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Nils Lofgren, 200 Record Reviews (Spotlight: Zeppelin, Wings)

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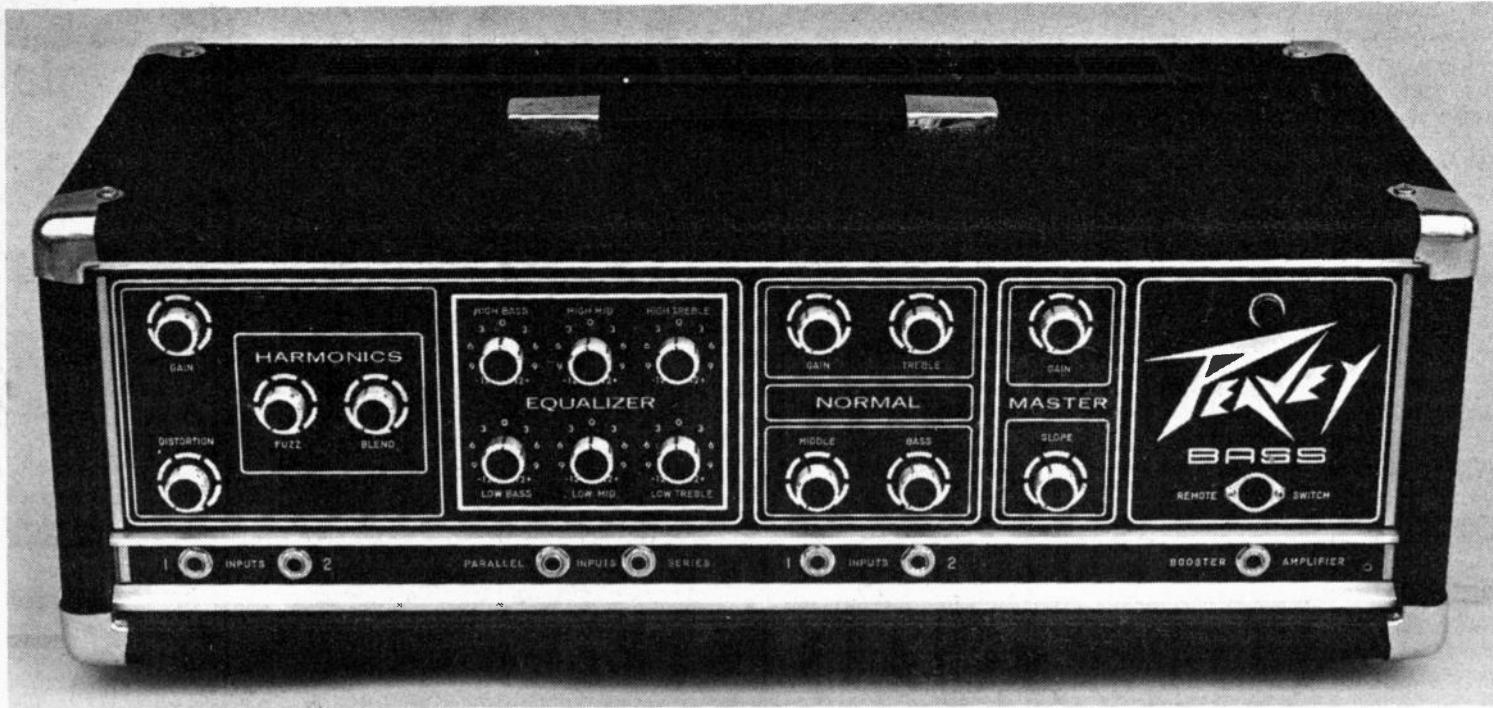


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Volume 2, Number 11

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We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Ann Iivil for her invaluable help and cooperation in obtaining access to Ronnie Wood.

—Ed.

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# LOW DOWN

by Allan Earle

David Bowie pleaded "not guilty" to charges of marijuana possession then charged the New York Police with entrapment and illegal search and seizure for his recent pot bust.

Police later admitted that two female undercover narcotics officers had been inside the hotel rooms after being invited by Bowie to a small party comprised of himself and three friends. One of those friends was Jim Osterberg, whose new album is being produced by David. Osterberg, who got popped too, is better known to his fans as none other than Iggy Pop.



Danny Fields, Jean-Charles Costa and Iggy Pop

During his current tour Bowie asked his audience at Cal-State San Diego, "how many bisexuals

are here tonight?" The remark elicited a wave of resentment among the campus Gay Liberation Chapter, to which one member, Gary Farmer, later announced, "Bowie has used the Third World and the gay world to better himself financially and professionally. He has . . . tricked (the subculture) into thinking they had a spokesman." Farmer asserted, "First Bowie was gay, then he was black. What next?"

Next, Bowie might be advised to strike it up with Jim Collins in his new music-form called "Head Music." This almost untapped musical expression, recently discovered by Collins, is produced by pounding a nine inch wrench against your head.

Collins, a British Air Force officer, says he discovered this unusual way of putting his head to use when he banged his head into another man's during a rugby match. It was the first time, he says, that his head produced a clear musical note. Collins claims he can bang *Rule Britannia* or *Onward Christian Soldiers*, with the best of them. "People who hear me," says Collins, "think I need to have my head examined."

Marc Bolan, lead singer of the rock group, T-Rex, should have such a thick skull. During his re-



cent comeback tour in Great Britain, Bolan was hit by a champagne bottle tossed from the audience, resulting in injuries that had to be stitched up later. The following night another fan managed to sink his teeth into Bolan's neck.

Bolan views the incidents as occupational hazards: "I suppose these are the slings and arrows you have to bear if you want to earn an outrageous fortune."

Another rock group currently in England making their fortune is the Bray City Rollers from Bray, Ireland. Britain's hottest teenrock act, Bay City Rollers, aren't very happy about the new group's choice for their name.

"At first we all laughed," said a

spokesperson from Arista Records, but then it all seemed a bit much, so we contacted our lawyers."

"Bay City Rollers' fans," he added, "are very young. So it's quite possible that they could make a mistake."

That mistake has already been made by at least one Irish newspaper. In a feature story about the new group, the all-important "R" was left out. The error prompted Arista Records to complain to Polydor, the Bray City Rollers' recording label. Consequently, Polydor refused to distribute the Irish Rollers' first record, *Lovely, Lovely Face*. The Irish boys are currently contemplating a new name—The Bray City Strollers.

There won't be many strollers in the town of Renner, Texas since their solution to the city's financial problem went into effect.

When Renner, a community of 500 persons, ran low on funds in March, it simply fired its entire police force. It naturally followed that the court clerk and city judge had to be dismissed too since there was nothing for them to do. The Renner Tax Collector and City Administrator jobs have also been terminated. With the entire law enforcement and judicial system disbanded, Renner Town Commissioner Ross Forney was asked who would maintain law and order. "I've got two German Shepherds," he replied, "and I may buy a third one now."

Dr. Michael Fox of Washington University in St. Louis says there has been a sharp increase in the mental illness of pets because owners are becoming increasingly dependent on or intimate with their pets.

He adds that one common neurotic symptom arises when dogs are raised only among humans, without contact with other canines.

"The pet literally thinks of itself as a human being," says Dr. Fox. "Some dogs like that have problems breeding—they would sooner breed with their owners."



The concept of breeding may soon enter the realm of toys for tots. Two of America's biggest toymakers—Mattel and Ideal—are rushing out baby dolls that come complete with a penis. The toymakers however may be aiming for different markets: Mattel reports its doll is uncircumcized while Ideal's is circumcized.

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The GIG is published monthly by The GIG Enterprises, Inc. All contents copyrighted 1975 by the company. Subscriptions are payable in advance: \$5.95 for one year, and \$11.50 for two years. Manuscripts and photos covering recording artists, composers and producers may be sent on speculation without guarantee of return to editorial offices of The GIG, 415 Lexington Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017. National advertising offices, 415 Lexington Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017. Telephone 212-661-6790. Application to mail as second class postage in pending at New York, New York.

# COMMENT

Even making untold allowances for the primitive nature of GIG's office stereo system, we have noticed a dramatic increase in flawed vinyl product over the last few months. After all, we receive promotional or "review" copies, and, knowing that these are sent out regularly to the hyper-critical ears of the national rock press, it is even more appalling to come across supposedly virgin LPs scarred with scratches, vinyl imperfections (causing "pops," skips or repeats) and surface hiss. And these are freebies! Pity you, the poor consumer, who has to trek back and forth to the record store, exchanging copies just to end up with that same skip in the same place!

Having saluted NARM (The National Association of Record Merchandisers) in a previous issue, we now do a neat turnaround and ask the powers-that-be behind the mammoth record multi-corporations to 'fess up. Come on guys, ever since the fuel shortage, you've been pressing this flood of recorded product with a noticeably lower grade of vinyl. And its beginning to show. Granted, to expect discs of near-virgin vinyl is unrealistic in this day and age, but substantive improvements in quality control are more than called for. At \$6.98 a pop (pardon the pun), one would at least expect a record that is playable, even during a decade where the word quality is on the verge of becoming extinct.

ED.

#### CORRECTION

Regarding the Laura Nyro album review in the May issue: It has been brought to our attention that the author of the song *Sexy Mama* which appears on the SMILE LP, is not written by Smokey Robinson. The author is Sylvia Robinson along with co-authors Al Goodman and Harry Ray.

# LETTERS

I've never heard of The Music Gig before today. I was in the store and saw Dan Fogelberg's name on your cover for April 1976. I bought it immediately.

I opened to page 47 and I thought 'Great, look at those beautiful pictures!' Then I started reading and said 'ugh, he's not an answer to John Denver, as far as I can see FM radio hasn't really discovered him yet, just a lot of great people have.' But, as I read, the article got better and better. It was fabulous, it just had a rotten first line.

Congratulations! I'm thrilled to see that some magazine has finally written about him—he's the best as far as I'm concerned. (He's also gorgeous which doesn't hurt him any). Thanks a million for a fabulous article and great pictures of the best new artist and group in music. (Fool's Gold just happens to be fantastic on their own new album and in concert.)

Keep it up,  
Sandy Martin

P.S. The rest of the magazine looks really good too, although I haven't been able to leave Dan long enough to read all of it yet.

Sincerely  
Vickie Williams

As an inmate in one of Florida's main correctional facilities, I must say your GIG is one of the best papers that I have ever read. Your Allman and Manchester review was really beautiful. I am the only inmate who is receiving GIG and I let other breeze through and they like it also. But the only thing that bothers me is that your concert listings are really behind times. What I mean to say is that we have people leaving everyday to go back on the streets and they want to know if any good gigs are gonna be around, not the one's that have already happened two months ago but the ones that are going to be around in the month or the next. You also have too much Disco sound. We, the inmates would like to know if you could run a few articles for us. We would like you to interview J. Geils, John Baldrey, Johnny Winter and Bad Company. We hope this isn't too much of a problem. Keep up the good interviews.

Jeffrey G. March

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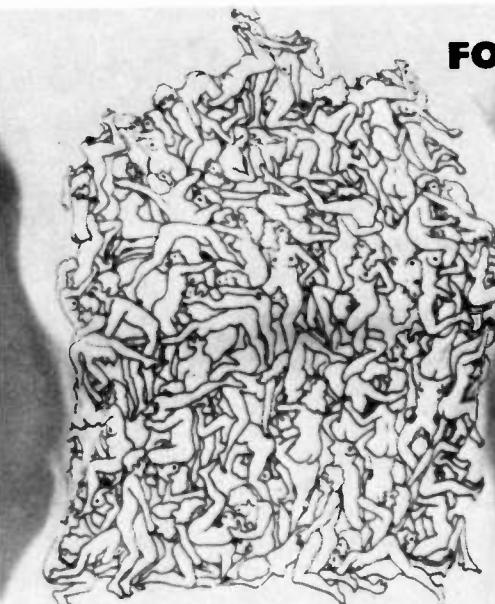
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# RON WOOD

Mr. Popularity  
Joins The  
Stones

by Steve Weitzman

My first attempt at interviewing Ron Wood was not what you would call successful. Although given an L.A. phone number and instructed to call at precisely 5:35 PM EST on Friday, March 26, the congenial Stone-Face (what is he anyway?) was not in. The person who answered stated that it was "only 5:33" and would I please call back in ten minutes? Ten minutes later, an abridged conversation with Wood went something like this:

The interviewer asks his first question.

Wood: "I can't hear you very well." Various crashing noises and other voices almost drown him out. "Listen, the thing is, I'm getting closed in by so many people here, I think we'll have to set this up for later on. How about 8:00 tonight, L.A. time? They're coming in the windows!"

"O.K., 8:00."

"All right mate, Bye Bye. I really can't talk now. There's floods of people here. See you tonight."

Only trouble was, "8:00 tonight" turned out to be some fifteen phone calls and forty-four and a half hours later. The delay was not totally unexpected though, since Wood was in the midst of recording and most musicians loathe interviews during sessions. But Wood would oblige — and his charm (that's not an on-stage front) as he profusely apologized for each time he said to call and then couldn't talk, made the delays easier to accept. The wait was not without a certain amount of entertainment. At 6:00 AM Saturday, a friendly female named "easy" answered the phone and while engaged in conversation waiting for Woodie, Eric Clapton strolled by. She called him over and he offered a gorgeous acoustic guitar solo with slide — into the ear of the telephone. "Now does that make everything all right?"

At 7:00 PM that night, another appointed time: "Woodie's gone to sleep ten minutes ago. He says to call him in twelve hours." Suffice to say that never materialized either, but at 2:00 PM EST, Sunday, March 28, the silence was broken. Take fifteen.

First of all, where exactly am I calling? If you could sort of set the scene a bit...

"You're calling the Zuma Beach area. It's near Malibu. This (Shangri La) is a studio owned by The Band. I'm here doing Eric Clapton's album — playing and singing and doing any requirements within my capabilities."

Was this a pre-arranged thing or spur of the moment?

"Spur of the moment. I had been in Nassau in the Bahamas in a house that Eric was renting there, he had wanted me to go over and visit and I did because I definitely needed a holiday after all the touring and studio work I've been doing over the past few years. So I went there for about three weeks, popped up to New York on a couple of occasions to finish the Stones album and now I'm here."

Speaking of Nassau, I saw your Nassau Coliseum gig last summer with Rod Stewart. Remember that?

"Yeah. I went on with shorts!"

Your shorts, your striped socks and your sash...

"Right. And my snake down the leg."

I wanted to ask you who your tailor is.

"Funny enough, that was Eric's suit. He got it in South America. It's a one-piece jumpsuit with short trousers. He never thought I'd wear it. He gave it to me as a goof and towards the end of the Faces' tour I figured why not? Go Crazy!"

In the early sixties did you used to go down and watch the Stones rehearse like Rod did?

"No. I watched Cyril Davies. Mick used to be in the audiences sometimes."

