

## CRITIC

**ALBUM: JIA***Left At The Robot (myspace.com/jiamusic1)*

Recorded over five months in South Africa after a businessman investor's surprise invitation to the band miraculously turn out to be legit, Jia's album certainly had ample time to develop. Not always a good thing – *Definitely Maybe* was knocked out in 10 days – but the duration of its conception isn't being judged here, it's the end result. And in this case it's a well-crafted collection of gentle pop that, after a few apparent false starts, deserves its chance at success. (NC)

**EP: LEON LACE***Live From Henriques St (Anvil)*

We don't know a great deal about Mr Lace, his CD arriving somewhat bereft of pertinent biographical information. But sticking the disc in the player, we're at once overcome by his groove – a bass-led jam which has echoes of early Quantic but with an altogether more organic feel to it, relying on sparing guitar licks rather than trippy vocal samples. Much of this kind of sound veers too easily into muzak, an aural wallpaper that struggles to hold the attention, but there's enough going on here, sax and keys duels especially, to keep the interest going. Nice. (NC)

**EP: LONG RANGE***Control Me (Pure Mint)*

Back after a long break, and now very much a full band set up, Long Range boss Nick Smith, Jimmy Day from Mula, ex-Largo fella Ben Burns, Will White from the Propellerheads, Toby May and Orbital's Phil Hartnoll seem stronger than ever. The supergroup's *Control Me* is a sultry, slutty, squealing piece of electro throb with a call and response, male-verses-female vocal. Aimed right at the dancefloor, it's ace and perhaps the best thing they've done. (JK)

**SINGLE: MICHAEL MORPH***Go Cat Go (Pure Mint)*

"Elvis was a hero to most/but he never meant shit to me," reckoned Public Enemy, but the Pure Mint boss clearly doesn't subscribe. He's taken a line from *Blue Suede Shoes* and completely re-contextualised it into Fake Blood style electro. It takes what is already a good distorto-stomp and ramps it up to the next level. We're looking forward to hearing it over Digital's Funktion 1 soundsystem. (JK)

**ALBUM: NICK PYNN***The Colours Of The Night (Roundhill)*

Nick and partner Jane are responsible for Kemptown's Bom-Banes restaurant, which admittedly immediately draws us to this CD. It's ace in there (see our Secret Eater feature, now online) and the musical eclecticism the pair install, along with all the other oddness, is writ large within this collection. The recorded accompaniment to Pynn's Edinburgh Fringe Show of the same name, it achieves orchestral width and depth via the gradual layering of sounds, delivering a deliciously avant garde take on contemporary folk. In other words, bonkers but brilliant. (NC)

**SINGLE: ROB THE RICH***Tiger (myspace.com/robtherichtheband)*

As the sun sets on a busy year for Rob The Rich, they can look back with a certain amount of satisfaction at a job well done. A Channel 4 *Skins* sync, that holy grail for many a young band, together with sell-out Club NME and Britbus shows as well as a load of summer street gigs and festival appearances, are all conspiring to properly propel RTR fame-wards. As a consolidation of all that set-up effort and a possible introduction to the band for many, *Tiger* is a confident and percussive slice of pop optimism that sees the band truly earn their stripes. Hard workers who look to have a bright future. (NC)



ROB THE RICH