Dina's Perfect Year

GLITTERING 1993: Dina Carroll

1993 Review By BOB WOODHEAD

The year of 1993 will undoubtedly be remembered in pop history as the "Year Of Ragga" which is a modern, raw and danceable form of reggae as performed by the likes of Shabba Ranks, Snow and Shaggy whose Oh Carolina epitomises the style.

In March these three made up the first all-reggae Top 3 in chart history and as a result the more mainstream reggae also flourished.

Hits came from groups like UB40 and Ace Of Base, who at the time of writing, are battling it out to be best-selling single of the year, and also Inner Circle whose Sweat-A-La-La-Long was my favourite of 1993. These three made up a second all-reggae Top 3 in May.

UB40 were one of only five acts to reach No.1 in both Singles and Album charts in 1993 – the others being teenage favourites Take That, the leading Dance outfit 2 Unlimited, top female Whitney Houston, and Meat Loaf, who together with R.E.M. was the top rock performer.

Whitney Houston broke the record for most weeks at No.1 in the rock era in America, when I Will Always Love You spent 14 weeks and became the top selling, non-charity Single ever. In Britain it was top for ten weeks, beating Doris Day's record run at No.1 for a woman, set by Secret Love in 1954, and becoming our best selling 45 by a female artist. The Bodyguard soundtrack which features six of her songs, sold nearly 1.5 million albums in this country, but as the remaining songs are by various artists it is not eligible to be counted as the No.1 "Artist" Album of the year. The honours in this category are being fought out between R.E.M. and Meat Loaf whose original 1977 Bat Out Of Hell became the most charted album of all-time when it notched up its 444th week! His I'd Do Anything with a running time exceeding eight minutes, became the longest No.1 single, beating Hey Jude by the Beatles 25 years ago!

The Singles and Album Charts have grown apart just as they did 20 years ago, but a few artists did manage to achieve significant success in both, like Janet Jackson, Mariah Carey and the Pet Shop Boys whose Very was my favourite album. Names like D-Ream, Robin S, Culture Beat, Cappella and Gabrielle become important on the Dance Singles scene but meant very little to album buyers, while cult band Suede's success was much greater with the latter category.

It has been another good year for 1950s and 60s hits being reissued on CD, with packages by Manfred Mann, the Dave Clark Five, the Hollies, who have been celebrating their 30th anniversary, and Buddy Holly being especially good, Lulu also made a great comeback. A revival and cult following of 1970s music has also been gathering momentum.

For me, the brightest spots of 1993 included the long overdue mass acclaim afforded to both Sybil and M-People, and best of all the stunning debut album So Close by Dina Carroll which is probably the best and most successful first outing from a British woman after Lisa Stansfield in 1989. Dina first round fame in 1991 fronting Quartz in It's Too Late and then spent 1992 quietly building her solo career. In 1993 we have certainly seen the glittering dividends!

You can hear my show on Radio Bognor 87.7 FM, between 7-9am on Saturday, and 10am-1pm on Sunday, until January 8.

These were the No.1 Singles of 1993:

February 7: No Limit (2 Unlimited) five weeks.

March 14: Oh Carolina (Shaggy) two weeks.

March 28: Young At Heart (Bluebells) four weeks.

April 25: Five Live EP (George Michael/Queen) three weeks.

May 16: All That She Wants (Ace Of Base) three weeks.

June 6: I Can't Help Falling In Love With You (UB 40) two weeks.

June 20: Dreams (Gabrielle) three weeks.

July 11: Pray (Take That) four weeks.

August 8: Living On My Own (Freddie Mercury) two weeks.

August 22: Mr Vain (Culture Beat) four weeks.

September 19: Boom! Shake The Room (Jazzy Jeff and Fresh Prince) two weeks.

October 3: Relight My Fire (Take That and Lulu) two weeks.

October 17: I'd Do Anything For Love (Meat Loaf) seven weeks.

December 5: Mr Blobby (Mr Blobby) one week.

December 12: Babe (Take That) one week.

December 19: Mr Blobby (Mr Blobby).