

Rhythm Review

with Alan English

GOLDEN DISCS

The records reviewed in this column are available at Golden Discs, downstairs in Todds.

Your choice

Send your Top Ten albums of all time to Rhythm Review, 54 O'Connell St., Limerick. Publicity shy readers need not enclose a photograph if they so desire.

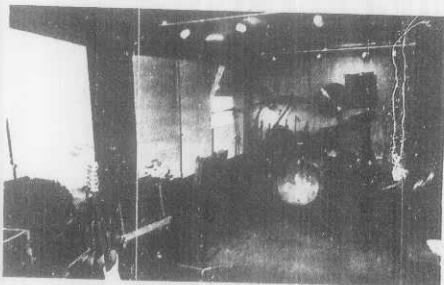
RECORD RATINGS

- **** Magnificent
- **** Excellent *** Good
- ** Weak * Abysmal

MY TOP TEN

Is Damian Lane, from Rathmale in Mungret, Limerick's leading connoisseur of the stylish, underrated David Sylvian? I think we should be told.

- 1: DAVID SYLVIAN: "Gone To Earth".
- 2: DAVID BOWIE: "Hunky Dory".
- 3: THE WATERBOYS: "This Is The Sea".
- 4: DAVID SYLVIAN: "Brilliant Trees".
- 5: THE SMITHS: "The Smiths".
- 6: JAPAN: "Oil On Canvas".
- 7: DAVID SYLVIAN AND HOLGEL CZUKAY: "Plight and Premonition".
- 8: PRINCE AND THE REVOLUTION: "Parade".
- 9: DAVID BOWIE: "Low".
- 10: DAVID SYLVIAN: "Secrets Of The Beehive".



Some of the equipment at Xeric Studios.

Limerick's Studio One



Pearse Gilmore, co-owner of Xeric Studios at the mixing desk.

WHEN December comes around and the Limerick rock fraternity searches its collective memory for the most significant local occurrences in the rock calendar there will, no doubt, be a few outstanding candidates. The Tuesday Blue debut should be there or thereabouts, the closure of the Savoy could leave a permanent scar, but one event that passed by without undue fuss should be seriously considered as a major local achievement in '88. I speak of the recent opening of Xeric Studios. Limerick now has a 24 track recording studio that is well capable of competing with the Dublin alternatives. Indeed the mixing desk is the same as the desk in Windmill 3. Situated in Edward St., where the Shannon Foundry was formerly located, the studio is a joint venture between James Hanley (21) and Pearse Gilmore (22), both members of Limerick band Private World. £80,000 has been invested in Xeric, one hopes that it will prove money wisely spent.

The studios have been acoustically designed and equipped with some of the best gear on the market. The boys have brought a talented engineer, John Lyons, down from Dublin to act as Limerick's answer to Steve Lillywhite.

The facilities at Xeric Studios are ideal for Limerick bands, no matter the extent of their experience or the depth of their pockets. For those with big music in mind, the full-blown 24 track studio is available at £25 an hour, very

reasonable if you knew the astronomical rates of the more famous studios namechecked on album sleeves.

Xeric also have a 4-track pre-production demo studio available at £5 an hour and three rehearsal rooms which you can hire for a five hour session for a tenner. Instru-

ments and amps are also available for hire (Phone 40566).

The whole operation is tastefully designed and well worth a visit. With the support of the local music community it should prove a 1988 success story.

Belltable Freddie



Freddie White thrives on an intimate venue. Our own Belltable is one of the best. If you've ever seen him perform there you'll know what I'm talking about. If you haven't, here's the ideal chance after a few Friday night hebies on the town. Freddie keeps a record of the songs he plays in each town. If you saw him last time around, he'll have a fresh set for you on Friday night.

And now back to the comical drawing. To claim a complete set of Freddie White albums, including the 'Have A Nice Day' 12" plus tickets to any Fred gig of your choice (four sets of prizes in all) simply use your skill and wit to dream up a funny caption for the drawing. At least one of the lucky, lucky winners will have their wit and wisdom immortalized on the new Freddie White T-Shirt.

Answers on a postcard by June 20 either to the Leader office or to O'Brien Marketing, Unit 38B, Watercourse Industrial Estate, Cork.

