

# Don't let radio rule! Look at what they don't play

By **TODD MORMAN**  
Special to the DTH

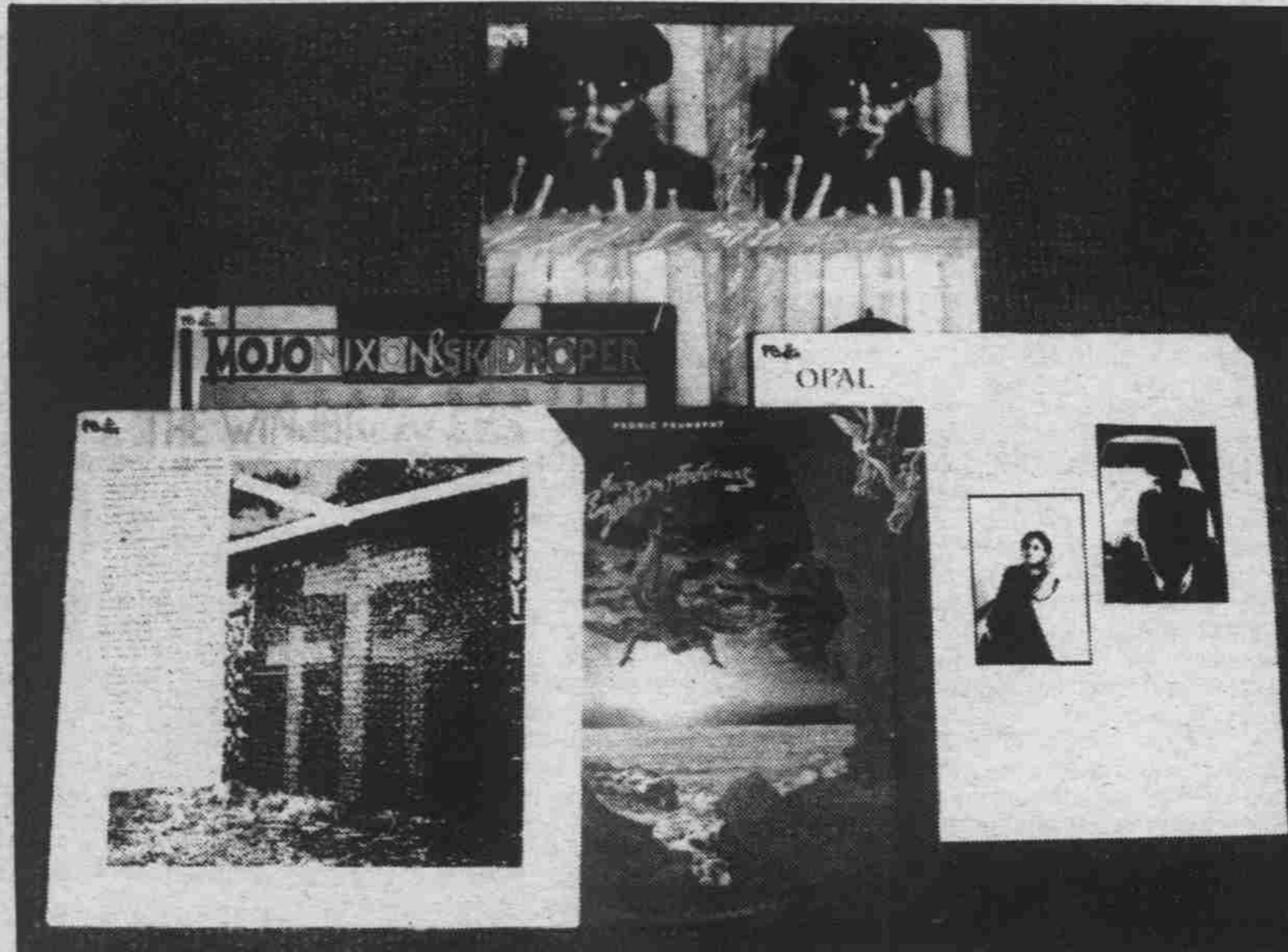
There are a lot of great new records that you'll never hear on commercial radio — for all the wrong reasons (shame, shame).

