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MUSIC

New British acts storm U.S. shores

by Jackie Barry

Polygram Records recently released recordings by three original new artists whose recording might please pop/soul or metal fans. One duo and a male and a female soloist, Polygram lauds the performers as part of a new British invasion.

Delroy Murray and Robin Achampong released an album that is their namesake: *Total Contrast*. Although I liked their upbeat soul creations, penned primarily by the duo and producer Steve Harvey, I preferred the Lionel Bart selection, *Where Is Love*, above all. The arrangement by Graham Wilde and Nigel Martinez transformed the song sung by an orphaned Oliver Twist wishing for a mother to the soulful ballad of a young man's heartache.

The eight selections include several compelling instrumental introductions, some a bit repetitive, such as *Hit and Run* and *The River*, but well-executed and mixed.

In the same pop/funk vein, Junior's *Acquired Taste* deserves attention for its nouveau qualities. Although Junior's high pitched vocals occasionally reminded me of Michael Jackson, the original selections provided new musical encouragement for the most part.

Junior wrote the eight cuts with Glen Nightingale, who also played guitar on the recording, and Robin Smith, who contributed keyboards. More compelling intros grace this recording, including the lead cut, *Somebody*, Do You Really Want My Love with Stevie Wonder sitting in on drums and previously arranged on the *Beverly Hills Cop* soundtrack, and the metal tinged *Come on Over*. Nigel Martinez contributed his producer talent to this album as well.



Total Contrast: part of the recent British music invasion. They've got a new album out.

Leather bedecked metal queen Lori Chacko offers ten selections ranging from a ballad about her dead mother to sharp metal tales describing cynical reality on her namesake release *Chacko*. Although the British rocker looks and sounds a bit like some of her American metal sisters, prominent, accomplished female musicians haven't yet flooded the market, leaving ample room for Chacko's robust contributions. Chacko and Joey Balin co-wrote the ten selections which don't sound "just like" anyone else in particular.

The instrumental melodies don't delve in cacophony either, a path metal music has a tendency to wander. Possibly the variety of musicians contributing to the recording make the difference. Their experience backing well-known American performers covers a wide gamut: John McCurry (John Waite, Cyndi Lauper), Jeff Golub (Billy Squier), Tommy Price (Billy Idol), and Vinnie Zumbo, Gary Burke and Tony Aiello (Joe Jackson). And Chacko's deep voice has an off-key quality that listeners sometimes find attractive.

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