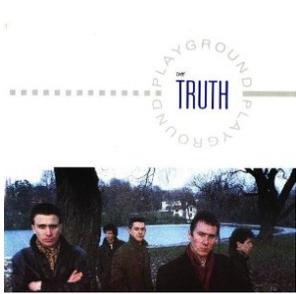


w/ Cover Page

## The Truth - Playground



from the LP *Playground*

c. 1985 IRS Records/American Beat

Formed in the early '80s by former One Below Zero leader Dennis Greaves (vocals and guitar) and second guitarist (and occasional vocalist) Mick Lister, the Truth's mixture of '60s rock and R&B veered away from the bluesy grind of Greaves' former band and embraced a more melodic pop sound. Emerging from the shadows just as The Jam broke up and Paul Weller formed the Style Council, the Truth filled in all the musical blank spaces in between. Not as "punk" as former or as smooth as the latter, the Truth's energetic pop & soul jive came at just the right time.

## Crash Course In Science - It Costs to be Austere



from the LP *Near Marineland*

c. 2011 Schematic Records (orig. recording - 1981)

Crash Course In Science are a post punk band formed in 1979 in Philadelphia. They avoided the sounds of conventional instrumentation by using toy instruments and kitchen appliances to augment the distorted guitar, drums and synthesized beats. Championed by local radio station WXPN DJ Lee Paris they recorded the single "Cakes In The Home" (with the B-side containing "Kitchen Motors" and "Mechanical Breakdown") for his Go Go label. This was followed by "Signals From Pier Thirteen" in 1981 produced by John Wicks at Third Story Recordings.

## Ack!Ack! - Another Face



12" single

c. 1985 Office Records

Ack-Ack! formed in Champaign-Urbana, IL in August 1982 as an artistic experiment in group composition. Within the group's first year, the need to expose the material to an audience for critical feedback expanded their focus to live performance. They were so well received that audience demand caused the group to evolve into what it eventually became at its zenith in 1986: an exciting, skilled live act with a solid compositional core. Various personnel changes over time strengthened its method of composition, as each new writer/performer reshaped the group's sound and direction towards its ultimate fresh and forceful style.

## Girls From Tahiti - No Reply



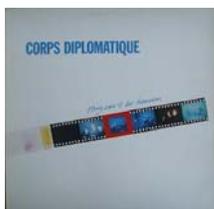
from the EP *Tower of Love*

c. 1984 Office Records

Here's a post-punk rarity that comes out of Switzerland from the early 80's. A four member group that takes on the classic approach of the greats in the genre and emphasizes not anger and energy, but mood and expression. "No reply" is a rumbling gloomy gem called which has fantastic background sound effects and trademark stripped down minimal guitar arrangements. The foursome embraced the haunting melodies and isolated vocal content to produce four exquisite songs. This is about as good as it gets for obscure post-punk fans....Enjoy!!

w/ Dangtrippers

## Corps Diplomatique - The Picture



from the LP *This Can't Be Heaven*  
c. 1987 SAM Records

The debut album from a new wave arena rock inspired band hailing from Denmark. After listening to the album for the first time, the main influence that the band takes on is U2, although you can hear The Mission, CWN and other passionate sonic laden guitar bands of the mid 80's. The core of the band was a trio and their music is driving new wave oriented rock, which gives the band a forceful, powerful edge that would fit nicely in an arena/stadium atmosphere.

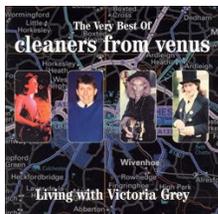
## Horizontal Brian - Practicing First Aid



from the LP *Vertical*  
c. 1983 Gold Mountain

This nifty British quartet plays lyrically observant melodic rock, much in the same vein as Stackridge did in oldentide. Bassist Tony Phillips sings his own songs in an engaging, unprepossessing voice, humorously satirizing the shortcomings of parenthood, colonial obsession and more. Although not as sharp as the words, the music is dandy.

