Observer Entertainment

Whoops – the Blow Monkeys produce a mixed bag

The talented Dr. Robert, whose real name is Robert Howard, is back in business with his group the Blow Monkeys on the album "Whoops! There Goes The Neighbourhood."

He composed the ten tracks and a variety of producers took the helm, including Stephen Hague and Julian Mendelsohn, famous for their work with the likes of the Pet Shop Boys and New Order.

The album kicks off with a disappointing remix of their single from last summer "This Is Your Life" which has removed all the charm of the original "house" mix. Next up is the excellent dance track "Wait" which was recently a Top Ten hit single for Robert Howard under his own name, in duet with Kim Mazelle.

But the best number on Side One is "It Pays To Belong", the intro of which sounds like "Gonna Get Along Without You Now" the 1979 hit by Viola Wills. Much of the song is structured in the same way, but it is so tuneful you just cannot resist liking it.

On Side Two Dr. Robert had obviously been listening to the Pasadenas' hit "Right On" when he wrote "Squaresville" but he redeems himself later on with the album's final two offerings "Bombed Into The Stoneage," featuring a pleasant change of mood into a quiet, more acoustic sound, and "Let's Emigrate," a fine piece of slow-funk with a good guitar rhythm and saxophone passages.

EMI Records have released a fabulous Compact Disc featuring music from the Motion Picture "Scandal". The disc has twenty tracks, most of which are featured in the film which tells the story of the Profumo Affair of 1963. Apart from the great theme song "Nothing Has Been Proved" by Dusty Springfield and the "Love Theme from Scandal" by Carl Davis, the tracks are taken from the late 1950s and early 1960s – the period covered in the films.

They include "Apache" – the tune that really established the Shadows as a talented outfit in their own right, "Dreamin'" by Johnny Burnette, "Those Lazy Hazy Crazy Days Of Summer" by Nat King Cole, "I Remember You" by Frank Ifield which was No. 1 for seven weeks in the summer of 1962, and the atmospheric "Johnny Remember Me" by John Leyton. This was produced by the late Joe Meek who created fantastic records in his flat above a shopping parade, by artists like the Tornados and the Honeycombs without the benefit of today's technology.

The Peter Sellers and Sophia Loren comedy classic "Goodness Gracious Me" adds a pleasant variety to the disc, while Billy J. Kramer's "Do You Want To Know A Secret" could almost have been the theme song. It is rather ironic that this song was at number two in the charts when the Profumo affair hit the headlines.

Errol Brown, who led Hot CHocolate from 1970 until 1986, has issued his first solo album entitled "That's How Love Is". The ten tracks make interesting listening as he has adapted his style to a more contemporary dance feel.

He was involved in writing many of the songs, but the most outstanding feature of the LP is the production work of Paul Staveley O'Duffy, who in my opinion, is one of the country's finest young producers with the ability to turn a good song into something very special. He has done just that on "From The Balcony" and "Love Goes Up And Down" on this LP.

The Blow Monkeys

LP CHART

1 Anything For You (Gloria Estefan)
2 A New Flame (Simply Red)
3 Southside (Texas)
4 Singular Adventures Of The Style Council
5 101 (Depeche Mode)
6 Stop! (Sam Brown)
7 Ancient Heart (Tanita Tikaram)
8 Don't Be Cruel (Bobby Brown)
9 Greatest Hits Collection (Bananarama)
10 Bad (Michael Jackson)

Bob Woodhead