



## SOUL ASYLUM

### While You Were Out Twin/Tone (TTR 8691)

It's too bad a reviewer (like myself) can't just like this album. We have to like it for all the right reasons; say all the cool things about it. Otherwise, the Twin/Tone folk, who are all hip and *only* like records for the right reasons, will snoot down their noses at us.

Me, I just like this record. I don't like lead singer/guitarist Dave Pirner's dirty hair or pants; I like his voice, and the way he writes songs that make you want to jump around your apartment and scream all your hell out. S.A. is a cathartic band that way. Their strong suit is a natural inclination to be a band, not just four guys who happen to play together. It may sound like some kind of bullshit synopsis, but these boys work their problems out together, which is ultimately more satisfying for both the band and whoever happens to be listening to them.

*While You Were Out* doesn't work out as much shit as Soul Asylum's last one, *Made to be Broken*, though. It's a better record, but it just doesn't have that sonic thrust that *Broken* had. Okay, so take that for what it's worth. If you don't want catharsis, no problem, either record kicks the crap out of anything else in the "s" bin.

Maybe it's just because I've been listening to a tape of this record that was recorded on a bad deck, but the songs seem to fly by without leaving a permanent impression. Of course, lots of them get lost in the shuffle of scratch-mastered guitars — or wiped out by the song right afterwards. But now that I think about it, maybe all the songs are just so good that none of them really stands out. Yeah, I think that's it.

"Freaks" has a cool backwards beginning that breaks into unexpected syncopation that stumbles into chaos until it's over and you

get the feeling that this LP is going to be some kind of a heavy experience, dude.

"No Man's Land," "Carry On," "Closer to the Stars," "Lap of Luxury" and "Never Too Soon" all befit S.A.'s reputation for harmonically brutal rock fests. Once and always a Suicide Commando, Chris Osgood takes over Soul Asylum's production from Bob Mould and takes two steps backwards, in a sense. He sees the blatant cock rock heritage in Dan Murphy's, Grant Young's and Karl Mueller's bones (it's probably buried in Pirner too, but I already mentioned him) and brings that aspect of the band to the front (cf. "The Judge"). There really isn't anyone to compare this band to, because their songwriting is so personal and unique. But Osgood makes Soul Asylum sound like a beat-up version of Aerosmith, and I always thought Aerosmith would be a lot better if somebody had just beat them up a couple times.

"Miracle Mile," Murphy's lone vocal on the disk, sounds amazingly like the Magnolias. It's kind of a scary tune; Murphy sounds pretty pissed off about something. *W.Y.W.O.* closes with "Passing Sad Daydream," a tune as melancholy as the title implies. But it doesn't wallow or cry. It just finishes the record with a grace of dust and the band's comfort in a job done and jobs left to be hated and beat. I feel better already.

P.S. Next band to pull the stupid "fade-out, fade-back-in" thing at the end of a song should be forced to kiss Led Zeppelin on the booty.

—Crispin Fox

## THE NEVILLE BROTHERS

### Treacherous: A History of the Neville Brothers Rhino Records (71494)

"T"reacherous" is a bit of Neville family slang, a variation on the familiar "bad" (meaning good). It could also serve to sum up the varied pitfalls (legal, financial, and otherwise) that for too long kept the Nevilles from reaping the recognition their collective talents warrant. Aaron, for example, was prevented from recording new material to follow up his 1967 number two hit, "Tell It Like It Is," by contractual ties to a failing record company. He never even got