



few years plus Brendan O'Brien on organ, Dylan runs through 11 songs (12 on the video), mostly from his sixties heyday, with varying results. When he tries, as on "Desolation Row," "With God on Our Side," and "Love Minus Zero/No Limit" (available only on the video), he reinterprets and gives new meaning to old material. At other times, however, as on "Tombstone Blues," "All Along the Watchtower" and "Like A Rolling Stone," Dylan merely blurts lyrics indifferently. The *Unplugged* set is also noteworthy for its inclusion for the first time on an album of "John Brown," a 1963 antiwar outtake from *The Times They Are A-Changin'*, which is another of the set's most moving moments.

Despite the inability or refusal to grace his audience with new material, Dylan consistently finds ways to reinterpret his older work and keep it fresh. And notwithstanding his sloppy lead guitar work and the occasional phlegm gurgling in his throat as he sings, *Unplugged* is, for the most part, a job well done. (Columbia) df



The Existers Of Coffins & Carousels

If you're searching for the perfect antidote to help you escape the \$30 million media blitz which attempts to convince us Michael Jackson is still the King of Poop, then The Existers' *Of Coffins & Carousels* is just what the doctor ordered. Forget the moonwalking monkey lover and slip into a psychedelic haze as Existers' multi-instrument mastermind J.D. McKean leads you through his personal Neverland of freaks and harlots and bittersweet musings on entropy and decay. Here love is a Cat O' Nine Tails, a disease that "lurks in shadowed wait," while on the title cut McKean laments the emptiness of contemporary life: "Is there no sadder equation/than all that lives must fall bitter & die/Trapped in this solemn occasion/with nothing to wear but this/black suit and tie..."

The ghost of Ian Curtis would approve. But imagine a subdued reworking of The Residents' *Freakshow* produced by Ray Manzarek, replete with happy-organ-of-death keyboards, laid-back John Densmore drums courtesy of writer Richard Christian Matheson and Jim Hagopian's lead guitar which sounds like it could have been recorded sometime in '66 and exhumed from the Elektra Record vaults. Wrap this audio web around McKean's lyrics and plaintive, almost wounded vocals and the result is a near perfect selection of psychedelic blues

shot through with some surprises. Like "Letter From David," an excerpt of a taped letter played over a Vic Mizzi *Munsters* theme-like arrangement. (Skeleton Music, Box 9078-150, Van Nuys, CA 91409) pn



Marianne Faithfull A Secret Life

Faithfull's wither-hag wheeze remains intact, but her first album of original material in 12 years is a boring and at time preciously pretentious affair. Her self-penned lyrics, which emphasize sad tales of down-and-out women in sordid predicaments, are, however, frequently compelling. But using excerpts from Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy* and Shakespeare's *Tempest* as bookends for her tales of woe is a mistake. Moreover, Angelo Badalamenti's accompanying music, which leans toward a Euro-cabaret sound - heavy on the orchestration and synth arrangements - lacks compelling melodies, while the backing playing is utterly faceless. (Island) df



Foetus Gash

"Welcome to hell, motherfucker," Mr. Jim Thirlwell spat as he walked by me to the elevated stage at the back of the black-walled D.C. punk palace otherwise known as the 9:30 Club. And while I was never quite sure I was in the infernal regions, I would just like to say if what I subsequently experienced was the hell below, then, oh baby, baby, we all gotta go. Now how to describe



it? How indeed? What with compositions drawing from all forms of popular music - blues, big band, rock, industrial, r&b - as a starting point, as inspiration, and piling on

contempt, anomie, atomization, horror and madness. Does it help to say that it rocks? And that the slower lugubrious tracks possess all the majesty of a Papal funeral? "Hammer Falls" takes off on Greek or Mediterranean folderol before assaying a sonic ride between Scylla and Charybdis. "Downfall" is pure, beautiful noise, asumia, the sound a sticking cd makes before being assaulted by baseball bats. "Verklemmt's" hard beat metal implodes on its own self-disgust. "Slung" marries noirish Ellington to lyrics so angst laden they would have Sylvia Plath pulling her head out of the oven and perking up. I could go on and on. Write a doctoral thesis. Thirlwell threw out my notes. I mentioned something about humor. "What humor?" he asked tearing up my foolscap. "These are fragments I have shored against my Ruin." And I? I am left bereft. Unable to say or guess. Knowing only a heap of broken images. (Columbia) ds



The Fuzztones Lysergic Ejaculations

Perhaps America's longest-running '60s punk garage band. Until they broke up a year or so ago. Since that time there have been a number of cool posthumous releases, i.e. *Nine Months Later*, the *Halloween LP* and this fab double lp set. The packaging is A Number One daddy with a gatefold sleeve and full color artwork throughout. The cover features two crossed, erect penises spewing paisley. The inside collage sports naked chicks cavorting amidst press clippings whilst the inner sleeves contain pics of hard cocks rudely nestling between dozens of female fans' luscious thighs. I forgot to play the records so ensconced was I in the aforementioned graphics but my girlfriend did and she told me this thing had a pretty fair live sound although the lead guitar could've been mixed a little louder. She also told me that there were great cover versions of Standells, Avengers and Love tunes and originals like "99th Floor," "Love At Psychedelic Velocity" and "She's Wicked." That's what I think she said; I was too busy touching myself in a sinful manner to really pay attention. (Music Maniac) ds



Galaxy Trio In The Harem

They play it slow. They play it fast. They play it with aplomb. Mysterioso lo-fi surf instrumental. You've heard it before. Nev-