But don't let that stop you — all of the following releases are excellent. If the names are all new to you, consider yourself lucky; you've got worlds to explore. And, hey, if the names are familiar, consider yourself lucky — there's not a bad song in the bunch.

Mojo Nixon and Skid Roper's new album **Bo-Day-Shus!** is a good place to start, because the song "Elvis is Everywhere" has a good shot at being a hit. These two guys have cultivated a loyal club following by combining simple talking blues (Mojo on guitar, Skid on washboard) with a wild and hilarious stage show. Previous songs include "Jesus at McDonald's," "I Hate Banks" and "Gonna Put My Face on a Nuclear Bomb."

The new album shows them stretching out a bit, adding horns and backing vocals on some tracks, getting funkier (just a little), and singing some wiser, even poignant lyrics. But **Bo-Day-Shus!** is no sell-out; for proof, you can check out the scatological "I Ain't Gonna Piss in No Jar," or "I'm Gonna Dig Up Howlin' Wolf," complete with casket-opening sound effects. Vinyl success number three for Mojo and Skid.

The Dukes of Stratospear were XTC. No surprises there — some of last year's **Skylarking** would fit nicely on **Psonic Psonspot**, the new Dukes album. Unashamedly inspired by the



A few albums you will not hear on the radio

DTH/David Minton

best 60s psychedelic pop (you can actually play name-that-song-influence), they start with almost unbelievably catchy melodies, add an odd and amazing variety of instruments and effects, and come up with a near-perfect reincarnation of The

Drug." "Vanishing Girl," "Collideascope" and "Branic's Daughter." If you enjoy the intensity of, say, Sonic Youth, but sometimes get a little bored with headbanging rhythms, try **Happy Nightmare Baby** by Opal on SST records. Kendra Smith and Dave Roback (formerly of The Dream Syndicate and Rain Parade, respectively) create music that is both psychedelic and metallic, but slowed enough to allow you to really explore the darkness within.

Lovein' Spoonful/Byrds/Beach Boys/Traffic/Small Faces and, oh yeah, the Beatles. This is one of the best pop albums ever (at least of this year), and you won't hear any of it on commercial radio. Still unconvinced? Try these song titles: "You're my

not just wallow in it. The heavy T. Rex guitar and vocal influence is a joy — I wish more bands would acknowledge their debt to this guy. The sound is mystical and wonderful (is that a harpsicord I hear behind those guitars?). This is folk music to listen to after the coming apocalypse.

Here's one for the guitar worshippers: Tom Verlaine was a founding member of Television, one of the best of the mid-70s New York bands who were doing things that would later be called punk. Famous for his biting, fractured guitar lines and alternately funny/angry lyrics ("I fell into the arms of Venus de Milo," for one), Verlaine's solo albums have been explorations in guitar and keyboard work that are usually pretty stunning, and **Flash Light**, his latest, is no exception. This reminds me of U2's first albums, probably because Bono and the Edge listened to a lot of Tom Verlaine. There are bits of guitar here and there that seem to ricochet around your head as you listen (my idea of fun). Add beautiful keyboards and powerful, suggestive lyrics and you've got another great Tom Verlaine album.

The Windbreakers have become over their five releases a group of players rotating around guitarist Tim Lee, a Jackson, Miss., native who's worked with Let's Active and Rain Parade, and the Bongos, among others. So, the overall Southern pop sound of this band shouldn't be a surprise. What is a surprise is the gritty power of the songs on the new album, **A Different Sort**, due mostly to Lee's vocals and grinding guitar. The Windbreakers have always had an edge many other "jangly" pop bands lacked, but here it's up front, and especially potable in the lyrics. Lee uses pieces of sax and drops of piano, as well as a very nice female vocal partner, to warm up the album. The end result tastes like sandpaper crepe wrapped around peaches dipped in chocolate sauce. Yum. Title lyric: "There's a different sort of heart-break every day."

Go ahead, try one. Michael Jackson doesn't need your money that badly.

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