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RECORDS

Whodini still needs voice lesson

Whodini
'Open Sesame'
★ ★ 1/2

Oh, "Be Yourself" is fabulous. "Life Is Like A Dance" exquisite. "You Brought It On Yourself" superb. "You Take My Breath Away" yuk, and "Hooked On You" weak and stupid — nothing seems to be going completely right these days.

Whodini's second LP "Escape" may have lacked musical dexterity, but it had the rap potential that their fourth, "Sesame," partially loses somewhere in Brooklyn. By mixing up horns (fake and real) and rockin' guitars with a more soulful sensation plus the usual quantity of scratching around drum machines, "Sesame" pro-

duces a new infectious feeling. The songwriting is the strongest it's been, slick and fun, by throwing enough effects in with "God's Respect." "Sesame" deals with Whodini's usual share of self-identity woes. "Remember Where You Came From," "Early Mother's Day Card," and "You Brought It On Yourself"

Review by
Chris Metzler

sort of legitimizing their history amongst the best. Millie Jackson and the men of Whodini preach to all of you to shed your pretentiousness and get realistic on "Be Yourself." Much like the

earlier "Bigmouth" and "Friends," these songs carry strong messages opposed to "other" bands who just sing about their fine clothing.

Whodini is weak in the slow love numbers, which just don't work (at least for me) except maybe "For The Body," an Ice-T "I'm God's gift to womanhood" number.

When so many bands are doing the same over and over it's refreshing to find something like this which bounces over new pavement. Yes, Whodini love themselves, but they are still respectable as they thank about half the rap bands in existence. One just wishes they could take some more vocal lessons.

PiL
'Happy'
★

Here's Johnny "king o' the punkers" Lydon and he's happy as can be. He's got his seventh record out with an all-star punk rock line-up from about every British band between '77 and '80. In other words, it's the Asia or The Firm supergroup for punkers. Black backing singers, a punk rock chorus, plus every reused riff in the catalog yields a pretty generic British record circa 1987.

The whole album is perfect for the disco floor as any of the songs could serve as a 12" single remix. "Seattle," the first single, is OK assuming the whole album didn't have the same beat.

"The Body" brings up images of the Solid Gold dancers beckoning folks to join an aerobic club or the Army.

The lyrics deal with the usual range of subjects from depression and oppression to conformity and absurdity. The last song, "Fat Chance Hotel," is about as good as it gets by mimicking earlier PiL.

Futhermore, this album is too short, clocking in at only around 30 minutes.

PiL was always a noncompromising band, thank God, but to make something as unoriginal as this is a waste. Johnny has always scorned blatant commercialism, but I guess he wasn't happy then. This is pathetic.

The Emerald would like to thank House of Records for providing the albums reviewed.

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