

MUSIC

Royal Trux show soul on 'Thank You'

Every once in a while comes an album with so much raw emotion and power that it finds its way onto the CD-player more often than anything else.

Although Jennifer Herrema and Neil Hagerty's songs aren't particularly catchy or easy to understand, they have "soul," something that is unfortunately often missing in today's over-produced, polished, corporate crap that gets labeled as "alternative."

When the '80s garage-punk outfit Pussy Galore broke up, the members went on to form the Jon Spencer Blues Explosion and Royal Trux. Even though both bands had blues based sounds, the Blues Explosion took a more hip-hop and funk approach. Royal Trux, on the other hand, became a more experimental and much darker blues band, drawing comparisons to bands such as Sonic Youth and Come.

The band's early work often got dismissed as junkie-music, or an experimental drug-garage band, but this album should definitely set the record straight. Royal Trux have become a brilliant band, with



Thank You
Royal Trux

★★★★★

covered the whole *Exile on Main Street* album. One of the more distinctive aspects of Royal Trux' sound are the vocals. Herrema has a raspy, bluesy voice — a cross between Janis Joplin and Sonic Youth's Kim Gordon. When Hagerty is singing with Herrema, this is especially effective, as their voices complement each other well. Also present is the percussion, which adds a more rhythmic feeling, even though the drums sound very well. The bass player provides an interesting backdrop to the soundscape.

Thank You has no low-points, since every song is really good. There are, however, several stand-

a great album to prove it.

Hagerty's fascination with the Rolling Stones is evident in his style of playing guitar and the general looseness of the songs. Pussy Galore once

outs, such as the surprisingly catchy "Ray-O-Vac" and "Lights on the Levee." There is no set mood for the album, but there is a feeling of destruction and decay that may be associated with Hagerty and Herrema's urban surroundings and drug use, as in "Shadow of the Wasp," which includes the lines, "... with the trash piling on for six weeks now, this town really stinks, everything's so crowded now."

To best describe what Royal Trux sound like, imagine what it would be like if the Rolling Stones grew up in the early '80s listening to punk and became a garage band with a female singer. This is simply great blues/rock with a garage-punk attitude. For those who have not heard the band, this is definitely their most accessible work to date, and for fans of Royal Trux, their major-label debut might just be their best album so far. They have great potential, obvious throughout *Thank You*, and hopefully we will be seeing more of them.

— LES ZACZEK
Oregon Daily Emerald



Doom to be released in paperback

Pocket Books and id Software have announced the publication of four novelizations of the popular Doom computer software games. Doom's realistic texture-mapped 3-D graphics, intense stereo sound and action have made it the No. 1 computer game in the world.

Two mass market paperbacks, based on the storylines of Doom and Doom II, priced at \$4.99, are scheduled for release in August 1995. The novels are titled *Doom: Knee-Deep in the Dead* and *Doom: Hell on Earth*.

Free poetry contest for Eugene poets

A \$1,000 grand prize is being offered in a free poetry contest, open to everyone in the Eugene area. The deadline for entries is May 10. Winners will be announced on or before July 6. Poems may be written on any subject, in any style. To enter, send one poem 21 lines or less to: Free Poetry Contest; 421 N. Rodeo Dr., Suite 15-544, Beverly Hills, CA 90210.

Water plays good, catchy songs

Their record company, MCA, describes Water as "a melting pot of Anglo-rock and southern art-pop influences...transcends the traditional boundaries of punk, pop and alternative." The word "punk" repeatedly pops up in the bio/press release. I'm not a punk fan so I don't know a whole lot about the genre, but I do know that *Nipple*, Water's debut, is not punk.

As far as being alternative, isn't everything nowadays?

Whatever genre one wishes to put Water in doesn't really matter. They write and play good, catchy songs. "Spin" in particular has been in my head since I first lis-



Nipple
Water

★★★

tened to it. Some songs have an ethereal sound, others really kick in with some nice grooves, but none are very heavy. Dean Bradley's voice is reminiscent of Michael Stipe throughout various parts of the CD, but not so much as to be labeled a R.E.M. clone. Mark Cohen, bass; Howie, lead guitar; and John Guest, drums, round out this fledgling

band from Orange County, Calif. Their lyrics have the typical themes of struggle, love, freedom and philosophy. Often times the songs are so abstract that it is hard to figure out exactly what they're talking about. The lyrics to "Oven" are "step up to the oven/welcome to the oven/she waits, she waits/ step up to the oven/welcome to the oven/she waits, she waits" What? The only thing I can surmise is that maybe it's about the ovens from WWII.

It's still a good album and if you're into checking out new bands, check out Water.

— ALLISON HALL
Oregon Daily Emerald

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