

BOSS TUNEAGE

Bruce Springsteen

Dancing In The Dark/Pink Cadillac

(Columbia CBS WA 4436, 7" picture disc, 1985)

£15-£35

Released alongside the delayed 30th anniversary edition of *Darkness On The Edge Of Town*, last year's double-disc compilation *The Promise* once again confirmed Bruce Springsteen's affection for Elvis Presley. Playing along to the songs of the hip-swinging rock'n'roll star had helped a young Boss-to-be learn to make his guitar talk, and the 50s-style melodies that permeate those *Darkness* outtakes are a wonderful homage to his early idol.

It was something that Springsteen often returned to over the years, most notably on 1980's double-album *The River*, and then with Johnny Bye-Bye, B-side to *Born In The USA*'s fourth single, *I'm On Fire*. An adaptation of Chuck Berry's *Bye Bye Johnny*, Springsteen reshaped and recast Berry's song, shifting the focus of attention from Johnny B Goode to the death of Presley.

By far and away the most obvious indicator, however, was this gem. Another B-side from that album, *Pink Cadillac* was a rollicking rockabilly ditty found on the flipside of what remains Springsteen's biggest hit to date, *Dancing In The Dark*. Though also released as a conventional 7", it was this wonderfully garish picture disc that best illustrated – literally and metaphorically – The Boss' obsession with Presley, who had, of course, famously owned such a vehicle.

As much as it was a tribute to The King, the song was also, however, a sly dig at the materialistic 80s, right at the time Springsteen was benefitting most from them; an irony he was surely aware of. More than that, it was a salacious, sexually-charged experiment in double-entendre: "They say Eve tempted Adam with an apple/But I ain't going for that/I know it was her pink Cadillac." If that wasn't enough evidence, the final line certainly is: "Anyway," croons Springsteen, "We don't have to drive it/We can park it out in back/And have a party in your pink Cadillac."

Today, Elvis' original vehicle can still be found on display at Graceland, though its price tag is probably only in Springsteen's orbit. This single, however, crops up on a semi-regular basis and is somewhat more affordable. **Mischa Pearlman**



LABEL OF LOVE

Resipiscent

Gaining on the land-grabbers

Q&A Co-founder James Decker

Why start a record label?

Liz Allbee. After a show she played, [co-founder] Thomas Day and I found ourselves slack-jawed, wondering how it was possible she didn't have a single recording. We knew how hard artists were busting ass to create killer, original music but then suffering the indignity of having to self-promote it too. More often than not they just didn't promote, and didn't get heard outside those who already knew their work. Neither of us wanted to live in a world so despicable, so the choice was suicide pact or Resipiscent. We took the hard way.

What labels influenced you?

Dolor del Estomago, American Tapes, Toyo, Ultra Eczema, Bennifer Editions, Enshe, Bent Over Cowboy, Le Dernier Cri, Anomalous, Electro Motive, Breaking World, Interruption, Misanthropic Agenda, CIP, but also Subterranean, Ralph and LAFMS.

Why the name?

The word had been buried for centuries, we shovelled it up. It means coming back to your senses following a brutal experience/complete-fuck-up. Whether that was hearing Culture Club, Sammy Hagar, or maybe being etherised by Vivaldi one time too many, we aim to lay the gutter where you can come to unstick your scabs from the pavement of monoculture and get on with it.

What are your guiding principles?

Foster new work, new instruments and new lost causes en route to becoming new old people. We're anti-profit, which means zero pay and 100 per cent of any profits go to the artist. Beyond a batch of free artist copies, bands can purchase as many more as they want at cost of production. Hopefully they sell them at shows and manage to eat decently.

Can you sum up your output?

Situationist class struggle. While that's a summary that narrows nothing, it does accurately describe Ralph White+Horafiora, SIXES, Occasional Detroit, Oth and Porest all pretty clearly. Like the historic Situationists, our efforts and community have as much in common with folk art as fine art.

Which is your format of choice?

So far we've let the vinyl bandwagon pass us by. Reason one: Who can afford \$18-\$25 for a record? They're clearly not listening to enough music. Reason two: Properly mastered, CDs sound good. But our reasons may be faulty. We have shops and distros saying they only want vinyl (could care less what's on it, just vinyl) and so we'll see what that looks like with a double-LP. It will be nice to have all that space for art. We'll price it low and see how it goes.

How do you find new acts?

Seeing them live then extending an invitation to create a new recording, or finish a project. We listen to every demo, but there has to be an opportunity to see the artist play. After all, music isn't a recording; a recording recalls a



performance. And seeing fundamentally studio acts, like Porest, find a way to perform is as at least as interesting as hearing live acts, like Nerfbau, find a way to record.

Which record of the last year did you wish that you'd put out?

Well, it's records that failed to come out that we wish could have released. One example was Suzy Poling's *Pod Blotz* project. We worked hard to get a CD/DVD double-release together but time conspired against us.

How important is the look and packaging?

I'd say very important, but it's always the decision of the artist. If folks never pick it up, it never gets heard. We like to push for non-standard packaging, hand-printed and assembled. But if the artist likes a digipak or jewel case, then we do that. If they envision a jewel case with a hole drilled in the spine to allow for a spring loaded pinball plunger, tiny silver balls and three-dimensional bumpers glued inside, such that the whole package becomes a fully functional pinball machine with the track numbers and sub-index numbers on the CD itself designed to race up like a scoreboard, then we do that, even if it means 45 minutes to build each copy of Bran(...)Pos' *Quaak Mutter*. It was an edition of 100.

What does the future hold for the label?

Vinyl and, with that, hopefully better distribution in the US. We find bigger audiences in Europe and Japan than here at home! Wondering if we've secretly been blackballed.

Anything else you would like to tell us?

Thomas Day is a composer and sound engineer who started from an Iron Maiden, Black Sabbath childhood in New York. I'm a writer/K12 educator rescued by The Residents and Sun Ra. Both of us grew up in the early 70s, when records were bought based on nothing more than the sleeve. With an end to physical music, filters are a necessary immunity, and that's made fewer and fewer culture mavens particularly dangerous.

I think of media darlings who love the power they have to crown a few bands. I worry that those crowned may end up doing to their contemporaries what Philip Glass did to 20th-century classical and Sonic Youth did to post-rock: give it a nutshell and a norm. By contrast, the spirit of SST releasing The Minutemen as their second record and following up with Meat Puppets. I'd give 100 Thurston's for half a Greg Ginn. **As told to Spencer Grady**

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