## Cleaners From Venus - Girl On a Swing



from the LP *Going to England*  
c. 1987 Ammunition

The most extensive of singer/songwriter Martin Newell's various projects, Cleaners from Venus recorded some of the finest -- and most neglected -- British pop/rock of the 1980s. Its failure to find a wider audience is due at least in part to its unconventional method of distribution. As the chief of Cleaners from Venus, Newell and cohorts recorded several albums on their own, and distributed them via self-produced cassettes that were chiefly available by mail.

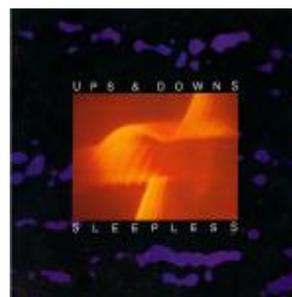
## Rhythm Corps - Solidarity



from the EP *Paquet De Cinq*  
c. 1983 Transcity Records

Rhythm Corps originally formed as the Rhythm Method in Detroit in 1981 with Michael Persh, Greg Apro, Davey Holmbo (a/k/a David Adamson), and Richie Lovsin. As Rhythm Method, the band played in the local area and attracted a sizable loyal following. The extended play *Paquet De Cinq* is their only release as Rhythm Method (later runs of the EP called the band Rhythm Corps). They released the independent EP *Espirit De Corps* in 1985 and their debut full-length *Common Ground* in 1988 on Epic. The album hit # 104 on the Billboard 200 while the single "Common Ground" hit #9 on the Mainstream Rock charts.

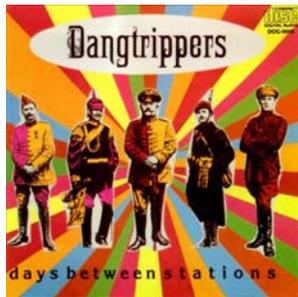
## Ups and Downs - The Living Kind



from the LP *Sleepless*  
c. 1987 What Goes On Records

Formed in 1983, Brisbane band Ups and Downs played a brand of ethereal, well-crafted, jangly guitar pop that called to mind Australian post-punk icons The Church, as well as the American underground jangle of REM. The band derived their name from a track on the Flamin' Groovies' 1978 album *Now* and they even supported them on their Australian tour of 1987. This album was recorded in the summer of '86 at Sydney and gives us the fantastic songs such as 'The Living Kind', their cover of Neil Diamond's 'Solitary Man', 'In The Shadows' and 'The Perfect Crime'. In 1990, the band split up and reformed as Big Heavy Stuff.

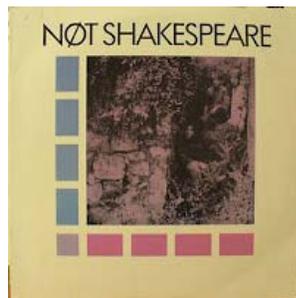
## The Dang Trippers - When Time Runs Out



from the LP *Days Between Stations*  
c. 1989 Dog Gone Records

*Days Between Stations* is principally an item for hardcore R.E.M. fans since it is one of a handful of albums released on the label owned by that band's manager, Jefferson Holt. The jangly guitars and well-crafted pop songs reflect the "college rock" sensibilities of young music makers raised on classic rock and power pop (particularly The Raspberries and The Byrds), with enough guitar arpeggios to place the group under the "New South" umbrella. Dumptruck, Dreams So Real, and a host of bands on dB Records found a niche making this kind of music, but The Dangtrippers add superior songcraft and a mild strain of psychedelia that at least give *Days Between Stations* a longer shelf life for the few listeners who chance upon it.

