



Berlin-era Bowie and Prog, this double album, presented here in an attractive gatefold, takes tracks from the albums 'Green' plus 'Motivation Radio', 'L' and 'Fish Rising' and the Beatles cover, 'Getting Better'.

The live performance is excellent from Hillage, whose guitar work has always been one of the Seven Wonders Of Rock, but the LP sound quality is not exactly audiophile standard. This recording suffers from a bed of hiss that underlies the whole performance.

That said, as the only surviving transcription of the performance (we think), it serves as a valuable archive. Hillage fans should be happy that Ozit has prevented it from being lost forever. Limited to 500 copies, and arriving with a good quality gatefold plastic cover that opens with the sleeve plus poly-lined inners, this is a valuable and collectable release for Hillage cognoscenti.

MISSISSIPPI FRED McDOWELL "I Don't Play No Rock'n'Roll" Pure Pleasure

McDowell was blues through and through. When you hear him, you hear the likes of Charlie Patton with his gruff vocal style and aggressive guitar playing, utilising a bottleneck attack that took no prisoners. McDowell was an oddity in the blues scene because he appeared, during the mid-sixties, from nowhere as an ageing genius, amazing all who heard him. Other blues greats of the time had some form of archive to draw upon, 78s, old field recordings and the like...

The title of this album is both

a measure of the man but also a back-handed dig at other artists in the contemporary blues field who watered down the blues to incorporate other genres. Possibly because they felt that the blues needed to be more progressive or possibly because they were chasing the dollar. McDowell was having none of it, however. Star fans did want it, as his works were covered by the likes of The Rolling Stones and Bonny Raitt. That said, some blues purists thought that McDowell was 'selling out' because, like Dylan before him, he picked up an electric guitar and had a young white backing band for this 1969 release and, again like Dylan, the resultant music sounds pretty darned good.

The record, which was initially released on the Capitol label, has been mastered by Steve Hoffman in the USA from the original master tapes, and it shows with an excellent presentation. In conversation with Pure Pleasure owner Tony Hickmott, he did say that, as the original tapes were present in the USA, it was easier to ask the US-based Hoffman to master this release than arrange tape copies to be made and transferred to the UK. An excellent release and an essential listen for any blues fan.

POLYPHONIC SIZE 30 Years After - When The Size Was Polyphonic Vinyl-On-Demand

Launched in 1979, this group, which combined electro with pop and a slice of new wave ethics thrown in for good measure, produced their first

EP on the small underground record label, Sandwich Records. Later, friend of the band JJ Burnel, the bass player from The Stranglers, would produce and occasionally play and even sing with the band.

This set focuses on the first three years of the band's existence and is packed with rarities. The material includes unreleased tracks, demos and outtakes, all of the singles released in this period including the maxi singles plus the first LP produced by JJ Burnel. On top of that little lot are B-sides and rare tracks and unreleased material remastered from the band's founder, Roger-Marc Vande Voorde's own archives. The music itself ranges from a pastoral version of Kraftwerk with a smooth vocal blended with easy-going organic synth noises to a more, post-punk variable of, say, Wire. It definitely edges toward rather left-field regions of electro, that period when bands liked to portray a more robotic, dehumanised vocal style but, in this case, via the French language.

Presented as a luxurious box set, the package arrives in a pizza-style box. Insides are four LPs, each in their own wax-coated inner sleeve which are placed within their own outer covers plus a large format booklet printed in colour on thick card presenting lyrics, photographs and more. Limited to just 600 copies, this is a real treat for fans of the band and a discovery for those of us who enjoyed the electro stylings of the early eighties, a highly significant period when we were on the cusp of the digital age. An excellent and varied suite of music. **PR**