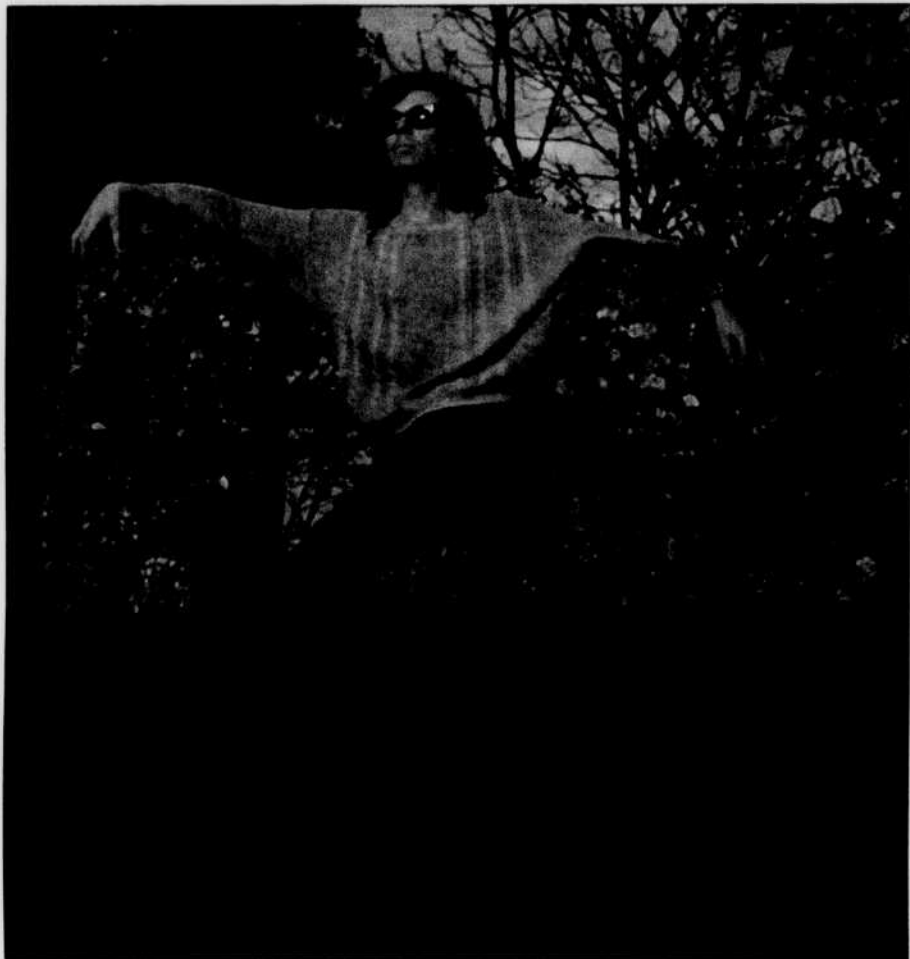


Cope's 'Suicide' lashes out at indifference



COURTESY OF ISLAND RECORDS

Julian Cope's latest *Peggy Suicide* is pure pop joy.

By MATTHEW P. MOORE

The Auburn Plainsman, Auburn U.

Julian Cope could be described as a survivor of sorts.

Cope fronted one of the great English bands of the late '70s, the Teardrop Explodes, and following its demise in 1982 he went onto even greater success as a solo artist.

Cope projects an unflattering view of people as a whole, not to damn them, but to warn them.

Nowhere is this more evident than on Cope's 1991 release *Peggy Suicide*, an 83-minute double album that lashes out at the indifference of humanity toward the planet and nature, poll taxes in England, war and everything that goes down everyday to make life on earth more unbearable.

Cope said that *Peggy Suicide* "... is a vision of the world I had some months ago. In that vision, Peggy Suicide was Mother Earth."

Cope said he called the album *Peggy Suicide* because Mother Earth is poised on the highest cliff of infinity about to leap off.

Cope said the album is his message to the world that "... I'm back. I'm lucid, well-meaning, and I'm not an asshole."

Peggy Suicide excels as a concept album.

It opens with "Pristeen," a Velvet Underground-type tune that's about a man who is falling in love with his ideal woman and finding out that she's not what he thought she was at all.

Cope said *Peggy Suicide* is a metaphor for the treatment that Mother Earth receives

from people.

Cope sometimes deems it necessary to provide his audience with a subtle yet forceful aural masterpiece about the human condition, the role of religion in society or the desecrations caused by politics.

Peggy Suicide provides an eerie homespun charm that combines a garage sound with precise, rhythmic percussion. The flowing keyboards combine with guitars that sometimes break into chaos. It's pure pop joy.