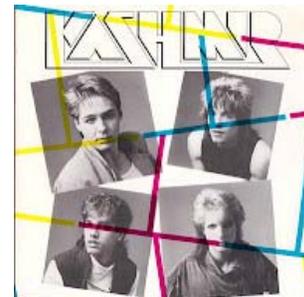
## Not Shakespeare - Turnaround



from the EP *Not Shakespeare*  
c. 1986 records

The roster of bands Mitch Easter produced at his fabled Drive-In Studios throughout the '80s is utterly staggering, given that I'm still stumbling upon more vintage college rock records that have his name adorning back sleeves, as is the case with Richmond, VA exports Not Shakespeare. I can't say this trio had a very heavy handed REM or Let's Active inflection to them, but still a relatively recognizable Mitch Easter production. It's more Cactus World News than dBs if you get my drift. "Get Well Soon" would have fit in snugly on a Red Rockers album. Overall, immensely satisfying if not particularly innovative. A [Complete Bunch of Pants](#) blog has some kind words to extol on them, including a brief mention of a NS tape titled *Not for Sale*, and another 12" EP that followed this one.

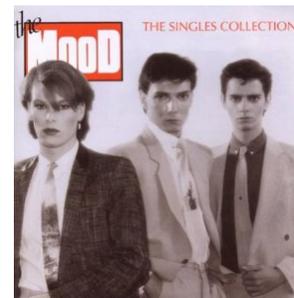
## Kashmir - Outside



12" Single  
c. 1984

Okay... if you can get past the sleeve of this 45, which is as gratuitously seeped in the '80s as you could ever possibly get, the proceedings within the grooves are surprisingly flattering. Don't let their moniker fool you, there's not a shred of Led Zeppelin homage occupying a stitch of these songs, rather a straightforward new wave motif reigns here. The sublime "Outside" packs a hook far more devastating than any of their mainstream competition could muster, thankfully deriving more from U2 and the 415 Records crop than say, Duran Duran. I have not a shred of info to pass along regarding Kashmir, save for their whereabouts, potentially in the Portland, OR area, which is where this single was cut.

## The Mood - Watching Time



from the LP *The Singles Collection*  
c. 2008 Cherry Pop Records

In 2008 Cherry Pop Records released the definitive collection of this obscure synthpop band's singles including their ultra rare indie single 'Is There A Reason'. Other A sides includes 'Don't Stop', 'Passion In Dark Rooms', 'Paris Is One Day Away' and 'I Don't Need Your Love Now'. The re-mastered 19 track *Singles Collection* features all the 7" and extended mixes of the A sides dating from 1981 to 1984. The CD booklet features sleeve notes, a discography and rare items of band memorabilia. The Mood hailed from York, UK and came to the attention of the major labels with the release of their indie single 'Is There A Reason'. The band signed to RCA in 1981 and the band released five excellent singles over the next three years.

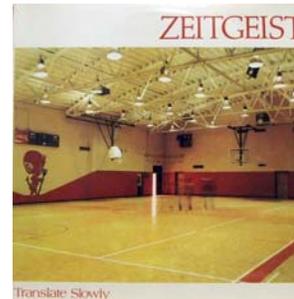
## First Man Over - It's Happening



from the LP *First Man Over*  
c. 1986 Attention Records

Here's an unknown album by a Canadian independent band based out of Toronto, Ontario. The band released several records on Mannequin Records including 3 EP's and a single. Impassioned vocal treatments with an abundance of up-tempo guitar driven indie pop inspired arrangements is what you will find here. An above par indie guitar rock obscurity that turns in an entertaining set of songs. Out of print private pressing via Attention Records.

## Zeitgeist - Araby



from the LP *Translate Slowly*  
c. 1985 DB Records

Zeitgeist was a post-R.E.M. folk-rock band hailing from Austin, TX, and led by guitarists/vocalists John Croslin and Kim Longacre. However, after just one album (1985's *Translate Slowly*), the group was forced by a Minneapolis percussion ensemble called Zeitgeist to change its name. The group became **The Reivers** and recorded several more albums, breaking up in 1991; *Translate Slowly* has since been reissued under the Reivers' name.

