

= Black Eye (album) =

Black Eye is the only full @-@ length studio album by the English punk rock band Fluffy , released on September 17 , 1996 by The Enclave . It was recorded at Metropolis Studios in London and produced by punk rock veteran Bill Price , who had recorded albums by Sex Pistols and The Clash . The album was recorded live in the studio and the music was not arranged by the producer in order to achieve a rough , live sound . The record contains loud punk songs that explore social issues such as sex and abuse .

To promote the album , the band embarked on a major tour in Europe and both coasts of the United States , including a performance at CBGB in New York City . The songs " Husband " and " Nothing " reached number 58 and number 52 respectively on the UK Singles Chart . Upon release , Black Eye received mixed to positive reviews from music critics . Most journalists praised the album 's unrelenting mood , but some criticised the vagueness of the lyrics .

= = Background and recording = =

Black Eye is the only full @-@ length album by the English punk rock band Fluffy . The band formed in London in late 1994 by singer and guitarist Amanda Rootes , guitarist Bridget Jones , bassist Helen Storer , and drummer Angie Adams . Unsatisfied with the Britpop invasion at the time , the band sought to recapture the punk rock phenomenon . According to Rootes , " We want to infiltrate and conquer the masses . It 's like , Americans think English music 's shit ? ' cause it is . We want [England] to gain a little respect that we haven 't had for a while . " The band also felt more comfortable in North America than in the UK because the British press " can 't handle the concept of a sexually frank all @-@ girl band " ; the name of the band comes from a lesbian novel titled Fluffy Butch , which Rootes thought was funny .

After turning down a number of record labels , the band signed to The Enclave , a record label run by A & R executive Tom Zutaut , who had previously signed Guns N ' Roses to Geffen . Rootes felt that Zutaut was " great . Very American , very cool , very into his artists . " Black Eye was recorded at Metropolis Studios in London and produced by punk rock veteran Bill Price , who had recorded albums by Sex Pistols and The Clash . The album was recorded live in the studio and the music was not arranged by the producer in order to achieve a rough , live sound . According to Rootes , Price " just recorded us live while we were playing . We did things like putting different guitar tracks on top and stuff like that . I did vocals at different times . But we really wanted to get a live sound . " The drums were recorded in a stone room using a basic kit that was modeled after a Ringo Starr reissue model , which resulted in a slightly distorted sound . The album was mastered by George Marino at Sterling Sound in New York City .

= = Music and lyrics = =

Musically , Black Eye was described by Carrie Borzillo of Billboard as " pure hardcore punk delivered with a raunchy , abrasive vocal assault from [Rootes] . " Aaron Axelsen , music director at modern rock KITS , opined that the band is " a real indie , edgy version of Elastica , but not Britpop . They fit into that Hole , L7 , Tuscadero , Veruca Salt , edgy thing . " The band , however , felt " insulted " when journalists compared them to Elastica because they think the sound of Elastica is too " clean " . As Rootes recalls , " I admit every time me and Bridged cleaned our house we put Elastica on " . Despite this , she considers Elastica , along with the Sex Pistols and the Buzzcocks , as the only UK bands among her favorites . The band cited the Sex Pistols , the New York Dolls , and The Stooges as their musical influences . They also preferred the Sex Pistols over the Clash . According to Rootes , " The Sex Pistols are political in a great teenage fuck @-@ you way . The Clash are political in a mature way , like they 've done politics in A @-@ levels . "

The lyrics of Black Eye deal with sexual and abuse topics : " Nothing you will likely hear on the radio " , Rootes explained . The song " Hypersonic " , named after the best @-@ selling vibrator in England , celebrates the joys of vibrator use . The title track , " Black Eye " , is about domestic

violence . Rootes remarked : " When I was growing up , my dad was really violent . I knew it was something I had to write a song about ? to get it out of my system . " The song inspired the album cover , which depicts a cat holding a mouse in its jaw . Rootes explained that the mouse 's black eye represents a moment of serenity before it dies . Similarly , the song " Scream " deals with rape issues , while " Dirty Old Bird " is about spousal abuse . The track " Technicolour Yawn " is about the unpleasant effect of a hangover , " Psychofudge " is about drug usage , and " Cheap " deals with one 's loss of virginity and the subsequent feel of becoming " sort of cheap and common . "

