



On record

Pacesetting musicians

"Battle Hymns for Children Singing"
Haysi Fantayzee
RCA

It's probably because the United States has the largest record-buying public in the world, or maybe it's that they have outgrown the tiny island that is their home. Whatever the reason, Britain's popular duo Haysi Fantayzee is making an assault on this continent.

Haysi Fantayzee consists primarily of Kate Garner and Jeremiah Healy. Secondly there is Paul Caplin, co-writer, co-producer and the brains behind the mixing boards.

The duo has been enormously popular in the U.K. for better than two years, where they are pacesetters in fashion and music. These two elements are inextricably wound up in the British music scene. Haysi Fantayzee are art in the context of fashion and literature set to music. Their mode of dress is called "Dickensian basic enlivened by rasta-reggae, hillbilly, African influences — topped off dramatically by headfuls of flowing dreadlocks."

There's really no way to visualize them from this description. Picture a woman almost totally encased in black fish-net stockings and leotard, with waist-length dreadlocks and a battered red felt hat. That's Garner. Next to her is a man in extremely baggy white striped black trousers, also with waist-length dreadlocks and a crumpled leather top hat. That's Healy.

But, to the album.

A lot of these fashion groups arrive with a splash and a shout, then sink the next day with a yawn. That's if their music has only passing interest. Haysi Fantayzee is different. "Battle Hymns for Children Singing" is nearly a compilation of their U.K. hits and shows them at their very best.

The strongest tracks on the album are those U.K. hits: the early "Sabres of Paradise," "John

Wayne is Big Leggy" and the most recent "Shiny Shiny."

"Sabres of Paradise" is a typical early Haysi Fantayzee song. It's a "rap" song — with Healy reciting the lyrics in a low, breathy voice. The whole song has a quirky sensuality, with lyrical twists gleefully trampling upon the obvious.

"John Wayne is Big Leggy" is done all in a furious gallop. Haysi Fantayzee, and Caplin, have kicked over the barricades and put everything, including gun shots and cracking bull whips, into this song.

Most of the tracks in "Battle Hymns for Children Singing" are set at a blistering pace — often with not even a moment for a quick wheeze or sit down between. The track entitled "Sister Friction" will startle the listener. It's wham in the left speaker... bam in the right.

"Shiny Shiny," Haysi Fantayzee's most recent U.K. hit, doesn't slacken the pace. "Shiny Shiny" is a lovely little tune about the world after the bomb. Hmmm. Still, it has quintessential Haysi Fantayzee lyrics.

*You sure look fine
Your shoes they shine
No heat can compete
With this blue-eyed liar
The child spoke
'We ain't got a hope
press the button
press the button
It's all remote.'*

According to publicity hacks, Healy was dismissed from Catholic school and moved into a "squat" in London. Garner, a part-time model from Wigan in northern England, was supposed to have met Healy when he crashed one of her photo sessions. Other stories say Garner discovered Healy when she barged into a room of squatters and found him snoring amongst the scruffs.

Oh, C'mon — they needn't go to all the bother. The music that Haysi Fantayzee makes is *non-pareil*, that will be recognized at the first listen.

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