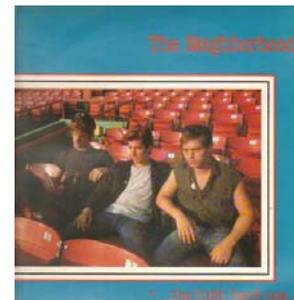
## Lavvi Ebbel - Much Ado About Nothing



from the EP *Albu Meth*  
c. 1982 Parsley Records

Lavvi Ebbel formed in the Netherlands in the late 70's, with their first single produced in 1981. The track "Victoria" was also released as its own 7" single the same year as this 12" extended player. There are some odd moments and periods of creative quirkiness, but they also provide entertaining upbeat synth numbers delivered with female and male vocals. Lavvi Ebbel would go on to produce two full length albums and further explore the experimental side of things. Out of print pressing via Parsley, Belgium.

## The Neighborhoods - True Stories



from the LP *The High Hard One*  
c. 1986 Restless Records

A punk-fueled garage-rock sound with big hooks, melodies, and snarling six-strings, The Neighborhoods are pretty much where it all starts in Boston Rock. A series of excellent albums, including 1986's *The High Hard One* (Restless), 1987's *Reptile Men* (Emergo) and their 1991 major label release, *The Neighborhoods* (Third Stone Atlantic), plus their non-stop touring made them the snotty favored sons of the Northeast and dark horses in much of the rest of the country. They called it quits for a spell, but they're back and are very much the real thing.

## I-Rails - Still Invisible



from the LP *Unfocused*  
c. 1987

This track is from the uber-rare 1987 cassette only album *Unfocused*, which thankfully was transferred from analog to ones and zeroes by some close associates to the band. For the uninitiated, the I-Rails were an Oxnard, CA based power trio and the unlikely precursor to '90s one-hit wunderkinds Primitive Radio Gods. As for *Unfocused* itself, it doesn't disappoint, yielding some of the Rails' best including the high-strung "No Matter" and "Mercury Don't Understand." Perfecto!

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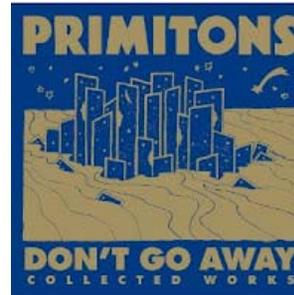
## Home - Heaven



12" single  
c. 1987 Homestijl Records

Fronted by the brains and brawn of principal songwriter and producer Bob Lukomski, Home was a short-lived Albany, NY band who released only a handful of obscure singles from 1987-1991 including the gem here called "Heaven" B-Side to the "Dirt" 12" released in 1987 on vanity label Homestijl Records. Lukomski is now a well known writer and composer for classical music ensembles, choirs, and electronic music/soundtracks.

## Primitons - Five Lines



from the EP *Primitons*  
c. 1985 Throbbing Lobster

Sometimes a trio, and at one point a quartet, Birmingham Alabama's The Primitons involved a constant nucleus of guitar/keyboards toting frontman Mats Roden and percussionist Leif Bondarenko. The group boasted an advanced sound beyond sweet minor chords and tingly arpeggios, one that's hard to properly distill in the written word. Arena Rock Recordings has recently enshrined the Primitons catalog in an 18-song set *Don't Go Away* which compiles their '85 self-titled mini album for Throbbing Lobster, the *Don't Go Away* ep (1986) and their 1987 parting shot, *Happy All the Time*.

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## O Positive - With You



from the EP *Only Breathing*  
c. 1985 Throbbing Lobster

Although some may view Boston's O Positive as nothing more than generic college-radio pop, the Boston group's talent and potential exceed that of many similar bands. Drummer Alex Lob and bassist David Ingham unite to form a monstrosly strong rhythmic backbone, upon which guitarist/singer Dave Herlihy drapes his clumsy but earnest lyrics about self-preservation in the face of obsession and unrequited love. Although this is thematic terrain which has been crossed a million times, Herlihy displays an Andy Partridge-like penchant for clever wordplay, some of which works nicely.

