

THE EAR

MW's Talent TipSheet

LIVERPOOL

THE PINK FISH QUARTET

The muffled vocals on this quartet's demo are extremely like those of New FADS, as indeed is the hard-hitting techno throb of Tomorrow Never Knows. But Burn You indicates an appreciation of everyone from The Doors to Ministry. A bit heavy for club types, but interesting.

Contact: Julie O'Neill
Tel: 071-482 8636

LIMERICK

THE CRANBERRIES

This Irish fourpiece, with an average age of just 18, are already attracting plenty of A&R and press attention. The main reason is Dolores O'Riordan's strong and distinctive vocals, which are well to the fore thanks to the group's restrained and difficult to pigeonhole backing. Their recent live dates supporting Moose exuded promise, as did all five tracks on their very consistent demo.

Contact: Pearse Gilmore
Tel: 010 353 61 40566

WEST MIDLANDS

STEAM

A heavy Teardrop Explodes influence can be heard on this Erdington five-piece's two-track demo, with Dodge's vocals particularly redolent of Julian Cope. They are good songs, and the chirlish lyrics of Watermelon Wine definitely hits the spot.

Contact: Dave Nash
Tel: 021-236 9170/350 1028

LONDON

CHINA BOY HI

This quartet offer a bounce and commercial indie pop with echoes of everyone from

George Michael to late-Seventies indie pioneers Young Marble Giants. The lively bassline makes Jasmin I Told You So worth hearing, but it is the slower Please Don't Say Goodbye which really hints at future teen appeal.

Contact: China Boy Hi
Tel: 071-482 6550

BAND AFRAID OF THEIR HORSES

Essentially the solo project of Rainy Moor, Band Afraid... offer an interesting mix of styles from Pet Shop Boys-type pop to the modern folk of Fire Inside. The strong vocals make the demo run smoothly and their promise makes them worth hearing early.

Contact: Medieval Productions
Tel: 081-881 6959

DUBLIN

BLINK

Best track from a new band on the official Irish NMS CD is That Was A Happy Day by this young trio. Cool is the word for their sassy blend of strolling bass, few vocals, whistling and silly-but-nice lyrics. Worth contacting to see if they have any other gems.

Contact: Aiden Lambert
Tel: 010 3531 715357

BLACKPOOL

THE NATURE THINGS

This five-piece offer a hard-hitting variation on the independence format with their debut EP on Action Records. It works best on the splendid Ignorance, which echoes Dinosaurs Jr more than their Manchester neighbours. But over the four tracks they effortlessly switch moods and years and look set to make a name for themselves.

Contact: Wayward
Tel: 091-978 8611

Wilson spearheads Dino strategy shift

Compilation specialist Dino Entertainment is changing strategy by releasing an original studio album, Mari Wilson's first in eight years.

Wilson is Dino's first UK signing, and part of an aggressive attempt to make its mark in the artist album chart.

The plan is to reduce the company's compilation work to just 50% of its business. But company consultant Nic Moran says: "It's very difficult to lure the right sort of artist and find new talent, and we need somebody who can sell albums not just singles."

Dino's interest in Wilson was triggered when her version of Cry Me A River appeared on its That Loving Feeling compilation. Moran, who worked on the strike force for her 1983 Showpeople LP on London, saw a possible market opening for a female jazz artist and contacted Wilson through the Musicians' Union.

Although she had been talking to Sire in the US about recording a pop album, her desire to continue in a jazz vein coincided exactly with Moran's ideas.

For the past five years Wilson has been singing jazz in clubs up and down the country including slots at Ronnie Scott's and supporting Stan Getz. She says: "In the mid-Eighties I thought, 'I want to be a singer and make great records and I'm not'. So I ran away for a while."

The new as yet unnamed album consists of 12 cover versions such as Someone To Watch Over Me, My Funny Valentine and Lover Man, as well as two of her own tracks, of which The Rhythm is set to be the first single. Interpretations of the covers are her own



Wilson: Dino Entertainment's first UK signing

and "quite different", which she puts down to her mixed jazz/pop career. A variety of renowned musicians such as Chico Freeman, Gil Evans and Delmar Brown play on the album, and Egyptian, Brazilian, New Orleans and flamenco musicians also feature.

Moran describes the music as having a slight jazz flavour. "Basically the concept is great songs performed in Marie's style," he adds.

Moran took the unusual step of asking Wilson to produce the album herself. "I didn't want a producer coming in, smothering it and making it sound like his album," he says.

Although Wilson was initially daunted, she believes her live experience has taught her to know what she wants

from her music and how her voice should sound.

Now Dino is concentrating on giving the album a heavy-weight push. "It's a totally different marketing technique to our compilation albums where really all you're doing is giving information to people and it's a very hard sell," says Moran.

"With Mari we will expose it through the media, get reviews and get people interested so they discover it for themselves."

Mari Wilson's comeback will be minus the beehive but with much experience gained over five years' hard work, and could be just the push Dino needs to establish itself in the artist album charts.

Caroline Moss

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