

X.T.C. - Drums and Wires.

Andy Partridge and Colin Moulding again share the songwriting credits, the latter's compositions being easily his best to date. The single "Making Plans for Nigel" is included on this album along with other tracks with single potential such as "Real by Reel". For me though the meat of the album is in tracks such as "Roads Girdle the Globe", which tells of how man idolises the piston engine, and "Complicated Game", which is the best thing the band have ever done in my opinion. This track starts off quietly and slowly builds to a climax, making full use of Andy Partridge's excellent vocals. X.T.C. make full use of the studio when recording their albums and the result is another elaborate and professional offering, probably their best yet. With my copy I also received a free single and a word-sheet covering all the bands recorded material.

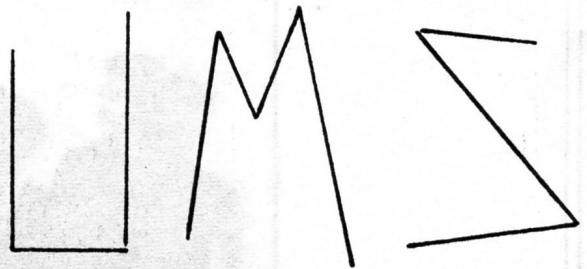
T.W.

Gang of Four - Entertainment

This is the Gang of Four's first album and it is an accomplished debut. The production is good and captures the bands live excitement well. The hacking, full-blooded guitar work of Andy Gill comes over well also. His loud guitar sets up a powerful, attacking riff but the bass and drums are not prepared to let him have it all his own way and they also battle away to help produce that distinctive Gang of Four sound.

Side one opens with the excellent "Ether" followed by my favorite track "Naturals not in it", then "Not great men" and the well known "Damaged goods". These four tracks are a worthy opening for any album and by comparison the last two tracks on this side are something of an anti-climax. Side two also has six tracks including "At home he's a tourist" the last single, and "5-45". The last track, "Love is like anthrax", is a clever number using two sets of lyrics which are sung simultaneously and skilfully interlinked. On the whole a good album that lives up to the title - Entertainment.

T.W.



Joy Division - Unknown Pleasures.

I had seen Joy Division on the T.V. show "Something Else" and I liked their use of the basic trio of instruments, yet I was still surprised at the depth and far reaching qualities of this album. The band use each instrument as a separate entity to achieve their overall sound. Peter Hook's bass is powerful and yet still climbs and swoops and is almost delicate at times. Add to this the precise knife edge guitar of Bernard Albrecht and the excellent drumming of Steve Morris and you have the perfect setting for the awesome vocals of Ian Curtis. The tracks vary from the more instant pieces such as "She's Lost Control" and "Interzone" to the almost psychedelic feel of "Day of The Lords" and "New Dawn Fades". This album is a technical achievement to be taken seriously and despite being hard going in places it is for me the best debut LP of 1979. Make the effort it's worth it.

T.W.

The Clash - London Calling.

A double album for £3-50 (Virgin Records) can't be bad, especially when it's by The Clash and especially when it's the best thing they have ever done. At last they have lived up to their previously over-rated image. The production, by Guy Stevens, is rough and basic which I am sure is exactly what was intended and which suits The Clash down to the ground. The album has 18 tracks (19 including the unmentioned "Train in vain" on side four) and they contain some of the most varied musical styles that The Clash have ever tried before. The band play Rock & Roll, Jazzy, Ska and Soul type numbers as well as plenty of the good old Clash type rock which we all know and love. More important than what they play though is the WAY that they play it. They actually sound like they are enjoying themselves and this is something that has never come over before on their recordings. They usually come over as being solemn about and even bored by their music whereas on this album they seem to be actually having FUN. London Calling is good and there's plenty of it so get to Virgin while it's still on offer and grab yourselves a bargain.

T.W.