1. THE TRUTH - Playground (3:16)
2. ACK!ACK! - Another Face (3:14)
3. RHYTHM CORPS - Solidarity (4:01)
4. UPS AND DOWNS - The Living Kind (3:47)
5. THE DANGTRIPPERS - When Time Runs Out (2:24)
6. NOT SHAKESPEARE - Turnaround (4:20)
7. ZEITGEIST - Araby (2:39)
8. THE NEIGHBORHOODS - Real Stories (3:00)
9. I-RAILS - Still Invisible (3:00)
10. HOME - Heaven (5:08)
11. THE PRIMITONS - Five Lines (4:45)
12. O POSITIVE - With You (3:07)
13. FIRST MAN OVER - It's Happening (4:04)
14. LAVVI EBBEL - Much Ado About Nothing (2:55)
15. KASHMIR - Outside (3:56)
16. THE MOOD - Watching Time (3:25)
17. CORPS DIPLOMATIQUE - The Picture (3:31)
18. HORIZONTAL BRIAN - Practicing First Aid (2:36)
19. CLEANERS FROM VENUS - Girl On a Swing (4:02)
20. CRASH COURSE IN SCIENCE - It Costs to be Austere (4:04)
21. GIRLS FROM TAHITI - No Reply (5:27)

Special thanks to the following for their invaluable contributions to this compilation:

Wilfully Obscure - <http://wilfullyobscure.blogspot.com/>

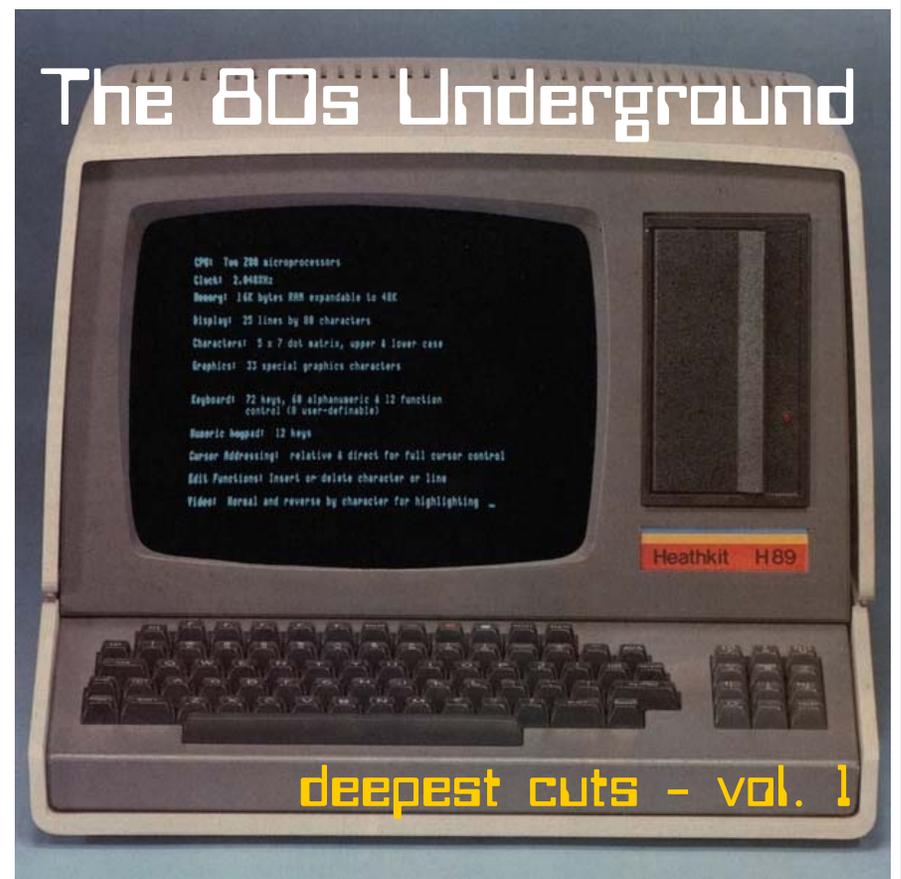
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