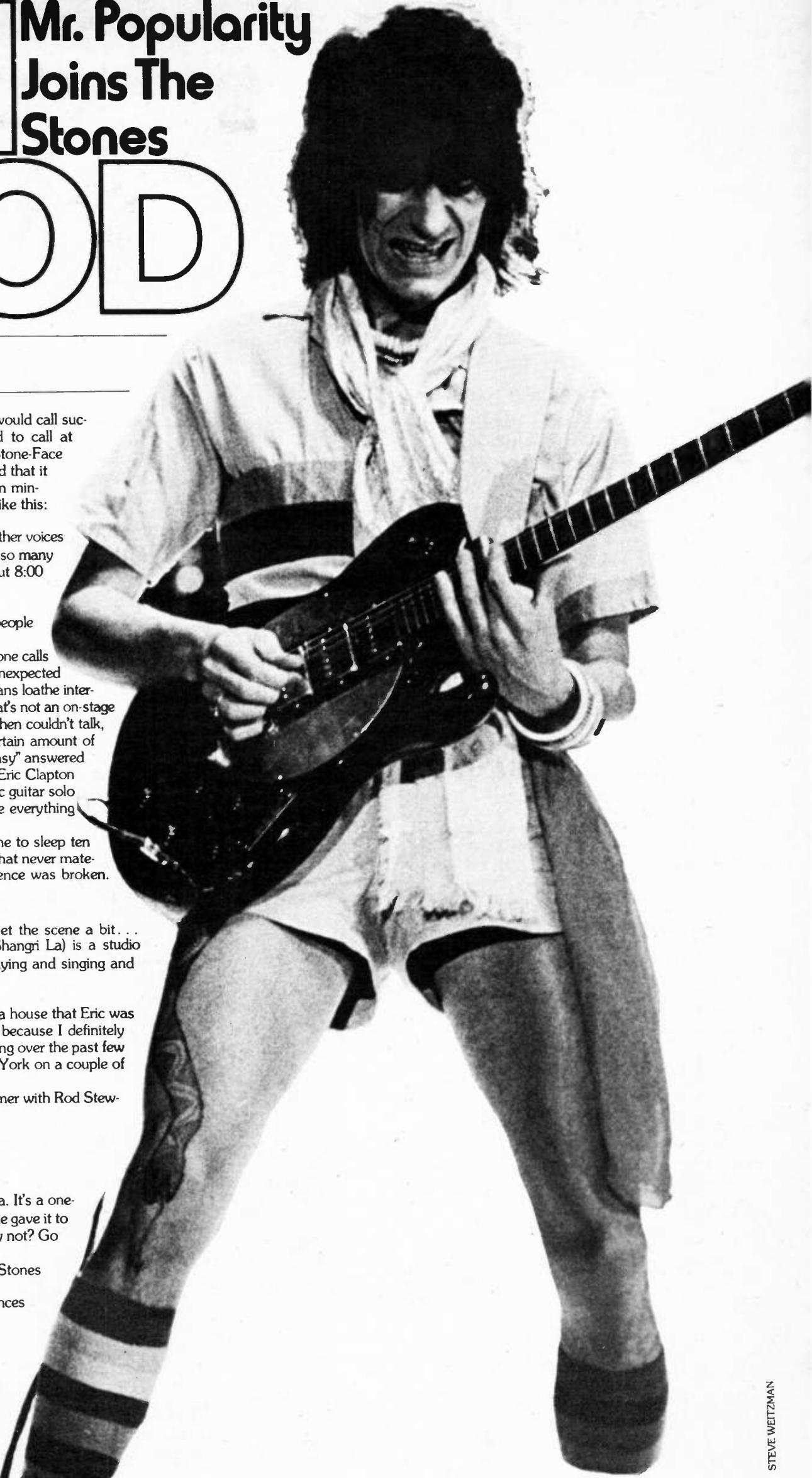
Was the Jeff Beck group your first band of significance?

"Yeah."

What were you doing right before Beck?

"I had a small but dedicated following with a group called the Birds. We did Motown and blues. It was basically a college band. I was going into the art field, you know. I had been in an art college for about five years but I knew then that art was a helluva field to get anywhere in. There was pretty near no opportunity

continued next page



for big money or to be able to travel or get recognition or anything. So I pursued the music. And when my band broke up, I renewed my acquaintance with Beck because I used to meet him on the road quite a bit. I just rang him up and I said, 'What are you doing?' I'd heard he'd left the Yardbirds and when I rang him he was really pleased to hear from me. He said, 'Come over!'

When you were playing Motown stuff, you were probably heavily influenced by American rhythm and blues . . .

"Yeah. Marvin Gaye."

So, as a guitarist, you must've liked James Brown's guitarist who was incredible . . .

"Oh yeah. I used to dig him, but I didn't know his name."

Right. Well I still don't know his name.

"(Laughs) Nor do I now! I was a big Chuck Berry fan also. Note for note I used to memorize his solos. And then I went through a phase of listening to people like Jimmy Smith, Kenny Burrell and Grant Green. Wes Montgomery had a big influence on me during that time. Jon Lord was in my eldest brothers group at the time, they were called the Art Boys and they used to get home from a gig and Jon and I would sit into the night listening to all different kinds of music. Booker T. and the MG's was a really early favorite."

There was a Faces gig on TV last summer with Keith Richards as a special guest. How often had you and he played together before that?

"He had done my first album and two live shows in London."

Two live shows with the Faces in London?

"No. They were under my own name. The show was called, 'Ron Wood, if you gave him half a chance.'

So basically, you haven't really played a whole lot with him.

"Not before my album, but during the album he spent about eight weeks at my house and we were solidly working."

Did you know him real well at that time? Had you been friends over the years and kept in touch?

"We'd been friends over the years as far as just a quick Hello, you know, How you doing . . . We'd meet in the street. Or hotels in the corridor where we never had time to talk. We'd always wanted to sit down and have a decent chat and one night Chrissie, my old lady, brought him home from a club in London. She'd met him down there and he'd looked a bit on edge because he was with some people he didn't particularly want to be with. So she said, 'Woodie's just starting his album. Why don't you come back and see how it's going?' And he said, 'Oh yeah? Let's go straight away because I want to get away from these people' So he came over and I thought he'd stay for the evening and he ended up staying a couple of months."

That's the classic mother-in-law story . . . Last year I did an interview with Mick and we did some talking about you. When I asked him how your singing would work in the Stones, he said, "Woodie can sing . . . a little. He'll probably say a lot about that!"

"That's right. I remember reading that. But that's right, I mean, I can sing a little. I'm still learning. That's the reason I like to play with a lot of bands. Just at this time though. My acquaintance with Bobby Womack really helped me out. And this Stones album was a really good experience because I had done a lot of background singing with Billy Preston, me and Keith, all of us at the same time and apart from what Rod would teach me — but he had the wrong kind of attitude where I was the guitarist and he was the vocalist, I had very little exposure to that kind of thing. He didn't used to pay much attention to my thoughts towards singing at all. So that's why I probably broadened my horizons a bit. In my spare time I did the Clapton Rainbow Concert, which was my first real deviation from the Faces. I did it with Pete Townshend and all of them and that was the first eye-opener. And then I met Rick Danko and Levon Helm when they came to London and Rick is a very free kind of guy with his feelings and he'll burst into song at any given moment and he'll just expect you to join in. People like that who encourage you are really good for someone learning to sing."

Talking about The Band, I wanted to ask you about a song on your first album, *Cancel Everything*. It has a real Basement Tapes feel to it and I thought that you'd probably have a lot of empathy for that particular Dylan/Band album.

"I'd heard various bootlegs but I wasn't aware of it being an influence, but now that you say that, I suppose it contributed quite a bit — that kind of feel towards that number, yeah. Bob Dylan was over here last night. I came back from town, from Beverly Hills and he was playing bass on my song, one of the numbers on Eric's album. It knocked me out to see Bob down there playing on that."

Dylan playing bass?

"Yeah. We did the number again because Bob left early. He

suddenly cut out and we carried on cutting the number."

How's he to work with?

"Well, he's always been a man of mystery (laughs). And I think that's the way he'll stay. He doesn't say very much and I've only met him a couple of times before. The first time I ever met him, he said, uh . . . it's funny you should bring that up, actually, *Cancel Everything*, because the first time I met him he was at a Faces party in L.A. which we threw for a whole bunch of music friends. We sent out a large amount of invitations to all kinds of people we thought wouldn't even dream of coming and as it happened, they all turned up. Bob sort of crept over to me at the party and said, 'I really dig your album.' I said, 'You've actually heard it??' And he said, ' . . . Yep.' He sent his regards to Keith. Keith is a really good friend of his."

Eric did a bit of recording with Dylan last year, but I guess it didn't make it on *DESIRE*.

"Oh it did. Durango."

That's Eric? It's uncredited. That's a common habit because I heard Mick singing on *I Can Feel The Fire* and Rod on *If You Gotta Make A Fool Of Somebody* from your first album but they're not listed. Any reason for that?

"Yeah. Warner Brothers didn't print the information sheet. That really annoyed me then."

Any thoughts of going to Rolling Stones Records for your solo albums or can't you do that yet, contractually?

"No I can't, contractually. But I think maybe it would be a bit too close to home if I had the freedom to go elsewhere. I don't really think the Stones really want me on the label because I think the Stones' label should be basically for them as a group."

But aren't you in them as a group?

"Yeah. But I mean, the whole five of them together. I know Bill is on there but that's one exception. I don't think I should be on there."

Which leads me to the obvious question . . . I wanted to find out exactly what your situation is. I heard that Rod is doing a tour in August, September and October, and his agent said that, as of a couple days ago, you were going to be on the tour as well. Have you made plans to do that?

"What, Rod's tour? No. I've made some plans to meet him later today or tomorrow. We still get along great. I'm looking forward to seeing him and he's looking forward to seeing me, but we know we can't work together for a while. I would be very surprised if I did it because I've got a two month tour of Europe with the Stones beginning April 23rd and then we're coming over here in July."

You're not doing a whole lot of gigs here though.

"Twelve."

Is the Stones tour lasting through August?

"Let me see . . . July . . . no."

So actually, you're free all during Rod's tour. Or recuperating.

"As of now I'm free, yeah. But who's to say what will come up. Or what already is on the books that I don't know about now."

What if Rod asks you tomorrow, "Will you be on my tour?" What would you tell him?

"Umm . . . I would tell him I'd like to be but . . . chances are, the commitments would be too many for me to do it. I'll probably be making my album then."

What would you say finally contributed to your split with Rod, if you could sum it up? I'm sure it's not an easy question to answer.

"Yeah, there were a lot of contributing factors. I'd say the main thing was that we were all probably breathing down each other's necks just a little bit because of having to handle most things ourselves though just sheer determination to get our points across in the way we wanted the band and the albums presented. It was like banging your head against a brick wall in the end. But I enjoyed those days that we were together and it would not surprise me if we got back together one day."

So last summer when you joined the Stones for the tour, you really had, in your mind, only decided to be a temporary member.



"Yeah."

Your final decision came after Rod's last tour . . .

"Well, he'd already made up his mind. I believe that his days with the Faces were numbered. Nothing personal, or hate, which some magazines had expressed, like extreme arguments. There was none of that. It was just that he'd broadened his horizons with studio musicians that he'd worked with, seen what else there was around and just wanted to experiment. His new band will be a various selection of good, possibly studio musicians."

Right before the Stones began their rehearsal for last year's tour, Jagger said that it was nice that you already knew a few of the numbers. "Better to like it . . . vaguely, at least," he said. Did that make it easier for you?

"I liked that but I had never sat down and learned the chords to any of them right up until the beginning of those rehearsals in Montauk. So although I was familiar with the numbers, it's a whole different thing when you have to sit down and play them."

Have you written anything with the Stones yet? I know you used to write a lot with Rod.

"I co-wrote *Hey Negrita* with Mick and Keith."

Will the Stones be performing much of the new material from **BLACK AND BLUE** on tour this year?

"That's one of the things we'll all talk about when we get together again. Rehearsals for our European tour begin April 5th."

Did the Stones tour last year present any surprises for you or were you pretty well prepared for what happened?

"I was pretty well prepared but it was *much* more pleasing. The vibe I got from it was increasingly powerful as the tour went on and at the end I couldn't believe it was over and we'd done so many gigs. It went so fast!"

Obviously you had been prepared for the mania of it by all the Faces tours you did . . .

"Yeah. I wasn't prepared for the total organization with which the Stones go about things though. But still, nothing happened without the O.K. from the whole group."

Other than the organization, what was the major difference in touring with the Stones as opposed to the Faces, say, musically, from your contribution? Are you basically playing as much guitar and singing the same amount?

"I'm playing *more* guitar and singing *more* because of the lack of restrictions. Basically there's a feel going between the Stones that we don't have to give too many instructions at all. It just works out right. I give an occasional look over to see what Keith's doing and take my cues from that."

Can you be detached from the Stones enough for a second, to comment on whether you think the role of guitar is changing any in the band since you replaced Mick Taylor?

"Well I still base myself with a strong emphasis on melody. Melodic playing. Even though it's loud and electric or whatever. I'm similar to Mick Taylor in one thing—he's very melodic and that's the way I like to think how I am. I can also rock out on a slightly dirtier tangent, I think, which Keith likes."

You really complement Keith well because you're both primarily brilliant rhythm guitarists who can also solo.

"Yeah. You hit it right."

Did you do all the recording of the new Stones album at Musicland?

"My contributions were done at Musicland, but before I got there they were near half-way through completion because Wayne Perkins had laid down some very valid and very nice guitar and so had Harvey Mandel. Harvey's on one track and Wayne's on three or four."

Were these tracks from the try-out sessions for a replacement guitarist from last spring?

"Yeah. The Stones spent time with these guys getting to know them and both guys played well in the studio, the parts fit in, so they kept them."

But did Harvey and Wayne know that what they were recording then would be out on a Stones album in a year and a half?

"No. They thought they would be on the Stones album out in six months (laughs). You know what I mean? These things just take time."

There are a couple songs on the new Stones album that some people consider disco. Do you consider them disco?

"Do I consider them disco? Yeah. *Hot Stuff* is a disco one, I reckon. And *Hey Negrita*."

What's that mean?

"It's a phrase of Mick's. He does a lot of travelling around the islands and it's sort of Hey!"

**Ne-GRI-TA!** It's a bit South American and a bit Jamaican. It's like the islands. I don't know what it means, but it does mean something."

You were credited with "Inspiration by Ron Wood" on **IT'S ONLY ROCK AND ROLL**. So is **BLACK AND BLUE** the first Stones album you've actually worked on and done sessions for?

"Apart from **IT'S ONLY ROCK AND ROLL**, yeah."

What did "Inspiration by Ron Wood" entail?

"Well, I played acoustic guitar and helped get the title track together with Mick and I will be credited with the same on *Hey Negrita* because when the song was written I was unsure whether I was contractually tied to my publishing company or not. So I'm not putting my name on it."

Do you feel your solo albums are a fair representation of what you were trying to do at the time of recording?

"Yeah, I do. They're not what I . . . um, but you did say it right, at that time I liked them but I want to get into it a lot deeper next time and get a lot more polish on the final thing. I still want to keep that rough R&B edge on the music but I want to get the presentation better."

Any final message?

"A final message? Well, the final message is, we seem to be out of brandy. Something will have to be done about that."



# Hot Off The Shelf

by Jerry Leichtling



Making of The President" series. But beyond the obvious critique of the Nixon people it was an indictment of our entire political system and how it had changed from one where people were active participants, to one where the people became merely consumers; just another facet of a consumptive and impersonal economic system.

When the book came out it was an immediate best seller. McGinniss, at 26, was the youngest person (with the exception of Anne Frank) to have written a number one bestseller. He was sitting on top of the world. But suddenly his world began to unravel. His personal life began to fall apart: he left his wife and three young kids and started to drink heavily; sort of recapitulating his own family history. It was a strange and sadly symmetrical story: he too had been bought and sold and lost something in the process.

And so McGinniss, who was really precocious and too young for his success, started to look around for what he, and we, had lost. The result is "Heroes", published by Viking, a story of a man looking for an idea and a reality in a world that had become all too unreal. It's one of the most sensitive and illuminating portrayals to date of a very central problem.

Heroes, in antiquity and up until recently, were in some sense "real" people. They were warriors or gods even, but their stories became known through people actually telling one another about heroes, creating a literature around them. In short, heroes were rarely mass produced by the media.

In 1969, Joe McGinniss published "The Selling Of The President, 1968". The book was an incisive and perceptive account of how the grim and drab figure of Richard M. Nixon was resurrected from the political graveyard, cleaned and polished, and sold to the American public like snake oil. It was one of the first warnings of the overriding lameness, shallowness and manipulativeness of the Nixon organization and mentality. It was the dark, other-side-of-the-coin from Theodore H. White's "The

McGinniss, in order to satisfy the missing personal center in himself, decided to both read all he could about heroes and go off to meet them personally. He was both lucky and unlucky in having the opportunity to do this. Most people don't have the time, the money or the access to heroes that McGinniss had. But the results of his quest, like Odysseus, were disturbing.

In the book he relates how Friedrich Nietzsche, the great 19th century German philosopher, characterized modern life. "Since Copernicus," he said, "Man has been rolling from the center toward 'x'. Man's place in the order of things was undermined and eroded. As civilization progressed and machines became important, man became secondary.

"Heroes" is the heartfelt attempt of a writer, who lives by word and image, the marginally real, to not die by those very means of expression. He goes to meet George McGovern, Eugene McCarthy, Daniel Berrigan, Edward Kennedy, Gen. William Westmoreland, John Glenn and Lt. Joe Hooper, the most decorated hero of the Viet Nam war. He also visits with writers William Styron and Norman Mailer, his own particular role models.

But McGinniss was really, like Carlos Casteneda, on an inner journey. It's a journey of dreams and consciousness and desperation. A very affecting book.

Essentially McGinniss has picked a very strong and central axis to hang his search from. "Heroes" as human figures were much more important and moving to us than they are now. Without heroes we have

few models for greatness. And we usually don't have heroes today, we merely have celebrities.

Music is the main arena for a lot of people's aspirations. The rock and roll star has replaced the hero, often substituting mere celebrity for real accomplishment. Substituting good looks for media hype for real talent. Remember "Wild In The Streets," the movie about a rock star becoming President? "Heroes" is a short, to the point, very human and very real antidote to media overkill. You should enjoy it.