OBSERVE, readers, this "funny" drawing. Take a good look at it. Hilarious, is it not? No? Well I must admit I didn't exactly fall about the place myself. However, I'm informed in a special press competition release that the sketch is indeed sure to raise many a guffaw, so who am I to argue?

In case you hadn't noticed, the drawing is of the fab Freddie White. In case you hadn't heard, Freddie plays the Belltable this Friday night in a late-night gig (11.30 p.m.).

I'll spare you the usual potted biography of the great man and his music (Is it rock? Is it jazz? etc. etc.) Freddie has been around long enough now for the punters to know what they're likely to get. However, I will point out that there are quite a lot of sound reasons for attending this particular concert, chief among the fact that it is late at night in an ideal venue for Freddie like the Belltable.

ALBUM REVIEW

The rhythm method men

THE FOUNTAINHEAD: "Voice Of Reason" (China). The Fountainhead are indeed treading a thin line between success and oblivion. This much was made clear by two recent independent events, one striking, the other virtually silent. In the same week that Hothouse Flowers crashed into the UK singles chart, the considerably more talented (at the moment at least) Microdisney were fired by their record label Virgin. Their crime? Uncommercial product.

The Fountainhead have a better ear for a catchy tune. What they do not have is the charisma of the soon-to-be-quitte-big Flowers. The early single on "Voice Of Reason", "Someone Like You" has done reasonably well. It's difficult to locate something on the rest of LP with its radio-friendly appeal.

Such quibbles aside, "Voice Of Reason" is still an impressive record, beautifully produced by Paul Hardiman (Lloyd Cole, The The). In the beginning, the synth based music of Pat O'Donnell and Steve Belton was often accused of lacking soul. Thankfully, they have now consigned the drum machines to the dustbin.

There is a good deal more to "Voice Of Reason" than their first appears to be. Naturally it's a better record than the



patchy HHF offering but try telling the great record buying public that.
Rating: ★★½.

BRUCE HORNSBY & THE RANGE: "Scenes From The Southside" (Virgin). Personally, I always thought Mr. Hornsby was a wimpish flash in the pan. Along he came with one highly likeable ditty called "The Way It Is" and before you knew it, the man was acclaimed as the find of the year by people who should really have known better.

This time around there's no finger-tapping tinkling of the ivories on show and what we get is a collection of fairly insipid songs given an expensive studio massage that rarely succeeds in obscuring the fact that Bruce Hornsby is a fairly boring individual.

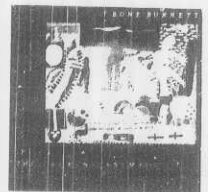
Just to remind everyone what a highly respected songwriter he apparently thinks himself, Bruce elects to gift

the world his version of that two-year-old gem "Jacob's Ladder". Suffice to say that Huey Lewis's cover version is superior. It's inclusion here is somewhat pitiful — it's as if Bruce and the boys found themselves in dire need of a half-decent tune. (In which case they diagnosed their difficulties with admirable accuracy.)

Surely this man is the Christopher Cross of the late 80's.
Rating: ★★.



T. BONÉ BURNETT: "The Talking Animals" (CBS). And so at last to a songwriter of real and exciting talent. Readers may have come across T. Bone Burnett in a variety of ways. The Dylan brigade will remember him as one of The Zim's Rolling Thunder Review sidekicks. Elvis Costello's small army of devotees aren't likely to forget him as J. Henry Coward, one half of the



legendary Coward Brothers. Then, of course, there's T. Bone's own body of work, most notably the stunning LP from 1984 "Proof Through The Night".

"The Talking Animals", his first LP for a major label, is decidedly good. T. Bone happens to be one of the sharpest lyricists around. In the past he has virtually spoken his way through songs. ("The Sixties", "Hefner and Disney") here he adopts the strategy just once, again to good effect, on "The Strange Case Of Frank Cash And The Morning Paper".

U2 completists will be interested to hear that Bone both co-writes and sings backing vocals on the faintly unusual "Purple Heart". Elsewhere T. Bone is at his best on "The Wild Truth", a song that combines some fine music with some of the snappiest lyrics this side of "Desire".
Rating: ★★½.

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