Cope is at once engaging and disparaging, poetic and depressing. His chaotic gloominess is apparent in the lyrics to his single "Charlotte Anne," from 1988's *My Nation Underground*.

"And in my room, I'm alone in my room. And in my casket I'm alone in my gloom, and may be in here for awhile," Cope sings in rhythmic patter, with what sounds like a slow, upbeat Celtic-like flute.

On his 1987 release *Saint Julian*, Cope dives headlong into the subject of religion and tackles it with bullish tenacity.

He sings on the title track, "I met God in a car in a dreaming dreaming ankerside. And I was very unkind, I said, 'You locked us out of forest and gave us a mind.'"

Most of Cope's work sounds angry and vociferous, but different from protestations afforded listeners by other bands.

Cope's singing style hasn't changed much from his previous works. Still rough and ragged and unpolished, Cope belts out his message with a ferocity that won't or can't stop.

SOUNDBITES

EMF *Shubert Dip*

The latest European wonderkids use the traditional 'house beats meet guitar rock' trend and inject a huge dose of dance-a-tronic bass rhythms.

Sounds like Jesus Jones, doesn't it?

Maybe, but EMF's sound is more fluid and their whirlwind guitars cut through the back-beats with a little more ummph, giving them more credibility than most indie/dance fusion acts.

EMF's free spirit of wreckless mirth and unbridled energy comes through crisp and loud on their EMI release, *Shubert Dip*. The first single, "Unbelievable," has been a big success on both sides of the Atlantic, on and off the dance floor.

The album as a whole combines EMF's passion for both straight-ahead rock and groove-bound dance music. EMF may look young and fresh enough to tour with the New Kids, but their music evokes a tough, determined, self-made working class effort that bands 10 years older are still trying to produce. ■ Charles Marshall, *The Daily Tar Heel*, U. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill



Fishbone *The Reality of My Surroundings*

Fishbone's new release, *The Reality of My Surroundings*, is the epitome of its title. "If I Were A... I'd," which is broken up into four parts on the album, says it all: "If I believed everything I saw on television, I'd think like the Brady Bunch and eat Wendy's for lunch."

The "Parental Advisory/Explicit Lyrics" label attached to the album is fair warning to songs such as "Naz-tee May-en" and "Junkies Prayer."

"Prayer" is supposed to be a take-off on the Lord's Prayer with lyrics that read "My pusher who art in the crack house, hallowed be thy bitches and hoes... forgive us for we have no control or self respect."

Although *The Reality of My Surroundings* has some unusual beats and intelligent lyrics, it doesn't compare to the band's *Truth and Soul* album.

The Reality of My Surroundings is an eclectic mix of hard-core funk and ska. It's interesting, but a bit too hip for hip's sake. ■ Nellie Jane Darlington, *The Daily Lobo*, U. of New Mexico



Jesus Jones *Doubt*

No *Doubt* about it—Jesus Jones is one of the most exciting bands to come along in years. Jesus Jones takes cynical, jabbing lyrics, and adds dark, savage guitars and catchy synth melodies to come up with a truly original hybrid.

Songs like "Nothing Left to Hold Me" and "I'm Burning" simmer with cold emotion waiting to explode.

"International Bright Young Thing" and "Real, Real, Real," are bouncy extra-terrestrial pop spiked with sarcastic lyrics.

"Right Here, Right Now" is a perfect marriage between jangling guitars and soaring harmonies.

With *Doubt*, Jesus Jones has come up with a masterpiece of cynicism and rage, perched upon the fragile line between smart danceable hip-hop pop and bludgeoning industrial energy.

While *Doubt* is an excellent album, Jesus Jones' first album, *Liquidizer*, was a better effort from the band and is probably a better investment for first-time Jesus Jones listeners. ■ Sean Leary, *The Northern Star*, Northern Illinois U.



R.E.M. *Out of Time*

R.E.M. has always prided itself on the diversity of musical styles within a single album, and the band's latest Warner Bros. release, *Out of Time*, continues the tradition.

The only problem is a few songs that fill the "quota" of experimental rhythms and vocals are just plain bad.

"Shiny Happy People" is an annoying tune indicative of its title, saved by the back-up vocals of Kate Pierson of the B-52s.

But cuts such as the popular "Losing My Religion" and "Half a World Away" combine great lyrics, complex melodies and strong rhythms to produce true R.E.M. hits.

"Belong" is the most enthralling song, saving the album from becoming a total waste of plastic.

Although *Out of Time* is still signature R.E.M., with Stipe's cracking voice and lyrics that don't necessarily rhyme, it doesn't compare favorably with their previous efforts. ■ Meredith Petran, *The State News*, Michigan State U.