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# **"It wasn't God who made honky tonk angels..."**

by Lynn Kellermann

The role of women in country music was virtually ignored until a quarter of a century ago, a period described as country's commercial "golden age." Although there were no female counterparts to Fiddlin' John Carson at the turn of the century or Jimmie Rodgers, country's first "superstar" during the 20s, there were always women lurking behind the stage somewhere. Most often they were overshadowed by the man, "featured" as merely "girl singers" or playing the lesser role in a husband-wife duet.

*continued on next page*



Though Kitty never considered herself one of the wanton pack or a women's libber, she did a brilliant job of convincing that men, not God, were responsible for the bad paths many a woman had to take . . .

Even during the 50's many of our finest female country artists moved to the spotlight involuntarily, at their husband's insistence or because of a record producer's growing enthusiasm.

The very first country artist on vinyl was a woman, a negro blues singer named Mamie Smith. Her recording in the spring of 1920 generated a blues market and launched the first successful hillbilly record company, Okeh Records. In the area of string bands, the first documented recording consisted of a fiddler and a banjo player, both women, named Samantha Bumgarner and Eva Davis.

Many country enthusiasts and folklorists consider Maybelle and Sara of the famed Carter Family the major innovators in "Mountain" music, characterized by traditional folk songs and homemade instruments. Sara Dougherty married into the Carter Family in 1915; at that time, she was an accomplished vocalist from Virginia. Maybelle Addington, who married E.J. Carter in 1926, was a multi-talented musician on banjo, autoharp and guitar. By the end of the 30's, many emulated her finger-picking style, among them, Woodie Guthrie and Leadbelly.

During the depression, the southerner's need to protest the drudgery of the coal mine and the monotony of tilling the soil was highlighted in the work of "Aunt" Molly Jackson, wife of a union member. Along with her sister Sarah, she popularized labor music from New York to Kentucky, meshing the traditional and modern by setting political lyrics to often religious melodies.

With the invasion of the jukebox many musicians were forced to electrify their instruments to combat the resultant competition. Ernest Tubb was one, and assisting him was Fay "Smitty" Smith, an accomplished female guitarist and one of the first to use a pickup on stage. Those who criticize females today for their minor contributions to electric guitar should take a lesson from Fay.

Way back in 1936, Patsy Montana (from Hot Springs, Arkansas) became the first female singer and yodler to record a million seller, *I Want To Be A Cowboy's Sweetheart*.

In the post war days, only two women gained immediate recognition. Mollie O'Day, a traditional singer and a Church Of God evangelist, had a sorrowful, emotion packed style, reminiscent of the famous

songwriter Roy Acuff. Even then, Columbia talent scouts called her the greatest woman country singer of all time. Rose Maddox and Kitty Wells burst upon the scene close behind Mollie with a somewhat more commercial repertoire. Rose performed with her brothers in gaudy, western costumes, billed as "the most colorful hillbilly band in the land."

Kitty Wells is perhaps the most prominent figure in the history of country women vocalists. Born Muriel Deason, daughter of a Nashville railroad man, Kitty is still adored by many, forever worthy of the title she was given 25 years ago as "Queen Of Country Music." (Patsy Cline, a close competitor was said to have dethroned Kitty but the truth of the matter will never be known since Patsy died in a plane crash in 1963). Kitty's first smash, *It Wasn't God Who Made Honky Tonk Angels*, was an answer to Hank Thompson's number one hit at the time, *Wild Side Of Life*, a

treatise on the wickedness of women, allegedly created that way by God himself. Though Kitty never considered herself one of the wanton pack or a women's libber, she did a brilliant job of convincing that men, not God, were responsible for the bad paths many a woman had to take:

Too many times married men still  
think they're single  
And have caused many a good girl  
to go wrong  
It's a shame that all the blame is on  
us women.

Originally, Kitty traveled with her husband Johnny Wright and his buddy Jack Anglin, billed as "Johnny And Jack" (note the name omission). They often appeared on the Grand Ole Opry and the Louisiana Hayride. Jack was tragically killed in a car crash in 1963, ironically enough, on his way to Patsy Cline's funeral.

Although Wells was most loved for heart rendering tunes like *Release Me* and

*I Gave My Wedding Dress Away* she feels they never reflected her personality, always finding a closer attachment to the religious songs she grew up with. In the summer of 1973, Kitty and Roy Acuff sold out a Pennsylvania ball park. Billed as "The King And Queen Of Country Music," they were accordingly crowned in velvet.

Moving with the changing times, Kitty has recently recorded with The Allman Brother and Marshall Tucker Bands on her new label, Capricorn, but the spirit of her voice is still indisputably country; smooth and casual in delivery, melancholy in intonation. Her legendary style has been reborn over and over again in the voices of many contemporary country artists. Her records still reflect an "authentic flavor" while emitting a feeling of great momentum and precedence.

The list of country female stars who were nurtured in the 60's is enormous: among them, Jan Howard (wife of songwriter Harlan Howard), Marion Worth, Tammy Wynette ("The First Lady Of Country Music"), Norma Jean, Wanda Jackson, Dottie West (currently the "Coca-Cola Queen", well known for her Coke jingle, *I Was Born A Country Girl*), Melba Montgomery, Skeeter Davis, Jean Davis (wife of Hawkshaw Hawkins), Loretta Lynn and Connie Smith.

Dolly Parton and Loretta Lynn echo the nasal, haunting voices of Mollie O'Day and Kitty Wells, while Tammy Wynette and Dottie West borrow a good deal from the popular stylists Doris Day and Pattie Page.

Dolly, a petite and striking blonde, was the fourth child of a family of ten, born in Locust Ridge, Tennessee in the Smoky Mountain Foothills. She's been writing all her life—introspective lyrics about rough times, simple pleasures and love. At the age of ten, she was already a star on the popular Cass Walker TV show and appeared at the Grand Ole Opry at age eleven. When Norma Jean left the Porter Wagoner Show in 1967, Dolly took her place. Three years later, she and Porter were honored by the Country Music Association as the "Best Duet Of The Year."

Until recently, Dolly found it difficult to gain acceptance as a serious composer. A lot of it has been attributed to her somewhat overwhelming physical appearance. A voluptuous blonde with many "natural endowments", she piles her hair high on top of her head and adorns herself in flashy



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Kitty Wells



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Dolly Parton



Dolly Parton



Dolly Parton



Connie Smith



Loretta Lynn

"When I was young, ya' see, I had nothing... That's why I like to dress up pretty. Besides if I came out on stage in a shag and jeans I wouldn't be Dolly... Some people don't look behind the fancy wig and the boobs."

clothing: "I do it because I like to be unique. If everyone started pushing their hair up, I'd probably knock it down. When I was young, ya' see, I had nothing, I was forced to wear what everyone's into now, the jeans and all. That's why I like to dress up pretty. Besides if I came out with a shag and jeans I wouldn't be Dolly. It has nothing to do with my intelligence."

"My music is my personal life. Even though I can't read it, I sit with a tape recorder, humming out songs, gradually adding lyrics and then my arranger changes it into notes one by one, like magic!" Among Dolly's many masterpieces is *Coat Of Many Colors*, a moving childhood tale covered by many artists, including Emmylou Harris.

Dolly enjoys mingling with the so-called "underground" country people: "Women like Emmylou and Linda Ronstadt may not have real country roots but they have that honesty and sincerity which is magic in itself. Having actually lived it gives you a different quality of sound but you don't have to be from the farm to be country. Even Neil Sedaka's got the spirit. When he sings *New York City Blues* you know he knows what he's talking about. It's just that, in the country, you have to raise something to eat. In Harlem you have to steal it!"

"Everyone says the underground loves me," Dolly comments. "Of course it's a whole different world, but I know I'm accepted for the way I am. It's the people that don't have personal contact with country artists who view us as 'simple.' They don't look behind the fancy wig and the boobs. But I'm the best of friends with so many of those young people. Percy Sledge, Linda and Emmylou and Olivia Newton-John have all recorded my songs and I'm very proud. (Olivia Newton-John recently recorded the Parton classic, *Jolene*).

Dolly believes strongly that loyal country audiences allow the music to endure: "I like to get down with my audience, I want to see the people who pay to see me. I guess with rock, you can't do that as much because the audience is often volatile. But country audiences are often family. You can get up close. The more successful I become the more humble I get. I see all these superstars having nervous breakdowns and my job is just a joy."

Dolly's husband has no connection with music but has accepted her career as a separate and important entity: "I don't preach women's lib, I'm simply preachin' the gift. You've got to pursue it. But I do believe the man is the king of his castle and if Carl had an unselfish reason behind wanting me to quit, I'd do it."

Connie Smith, a famous singer at 22 with her signature song, *Once A Day*, has gone through quite a transformation after "being saved by Christ" eight years ago. One of fourteen children, and the only 60's star originally from the midwest, her career began after entering a contest at the Frontier Ranch near Columbus, where she attracted the attention of Bill Anderson, the writer responsible for most of her hits.

Connie suffered through a nervous breakdown which she blames on the music business! "Fortunately I worked out my own salvation with Christ, the Lord was the last result in my case." Reminiscent of the religious fervor of Mollie O'Day, Connie spends most of her time off the road doing works of mercy. Her four children are the focal point of her life at this time. When Connie does appear, it is usually to spread the word of Christianity through crusades with Billy Graham and others; "Country music is a healing process, there's a lack of personal feeling in other forms. With hill-

billy music there's a giving and receiving. It's been horribly misunderstood. Some people seem to turn it off because it reveals a part of themselves they'd rather not see. Of course, there are certain corny country tunes I'd be too embarrassed to sing like Ken O'Dell's *Behind Closed Doors*. Why, I think being a woman is so glorious, but it's between her and her man. I feel sorry for those women's libbers who don't have a man to love them. The lord meant it to be that way. Something must have really hurt these women. This doesn't mean I don't believe in women's freedom. In fact, my husband hates my career but it doesn't stop me. What I do is important for the well-being of others."

Like Dolly, Connie has great respect for the underground. "I don't think any of the younger people are doing anything new. It's just the die-hards take awhile to accept new variations. But the nucleus is the same. Jessi Colter and I are great friends. When Waylon introduced her to me 10 years ago, she was still belting out the same way."

Tammy Wynette still renews her Alabama beautician's license in case her one million a year suddenly disappears, and this despite her eight years at the top; including 3 Grammies, a \$125,000 house in Nashville and a velvet upholstered tour bus. She's still the pretentious farm girl from Itawamba, Mississippi: "I chopped cotton and baled hay all my life. I want no more of that."

In 1965, with three daughters and a divorce on her hands, Tammy went to Nashville with many other young hopefuls. After being turned down by five record companies she finally got a contract with Epic Records, through composer/producer Billy Sherrill.

Tammy's seven year marriage and part-

nership with George "Possum" Jones ended suddenly one day when Tammy came home from the doctor's to find him gone. For five years they'd worked as a duet, with George having top billing at Tammy's insistence. With the trauma of this, her second breakup, Tammy found it an emotional necessity to release her pain in melody—"a slightly used woman just waiting for someone who loved her." Many of Tammy's hits like *Stand By Your Man* were written and produced by Sherrill, who has discovered other country women as well, including Lynn Anderson (*I Never Promised You A Rose Garden*).

Tammy thrives on touring, as it keeps her mind constantly occupied: "It's just the greatest feeling in the world. Sometimes I wish I could sleep, eat and breathe on stage."

More than most of her contemporaries, Loretta Lynn knows the hard facts of the daily struggle to survive, and has gained the kind of artistic prominence only accomplished previously by Kitty Wells herself. Married at 13 and a grandmother at 28, the girl from Butcher's Hollow, Kentucky got into the business through husband and manager Mooney Lynn, who exclaimed at a square dance one night that, "my wife Loretta can sing better than anybody besides Kitty Wells."

It's been a long, painful haul for this "coal miner's daughter" (the title of her moving ballad) which may explain her intense chauvinism for "pure" country music. Similar to Wells unassuming but controversial statement, in *God Didn't Make Honky Tonk Angels*, Loretta strikes out against the cubby-holed attitudes about southern women in timely songs like *The Pill* and *When The Tingle Becomes A Chill*. Yet, simultaneously, a strong affinity to her roots and family

continued on next page

"Through a process of gradual assimilation and consolidation . . . contemporary singers have grabbed up the rudiments of hillbilly music and declared a 'manifest destiny' upon it."



Tanya Tucker

tradition are obvious. In Butcher's Hollow, she and her brothers and sisters wore flour sack clothing and torn shoes. Never getting past the eighth grade, high school became an impossibility because of physical distance. After marrying Mooney they worked many years to support their family, which continues to grow.

"My daddy used to come home from the mines to find me sitting on the porch, rocking the babies and singing." The thought of her father's death in 1959 saddens Loretta, since he never realized the true dimensions of her success. The dichotomy between the world Loretta's stepped into and her impoverished childhood is sometimes staggering to the forty-year old star, who came to Nashville in a 99¢ Salvation Army dress. With houses in Mexico and Nashville and a \$147,000 custom bus, she occasionally works herself into an ulcer attack and friends worry about her constantly. Her business activities include the band, rodeos, a chain of Westernwear shops, talent booking and music publishing, not to mention her husband, family and the church. Her voice is frighteningly reminiscent of Wells' in both tone and phrasing, especially during those weary intermittent dialogues that are both humorous and moving. *Coal Miner's Daughter* conjures up the lively spirit of "Aunt" Molly Jackson, covering 50 years of bondage and deprivation. For Loretta, it wasn't that long ago:

Well I was born a coal miner's daughter  
In a cabin on a hill in Butcher's Hollow  
We were poor but we had love  
That was one thing my daddy made sure of  
He shoveled coal to make a poor man's dollar.

A bit less reticent about the woman's plight than Kitty was, Loretta could hardly be called a militant, either. She's just a woman who's "had all there is to take" and is unwilling to take anymore.



Ronee Blakely

While many of today's country/rock female singers have little common ground with the aforementioned, they have translated the woeful real-life tales of long ago into even more emotional statements, drawing from psychological rather than just physical experiences. As Parton put it: "what separates a country artist from a singer is the ability to 'inject the soul into a song.'

Ronee Blakely is more than capable of that. A proficient actress and songwriter (who recently portrayed an alleged Loretta Lynn "type" in the film *Nashville*), her *Idaho Home* effects the same familiar feeling projected by Lynn's *Coal Miner's Daughter*. "I still remember Daddy singing his old army songs. We'd smile and ride horses as we drove along."

Emmylou Harris, a stunning new singer from Alabama, was inspired by the remnants of the urban east coast folk scene; performing with former Byrds and Flying Burritos member, Gram Parsons—whose shocking death a few years ago traumatized Emmylou for quite some time. Picking up the pieces of her career, she has proven herself a skillful, magnificent soloist on two recent Warner Brothers albums. Her repertoire includes everything from Parton's *Coat of Many Colors* to the Beatles' *Here, There and Everywhere*.

Linda Ronstadt, a singer heavily influenced by the pop bastion, can still take a country tune like *I Fall To Pieces* and make it linger long after the voice fades. Though she hasn't had the artistic benefits of real country roots "suffering," coming from a middle class, western background, she cries her songs as convincingly as Kitty Wells did when she wailed "Please Release Me."

Tanya Tucker, born in Wilcox, Arizona, is a 17 year old child star who represents one more evolutionary step in country music. Says Tanya: "I like to cross over, do a variety of things. I was promoted with my coun-



Emmylou Harris

try roots, but I'm looking for national appeal. All kids have their dreams and this was mine. I figure if Emmylou and Linda are 28 and I'm only 17, I have all that unclaimed time to catch up, develop and go beyond."

Basically unconcerned with the "authenticity" of her songs, Tanya comments: "If the tune is about a vaporizer and it's a hit I'll do it. Olivia Newton-John made a million on *I Honestly Love You* and everyone said she was a foreigner trying to be a country, but I have to admire her."

On stage Tanya provokes a nubile sexuality that has blessed her with the title of "teenage tigress."

"I really like to give out on stage. I don't understand how Ronstadt can just stand up there and sing, but I think the sexuality bit is all in people's minds."

Nevertheless, when Tanya sings *Lay With Me In A Field Of Stone*, it hardly invokes a spiritual feeling.

Still growing, "loving and learning" (the title of her new LP), it's difficult for Tanya to "write those hurting songs like Tammy or Loretta," but the compassion she reveals in song, based on a dream she worked diligently to make real, is a constant stylistic.

The roster of country women is infinite. Others that merit attention are the strident voiced Jessi Colter, Maria Muldaur who does wonders with Parton's *Tennessee Mountain Home*, Canadian Anne Murray and Olivia Newton-John, whose sweetly-paced voice on tunes like *Please Mister Please* exhibits the same desperation Kitty conveyed in her "weeping by the jukebox" melodies.