Not all the songs from the album explore social issues . The songs " I Wanna Be Your Lush " and " Too Famous " use satire to criticise the superior attitudes of male musicians , while " Husband " disapproves " gruff and pushy " boyfriends . The band also clarified that they have nothing against men . As Rootes notes , " Men are great ! We love them ! We 're talking about dickhead men , not all men . " The band considered themselves more of a pro @-@ girl band than a feminist band . Rootes told Select : " So many girls are afraid to be girls . Apart from Courtney Love , who 's really feminine and uses her sexuality and is a strong woman . I don 't think women should dress like boys . That 's what 's great about PJ Harvey . She was boyish and now she 's gone really glam . She looks amazing and she 's become an icon : a real woman . "

= = Promotion and release = =

Black Eye is the first full @-@ length released by The Enclave . To promote the launch of the album , the record label , who had been working with the band since December 1995 , released several singles for " Husband " , " Psychofudge " , " Cheap " , and " Hypersonic " prior to the album release . The Enclave also released an EP consisting of five live songs recorded at New York 's CBGB on May 15 , 1996 and released on July 9 , 1996 to further awareness of the band . Prominent music critic Robert Christgau described the sound of the EP as " as pure punk as the ' 90s get . " Zutaut also admitted that the band 's punk attitude " may scare radio and MTV a little bit " , but he believed that their melodic music and lyrical statements " would pave the way for its success . "

The band embarked on a major tour in both coasts of the United States in April , May , and September 1996 . In Europe , the band also toured in Ireland with Foo Fighters , appeared at major summer festivals , and played with the Sex Pistols , Iggy Pop , and the Buzzcocks at Finsbury Park in London in June 23 , 1996 . The album was released on September 17 , 1996 in the US and September 30 , 1996 in the UK . The songs " Husband " and " Nothing " reached number 58 and number 52 respectively on the UK Singles Chart . A music video was made for " Black Eye " under the direction of Floria Sigismondi .

= = Critical reception = =

Upon release , Black Eye received mixed to positive reviews from music critics . Tom Sinclair , writing for Entertainment Weekly , stated that the album " barrels forward with such high @-@ spirited hookiness that it 's possible to forgive the shameless pandering of lyrics like ' I wanna be your kitten / Caress my fur . ' " In a very positive review , prominent music critic Robert Christgau felt that most of the songs " live up to the underlining " and considered the album to be the best punk debut since the ones by the Ramones , Sex Pistols , The Clash , and Wire . AllMusic reviewer Tom Demalon praised the loud guitar playing of both Rootes and Jones and opined that " the lack of dynamic diversity makes Black Eye somewhat of a one @-@ trick pony , but it 's a trick that makes the album 's strongest tracks a joy . "

Nick Duerden of Q magazine remarked that Black Eye " sounds like a cross between The Stooges and Courtney Love . And despite boasting the musical dexterity of Status Quo , it 's a short , sharp shock that dispatches its venom with a tireless guile . " Similarly , critic Roy Wilkinson of Select compared some songs favourably to The Stooges and early @-@ Siouxsie and the Banshees . However , he noted that the band " [seems] intent on falling short of PJ [Harvey] 's black @-@ bordered presence . When was the last time you heard the Yeovil delta blues sound enlivened by such Carry On Riffing @-@ isms as ' I 've rocketed to Uranus ' (' Nothing ') and ' When the kids

scream , there is a racket / You 've got a magnificent packet ' (' Too Famous ') ? "

In a negative review , Darren Gawle of Drop @-@ D magazine criticised the lyrics for their vague observations about obvious truths , stating : " The only shocking thing about Black Eye lies in a band trying to pass themselves off as Riot Grrls when in fact they pack as much ' Grrr ' as a slightly vexed Yorkshire Terrier . " In contrast , Colin Weston of Drowned in Sound commented : " The thing about Fluffy , is they aren 't the most lyrically challenging of bands , but their music more than [sic] makes up for it , and what they DO say , you understand immediately ... not messing about with ' Deep and meaningful ' lyrics , these girls have got something to say , and say it the only way they know how ... in your face !!! " Although Black Eye was not ranked in the Top 40 of The Village Voice 's Pazz & Jop critics ' poll for 1996 , Christgau placed it at number 3 in his own " Dean 's List " .

= = Track listing = =

All songs written and composed by Fluffy .

= = Personnel = =

Credits are adapted from the album 's liner notes .

Fluffy

Amanda Rootes ? vocals , guitar

Bridget Jones ? guitar

Helen Storer ? bass

Angie Adams ? drums

Technical personnel

Bill Price ? engineer , mixing , producer

George Marino ? mastering

John Coding ? design

Phil Hope ? management

Elaine Constantine ? photography

Jake Walters ? photography