

Carlisle Go-Go's Back To Her Roots Singer Rocks Harder On 1st Virgin Set

BY CRAIG ROSEN

LOS ANGELES—Although "Real," released Oct. 5, marks Belinda Carlisle's debut in the U.S. on Virgin Records, the singer says that, in many ways, the album signifies a return to her roots.

Those well-documented roots are best remembered for Carlisle's stint with the Go-Go's, the one-time punk band that rose from the L.A. club scene to the top of The Billboard 200 in 1982 with its debut album, "Beauty And The Beat."

Of her new set, she says, "I wanted to make the type of album that I would buy. My tastes don't necessarily run along the tastes of top 40. They are a little bit more raw, and I really wanted to get back where I came from."

After the Go-Go's emerged from the L.A. punk scene in 1980, Carlisle gradually transformed from a punkette with a crewcut into a svelte glamour girl, while her music evolved from power-pop to studio-polished balladry.

To return to a more stripped-down

approach, Carlisle recruited various friends from her days on the L.A. club circuit, rather than relying on a cast of studio musicians as she did on her four previous solo albums.



CARLISLE

Contributors to "Real" include Redd Kross members Jeff and Steve McDonald, ex-Bangle Vicki Peterson, and current Nirvana side-man Pat Smear, with whom Carlisle played briefly as a member of legendary punk band the Germs.

The one constant in Carlisle's solo career has been her collaborations with former Go-Go Charlotte Caffey, who plays guitar and co-wrote nine songs on "Real"—including "Lay Down Your Arms," originally recorded with Caffey's post-Go-Go's outfit, the Graces.

"Real" also marks Carlisle's first album as a mother. She says the birth of her son 16 months ago was an experience that has affected her career.

"During my pregnancy I had a lot of time to think about what direction I wanted to take," she says. "I felt I needed to rethink a lot of things, including production and the songwriters I worked with. I also needed to take more responsibility for myself. Basically, what that meant was getting more involved in the songwriting."

On "Real," Carlisle co-wrote songs with Ellen Shipley, the MacDonald brothers, Gregg Alexander, and Ralph Schuckett, who served as a producer on half of the tracks. Carlisle, Caffey, and Caffey's brother, Tom, produced the other five tracks.

Carlisle has even altered her image for "Real." "I never put that glamour girl label on myself," she says. Nonetheless, Carlisle posed for the cover of the album sans make-up.

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Getting The Skinny. Skinny Puppy meets with American Recording execs after signing with the label. Standing, from left, are Steve Traxler, band manager; Marc Geiger, American Recordings A&R head; Skinny Puppy's Ogre; manager Mike Ryan; Skinny Puppy's Cevin Key; and American Recordings GM Mark DiDia. Seated are the band's Dwayne Goettel and manager Chris Sheldon.

Concrete Blonde Sets Sights On A Multiformat Success

BY STEVE APPLEFORD

LOS ANGELES—The view from the Capitol Records tower looks just fine to Concrete Blonde's Johnette Napolitano. Her band's new "Mexican Moon" album is its first release for the label, and rehearsals for an upcoming national tour are going well.

Capitol is promising a major promotional push for the new album that it hopes will return Concrete Blonde to the top 40, while maintaining the band's core audience of modern rock and college radio listeners. And Napolitano seems content enough with all this during an afternoon of interview sessions at the label.

Then she casually mentions that "Mexican Moon" is probably the

band's last new studio album together. "This is the best record we've ever made, and I don't want to undermine it by saying I'm going to do something else," Napolitano says of the album, due Tuesday (19). "But I can't be less than truthful."

The record bears both the I.R.S. and the Capitol logos, because the band still owed I.R.S., for whom it recorded four albums, one more release when it signed with Capitol. "We made a new deal with the band, and in doing so picked up the last record from I.R.S. We're treating this album almost as a joint venture," says Tim Devine, Capitol's VP of A&R.

