Power-packed vocalist

Teena Marie was born in California and brought up in Venice, and she made her name by becoming one of the first white girl singers to sign up with Motown Records.

She achieved recognition and chart success with floor-fillers like "Behind The Grove" and "I Need Your Lovin' " in 1980, but later signed with Epic Records for whom she has just released her fourth album (and her eighth in total) called "Naked To The World."

The power-packed vocalist has written, arranged and produced all the songs on this package. They include two duets with former musical partner Rick James, namely "Call Me" and "The Once And Future Dream." The latter was unquestionably inspired by the much-lamented partnership of Marvin Gaye and Tammi Terrel, and is the better of the two duets. The best track overall is the recent 45 "Ooo La La La," a sensitive groove-ballad, reminiscent of the great early Smokey Robinson hits. The title-song comes a close second. It is another slow number with a superb vocal delivery. "Trick Bag" is the best of the faster cuts.

Sometimes Teena's vocals go completely "over the top," and there are tracks where a more refined approach could sound better. It almost seems that she gets carried away on a tide of enthusiasm, but fortunately the songs and production are so strong they can stand up to this.

Country music lovers will be pleased to learn that EMI have issued a mid-priced collection of Crystal Gayle's U.K. hit songs from the 1970's. The 20-track album is named "Talking In Your Sleep" in recognition of her biggest hit, and it features favourites like "Don't It Make Your Brown Eyes Blue" and the haunting ballad "When I Dream."

Record Review

Crystal was one of the last performers to achieve major recognition in our mainstream pop charts. The popularity of Country Music has been on the decline both here and in America for the last six or seven years, but there are signs that a revival may be on the way in the 1990s as many promising young singers are perfecting their art.

A new compilation LP called "The Best Of Acker Bilk, His Clarinet And Strings" features the pick of Acker Bilk's recording for the Pye label from 1971 onwards. This delightful collection is a joy to listen to, and should provide many an evening with a soothing and relaxing atmosphere. The highlights include his 1976 comeback hit "Aria," his 1973 remake of "Stranger On The Shore," and some classy arrangements of "Canio's Tune," "Pachelbel Canon" and best of all "The First Of Spring." Together with Wham's "Last Christmas," "Stranger On The Shore" (from 1961) is the only recording to sell more than a million singles in this country alone, without hitting the top spot.

Also available in the same series is "The Best Of Chris Barber" which will appeal to fans of "Trad. Jazz." The album includes 15 of the band's famous recordings from the mid-1950s, most notably the timeless "Petite Fleur" which was a forerunner of the Acker Bilk clarinet sound!

L.P. CHART

1. Nite Flite (Various)
2. Tango In The Night (Fleetwood Mac)
3. Motown Dance Party (Various)
4. Stronger Than Pride (Sade)
5. Dirty Dancing – Soundtrack
6. More Dirty Dancing – Soundtrack
7. Popped In, Souled Out (Wet Wet Wet)
8. Heaven On Earth (Belinda Carlisle)
9. Whitney (Whitney Houston)
10. The First Of A Million Kisses (Fairground Attraction)

Bob Woodhead

Teena Marie