The deprivation, racism and isolation that defined the south 50 years ago is now virtually obsolete. Through a process of gradual assimilation and consolidation, country music has been labeled by many as "Americana." Contemporary singers have grabbed up the rudiments of hillbilly music and declared a "manifest destiny" upon it.

Women in this field have always used the stage as a platform to voice their misgivings, their passions, their tragedies and their happiness. For as long as that "genuineness" remains, the music will continue to survive. From her sometimes overlooked stronghold as a part of the "family" or "couple," the country woman has ultimately transcended that stereotype. Never abandoning traditional values, she redefines them and goes on to create a sisterhood of singers that exists above and beyond given cultural values.

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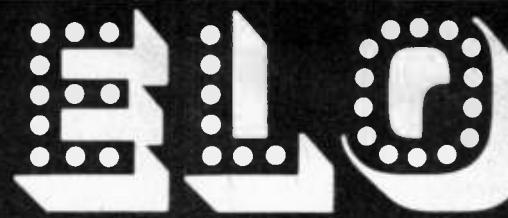
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## Slugs It Out In Louisville

by Stephen Ford

LOUISVILLE—Jeff Lynne slips out of his elegantly patched jeans and negotiates his way into dazzling, white trousers while spewing a vector of four-letter combinations describing his displeasure with the promoters at Louisville's Gardens Convention Hall this evening.

Almost 24 hours after a not terribly exciting one-nighter in Columbus, Ohio, Lynne and the six other members of the Electric Light Orchestra have been informed the Gardens' management has added Bryan Ferry and Roxy Music to the evening's bill, Roxy to perform between Journey, the opening act, and ELO.

"Bastards!" Lynne bellows. "By the time we're on, the crowd will be ready for bed! Who wants to sit through all that? We won't be on until 11 or worse!"

He's close. It's 10:40 when the band files onstage. The wine red shirt and dazzling trousers containing Jeff Lynne meander through the stage clutter to center stage. He takes a bite from a crust of garlic bread, plants a near-empty bottle of Budweiser on a nearby amp and straps on a gold-flecked Les Paul. "It's a living," he snorts before being drowned out as the band launches into *Fire on High* and ELO begins the 16th of 27 performances across North America.

Despite the weariness of touring—unexpected performers sharing the bill, errant logistics and rotten hotels—Lynne and everyone attached to ELO knows no other way of life. Louisville has done little to improve that way of life.

Louisville represents the old South every bit as much as Atlanta represents the new—its derelict downtown area and gray inhabitants reflect an era nightmares away from Atlanta's burgeoning skyline and double-knit denizens.

In these parts, 35 miles is a scant distance and that's just how far Fort Knox, Goldfinger's wetdream, is from Louisville. The Confederacy's gray has been profitably replaced with olive drab. On weekends, there are so many GIs in the bars, and ultimately in the motels, you get an indication of what Saigon must have been like some years ago.

ELO originally planned to check into a chain motel on one of Louisville's decaying main arteries that afternoon. But after surveying the sea of shaved heads on weekend leave and the clusters of indiscreet hookers on the sidewalks in front, they changed course for the high-rise Stouffers Inn a few blocks up on Second Street.

"Road tragedies," is how Bev Bevans refers to such incidents a few hours before their show at the Gardens. Bevans, ELO's drummer and alumnus from the departed British legend called The Move, elaborates, "You've got to expect all that. For instance, I haven't seen my wife in months. I talked to her on the phone a week ago but calling, you know," he gropes for the words, "makes it worse. When I called, she was telling me about a birthday party for a friend of ours. Naturally, I wouldn't be there, being 3,000 miles away."

"But," the deep voice pauses, "I still like the road, I like to see the audiences, even if we don't have the same control over our music that we have in the studio. That's why Jeff hates touring. He prefers the studio. He'll spend hours in the studio listening to one track and keep at it, improving it and improving it. I can't. I'll have the headphones on for awhile but I have to get out after a bit."

Bevans is pretty amiable this afternoon and has consented to an interview in contrast to Lynne who hasn't granted an audience to the press in 18 months.

ELO is clearly Lynne's band, from implementing electric pickups on the stringed instruments to incorporating an elaborate laser beam-oscillator show, all products of his fertile mind.

The intellectual, xenophobic and suspicious Lynne left the Move four years ago, not with a bang but a glimmer. Fed up with what he believed to be Roy Wood's self-centered histrionics, he exited with gloved gauntlet, experimenting with the innovative Electric Light Orchestra while still recording with Wood and Bevans.

As any record executive from United Artists, ELO's recording label, can tell you, success may have been slow to come to fruition for ELO but now it's definitely blossoming. ELO's first two albums stirred the minions. *EL DORADO*, their third LP, and *FACE THE MUSIC* have positively inflamed them... and the critics.

Backstage at the Gardens, Lynne is Wellington at Waterloo. Despite petty setbacks, victory shall be his. He takes such total charge of subordinates, promoters and anyone else that resistance appears futile—to a point.

Knowing Lynne's repugnance for interviews, I pursue him to the men's room between songs in that evening's program. The captive audience technique has its merits for, standing beside the porcelain troughs, I corral just enough of Lynne's pique to insure a few minutes of his time after the show.

Lynne's madman's eyes glaring out from the record sleeves of past ELO albums do, and don't, render him accurately. His music tends to do most of the talking. In person though, he is a master of non-verbal communications—a grimace, a grin, a strategic cough or a sweep of the hand relays much more. Angered, Lynne can resemble one of those prehistoric fish that dwell in the greater depths of the ocean.

He is ELO's resident genius but not their sole madman. Cellist Hugh McDowell often punctuates stage shows as if borne away on flight of fantasy, his instrument rapidly spinning like a dervish while he impales imaginary enemies on his bow. Violinist Mik Kaminsky will shed his classic violin form to cavort across stage and fiddle Grand Ole Opry style.

It's the kind of madness that explains ELO's navel warfare on the sleeve of *ON THE THIRD DAY* where their dignified deportment was somewhat marred by the prominent display of seven belly buttons. Odd for a band in danger of being labeled pretentious.

Lynne is most assuredly ELO's team captain and unequivocally, they would have no other. Onstage in Louis-

ville, Lynne calls every shot though studiously avoiding a solo number in the show.

Belying his aversion to the stage, it remains enough for Lynne to direct his symphony before an ocean of adoring University of Louisville students. His voice carries a texture that so perfectly suits ELO's material you could never imagine anyone else in his place. Much of the time on stage,

he appears oblivious to his uneasiness with an audience, even one separated from the stage by a wave of steel-blue police helmets.

Not quite two hours later, the show is over. ELO has woven bits of *FACE THE MUSIC* with *ON THE THIRD DAY*, thrown in a few glimpses of bygone days with *Do Ya* and tossed off a crash course on the intricacies of *EL DORADO* for a marvel of capsulized concept.

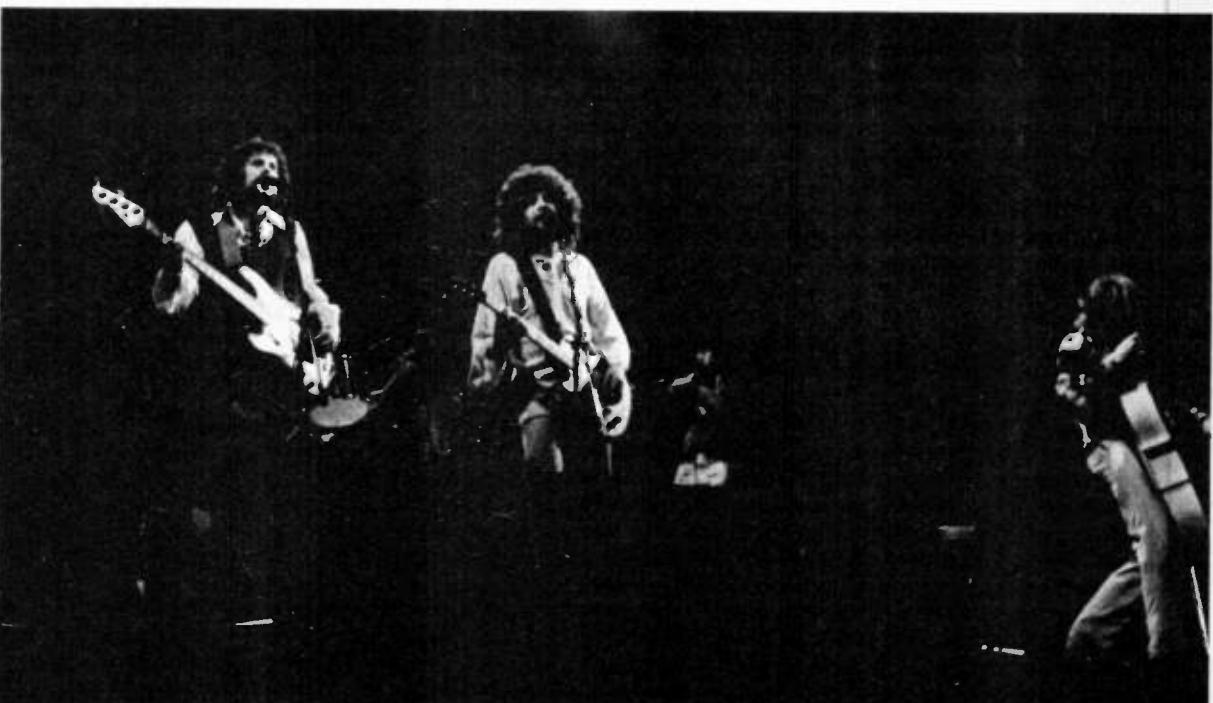
The wine red shirt dripping with perspiration, thirsty and very hungry, Lynne lacks the strength for hostility. He enters the dressing room the same moment a chorus of groans swell from the band—the food expected to arrive before their last number has not. All there is to eat are two cookie sheets of hardened garlic bread, the same batch they munched on earlier to allay their hunger until after the show.

Lynne manages to recreate the fervor displayed earlier in his first passionate oration on Louisville's concert promoters. He, as does most of the band, takes solace in two nearby plastic trashcans filled to the brim with ice, Budweiser and Liebfraumilch.

Never one to suffer writers gladly, Lynne nourishes himself from a dark brown bottle and says, "I get right sick of answering questions about Roy Wood all the time."

Between lusty bites from crescents of garlic bread, he explains, "That's why I won't do interviews. The critics," he gestures most graphically, "are just jerking off. They come to our concerts, or listen to an album, then write it up afterwards and I wonder if it's the same thing I heard. They don't know what the hell they're talking about."

"For example, most of them seemed more interested in the cover of *EL DORADO* than what was inside. They'd be asking the significance of Dorothy's shoes and how the album is related to the Wizard of Oz. What rubbish!" he declares amidst buttery crumbs. "We didn't have anything to do with the cover. We gave the (master) tapes to the company and they sent it to some artists in California and said 'Make us a cover.' That's all. I still don't know what it



ville, Lynne calls every shot though studiously avoiding a solo number in the show.

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is supposed to mean—maybe some reference to 'Over the Rainbow,' an optimistic touch, y'know, which would fit in with *EL DORADO*."

Not exactly the quintessential dainty rock star of 115-pound frame, he stands up to emphasize his emotion and the wooden folding chair he just occupied clatters to the concrete floor.

"Critics live in the past," he says more emphatically. "Always wanting you to do things they like over and over. They don't leave you any room to try anything different. Always the Move, the MOVE! Christ!" he shrieks, "I never joined the Move until it was just about over."

Bevans confesses he is as weary as Lynne of questions probing their days as the Move.

"People ask about Roy and we're tired of it," he says with just a trace of an edge to his voice. Shaggy, tall and with piercing blue eyes, Beverly Bevans is the group's diplomat and historian. "We've seen Roy a few times since he started Wizard. I saw him just last December at a Christ-



MARY ALFIERI

mas party our manager throws every year. Roy and ELO have the same manager. We talked awhile, nothing great."

Asked his opinion of Wizard, Bevans replied, "I've heard them often. I don't think much of them. Jeff and Kelly (Groucutt, bassist) were saying not long ago that Roy's too wrapped up in the 50s, too commercial."

"Not that we ignore what's commercial," Bevans hastens to add. "But we rarely know what's commercial ourselves. We never have preconceived ideas about the commercial side of an album when we go into the studio. Except EL DORADO which, as you know, was a concept. We knew what we wanted there. Sometimes we deliberately go with whatever sounds commercial enough for a single, that's why our albums never turn out the way we think they will. EL DORADO has been the most satisfying album for us so far but it's not strong enough to release a lot of the tracks as singles. That's why it died out so quickly."

"Our record company wanted us to release Strange Magic as the first single from FACE THE MUSIC but we knew Evil Woman was more popular in Britain and that's what we preferred. Then, we find out that Strange Magic is more popular here and should've been the first release."

Regardless, Evil Woman rocketed up the charts and into the Top 10. It is, however, only their second single in nearly four years to go that far—the first being Can't Get It Out of My Head from EL DORADO. Small peanuts for the nucleus of a band that recorded six consecutive number one singles in Britain, one of them, Roll Over Beethoven, being ELO's letter of introduction to the United States.

Does the repetitive hitmaking bespeak a trend, or (gasp!) a formula, for ELO's commercial success?

"We don't have a formula," Bevans admits. "We're doing the same kind of material, just better. We're album-oriented so we release singles that sound like," he pauses, "like they've captured our over all sound. We're trying to style ourselves. For instance, we'd never release Down-home Town as a single because it doesn't really reflect our sound. We wouldn't even do that in concert because it's just a fun song for us. It's not our style."

Lynne elaborates: "We have no formula even if we look like Fleetwood Mac. I disagree with Bev insofar as our music now being us doing what we know better. We've evolved and evolved. You should be able to see the changes between our first album and FACE THE MUSIC. That's not formula, that's evolution."

It's that admirable, if not aristocratic, air that hindered the band's initial acceptance. But then, Lynne doesn't truly feel ELO is for everybody.

"We can't blame anyone for our early failure in the United States," Bevans concedes. "We started about the same time as the Cream and while Clapton was building a reputation here, we stayed home. We had no idea how vast the country is, or how long it takes to build up a following here. We never realized how stupid it was to avoid radio and press interviews or TV shows. We had six back-to-back hits in Britain and thought once the FM radio stations started playing Roll Over Beethoven that everything would fall into place."

"In Britain," Bevans continued, "The Move had the same sort of pop image the Who had here. But we weren't con-

sidered as innovative. We weren't turning out the same stuff Townsend was."

"That was before Jeff joined the Move. He didn't like Roy's way of getting us into the papers by doing anything gimmicky. Roy would say anything, wear anything—gangster costumes—to get us into the BBC's 'Top of the Pops' show or those stupid family variety shows."

"When we got away from the Move and first tried ELO, we opened for a lot of bands we didn't think were going to attract our kind of crowd. But the audiences were so shocked to see two cellos and a violin move on stage along with the guitar and drums, they stuck around to hear

brand as inferior. You'd never see that in England, it's still strictly Brand X."

Bevans gnaws at his lip while ruminating on cultural differences between Britain and the United States, the latter's preoccupation with youth, in particular. "Our audiences here are so much younger than us and age seems a big thing. I'm 30, you know, and Jeff's 28 though it doesn't bother him much. Our audience is usually 18, 19. It scares me sometimes."

"A good friend of mine, Freddie Mercury from Queen, says he's only 28 because he doesn't want to alienate his fans. Queen is the most popular band in Britain right now so I can understand his feelings but I know he's over 30 by quite a few years."

"All the big stars are, Led Zeppelin, the Rolling Stones."

It's now well past midnight and Lynne is willing to philosophize on the tyranny of time from behind an electronic pingpong table in a Louisville bar: "We do seem a lot older than our audiences. It'll probably become more obvious, but that can't affect our music. My greatest influence, the only musicians who meant anything to me, barring the classics, were the Beatles, and their stuff came out when they were all approaching 30. I never felt I could arrange for strings in a song without being syrupy until I heard the Beatles do it."

"Maybe," Lynne stretches over the table as he trains his eye on an electronic boogeyman on the green table below, "that's why the Beatles are thought of as a studio band. There, they controlled the sound. Ah," he signs, "That's when I'm happiest, in the studio."

"On the road," he says between sips from a Pilsner glass, "We used to do soundchecks everywhere we played. I don't do that anymore. Too exhausting. That's the way it is. Now," he pauses over another electronic threat, "that's success . . . or a living."

Bevans, who had aspirations in high school of playing soccer for a livelihood, sees the future differently.

"Investments in the future," his face broadens, "I owned a few record stores around London, y'know, but the tax situation there made it all impossible. I think what I want to do now is produce an album completely written by drummers. I spoke to Ringo Starr about it in Los Angeles and he's perfectly willing to sit in."

