

ARTS

Summer tunes

New albums reveal dimensions in new wave and rock-funk

By CLIFTON BARNES

(Editor's note: records are reviewed on a five point system as follows — ***** excellent, **** good, *** satisfactory, ** fair, * poor.)

Two very different groups—Rufus and The Selector—in this week's album review, have recently put out equally good albums.

Rufus without Chaka Kan specializes in soul, rock-funk with a little disco mixed in, while The Selector is basically an English new wave group with an added Reggae and soul sound and a little rock mixed in.

Rufus' Party 'Til You're Broke is a 10-song dance and party album. "Hold on to a Friend" is a mid-tempo soul selection that is moving up the black-oriented music charts and is Top 100 material. The chorus is just made for Chaka Khan but Hawk Wolinski and Tony Maiden on vocals compensate sufficiently for the loss.

"Tonight We Love," by Wolinski is the best cut on the album. The horns make this upbeat song an exceptionally good one. It is a fun tune with rhythmic, sing-along words.

"We Lost the Way" is a nice smooth flowing addition to the album. The title cut and "What Is It" are also two of the better songs. The remaining cuts get monotonous and the use of synthesizers is excessive. Party 'Til You're Broke —***½

The Selector, a seven-member band, is a kind of potpourri of several English bands—Transposed Men, Hard Top 22, Chapter 22, the Blockheads and the Pharoahs with help from John Bradbury of the Specials.

The group's first album was a rush job, leader Noel Davies said, and even though The Selector had a week's worth of sellouts in Los Angeles, the group wasn't satisfied. In England there were a few changes, including band members and record companies.

Now—eight months later—The Selector is a group to be reckoned with after the release of its second album *Celebrate the Bullet*.

The title track by Davies is the best on the album. It is a pleasant combination of everything that The Selector is—Reggae, soul, new wave and rock. Davies' guitar and lead vocalist Pauline Black highlight the song.

Records

Other songs that make the album worthwhile are "Red Reflections," "Deep Water," "Tell Me What's Wrong," and "Their Dream Goes On." "Red Reflections" is a rock-new wave song by Black. Black's exceptional voice sounds similar to Grace Slick on "Deep Water."

"Tell Me What's Wrong" sounds like an old Jamaican folk song, "Matilda." It is written and sung by Reggae artist Gaps Hendrickson. "Their Dream Goes On" by Davies is an eery, electronic song with a fine saxophone solo by James Mackie, formerly of the Pharoahs.

The Selector is a fun group with a radical stance on issues, but they are not so far-out like some new wave groups that require a listener to have a warped mind to figure out the words. *Celebrate the Bullet*—***½

Alvin, Simon and Theodore join forces again for a new album—*Urban Chipmunk*. This novelty album consists of eight remake songs, two new songs, words and a poster.

The Chipmunks sing several popular country ballads—the best of which are Kenny Rogers' "The Gambler," and "Coward of the County" and Waylong Jennings' "Luckenback, Texas."

There are several hilarious lyric changes such as in "Coward of the County" where Alvin sings "The Gatlin boys were bullies and they beat up Tom's best friend."

In "The Gambler" Alvin sings:

*I can see you're out of aces
for a sip of your soda
I'll give you some advice*

*So I handed him my bottle
and he drank down my last swallow
Then he bummed a twinkie
and offered me a bite.*

The album is fun for children and adults. Needless to say, the lead vocals aren't much but there are serious background vocals from Beach Boy Dennis Wilson. The music is not bad either. As a novelty, the album is tremendous, but only as a novelty. *Urban Chipmunk*—***

Quick Picks

Spandau Ballet—*Journey to Farewell* ***

Keni Burke—*You're the Best* **

Odyssey—I got the Melody **½

Thelma Houston—*Never Gonna be Another One* *½

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