

1. JOHN TEJADA *Where* (Palette)

Known to most as one of the USA's top minimal minds, this LA based techno athlete is back for yet another solid album on his very own highly respected imprint. Marking the 50th installment for the label, and the 11th full-length of his career, *Where* is another Tejada classic. Taking a delicate approach, using friendly synth voices, light hits and dynamic mixes, the tracks are full of life and beg to be played either on the club floor or out of your car door. Spacious and extra melodic, Tejada knows exactly how to take a simple one bar synth loop and expand it into a throbbing pulse that makes your foot pound relentlessly. While the tracks keep a solid rhythmic drive, the real beauty in the mixes comes from expertly sublime production techniques blended flawlessly with advanced effect programming. Another great album, John! (Praxis)

2. SALLY SHAPIRO *Remix Romance Vol. 1 & 2* (Paper Bag)

Have you ever heard that old saying, that one person can't be "a prophet in his/her own land?" This certainly applies to the secretive italo-disco singer, Sally Shapiro. In her native country, Sweden, she isn't very well known at all. Being a music critic here in Sweden, I first heard about Miss Shapiro when an American magazine asked me if I could do an interview with her. Googling away on the internet, I found praise and cheers for her *Remix Romance* album—the core material for the two remix albums that now are released on Paper Bag. And let me say, fans of Sally Shapiro will not be disappointed. With skilled remixers like Junior Boys, Juan MacLean and Lindstrøm (to name a few), this project is not just a fast move in order to cash in on the success of the original album—no. The songs are polished, many of them given either a more direct dance drive (Skatebårds remix of "He Keeps Me Alive"), or have an added electronic depth (like Dntel's remix of "Find My Soul")—all the while remaining faithful to the original tunes. The music is great, but I am not partial to Sally's at-times-weak vocal delivery. Needless to say, Sally Shapiro isn't a prophet here in Sweden. (Mats Almgard)

3. VARIOUS *Defected In The House: Eivissa 08* (Defected)

Heralded as containing quintessential Ibiza club classics, Defected Records' Simon Dunmore serves up his label's best-of to pack along with your swimmy and thongs for these hazy days of summer. Although the double disc copy I received contained a persistent overdub of a woman reminding me that I was listening to a promo, I plowed on, and I can only imagine the store-friendly version will comply with all aficionado standards. The commercial release features a third, unmixed CD, with a stellar lineup that includes Shapeshifters, Bob Sinclair and even more solid gold tracks, so no doubt you could save yourself a few bob by investing in that and using those air miles for WMC instead. Standout cuts include Osunlade's "Momma's Groove," Norman Jay's edit of Los Jugerberos' "What You Doing To This Girl," Copyright's "Free" (feat Tasita D'Mour), and the classic, old school jack of Dirty South's "Let It Go." Repetitive overdub aside, I can imagine this to be a fantastic release for Defected. (Chrissie Wilson)

4. SUPERGRASS *Diamond Hoo Ha* (Astralwerks)

On *Diamond Hoo Ha*, Supergrass has done what is possibly a first for a British band, shifting its sound from British rock of the '60s to American rock of the '70s. The title track sets the tone for the big-bottomed, large stage sound that is the driving force for the record. The raunchy guitar riffs would be just as well suited to '80s groups taking their cues from Aerosmith. "Bad Blood" follows closely with a high kicking chorus that, with its rolls of thumping drums, competes with the best of adult-acceptable anthemic rock. "Ghost of a Friend" and "Whiskey and Green Tea" follow stadium style with a touch of cock rock that is delivered with no trace of irony. Slightly slower numbers, such as "When I Needed You," have a blatant arena ballad energy that is begging for a touch of British sarcasm. (Lily Moayeri)