Lynne is a captive of the present. "What we do now takes care of tomorrow. More and more people are recognizing us every day. They've heard our songs on the radio. Even middle-aged people spot us at some hotel pool or in a bar and they come over to chat. We're breaking into a wider market every day," the madman's face grins, "We're next. It's just a matter of time."



ROZ LEVINE

# LAURA NYRO

## On The Road After A Five Year Absence

by Kris Nicholson

Live, Laura Nyro's biggest problem is lack of communication with her audience. Next to that it's a question of, "Does she need a back-up band?" Wouldn't we all be just as happy if she sat behind her piano and played one bitter-sweet blues/love song after another? While there are positive elements in her band: three female musicians, a conga player, a trumpeter, a sax/flute/player, and an improvising jazz guitarist, there are moments when the band clutters up the sheer emotion of Laura's sporadically controlled voice. Loose endings and an uneven sound mix tend to drown out Laura's piano playing and to serve as a cover for an occasional uneven delivery of "la la's."

Certainly, it's good to have Laura back. Maybe you liked her better in 1970, but at least she's recovered from a five year absence. In that time she experienced a marriage, decided she didn't like the experience, liberated herself, took a trip to Japan which has ultimately influenced her music, and got into meditation. After all this she still presents herself with a certain amount of energy and potential.

Ushered in by this fluid, jazz/ballad-oriented comeback debut, SMILE is not as dynamic an example of her songwriting as past work. There's no *Eli's Comin'*, no *Emily*, and no *Flim Flam Man*, but there are smoother, more consistent, clearer voice up-dates of the past's mellower moments.

Another drawback of SMILE is that it's too specific from a personal standpoint. Subsequently, her new songs are unlikely candidates for other people's cover versions. SMILE is less a songwriters album and more of a singer's album; not necessarily a bad approach, since it may allow Laura the chance to be her own voice instead of leaving her lost in the shadow of her interpreters.

Returning to the topic of communicating with audiences, this is Laura's weakest point. Save for an occasional mandatory gesture: a brief thank-you, a snappy introduction of the band, a shy glance into the audience and a hesitant, "It's good to be back," Laura has little to offer in the way of reaching out to her listeners. She's never been known as a talker, but there are limits. If it was just Laura, her voice and piano could speak for themselves, but with eight other people on stage, one gets the feeling that something secret is going on and no one on stage is giving us a clue as to what it is.

Laura chooses to perform songs from all points in her career mixed in with a good portion of SMILE. A funkier *And When I Die* is refreshing. Her solo rendition of *Emily* is one of the finer moments in female love/friendship ballads, and the lyrical liberation of *Sweet Lovin' Baby* from "I belong to the man" to "I belong to myself," is an affirmation of Laura's new-found strength. When the vibe player dons a cat mask for *Eddie The Cat*, a sense of humor loosens up the mute pace of song after song. Laura even plays guitar on a couple of tunes, but it would probably be better if she didn't.

What Laura Nyro's comeback represents is ultimately the return of one of the late sixties' finest female singer-songwriter/performers. Rough edges and inconsistencies aside, Laura represents a legitimate contribution to the female legion of contemporary popular musicians. Whether or not she overcomes the obstacles built up in the wake of her absence, will be an indication of her strength and her sincere desire to build and expand that strength. SMILE and the coinciding tour are promises of better things to come.



ROZ LEVIN

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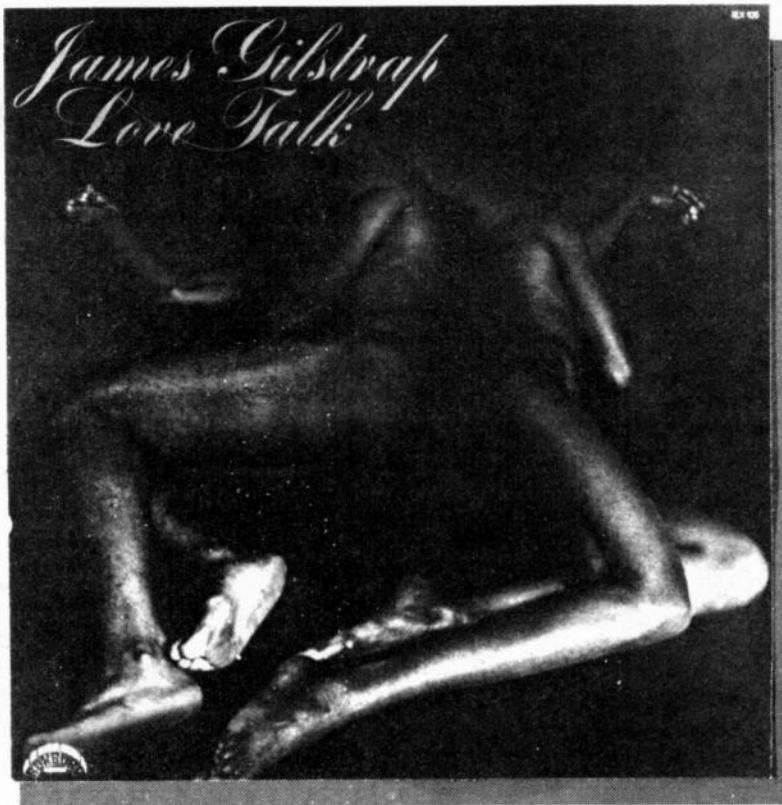
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# FLAMIN' GROOVIES

## The Perennial Spirit of Rock 'N Roll

by Jean-Charles Costa

Having been a charter member of the Flamettes, the minimally featured backing vocal group on the Groovies' legendary TEENAGE HEAD album (produced by Richard Robinson in a rapid fire series of warm and definitely "congenial" sessions at the drab Bell studios in NYC that resulted in dazzling instances of rock and roll brilliance—leading it to be favorably compared to BEGGAR'S BANQUET, the Stones' offering of the same period), has inevitably led to a decidedly warped personal view of this charming and mystifying band.

Given data. The Flamin' Groovies first see the light of day as a San Francisco "punk garage band" during the halcyon early sixties period when the Haight was just beginning to blossom in a big way. Be not deceived, however, these guys had absolutely nothing, repeat nothing, to do with the flood of "musical psychedelia" that flourished within the walls of the old Fillmore and Avalon Ballrooms. Starting at the logical Chuck Berry/Jerry Lee Lewis seminal point in rock 'n roll, filtering it through the early work of bands like the Beatles, Stones, Kinks and Animals, the Groovies have doggedly clung to the "essentials" of the form. Namely—tight, functional instrumentation, showmanship and "flash," concise solo work and an aggressive energy level throughout the whole set. When they write tunes, they still build on strong melody lines and persuasive rhythmic hooks. The long, meandering improvisational sorties popularized by bands like the Dead and the Jefferson Airplane were an anathema to Flamin' Groovies' basic rock ethic. Conversely, the band was often shunned and ostracized by fellow musicians and audiences of that period; probably because they weren't "mellow" and groovy enough.

Oh yeah, the members of the band. Well, the only original players who have survived the late sixties/early seventies rock wars are the "impressible," one-of-a-kind Cyril Jordan on lead guitars and vocals and George "can't recognize him since he got his hair cut" Alexander on bass. James Farrell (guitars), Chris Wilson (guitars, vocals) and David Wright (drums) round out the current Groovie line-up.

So the band has recorded a collector's item LP (SNEAKERS), a seriously flawed (mix-wise) album for Epic (SUPERSNAZZ), two fair-to-excellent LP's for Buddah (FLAMINGO, TEENAGE HEAD) and a series of dynamic individual tracks for UA ("Slow Death/Tallahassee Lassie," "Married Woman/Get A Shot Of Rhythm And Blues," "You Tore Me Down" (Bomp Records) and "Shake Some Action" among others). The latter were recorded at Rockfield Studios in Wales with the eminently perspicacious Dave Edmunds of "I Hear You Knocking" fame at the console and have led to a huge and vigorous cult following throughout England and continental Europe. In fact, a particularly obsessed group of Groovie devotees from Holland, Skydog Records, has pursued the group to hometown San Francisco during their period of semi-obscurity in order to record them in various garages around town. I mean, those Europeans really get into it. Ask any young passerby on the Champs Elysees about the Groovies and they



will exclaim about the amazing one night stand at the Olympia Theater where the band was introduced by none other than Elton himself and subsequently went on to devastate the French audience, earning a whole bunch of encores. After all, the Groovies "sont le vrai rock 'n roll," and that could be the crux of the problem.

Be prepared labelers, Cyril and the gang dress in elegant, never-to-be-dated Carnaby Street mod gear, use those great, old scratchy Gretsch guitars and small, funky Fender

amps, and ultimately produce a catchy, infectious brand of rock and roll that sounds suspiciously familiar at first. But you can't get hung up on thematic re-occurrence. The most important thing to realize when aging vis a vis rock is the simple fact that nothing blatantly "original" will be forthcoming with the next rock and roll generation.

The only thing that counts is if that singular buzz of energy is there. The Groovies have always had that, in spades. Go get 'em guys.—

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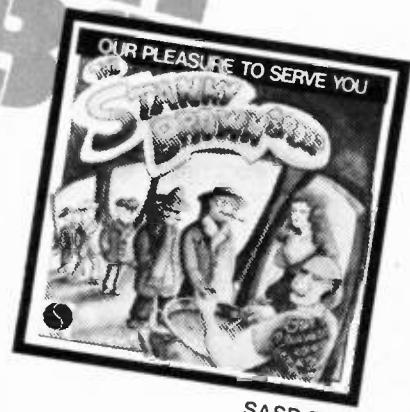
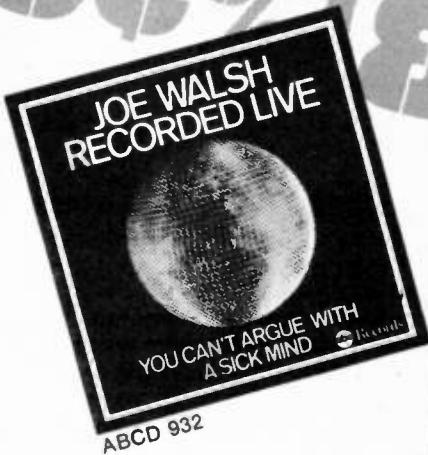
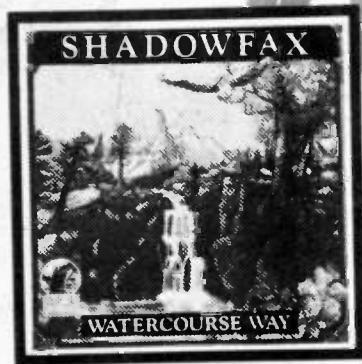
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WENDI LOMBARDI

## Nils Lofgren's Circuitous Path To The Top

"As a solo artist I don't want to be known for gimmicks. I've got lots of ideas for constructing a show but they won't come until I get recognition on the basis of music."

By Kris Nicholson

Until his 1975 solo debut, Nils Lofgren had always played his music with or for someone else—from Neil Young and Grin to Crazy Horse and sessions too numerous to mention. A guitarist with a lot of self-confidence, Nils got his introduction to a promising future when he made his way backstage at a Washington D.C. club and introduced himself to Neil Young.

In the late sixties, just after he'd finished Grin's first album and while he was waiting for his manager to clinch a recording contract, Nils headed out west where he met up with Young, who in turn introduced him to a producer named David Briggs. Nils explains, "From that point on it was all David. I sort of moved in with him and he kept me fed." The two have been working together ever since.

About this same time, Young's record company was threatening to suspend him if he didn't come up with a record. When he asked Lofgren to play piano for him, Nils was confused. He'd never played piano before, but was willing. "We messed around with a few different sets of musicians," Nils recounts, "Starting out with the bassist and drummer from the McCoys, or something weird like that. Eventually we got together with Ralphie and Billy of Crazy

Horse and it sounded real good, and so the foundation for recording *AFTER THE GOLD RUSH* had been constructed.

"This all took place at the time Neil had been asked to join Crosby, Stills and Nash, so he was feeling very confident. There I was playing piano. I'd played accordian for seven years before that. Since the right hand fingering was identical, I picked that up quickly, but my left hand was very simplistic. Musically I knew the notes, so I could cut the basics. That was all Neil wanted. He didn't need someone he'd have to say, 'don't play,' to. I was someone he could direct fairly easily."

Recorded in Neil Young's home in Topanga Canyon, *AFTER THE GOLD RUSH* was basically Nils on piano and Neil on guitar, though he added additional tracks recorded with Crazy Horse: *When You Dance*, *Birds*, which is an acoustic number, and the title track, on which he played piano and sang by himself. "Contrary to what everyone thinks," Nils explains, "Neil played piano on the two main piano songs but there was no point in fussing over credits, so I was given the sole piano credit and he was given the guitar credit. Not to take away from the album at all," Nils says reassuringly, "But because of

Neil joining Crosby, Stills and Nash, the album really got a fair chance to be recognized. If it wasn't for that, it might have taken a year of word of mouth before people really became aware of it."

During the *GOLD RUSH* sessions, Nils got close to the members of Crazy Horse. When it came time for them to record it was natural for them to call on him as a second guitarist. "I made them understand that at that point in my life, I couldn't quit Grin in all clear consciousness," Nils stresses, "But that I'd be glad to record with them. I never got to play live with Crazy Horse," Nils contemplates regretfully, "Until years later, never got the chance to play with Danny Whitten live. That was something I really wish I'd been able to do. In fact, originally I tried to get Danny to join Grin before I got my brother to fill the spot." (Danny Whitten is the guitarist to whom Neil Young dedicated and wrote *TONIGHT IS THE NIGHT*. Whitten died of an overdose of drugs just before Young was to embark on his *TIME FADES AWAY* tour.)

"Though the recording of the Grin, Crazy Horse and Neil Young albums was spaced out over a long period they all hit the streets at approximately the same time." "That,

says Nils, "was my start in show business."

Though the years that followed were devoted mostly to Grin, Nils managed to get involved in a lot of session work. "David would get calls to engineer and when a guitar was needed, he'd insist on me. I did some work on Kathy McDonald's solo album, that's how I met Aynsley Dunbar." (Aynsley drums on both of Nils' solo albums.) "I also did some session work that was never released." The most interesting of these sessions was with Donovan, done in Los Angeles with Mickie Most producing.

"Three Dog Night (the original group) was hired to back Donovan and David talked Mickie into letting me play guitar. Three Dog Night's guitarist was unavailable. It was a pretty heavy thing at the time. We did half an LP's worth of material. It was rock 'n' roll, but it was still Donovan. Eventually Three Dog Night had to split because their singers were uptight about the time they were spending away. I brought Grin in and we did the other half of the album. John Sebastian stopped by and CSN&Y came in to mess around. It was a great session but at the end of it, Donovan's contract with Most had expired, and he wanted out. Most got the tapes, at least that's the story I heard. Now

it's been so long and Donovan's tried to make so many comebacks. They'll probably never be released."

