

8. Josie Cotton, *Invasion of the B-Girls* (Scruffy Records): Probably best-known for her '81 Bomp Records novelty hit, "Johnny Are You Queer?" and her appearance in *Valley Girl* singing that song and two others in the movie's prom scene, Josie had a single major label album, *Convertible Music*, on Elektra, and a brief flirtation with Top 40 success before taking off for nearly a decade. This 2007 curio, complete with adulatory liner notes by none other than white-trash connoisseur John Waters, offers her loving covers of exploitation flick themes. Who knew she had a thing for the world of gore-teur Herschell Gordon Lewis ("Maneaters"), Japanese horror shlockmeister Kinji Fukasaku ("Green Slime") or pre-porn impresario Russ Meyer's notorious *Beyond the Valley of the Dolls* (with a screenplay by none other than film critic Roger Ebert), whose theme song, originally performed by the immortal Sandpipers, comes complete with narrative voiceover? Cotton offers an homage to Nancy Sinatra's thigh-high boots with the theme to the long-forgotten 1968 feature *Girl in Gold Boots*, a movie about the seamy world of Hollywood go-go dancers, directed by one Ted V. Mikels (whom Waters claims "makes Ed Wood look like Godard"). She purrs through "Run Pussy Cat," from Meyers' classic *Run Faster, Pussycat Kill! Kill!*, which Quentin Tarantino paid homage to in his own *Death Proof*, over typically blowzy sax riffs and the sound of screeching hot rods in the background. Her dramatic Shirley Bassey-style take on "Who Killed Teddy Bear?," with its slinky strings, pays its own tribute to the '65 movie, which starred Sal Mineo as a disco bus boy who develops an unhealthy interest in a DJ played by Juliet Prowse, which leads to voyeurism, pornography and all sorts of fetishistic sexuality, with Borscht Belt regular Jan Murray as a similarly obsessed cop (?!). Her menacingly lilting rendition of "Shiawaseo Yobou (Let's Try to Be Happy)," the theme to the immortal Ghidra the Three-Headed Monster, stands in stark contrast to the film's cheesy horror plot, while the jaunty roller-rink organ and twangy guitar on "Black Klansman" offers a cheery new wave pop take on the theme to the KKK exploitation film directed by-not him again-Ted Mikels. For "Goodbye Godzilla," her version of the theme to *The Return of Godzilla*, she combines her own yearning vocal, singing in the original Japanese (no dubbing) over a delicate, exotic synth arrangement, accompanied by the subliminal roars of the title character, while the final "Ursula 1000" remix of "Maneaters" sounds like an undiscovered gem by her contemporaries The Go-Go's, who originally turned down the chance to cover "Johnny Are You Queer?" thinking it was too controversial. As Waters himself puts it, "She never humiliates her choices of material or makes fun of the critically drubbed motion pictures." He's right. Self-declared B-Girl Josie Cotton is a true fan of sin-ema.

-Roy Trakin