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● Spandau Ballet — one of the most enduring bands.

Record Review

Bob Woodhead

With so many good albums being released during the run-up to Christmas it was impossible for me to review them all in 1986. One of the splendid LP's that I could not find space to review was "Through the Barricades" by Spandau Ballet.

This North London quintet are proving themselves to be one of the most enduring of the bands who emerged in the "new romantic" era of 1980. The reason that this record is their first for two and a half years is due to their heavy touring schedule and their contractual dispute with Chrysalis which led to their signing for CBS.

The album has been well worth waiting for, not least for its title-track, the haunting ballad with powerful lyrics and a clever arrangement. Also included is "Fight For Ourselves," the chanting, singalong hit single of

last summer.

Side One features "Virgin" which they sung for the first time at "Live Aid" in July 1985. This catchy tune has all the ingredients of the 1983-84 Spandau sound, but the other numbers have many new ideas and interesting arrangements. Apart from "Barricades" my favourite song is "How Many Lies?" which is strong on melody and has a well-balanced structure to it.

Also back on the album scene after a two year break are Kool And The Gang with "Forever."

The first three songs on Side One are uptempo, rhythmic affairs with "Stone Love" standing out. This side closes with the slower title-track, but the best of the slow songs are "Special Way" and "God's Country" with their exquisite, melodic vocal harmonies reminiscent of their 1985

smash "Cherish." All in all this is another well-produced, enjoyable collection of soulful funk and smooth ballads from these six Americans.

Just released on the Some Bizzare label is a ten track compilation of "Soft Cell — The Singles" featuring the duo's futurist, technopop hits from "Memorabilia" in February 1981 to "Down In The Subway" in February 1984.

The eight hits that came in between these two will be familiar to everyone. For example there is "Tainted Love," the best-selling single of 1981, "Bedsitter," "Torch," "What" and best of all "Say Hello, Wave Good-bye" with its spine-chilling vocal delivery from Marc Almond. I thoroughly recommend this well-timed collection.

I am pleased to report that Jackie Wilson's record company

are re-releasing "I Get The Sweetest Feeling" which was recorded in the late Sixties and reached number nine in August 1972. This is one of my favourite soul classics and I never tire of hearing it. Jackie's "Reet Petite" has now sold 750,000 records.

LP CHART (Last week's positions in brackets)

- 1 (2) The Whole Story (Kate Bush)
- 2 (4) Graceland (Paul Simon)
- 3 (3) True Blue (Madonna)
- 4 (1) Now 8 (Various)
- 5 (9) Live Magic (Queen)
- 6 (8) Slippery When Wet (Bon Jovi)
- 7 (7) The Singles (Police)
- 8 (12) Different Light (Bangles)
- 9 (10) Revenge (Eurythmics)
- 10 (5) Silk and Steel (5 Star)

Reduced from A3 → A4.