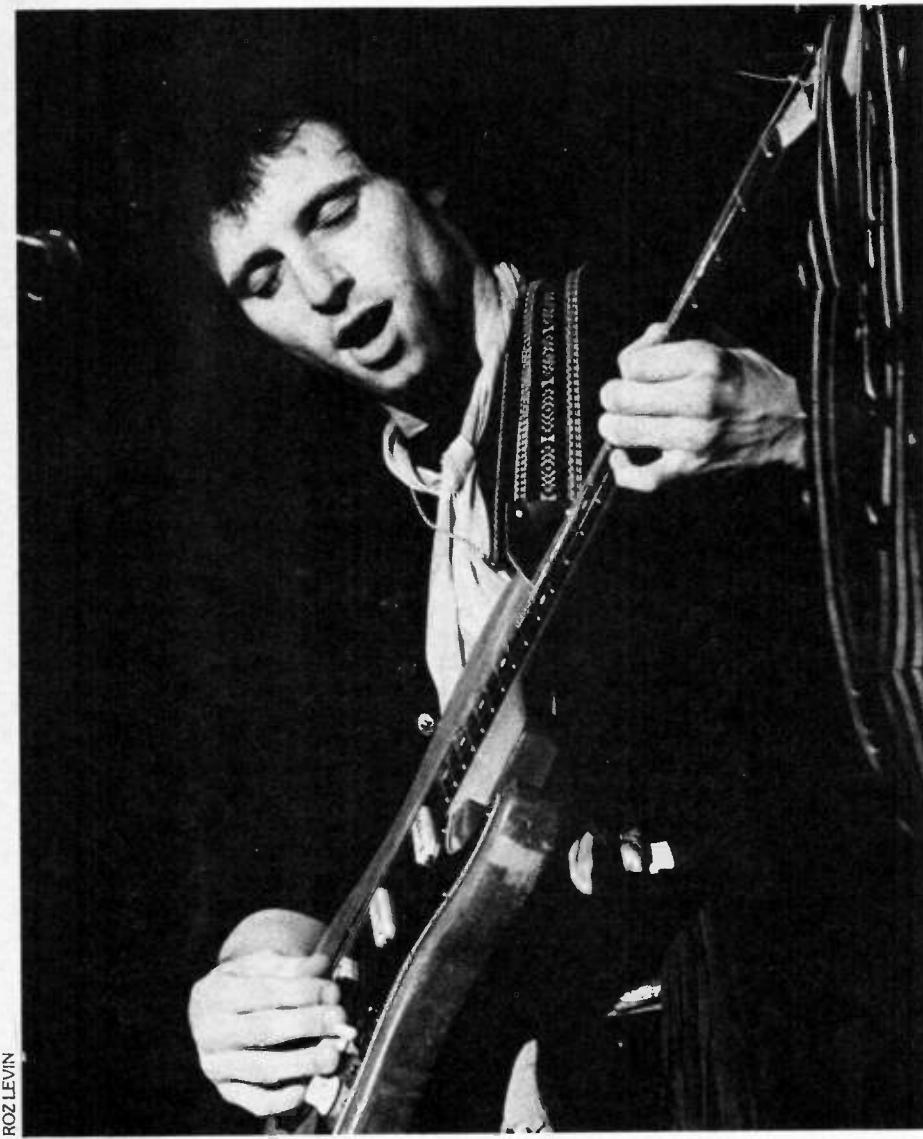
Of Nils' most recent session work, Neil Young's *TONIGHT'S THE NIGHT* is probably the most outstanding. Recorded three years ago, the album started out as a live session rehearsal and because it was so good, Neil decided to record it. "It was done in a month," Nils explains, "We just took our time. Everyone looks at it as such a dark album, which is cool. It's that side of Neil. But, knowing him personally, it didn't affect me that way. I just had a good time. I wasn't listening to the words and thinking, 'Wow this guy is really unhappy,' I mean, Neil feels unhappiness no more or less than anyone else. It's just the way he expresses it. He's a genius at writing songs."

Contrary to what was said in the Rolling Stone interview with Neil about his manager's being responsible for the release of *TONIGHT'S THE NIGHT*, "The main reason it came out was because of David Briggs. No one would deny that to my face. I don't know if Neil even said it was his manager, or if the writer recorded his words directly from the tape or interpreted what he thought Neil meant but, *ON THE BEACH* was dedicated to his manager.

"As loose as both albums are, I think *ON THE BEACH* is muzak compared to *TONIGHT'S THE NIGHT*. I don't mean that as a put down in fact *See The Sky About To Rain* from *ON THE BEACH* is one of the best songs Neil has ever written. I'm just saying *TONIGHT'S THE NIGHT* bared Neil emotionally in a way that none of his other records have ever done.

"After all I've been through with Neil, good or bad, and I've been through a lot, I really dig him. I love him as a person. I know we'll work together again. Neither of us will push it, it's just bound to happen. Musically we hit it off. It's something one can't hide. He's very proud of what he does and he's aware of his talents. I'm the same way, just a lot younger. There's a connection because we're both into melodic rock 'n' roll."

Now that Nils is on his own he's determined to do things right. He admits that he's become a little more laid back than he was with Grin but that's because he's trying to put the emphasis on his music. "With Grin, the only chance of getting noticed was to have a visual gimmick. (Nils used to do a back flip from a mini-trampoline on stage.) As a solo artist, I don't want to be known for gimmicks.

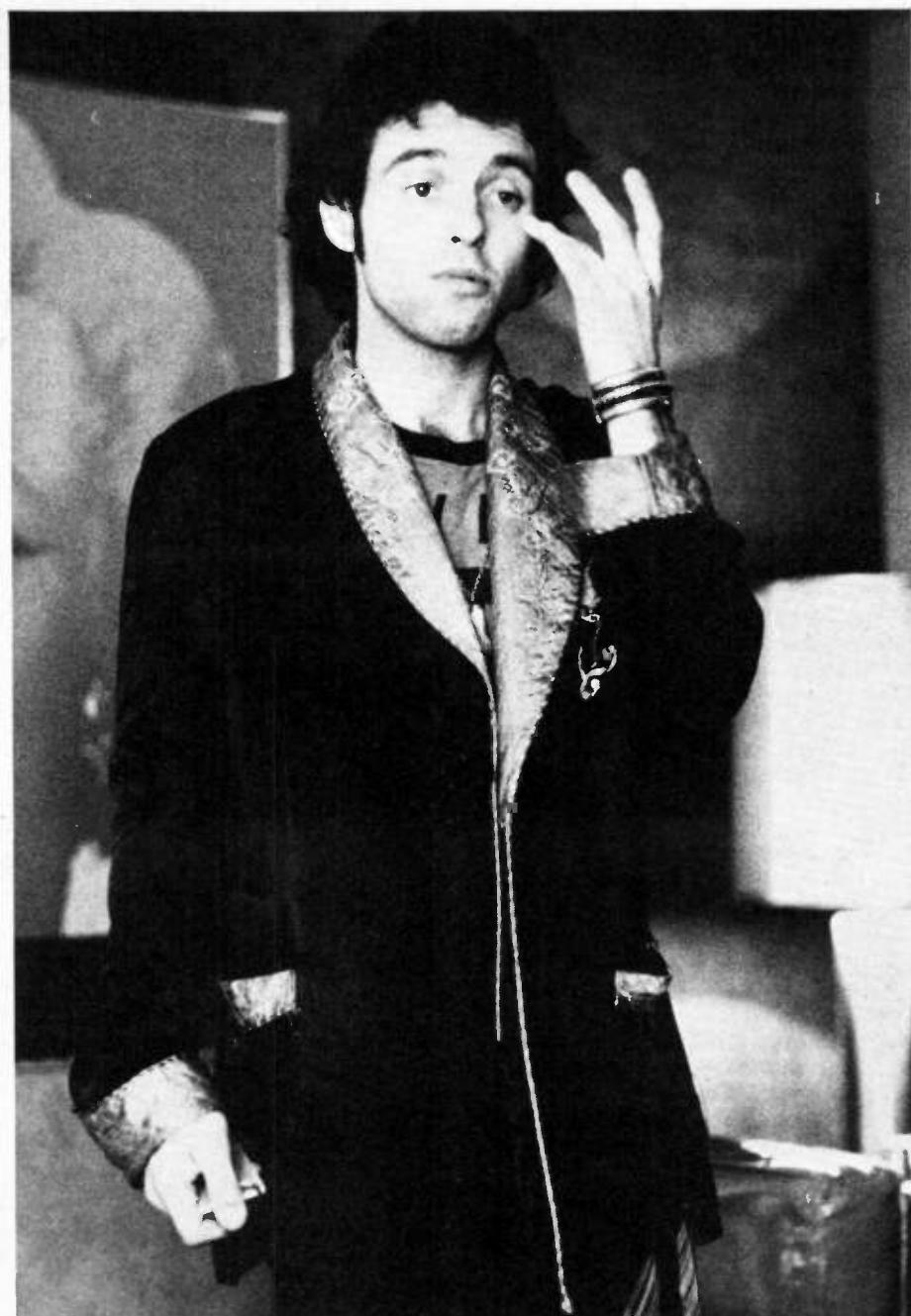


ROZ LEVIN

Like Neil said, *TONIGHT'S THE NIGHT* wasn't quite finished. I'm under the impression that his manager convinced him that it wasn't good enough, which is not a sin, it's just his opinion. But I think Neil was rightfully confused. I would have been too, but I didn't have to make the decision. I just liked *TONIGHT'S THE NIGHT* from a musician's point of view, which is totally warped anyway. I thought it was a shame that Briggs didn't get the credit he deserved. He was the one who went through hell to get that album finished. He always stuck behind the music."

I've got lots of ideas for constructing a show but they won't come until I get recognition on the basis of music."

Nils had been off the road for a year and a half when he decided to tour in the Summer of 1975. "I got back into the swing of things just in time," he muses, "I'd be itching to play and I knew I had to get out before I recorded again. I did it for better or worse, it didn't make any difference whether it sold records or not. It's stupid to think that an artist can be holed up in a suburb of Washington D.C., with no idea of what's happening in the music business for years, and



be capable of making records that are indicative of what's going on. So I went on the road for experience and did the best I could."

The result of a several month tour was a tighter band and a live album that was taped from a broadcast at San Francisco's KSAN radio station. Nils regards the album as a recording of just another good night and adds, "If we got a recording of a really special night, then it would be hot."

Since his first solo album Nils' band has grown with the addition of guitarist Bobby Manriques, who Nils describes as "An old friend who plays great lead guitar and percussion."

Nils describes the difference between his first solo effort and the recently released *CRY TOUGH*: "The new one is more produced, it's got different sounds on it and as a result is slicker in a positive way. Half of it's done with my band and the other half with Aynsley Dunbar (drums) and Wornell Jones (bass) who did the first album. The songs with Aynsley and Wornell are raw and sparse, very live sounding. I think I need both elements. It's like half studio and half live in the studio."

A brief glance around Nils' hotel room reveals a picture of Hendrix propped against the bureau mirror. Several photos of Jimi also adorn the interior of Nils' guitar case. Listening to *Keith Don't Go (Ode to the Slimmer Twin)* unveils Nils admiration for Keith Richards. Nils is enthusiastic when it comes to talking about either guitarist. "I admire Keith. Hendrix, every guitar player

idolizes whether they admit it or not, even the greats like Townshend and Clapton. In the Hendrix movie you can tell when others talk about him that even though they've got a sense of artistic pride and were doing similar things, they have to admit that Jimi was taking the guitar to places that no one else ever had. He was the best."

"Keith is more of a writer. He's a great guitar player, but his thing is the concept. It's genuine for the same reason that Hendrix is. Hendrix played guitar period! Whether or not he sang and wrote as good as he did, his playing was incredible because it was authentic. Keith deals in concepts. Sure, he could sit down and practice ten hours a day and in a year he'd be as fast as anyone, but it wouldn't mean anything. It's all a question of relating to people. It doesn't matter if you play one note or ten, if you can reach people emotionally, you've got it. That's what rock 'n' roll is all about."

Right now Nils is trying to reach people too. In the past his audience has been small and cult-oriented, but he's got faith in turning the tides of success in his favor. Perseverance is his method. "What I'm doing isn't exactly like anything else that's being done, so it may take me a while to get established," Nils explains his strategy, "I'm gonna play wherever I can, as much as I can. I'll be on the road till next fall. I've always known and felt that there are a certain amount of people into my music and that's good enough reason to believe that if I keep doing what I'm doing now, eventually I'll find my audience."

# Rock 'n Roll Saved My Nose

Life at Brooklyn College was a scream with lettered frat men asking Henry "Play volleyball? Play football?" and Henry staring blankly in return "No, play guitar."

by Susan Ahrens

Good time rock and roll is on the rise once again, having labored too long under straight-laced "heavy" consciousness—thought-provoking albums made to sit and be listened to. Rock and roll was never strictly for your listening pleasure, rock and roll was meant to be reacted to, hence its active name, and one man who has been putting out reactionary music for the past three or four years is Henry Gross.

Henry's big excuse for his crazed behavior onstage and on vinyl is that he was born in Brooklyn. "Queens was more like Long Island, which was basically an R&B type of experience musically. When I would go out to play in Long Island, most of your Long Island clubs (not counting the wine and cheese place with the folkie who couldn't sing) had pretty funky dance music. I mean, that's what you were going out there to hear. Look at the music that came out of Long Island—the Young Rascals, the Vagrants—not really rock and roll. Brooklyn, on the other hand, was rock and roll city. I grew up playing in these little seedy clubs that paid \$10 a night, but you could play stuff like Chuck Berry's *Memphis*, and those kind of songs."

Life at Brooklyn College was a scream, with lettered frat men asking Henry, "Play volleyball? Play football?" and Henry staring blankly in return, "No, play guitar." Still, it was during these halcyon days that Henry's first big break came, his chance to play with Sha Na Na. "They were the Columbia Kingsmen and I was Henry Gross from Brooklyn, and they all had this 'I went to prep school at Hodgkiss' attitude, but I could play the guitar, so I joined up. Besides, they needed someone

who could talk dirty. It wasn't long before I realized that doing somersaults on the floor and playing *Wipe Out* was my second favorite thing to do. Everything else was tied for first, so I left, causing them great despair at the time. I think they said, 'Oh, he's gone? Tsk, tsk, too bad.'

Contrary to popular belief, the yellow album on A&M records simply titled **HENRY GROSS** and full of classics like *Come On and Say It*, and *Meet Me on the Corner*, was not Henry's first album. There is an earlier album on ABC gathering dust in the bargain bins of America that Henry feels is better left unearthened.

"The first album is just a collection of a lot of very different things, very romantic stuff. Nineteen, first album, you know. I was happy on every tune. I was so happy it was sickening. The depressing moments on the album are much happier than I've been in six months. You know when you're young, and you're crazy and you're into it on that level of 'Make it?' Henry shakes his head, disavowing any knowledge of his former life. 'The yellow album was me.

I walked in here and I had no band or anything. I had an acoustic guitar and I played for Cashman and West. They heard me acoustic and they figured, well, that's the way he's supposed to sound, and I said, 'No, b-b-but...' They were folkies and they said, 'Oh yes, believe us.' I felt, 'We-e-e-l-l...' but I believed them and they produced the album, making it an acoustic rock album which is pretty interesting. I mean, the songs are there. *Simone* is still one of the best songs I've ever written."

"Now, **PLUG ME INTO SOMETHING** I pretty much did myself. It was obvious that some crazy kid from Brooklyn said, 'Ah! Electric guitar!' It got crazy. So that one I did, and Cashman and West sort of said, 'This guy is crazy. We don't make records like this, but if this is what he wants to do, let's get out of here and leave him alone. Let him do it. It's probably ruining his career, but let him do it.' So I did it, and it sold."

Henry's latest album is **RELEASE**, put out on the Lifesong label, the new record company Cashman and West started early

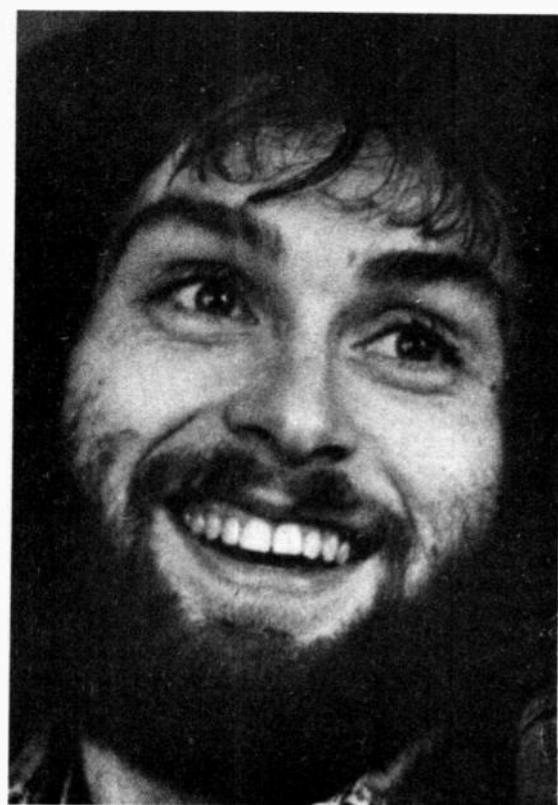
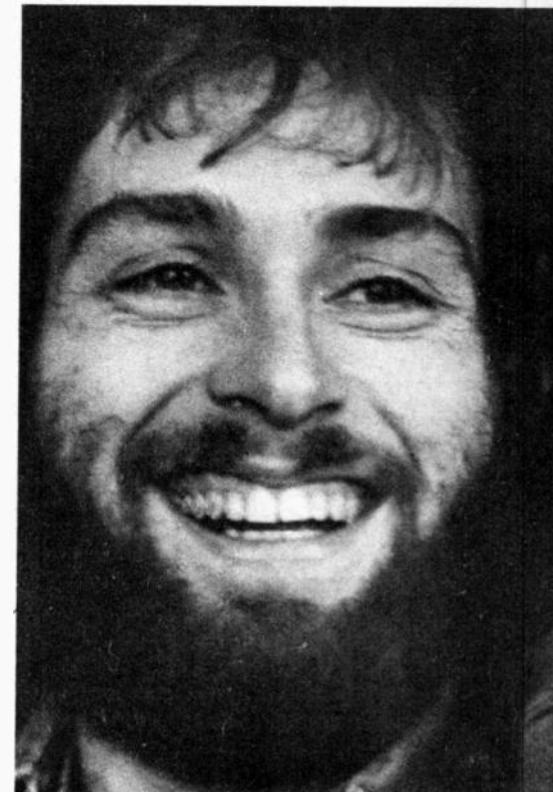
last year. Producing **RELEASE** was a group effort full of lengthy democratic meetings and such. "We made a deal to keep our mouths shut unless we really believed in what we were saying. If Tommy would say, 'Hey, I really think you're crazy. There's too much piano on this,' I would say, 'Next,' and turn up the piano because I felt it needed it. There was mutual respect there, but we did spend six months doing the album. It's a better album, a much more interesting album than the other two."

