Thrash in Boston with Mr. Beautiful

Mr. Beautiful Presents...All Hard, A Compilation of Boston Bands, Modern Method Records.

Contrary to what its title might suggest, this compilation album is defi-

ently not all hard. The range of music represented spans from the banjo picking of Stoma Fitch (Scruffy the Cat) to the thrash of Gang Green. We also get a taste of heavy metal compliments of the FUs, garage-style rock a la the Prime Movers, and pop rock from the Blackjacks.

So with all that diversity, how did these bands all end up on the same piece of vi-

ny? The answer is that Steve Barry, also known as Mr. Beautiful, represents a com-

mon thread among these local bands. Barry is locally renowned as one of the best sound men in Boston and has worked with each of the bands on this record at one time or another. All songs on the al-

bum were produced, engineered, and mixed by Mr. Beautiful.

My two favorite cuts on the album are those that were done somewhat tongue-in-

check. The Dogmatics do a great parody on the classic hit "Teenager in Love," only their version is called "Teenager on Drugs." This song is in the true style of the Dogmatic's good-time approach to rock and roll, as well as life in general. The song originally surfaced as a radio tape a few years ago, but this is its first appearance on vinyl.

Another song worth of promises for a Swinging Ending EP. Mr. Beautiful has turned out to be the first person to capture them on a record. Their contribu-
tion is an imaginative version of "Yesterday." However, it is not a mere cover of a Beatles' song. You've got to imagine the lyrics written by Barry. His comments: "I had a thumb up on the back of my McCartney key to set the sounds of punk, reggae, blue grass, jazz and sequins into many other musical genres as well. Sounds pretty ri-
cidulous, Right? Absolutely, and that's what makes it so much fun.

Incidentally, Brother Cleve and Johnny Angel make an appearance on the Dogmatic rendition of "Teenager on Drugs." In my sincere opinion, we have Band 19 second up on side two with "No Why." This cut is also on their recently released composer LP, but I prefer the version this compilation. Another good, strong rock "a roll song on this side of the album is "Headhunter" by the Orrians. I was warned, however, that this recording is almost iden-
tical to that on their most recent Taang re-

lease, Green Eggs and Ham. If the last album by the FUs didn't convince you, the "On Deep" on this compilation makes clear the new direction of this band into the heavy metal arena. It is personally am I a not a big heavy metal fan, but I must admit that this is a quite ac-
teptable tune. The FUs new sound is heavy metal, yet still contains the punk influences of the band.

Gang Green, on the other hand, has definitely remained a thrash band throughout and through. The 71-second song "Let's Drink Some Beer" is little more than a repetition of its title and continuous guitar banging. Scruffy the Cat offers its own variant of country rock and roll with "My Fate." It stands out as a winner on this record. The Prime Movers have earned their place in the heart of many by characterizing the psychedelic garage rock that lives on from the 60's. "All That Crisp" is fairly typi-
cal of this band's style and is along the same lines as material from their last EP. The Blackjacks were the biggest disap-

Pointment on the compilation. After a brilliant transition to pop rock on their last LP, Dress In Black, I was expecting great things from "Last Amygir Man." Un-

fortunatley, this cut flowed into an action of mediocrity. I have mixed feelings about this compi-
lation. The inconsistency of the style and quality of the bands makes it hard to listen to this record all the way through. There is something about a segue from The Prime Movers to Gang Green that makes me jump in my seat. However, there are many cases in which I stand by myself and go on with my train of thought. Overall my reaction to most of the material on the album is positive, yet there is still something just doesn't flow when I take my needle from beginning to end it.

Stephen A. Brovits

Errata

Due to an editing error, Joseph L. Shipman's name was inadvertently omitted from his art review, "Collage," on Jan. 26, 1986.

Stage becomes prison

The Island, by Athol Fugard, John Kani and Winston Ntshona at Suffolk Uni-

versity, 53 Temple Street, Thurs. Fri. and Sat. at 8 pm through Feb. 15.

The Island is a deeply touching and moving political prison on the coast of South Africa. Among its issues are John, a thre-

teen-year-old revolutionary serving 10 years, and Winston, serving life for flouting the pass laws. The characters are named for two South African crea-
tors who could create the roles and helped write the play.

As the audience is seated, the two actors some strenuous activity suggestive of hard labor, but which also evoke images of the mines, the mainstay of the South Afri-

can economy. Their involvement in the work is so complete that they seem to raise sweat. It is a little bit sad, however, to gu-

ess exactly what they are doing.

Their actors, carried with with animal-like ferocity and grimes, offer seem to min-

imize the incomprehensibility as well.

Why Moore as Winston and Allen Oliver as John in the Tester/Works production of The Island.

These are black South Africans as their jailers see them: animals to be worked and broken; humans in their response to pain. But when they are re-

turned to their cage, and slowly recover after a long hard labor, they are free to return to their hu-

manity.

Among their human concerns are justice and fair treatment. Their conversation fo-

cuses on dreams of homes, years away, and where they will be taken to work at the next dawn.

In the barren cell, the evening's enter-

tainment consists of taking turns to tell the stories of home and family unseen. John chooses to telephone his friends in New Brighton, a black township of Port Elizabeth, and pro-

ounce a long one-sided letter about a home and family unseen for three years. Although John is the better-read of the two, Winston has his share of memorable lines. He helps John to remember the past, to dream of freedom. But when he learns that John is soon to be re-

turned to the mines, he shows a glimmer: "John, if the freedom... you will laugh, you will enjoy the freedom in your dreams..."

Winston is in for life, and he knows he may never be released, and cannot count on the occasional visit from the MTG play. He can enter the story with ten fingers, John. I want to count. How. Do I have one? Two? How do I count? One. One day, one."

And so they pass the time, keeping each other company. But a greater piece of en-

tertainment is in store. The island is orga-

nizing a talent evening, and John is rea-

ding Winston into helping perform a play, "Aesop," which he saw years ago in Port Elizabeth. In his insightful analysis of the fable's meaning and makeup, extending even to the ankles, abridged in invis-

ible shackles.

And if the performance is complete in space, it is complete in time. The an-

thers are never allowed to leave their cubi-

cles. They are there before the audience is seated, and they remain there after we leave. The careful effort of the stage director Downs Class; the endure-

ing of the play, with no visible escape in space or time, reflects the hardship of the subject and the dedication of the actors.

Julian West

MTG in Arms

(Continued from page 13)

That was simply the inspiration where the light crew had managed to train a spot, but it looked awkward nonetheless. While I'm complaining about the tech-
nical crew, the sound person could have provided a little more help to singers struggling with the acoustics of the Sala. Schoke's wonderful voice, in particular, could have used a little help, as his deep tones didn't carry nearly so well as the wo-

The set designed by Angie Hwang '86 was simple enough and well-placed, without help from a curtain. The metronomes were carried out with due precision by the set crew.

Much the same comments could be made about Maggie Hsu's modest ins-

tumes. Most of the cast was uniformed in jeans or "gangster" suits. For the boys.

be played quite freely. These actors,

and girls alike, are all over each oth-

'Is he really all that hard, John? Don't you know they call me a hero, a war hero, a pur-

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with double entendres. (For that matter, "Ron Ford"?, Classic Coke??), is filled

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