

SPLIT SHIFT: cassette tape available from VIWU, c/o #203-1160 Burrard St., Vancouver, B.C. V6Z 2E8, or Fraser Union, c/o 396 E. 47th Ave., Vancouver, B.C. V5W 2B2.

If you've ever worked for The Man, I've got an album for you.

Split Shift – Songs and Poems of the Workplace is a collection of ten songs performed by Vancouver's Fraser Union, and sixteen poems written and read by members of the Vancouver Industrial Writers' Union: Kate Braid, David Conn, Glen Downie, Kirsten Emmott, Zoe Landale, Pam Tranfield, Mark Warrior and Tom Wayman. It's a well-balanced production, recorded at Vancouver's Bullfrog Studios, and expertly engineered by Alan Rempel.

The songs and poems deal with a wide variety of workplaces, from the forest to the office, and from fishing boats to factories. And don't fret if your workplace is at home. All you homemakers out there, whose toil and redundancies are as real as those of any other workers, have not been forgotten.

Mind you, some of the stuff is unsettling. In places it's tough and gritty, the language honest and forthright, straight from the heart, but the album is all the more authentic for it.

A good deal of thought has gone into putting this production together; each song and poem has been carefully placed. Tom Wayman's poem "Marshall Wells Illumination" ends with the line "What could I do but dance?", and is followed immediately by the bouncy "Soda Jig", an instrumental written and performed on the octave mandolin by Fraser Union's Barry Truter; "Step-son", Kate Braid's poem about a mother's relationship with her step-son, is followed by the poignant perception of Fred Small's song "Everything Possible"; and so on. In fact this continuity begins with the album's first cut, Glen Downie's "Material Handler", a poem about working to become rather than to acquire, and flows right through to the irony of the last cut, Utah Phillips' song "All Used Up".

Altogether, this is a fine album. The combination of songs and poetry is effective because it lays out a broader platform for expression. Fraser Union, who can always be counted on to deliver a top quality perform-

ance, comes up solid and strong here, with ear-pleasing harmonies and solos. And if what Robert Frost said is true, that "a poet begins in delight and ends in wisdom", then these are true poets. There is no shortage of wisdom here.

Bill Gallaher



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I was so curious about the "at least a dozen" typographical errors and omissions on the lyric sheet [of Sunsets I've Galloped Into . . . – see review, 23:1, p. 18], that I went back to it with Archie's handwritten notes. I did find one that I had missed in the proofreading, an "r" left out in the first word of the last verse in "All That You Ask", which I hadn't noticed before. There was another that I had spotted earlier, but too late to change it on the first pressing. In Archie's introductory notes there was an "s" added to Eastfield that shouldn't have been there. As for the rest, I typed the lyrics just as Archie had written them. When Archie saw the finished product, the only typo he noted was the additional "s".