Often criticized for penning formula rockers, Henry explains, "The Beatles used to record three minute rockers. I mean, what would the use have been if *Johnny B. Goode* had been fifteen minutes?"

Those people who have heard Henry or seen him in performance often credit him with being one of the finest promoters of soulsaving rock and roll, although Henry has a different attitude:

"An off-duty cop once pulled a gun on me and demanded *Blue Suede Shoes*." Was it similar to what happened at that Ted Nugent concert in Spokane? "Nah, this was at a Greek wedding when I was thirteen years old and playing in the band. The guy was drunk and he pulled out a gun and he said, 'Can you play *Blue Suede Shoes*?' I couldn't remember all the words and so I said, 'I'm not sure.' Well, he pointed that gun at me and asked again, 'Can you play *Blue Suede Shoes*?' and I said, 'Yup!'"

"So you're asking me why rock and roll saves your soul? Because if you didn't play those songs, they would have broken your nose. Rock doesn't save your soul, it saves your nose. Your soul has nothing to do with it." Amen.



# The surest way to get your song heard by the right people in the music business.

## The American Song Festival



### The break you've been looking for.

Chances are you know how frustrating it is to get your song heard by the "right" people — those music business heavies who can give you the big break.

That's why there's an American Song Festival songwriting competition. It's the surest and easiest way to expose your song to the "right" people... Our judges are A&R pros, music executives, artists, and publishers. They listen to each song at least twice — constantly searching for new talent.

It has proven to be one of the best ways new songwriters can become professionals. Many of our entered songs have gone on to be... Recorded by the writers themselves on such labels as A&M, RCA, Epic, Asylum and Buddah... Released by such noted artists as Barry Manilow, The Stylistics, B. J. Thomas, The Oak Ridge Boys, Al Martino, The Hagers and Ron Dante... And published by many of the top music publishers in the world. So if you've been dreaming about being in the music business, instead of just reading about it, the ASF could be the break you've been looking for.

### All you need is a song.

It's easy to enter and you can enter as many songs as you like. Just record each song on a separate cassette (lead-sheets aren't necessary). Perform it yourself or have someone else perform it for you.

There are categories for all kinds of music. And there are separate divisions for amateurs and professionals.

### Over a quarter-million dollars in cash prizes.

We've provided the largest cash prizes ever awarded in a creative competition — more than a quarter-million dollars in the last two years! And this year, we're expanding our prize structure to include more winners than ever before:

★ 600 Honorable Mention Winners (500 Amateur and 100 Professional) will receive \$50.00.

★ 45 Semi-finalists (30 Amateur and 15 Professionals — 5 from each category) will receive \$250.00.

★ 9 Category Winners (6 Amateur and 3 Professional) will receive \$1,000.00.

★ 2 Grand Prizes will be awarded to a category winner in each division. The Prize will be an additional \$5,000.00 for each.

### Special Features:

You retain all rights to your song. It's used only in conjunction with our competition.

You could win in more than one music category.

You may select the Judges' Decision Option. This lets our judges place an entered song into an additional category where they think it may win (25% of the 1975 winners won in the category that was picked for them by a judge).

### What you get when you enter...

★ The 1976 Music Business Directory. It contains an up-to-date listing of the top 100 record companies, the 250 most important music publishers, and 200 recording studios. (Regular \$4 value.)

★ The Songwriter's Handbook. It provides important information that every songwriter should know about the music industry (i.e., copyright information, music publishing, performing rights, mechanical rights, etc.). Regular \$2 value).

★ Feedback on Your Song. After the winners are announced, you may obtain a Judge's Assessment of each song you submit and for each category in which it is competing.

### What the judges look for.

The criteria for judging are: originality, musical composition, and lyrical content when applicable. The song is all that counts. Elaborate instrumentation, vocal arrangement or production will have no bearing upon the judging. (In fact, the simpler the production, the better. Many of last year's winning songs were submitted as simple home recordings, with only a vocal accompanied by a single instrument).

### Entry Procedure

1. Record the song on your own cassette. Start recording at the beginning of the cassette. Rewind tape before submitting. Only one song per cassette. (If your song has already been recorded on a disk or reel-to-reel tape, we'll duplicate it onto a cassette for one dollar per song.)

2. Complete the attached entry form or a reasonable facsimile, paying particular attention to the following:

A. Write the title of your song on your cassette on the side on which you recorded your song.

B. Song Categories — You must designate at least one category in which the song is to be judged. The fee for entering each song in one category is \$13.85. To enter your song in additional categories, so indicate on the entry form and enclose an additional \$8.25 for each added category. You do not have to send in another cassette as we duplicate cassettes.

C. If entering more than one song, obtain another entry form or produce a reasonable copy for each entry.

3. Wrap your check or money order and entry form around each cassette, and secure the package with rubber bands or string wrapped both directions. Place the bound cassette in a strong envelope or box and send to:

THE AMERICAN SONG FESTIVAL  
P.O. Box 57  
Hollywood, CA 90028

Once we receive your entry, we'll have a postcard with an acknowledgement in the mail within one week.

### JUNE 3RD IS THE ENTRY DEADLINE

4. Copyrighting your song. It is not necessary to copyright your song when entering the competition. ASF, Inc. acquires no copyrights in your song. You retain all rights.

### 1976 Rules and Regulations

1. Competition is open to any person except employees of the American Song Festival, Inc. (ASF, Inc.), or their relatives, or agents appointed by the ASF, Inc.

2. The entrant warrants to ASF, Inc. that the entry is not an infringement of the copyright or other rights of any third party and that the entrant has the right to submit the entry to ASF, Inc. in accordance with its rules and regulations.

3. No musical composition may be entered that has been recorded or printed and released or disseminated for commercial sale in any medium in the United States prior to 10/1/76, or the public announcement of the semi-finalists, whichever occurs first. All winners will be notified and all prizes awarded no later than 12/31/76. Prizes will be paid to songwriter named in item 1 of official entry form.

4. An entry fee of \$13.85, an accurately completed entry form, and a cassette with only one song recorded on it shall be submitted for each entry. Any number of songs may be entered by an individual provided that each cassette is accompanied by a separate entry form and entry fee.

5. The entrant must designate at least one category in which he wants his song to compete. Any song may be entered in additional category competitions by so designating on the entry form and including an additional fee of \$8.25 for each such additional category. Such additional category may be left to the judges' choice by selecting the "Judges' Decision Option" which permits the judges to place the song in another category in which, in their opinion, it best fits.

6. The entrant shall (or shall cause the copyright proprietor of the entry if different from the entrant) to permit ASF, Inc. to perform the entry in and as part of any ASF, Inc. awards ceremonies, to record the entry in synchronism with a visual account of such ceremonies and to use the resulting account for such purposes as ASF, Inc. shall deem fit.

7. No materials submitted in connection with entries will be returned to the entrant, and ASF, Inc. assumes no responsibility for loss of or damage to any entry prior to its receipt by ASF, Inc.

8. Each entry shall be judged on the basis of originality, musical composition and lyrical content if applicable. All decisions of the screening panels and judges shall be final and binding upon the ASF, Inc. and all entrants.

9. Cassettes with more than one song on them, cartridges, records, reel-to-reel tapes, or lead sheets are improper submissions and will invalidate the entry.

10. Recorded cassettes and accompanying material must be postmarked by June 3, 1976. ASF, Inc. reserves the right to extend this date in the event of interruption of postal services, national emergency or act of God.

11. For the purpose of ASF division selection, a professional is anyone who: (a) is or has been a member or associate member of a performing rights organization such as ASCAP, BMI, SESAC or their foreign counterparts; or (b) has had a musical composition written in whole or in part by him recorded and released or disseminated commercially in any medium or printed and distributed for sale. All other are amateurs.

© 1976 American Song Festival, Inc.

### Official Entry Form

1. SONGWRITER \_\_\_\_\_  
(Print name)

2. ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTRY \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: Home ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Office ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Area Code

3. TITLE OF SONG \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. CATEGORY SELECTION:

\*Important: To determine whether you compete as an amateur or professional, see rules and regulations #11.

### FIRST CATEGORY

Select at least one category by checking the box corresponding to your first choice (\$13.85 entry fee).

### ADDITIONAL CATEGORIES

Often songs fit more than one category. You may have your song judged and compete in more than one category by checking the additional box or boxes you desire.

(Add \$8.25 for each additional category selected)

### AMATEUR DIVISION\*

Top 40 (Rock/Soul)  Folk  Country

Gospel/Inspirational  Easy Listening  Instrumental/Jazz

### PROFESSIONAL DIVISION\*

Top 40 (Rock/Soul)  Country  Easy Listening

SEPARATE ENTRY FORM NEEDED FOR EACH SONG

### Judges' Decision Option

Check the box provided if you want our Judges to place your song in an additional category which, in their opinion, it best fits.

### 5. ENTRY FEE:

FIRST CATEGORY \$13.85

EXTRA CATEGORIES OR JUDGES' DECISION OPTION

\$8.25  = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Fee Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### 6. Did you collaborate in the writing of this composition?

Yes  No

Collaborators' names \_\_\_\_\_

### 7. Feedback on Your Song: Check the box provided if you desire the judge's assessment of each song submitted.

I hereby certify that I have read and agree to be bound by the rules and regulations of the American Song Festival which are incorporated herein by reference and that the information contained in the entry form is true and accurate.

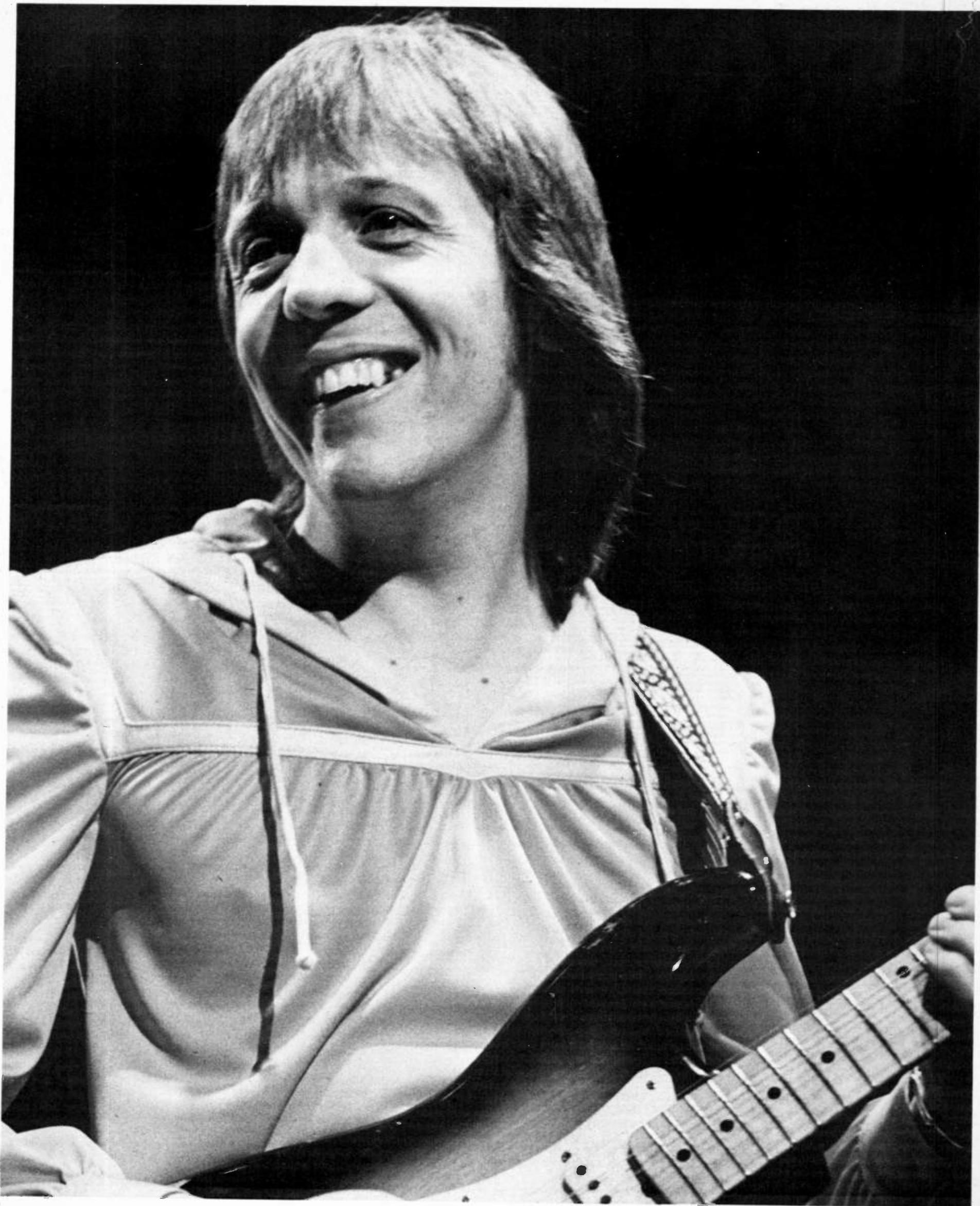
SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Send entry to: THE AMERICAN SONG FESTIVAL  
P.O. Box 57  
Hollywood, CA 90028

A presentation of Sterling Recreation Organization

# The 1976 American Song Festival

An International Songwriting Competition



# The Style is Hendrix, But The Content Is Trower.

by Jim Farber

"It was just a happy accident," says pug-nosed guitarist Robin Trower on the subject of his recently released live album. "We were playing in Stockholm in February of '75 and the concert was taped, but I didn't even know about it. Then, about eight months later it seems out of the blue I stumble across this live tape we've got. I didn't want to release a live album unless it was gonna be all original material never before heard from our studio albums. But once I heard that recording I decided it had to be put out even though the songs aren't new, 'cause the live versions are so much closer to what I originally intended when I wrote the songs."

And Robin couldn't have picked a better time to make that decision. Coinciding with the album's release is Robin's first headline tour to include all the largest concert halls in the U.S.—among them, such superstar "screechatoriums" as Madison Square Garden.

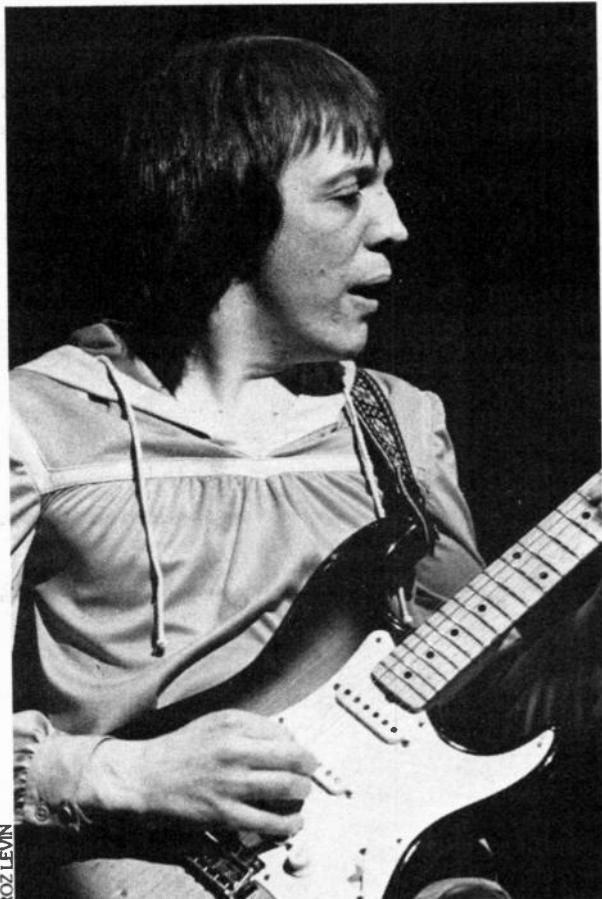
But, of course, Robin's popularity hasn't always been flying this high. The thirty year old six-string slinger spent many unheralded years developing his style under the confining rule of the keyboard dominated Procol Harum. Yet as far back as 1968, on the band's *A SALTY DOG* album, Robin was contributing his own original compositions—leading to the eventual realization that his potential creative wingspan was much too large to remain within the Procol nest. In fact, by the time *BROKEN BARRICADES* came together in early '71, Procol had begun to sound like two bands in one—there was Gary Brooker with his pop/classical dirges and then there was Robin Trower, typified by *Song For A Dreamer*—the eerie, echoed wonder delivered as a tribute to Jimi Hendrix.