The structure of Concrete Blonde's deal with Capitol allows band mem-

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Old Friends S&G Reunite Once More; Promoting Better Industry Relations

FEELIN' GROOVY: The ticket stub bore the stamp "The Concert Of A Lifetime," and while that may have been a bit hyperbolic, the first reunion of Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel in more than a decade proved to be quite the event. The two have taken up residence at New York's **Paramount Theater** for the month of October, having sold out 21 shows. Obviously needing no introduction, the duo opened the show simply by strolling out on stage and breaking into "The Boxer," accompanied solely by Simon's acoustic guitar. While their vocals seemed

leader Joseph Shabalala was as evident as the chill between Simon and Garfunkel. A high point was Simon and LBM's "Sesame Street" hit, the utterly adorable "Put Down That Ducky." Shortly thereafter, the concert sank into its one prolonged lull when Simon performed a never-ending "Further To Fly" and tedious "Cool, Cool River" from "Saints." The length of the pieces and the audience's relative unfamiliarity with them made the opening horn blasts of "You Can Call Me Al" all the more welcome.

As an encore, Garfunkel reappeared to perform "Bridge Over Troubled Water" sans Simon, as has been their pattern since the breakup. While Simon's move could be interpreted as a generous relinquishing of the spotlight, it was an unnecessary one: Garfunkel received a standing ovation the minute he walked back on the stage, and, despite Garfunkel's masterful rendering of the song, Simon's harmonies were missed. Simon rejoined Garfunkel for a brief reprise of "The Boxer"

for some poor, late-arriving sap who bellowed for it midway through the second half, before ending with an entirely fitting and appropriately reflective "Old Friends/Bookends Theme" pairing.

ARE YOU GONNA GO MY WAY? The North American Concert Promoters Assn. held one of its semi-annual meetings in Los Angeles, Oct. 9-11.

"Our goal was to improve promoter relations with other industry businesses, and also to promote a healthy exchange of views," says NACPA executive director Ben Liss. "We tackled concerns that impact promoters, but also affect record companies and talent agencies, as well as how things like SoundScan and TicketMaster affect all of us."

Representatives from the organization's 21 member promotion companies spent time meeting with booking agents from Creative Artists Agency, William Morris Agency, ICM, and Monterey Peninsula Artists. Part of the meetings were devoted to developing better relationships with record labels. To that end, NACPA organized a meeting attended by executives from A&M, American, Atlantic, Capitol, Elektra, MCA, PLG, and Sony. Key-note speakers addressing NACPA members were SoundScan's Michael Shalett and TicketMaster's Fred Rosen.

Early next year, the organization will meet with New York-based music industry executives.



by Melinda Newman

slightly out of sync, it took only until the second tune, "America," for their voices to come together in that familiar but completely singular unison that made them one of the most successful duos in music history. It was simply a wonder to hear their voices not so much wrap around each other as run parallel to each other, creating an entirely unique and unbreakable sound. Neither time nor any acrimony between the two has dulled their ability to make beautiful music together. While many of the songs were performed exactly as one remembers, others were reworked to give them a different flair. Simon changed the tempo of "Mrs. Robinson" to give it the slightly sinister air the lyrics always had implied, but the music never had conveyed; "Cecilia" now had an island feel that interjected a cool breeze into the tale of betrayal and redemption.

Throughout the proceedings, Simon and Garfunkel barely glanced at or spoke to each other. Even when they put their arms around each other at the end of their segment, there was a measurable distance, both physical and, seemingly, emotional, between the two. The first half closed with Simon performing early solo material accompanied by his top-notch band, including saxophonist Michael Brecker and drummer Steve Gadd, as well as, at times, the Mighty Clouds Of Joy and a backup trio that included Phoebe Snow. The band and Simon came together on a vibrant reading of "Late In The Evening" that left the musicians straining at their leashes to soar into the evening. Simon reined them in for a poignant "Still Crazy After All These Years."

The second half focused on Simon's most recent work, including selections from 1986's "Graceland" and 1990's "Rhythm Of The Saints." For the "Graceland" material, Simon was joined by a jubilant Ladysmith Black Mambazo, the South African vocal group featured on the record. The warmth and affection between Simon and LBM

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