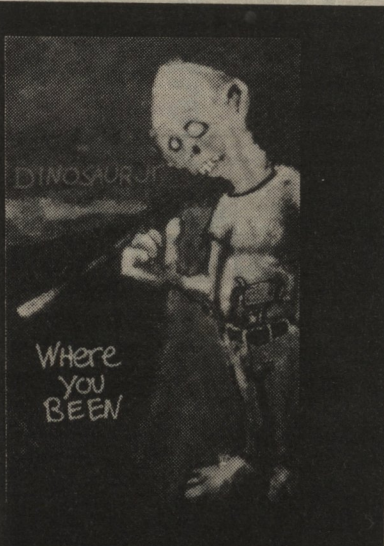
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Here it is: Neil Young's bad side, 64 minutes of it, preserved for posterity. The album opens with two *Trans* (yikes) outtakes and then gets much better, to the point where it's only bland. A fucking hustle that merits a boycott.

Number Ten
J.J. Cale
 (BMG)

4

Very, very anonymous, laid-back guitar dude. Competent but dull.



7
Where You Been
Dinosaur Jr.
 (Warner)

er the break I immersed myself in new wave (through Rhino's super-duper new punk comps) and it made me very aware of how unmelodic and repetitive most alternative rock is. So, on listen to *Where You Been*, I initially dismissed mastermind J Mascis (Dino Jr. in all but name) as a tuneless, clueless schmuck -- and a happy singer to boot. But the Crazy Horse-ish electric grandeur of *Where You Been* really grew on me. This is a pretty fiery rave-up. The pleasures of *Where You Been* are a tad superficial and this isn't really my thing, but if it's yours it don't get no better. Guitars!

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