



World Party

Goodbye Jumbo

Here is one of the best albums of the year. It was written, produced, arranged and performed (mostly) by Karl Wallinger. He left the Waterboys in the mid-'80s and released *Private Revolution* under the World Party moniker. That album was an engaging, bare-footed romp through '60s psychedelia. It also had a certain righteous anger, fueled as it was by the single "Ship of Fools."

Goodbye Jumbo is better in every respect. It's grungier, more perceptive and still as catchy as anything else you're likely to hear. It kicks off with "Is It Too Late," a raw, powerful track on which Wallinger worries that it's too late to try and "make a better day."

All his talents are on display here: the sound is casual and "live," the vocals are passionate and the guitar solos are concise and fierce enough to be worthy of George Harrison.

That Beatles reference is no mistake. Wallinger happily trumpets their influence in his varied musical settings, taking almost sensual pleasure in playfulness and experimentation. You also can hear homages to countless other artists. The Rolling Stones pop up in the background vocals of "Way Down

Now." Bob Dylan is quoted directly once or twice. And the vocal break in "Put The Message In The Box" is pure Brian Wilson, right down to the naivete of the lyrics.

But for all his trippy references, Wallinger avoids being dippy. "God On My Side" may use an image of Iranian protesters to question religious fundamentalism, but he still recognizes the need for spirituality in the chorus by saying, "I'm falling, I'm falling . . . I need your God on my side."

His seriousness is also lightened by the quirky excursions that the music always takes. As "Love Street" quietly fades out, the sound of a gurgling stream suddenly springs out of nowhere. "Show Me the Top" is brightened by a gentle coda on which Wallinger strums an acoustic guitar and softly sings, "I wish I knew, I wish I knew."

It's all wrapped up neatly in the final song, "Thank You World." The lyrics are as wide-eyed as

stream"—but the music is exuberant and gritty enough to sweep any doubters in its path. Wallinger is clearly a significant artist just beginning to stretch his creative muscles.

BY MICHAEL GILTZ

ever—"He laid me down this blanket/ Now I call this blanket grass/ And the sun is my alarm/ And the moon she makes me dream/ And my food is wild honey pie/ And water from the