5. TRICKY *Knowle West Boy* (Domino)

Thug/electronic avatar, Tricky gets less and less afraid to confront his demons (and others') with each passing recording effort; so much so that by this, his eighth CD, one almost pretty much expects Tricky to bare his ass while writhing through his usual battery of atmospherics and brutal, fluid hip-hop. Instead, the mugging MC and sampladelic sort hauls ass and gets more personal than the trip hop overlord has in the past, by handling his history in a sort of aural landscape autobiographical fashion with a very-nearly-sensitive set of life lessons to buoy him. So "Council Flat" is frigid and oafish and even Oi-like in its appropriation of mad Mod-Madness-like hyperactive ska-punk, but the story of the *Knowle West Boy* is poignant yet rough. Tricky's dry, raspy phrasing makes an epic fright-fest of the classically imbued "Joseph" and his cover of Kylie M's "Slow." But that doesn't stop him or his coterie of crooners from sounding tongue-in-cheek on the bar-room bounce of "Puppy Toy" and the art-rock reggae romp "Bacative." The most touching moments find Tricky—alone, looking downward and homeward, angelically—gasping for love's past air on "School Gates" and "Past Mistake"—moments that prove how dynamic a songwriter Tricky's become since '03's *Vulnerable*. Brixton never sounded so inviting. (A.D. Amorosi)

6. THE FASHION *The Fashion* (Epic Records)

Friendly snarls open the Fashion's sophomore album on "Dead Boys." This sounds like a contradiction in terms (How are snarls friendly and is that the right tone for a song about the deceased?), but that might just be the Danish (now) quartet's secret weapon. Creating a combination of the best of British and American indie-pop, the Fashion know their way around an infectious, easy hook. The bounce, tempered with a stretched-out chorus on "Letters From The Ambulance" belie an effortless ability to bring together disparate moods in one song and turn them into one accessible entity. There is confusion and messiness on "Like Knives," which together make it into the perfect scowling statement. "Mathematics" is so simple in its desperation, it could be a middle school love song screamed out by a boy who doesn't know how to get the attention of the girl he likes. (Lily Moayeri)

7. KASKADE *Strobelite Seduction* (Ultra)

Early on, it was pretty evident that Kaskade's picturesque style of house music was destined to surface and shine for the masses to fall in love with. Everybody likes the bright lights, no matter how much they deny it, and on Kaskade's fifth studio LP, *Strobelite Seduction*, he makes it all right for listeners to admit they crave the spotlight. It's OK, reveal your inner emotions and unravel that naughty demon dying to get loose, as the powerful "Angel On My Shoulder" gets you bouncing, prancing and joining the other freed heathens on the dancefloor. San Francisco comes to mind after one listen to "Back on You," but other tunes offer visions of Chicago as well. Even though the words "beautiful," "seductive" and "graceful" seem commonplace when describing Kaskade's sound on tracks such as "Pose," "I Remember" and even the downtempo, "Borrowed Theme," it isn't until "One Heart" that you've truly experienced his signature *Strobelite* streaks and kaleidoscope of colors. (Marlon Regis)

8. JUPITER ONE *Jupiter One* (Cordless Recordings)

If you are going to the moon anytime soon, I will tell you that you must bring three things: a lawn chair of the cheapest sort, a large decanter of mojitos and this album. We have here the caddish swagger of the Beach Boys gone cosmic with echoes of Morel's haunted, *Queen of the Highway* LP. There is some of the same bull elk-charging-into-a-pack-of-cows-in-estrus type of guitar-driven ferocity that one finds in the Strokes, Killers, Caesars; however, to change metaphors, the blade here is more often stained with the blood of sentimentalism, regret and starved-out humanity than the let's-get-coked-up-and-do-the-town zeal of the aforementioned one percenters. Yes, there is even what you might call a romantic hue in some places. Not in the Danielle Steel/Jane Austen way. No, No. More the F. Scott Fitzgerald-armed-with-a-pint-of-gin way. Obscure reference, yes. But check your facts and you will see that I am correct. Produced in perfect balance, on what budget I do not know, the electronic and electric are fused here in a coruscating, brain-gouging beam of purest gamma ray. (Markus von Pfeiffer)

