

Reviews

X-Teens album plays better in the air than on the air

By ED LEITCH

The Fabulous Knobs, The Fabulous Knobs
... big boys dream, The X-Teens

Two local bands billed as "Moonlight Recording Artists" have appeared at the Cat's Cradle in recent weeks: The Fabulous Knobs and The X-Teens. After attending a Fabulous Knobs performance, you will want a Fabulous Knobs album. After hearing an X-Teens album, you will want to avoid their performance.

The Fabulous Knobs' album, appropriately called *The Fabulous Knobs*, is a bit of a disappointment. It contains no more than eight minutes of music per side touted on the back cover as "Soul music for the Eighties — As the Stones did way back when, The Fabulous Knobs are forging the future by uncovering our musical past."

Well, that's nice but the Fabulous Knobs' album captures

only about one half the intensity of their live performance. As any Rolling Stones fan can tell you, in recording studio or stadium, their music is intense. The Knobs should strive for the same intensity even to the point of sacrificing the artificial studio-tightness found in their album.

Overall, the album is too careful, too restrained, too calculated and too squeaky clean. It leaves you yearning for a rougher edge. The energy is there alright (somewhere) but the vocals, that is Debra DeMilo's vocals don't really come to the front until side two on "Please You No More." Her pronunciation of "wants" as in "You got something every girl wants" is indeed, Fabulous. Too often, however, these tender moments are lost in the tidiness of her accompaniment.

Furthermore, the drums are consistently too loud; the guitars are too clean and the mix of the keyboards varies be-

tween too little and too much throughout the album. The album doesn't come anywhere near to exploiting the Knobs' full potential.

The Fabulous Knobs should have a few drinks, loosen up and record the whole thing over live. But until they do, buy this album — it was only \$3.00 the last time I checked. It is far from perfect but it represents some of the best local talent around and even for its flaws, it's a bargain.

The X-Teens' album, ... *big boy's dream*, is another story. This junk is manna from Mars for musical misfits. It is one of the few albums ever recorded that it actually hurts to listen to. They should quit wasting plastic on albums like this if only to keep the price of frisbees down.

Ed Leitch is a staff writer for The Daily Tar Heel.

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