One of the things that helped Robin create a Hendrix-like sound for that song was the switch of guitars he'd made just months before. "In my early days with Procol I used to play a Les Paul Gibson—until we were on tour with Jethro Tull and I just happened to pick up Mike Barr's guitar, which was a Fender Stratocaster, and I liked the sound so I switched. But I didn't make the change just because Hendrix used a strat. I mean, you can't play a guitar you don't like just because you like what someone else has done with it. It's gotta suit your style and I was already bent toward that sound, so the Strat just helped me to solidify the natural style I had already."

It was around this time (c. *BROKEN BARRICADES*) that Robin saw Hendrix live for the first and only time. "I saw him in Berlin on a Procol tour," the guitarist fondly remembers. "His band wasn't together and it was not the best of shows. But still his musicianship left an indelible mark on me. It struck me then, that Hendrix created music for the electric guitar to the extent that he made it seem as though nobody else had. It even wiped out people like Jimmy Page."

Eager to enter the ranks of those who create music just for the electric guitar, Robin left Procol in late '71 and formed an ill-fated foursome called Jude—rounded out by Frankie Miller (a famed British R&B singer), Clive Bunker (Jethro Tull's first drummer) and ex-Stone The Crows bassist James Dewar. Trower looks back on that part of his past with some reluctance. "It was a hard time", he says. "I was unsure as to whether I'd be able to make it and this band just didn't give me any support."

It's far from surprising, then, that within a few months Jude had bit the dust and Trower was in the studio making his first "solo" album—aided by hold-over Jimmy Dewar and drummer Reg Isidore (a friend of Jimmy's). The album's title, *TWICE REMOVED FROM YESTERDAY*, was appropriate since most people could hardly



believe this guy with the free flowing Hendrix-like wail was the same person who used to fiddle around in Procol just months earlier. *Song For A Dreamer* found its logical extension in *Daydream*—the album's mystic highlight. "Those two songs are very much connected actually," confesses Robin. "But all my songs are connected in one way. They all run into each other in terms of building a feeling or providing a musical trip for the listener. I don't see anything I do as being divorced from anything else I do."

As together as Robin's music was at this point, the fact remained that not everyone was quite ready to accept the "Stratocaster strangler" as a legitimate artist in his own right. There were some who viewed his music as a cheap Hendrix rip-off—seeing Trower as a mere seventies placebo. But what these people were missing was the fact that even though the general sound is Hendrix, the content is all Trower. But the differences are even more specific than that. First of all Trower is a lot more restrained than his idol (which is still about as "restrained" as ten "Let's Make A Deal" contestants confronted by Door #3). Robin also concentrates on slur and vibrato, de-emphasizing the "inspired noise" made famous by the Purple Haze king. But the most important thing is that, for today's younger audience who never got a chance to see Hendrix and who probably think Cream is the stuff that fills up an Oreo, Trower is one of the few true guitar heroes they can call their own. And what's more—none of his solos feature those heaping spoonfuls of self-indulgence that sixties guitar gods like Eric Clapton were so subject to.

There should be no doubt, then, that with his first album Robin had mastered the instrumental side of things. With his second LP, *BRIDGE OF SIGHS*, the guitarist began to express himself lyrically as well. "I'd always done

all the music for the band, but Jimmy did most of the lyrics on the first album," Trower says. "Starting with *BRIDGE OF SIGHS* I took more control over the words. On that album each song seemed to suggest a certain mood and the lyrics just came as a natural flow out of that."

Robin had his way with the albums, but his band was another story. "The trouble was Reg Isidore," says Robin with disgust. "He didn't have the right feel for the drums, so we asked him to split. Then when it came time to record *FOR EARTH BELOW* we picked up Colin Allen (alumnus of Focus) but he didn't seem right either. That whole recording session turned out bad. We did it at Abbey Road Studio and later scrapped it. I wanted an American drummer 'cause they've got a natural feel for their instrument. In Britain you either get 'crash-bangers' or 'jazzers' and neither of them are right for me. So we re-did the album with Bill Lordan."

If credentials are needed, Lordan has played with Sly Stone and at one point even with Hendrix (just prior to *BAND OF GYPSYS*), but all you have to do is listen to his heavy duty drum solo on *Alethea* off the new live album and you'll know he's someone who knows which side to slap the drums on. Once Lordan is combined with James Dewar, Robin Trower has the perfect support to set his cosmic solos ablaze.

In order to grace eager earthlings with yet another platter of other-worldly guitar contortions, Robin and band ventured into the studio just prior to the current U.S. tour. "We've just finished a new studio album and I think it's the best stuff we've ever done," says Robin with genuine excitement. "The main reason it's so good is because we've gotten to the point now where we can capture in the studio, as much as possible, the 'live' feel. I think we learned a lot from mixing the live album. We worked with Geoff Emerick to try a different approach to recording. We concentrated more on atmosphere and feeling rather than getting perfect production. We didn't go in to make a new studio album instead we went in to capture a performance. Consequently, we wound up settling on the second or third take even if the sound wasn't so good. Everything had to work very quickly, to capture the atmosphere that this type of spontaneity was created in. And this added excitement to the whole thing. We feature a couple of the new things on this tour. *Mr. Daze* is one of them—a real heavy sort of thing."

As for the future—after Robin breathes a triumphant sigh from the present eight-week tour—it's back to England to get new plans under way. "I've got nothing definite at the moment," says Trower hesitantly. "But I do have the feeling I'd like to get together with other musicians and just have a blow. Also, I'd like to do another live album sometime in the future but this time with all new material. I know there's been a rumor about me doing an album with Robert Fripp sometime soon but I don't think anything will come of it. His music is really just a whole other style. My getting to know him has helped me, though. He showed me some finger exercises and helped loosen up my hand a bit. Also he has this idea about equalizing the emphasis of both the left and right hands in guitar playing, giving the player more control over the instrument, since most guitarists only concentrate on the left hand. That's great—but when it comes to recording with someone, I want to get someone closer to my style. Anyway, right now I've got this tour to think about and the live album. I don't want to project myself too far into the future—things lose their spontaneity that way, and spontaneity is what I'm all about."

# INSIDE THE RECORD BIZ

## The Promoter: Ron Delsener

by Steve Block

Ron Delsener knows his turf. He promotes about 180 rock shows a year, 90 per cent of them in New York City. "I like it that way," he says. "And I wanna stay right here. I believe everyone should make his own living in his own little area. The business gets ugly if we start to get greedy."

Delsener speaks in rapid fire staccato. His movements suggest a cat-like quality. Munching a bran muffin, he adds, "There's a lot of money to be made. You can be greedy but it doesn't pay. One day somebody'll have something you want and you're not gonna get it because no one forgets. So we might as well start sharing."

By we, Delsener is referring to competition, which at the moment is minimal in New York. But not too long ago, the turf was Howard Stein's, and, before him, Bill Graham stood guard over Gotham.

Eventually Graham padlocked the Fillmore and fled west, leaving Stein's decrepit Academy of Music to flounder in a deteriorating district. Delsener pounced. Using the newly-renovated Beacon Theatre as his base, he began booking successful shows with groups like Crosby and Nash, Jerry Garcia, Labelle, The Kinks, The Tubes, Linda Ronstadt, Barry Manilow, Carole King, and many more.

Of Graham, Delsener has this to say: "Bill's a very excitable guy. I can't get the energy up like he does. I do it in a different way. I'm a little cooler backstage, to say the least. If I don't like a show, I don't panic. Graham started around the same time I did, in San Francisco. I started in New York. He came East—I told him to, as a matter of fact. But there was no sharing at the time. He just wanted the market. Now I like to

think there's more of a sharing aspect with the promoters. We have different boundaries and try to stay within them. Except for Jerry Weintraub, but I wouldn't call him a promoter. He's a supersalesman. He'll take anything he can get."

Although Delsener will not take just anything, he now appears to get almost every group that struts or strums into the city. Ferocious in his determination to block competition, Delsener can also play the diplomat. "It's not my demeanor to war," he says. "If I was to go to San Francisco I'm sure Graham would war with me. Scream and yell. Have free shows opposite my paying shows. But I don't do that type of thing. On the other hand, I'm not gonna sit back and let my living go down the drain."

While Graham totally identified with the Fillmore—he controlled a long-term lease and slapped his name boldly on its marquee—Delsener merely leases the Beacon without exclusive rights. "Of course," he says, "I do the prevailing number of shows at the Beacon, but I take a low-keyed attitude about my position. I don't sell tickets to the shows. I want to be in the background... like Saint Suba. I'm not an actor, not a performer. I don't want the press. "Anyway," he continues, "a lot of acts frown on a promoter getting a lot of publicity. It sometimes can backfire on them. I'm not saying it's wrong for Bill and others to do it, but it's not my composition."

Delsener started his promotional career in 1965 with the Schaeffer summer rock festivals in Central Park. Up until then, the only outdoor rock staged by the city included brief stints at Forest Hills, Queens, where Delsener had apprenticed for two seasons. New York City was under a new and imaginative

leadership at the time. John Lindsay was open to it as were many of his young staff members. Delsener, with backing from the brewery, convinced the city to give him space. "I never worked so hard in my life," he

says. "Did everything myself. I screwed chairs together. Picked them out, then threw them in the air to see which ones would break. I rode trucks, too. Did everything myself."

Delsener is still a streetfighter and remains reluctant to delegate authority. He works with a staff of six, though



he could probably triple this figure and still come up shorthanded. On any given weekend he may run a show at the Felt Forum, Madison Square Garden and the Beacon, yet manage to show up at all three the same night.

Delsener is checking his territory all the time. By foot, by phone, dashing over to agents, evaluating the physical layouts of every potential hall where his acts might play. "After all," he says, "90 per cent of my business is with the agent, because you can't break the structure. Guys like Jerry Weintraub and Concerts West do break it; they'll go directly to a manager and say, 'Hey, you don't need a promoter and you don't need a talent agent. You'll save the 10 per cent the promoter makes. I'll do the work for you for 15 per cent of the profits.' The guy'll say, 'Gee, that adds up to about \$100,000 saving. Christ, I'll go along with you.' Well, there goes your lifelong relationship with the act. Everything you've built. So these guys go on the road, they burn the acts out and when they're finished they throw them away. Next!"

And the bucks are flowing Delsener's way. Through his enormous success with the Schaeffer shows he learned every nuance of the business. He booked big names, drew responsive crowds and seldom got burned. "With Schaeffer they worked with me, yet I controlled the situation. Same thing now at the Beacon."

But at some other New York halls mounting union problems have cut deeply into Delsener's profits. "For me it's basically the IBEW, the electricians. Not the stage. At the Garden and Felt Forum they pass their union problems along to me. I guess they have to find work for their men or else they'd be forced to fire them." Since this never happens, Delsener sometimes gets stuck. You don't even know what you pay for half the time, you just get a bill and that's it."

Carnegie Hall restricts many rock shows. Says Delsener: "They have a list of acts that can't play the hall. Anybody that has an electric guitar, forget it. They haven't even heard the album. They must ask someone down at the manager's office or some kid on the street, 'What about this act?' and then they nix it. Avery Fisher Hall will let you come in with an act once in a while as long as it's not a crazy rock act. They've got a younger staff and are a little more

sympathetic." But Avery Fisher Hall has teamsters which means prohibitive overtime rates and a catalogue of other picky and expensive specifications. "Besides," says Delsener, "these halls rent to lots of other people and I seldom could get good dates. No Saturday night, etc."

So the Beacon beckoned. Recently renovated for \$250,000, the old vaudeville palace turned dollar movie house offered Delsener much of what he sought; a seating capacity of 2650, excellent acoustics and a prime Broadway location. "And," adds Delsener, "without tying myself down financially. I didn't have to worry about the roof leaking or a faulty boiler. This is something I stayed away for years. I could have had the Fillmore after Bill left—before Bill even got involved I could have had it. But I didn't want to own it. This way I have the best of two worlds. The Beacon's a great little theatre. It's got fantastic hydraulic lifts, warm drapes. Like a mini Radio City Music Hall, which for me is often too big. And I'm liquid. When I have a winner I do great, and when I lose I don't get clobbered that much."

Delsener makes no claims of being in the opinion-making circle of the rock industry. New sounds interest him but he sees plenty of financial headaches ahead. "People just don't have the money to see everything. I think peoples' ears are tired of hearing the same old stuff. It's as if you've eaten cream cheese too much. The taste is no longer new to you, you want to taste something different."

But there's not going to be a new wave, a new phenomenon. We're into rock now, really into it. Any little derivation, is of course welcome now, but I don't think we're going to see what we did in the sixties—when everything that came down the pike made it."

It's difficult for a new artist to get started now. They're not buying new acts the way they used to. Today the product has to be good. You can't just have an act be seen every day and play a little club. Repetition doesn't breed success. It has to be a good product. Hypes don't work. We promoters may give the act exposure but it's up to them after that."

So Delsener's focusing on the bigger names. He'd like to book the real class groups. "Wings, Paul McCartney," he says. "One of my favorite performers. There are lots of classy performers. I like classy people. Chicago, Paul Simon, The Beach Boys, Elton John, those in that special class. The creme de la creme."

"You can't sleep in this business, you have to fight for every dollar. There's no such thing as sitting back and taking an ad for a show. You have to die to get an act and then die to make it work. There's nothing nice about it. There are no friendly phone calls. It's very very rare that you have a good time. You sweat for every fuckin' buck you make. But... the rewards are big. That's what you're in for. It's a maniacal type of existence. I know Graham is definitely maniacal. The maniacal part occurs because you love what you're doing but you love the money too.

You get caught trying to make that buck. You gotta have more. It eats you up alive. You look old. You age fast and you die young. Or, you lose your wife. So far I've been lucky. But of course I don't have to travel that much. That's the key."

**SAYER**  
1976

## What the Record Companies Look For. A talk with Mercury's A&R Director

by Gary Graifman

As you enter the offices of Donna Halper, Mercury's East Coast A & R Director, you are immediately struck by the informal air of the office. Tapes from aspiring young artists cover the desk in disarray. On the wall are posters of Mercury's rock roster. Between incoming phone calls Donna is finishing a letter of thanks and criticism which will accompany a tape back to its sender. The people at Mercury (Phonogram's American Subsidiary) seem to enjoy this informal image. "We like to think of ourselves as a record company of human beings; we never use form letters," says Donna. It is stressed at Mercury that while you may not get a recording contract, you'll always get a fair listening and some pretty straight criticism.

### BACKGROUND

Donna, now with Mercury ten months, shares the directorship with Associate Director Judd Phillips. It is their responsibility to sift through the music and make an initial decision as to which of it might hold Mercury's future talent. As Donna describes it, her entry into Mercury's organization came as a result of her involvement with the radio broadcasting field. During her seven-odd years in radio she held various jobs; Music Director and disc jockey at WMMS (in Cleveland), researcher, musicologist and writer (most notably of ABC Radio's "Retro Rock—The History of Rock and Roll" series).

During her stint with WMMS, Donna started promoting a Canadian rock group called Rush and a group known as the Alex Harvey Band, both of which were beginning to make some noise around Cleveland. Mercury eventually thought enough of the noise to sign both groups; and enough of Donna's talent to offer her an A & R position. "I had seen so much from the other side and I thought it might be interesting to learn this side of the business," states Donna.

### PROCEDURE

If you are thinking of sending a tape to Mercury's East Coast office, it will be one of the two Directors (Donna or Judd) who will hear it. In most record companies, there is an A & R staff who listen to the new material and then refer what they consider to be the best of that material to the A & R Director. Then, the A & R Director makes the final decision. "In a company of our size though," explains Donna, "the decision is usually made by all of us. There are two other Mercury A & R Directors besides the East Coast; the Midwest (Robin McBride) and the West Coast (Dennis Rosenkranz). We will get together every two months at A & R meetings and listen to what each of us have picked out as the best tapes we've heard over the past few months. After listening, we vote on the tapes. If the reaction to a tape is favorable then contract discussions would commence."

### ACCESSIBILITY

With the high volume of tapes received by Mercury, it can easily be expected that most tapes will be missing that little extra something which would mean a trip to the bi-monthly A & R meetings. Just what that something is may not be so easy to pinpoint, but one thing Donna stresses is "accessibility":

"Is the artist a cult artist who will appeal to maybe fifteen of their friends, or will the

public at large be able to relate to this artist? Does he or she have wide commercial appeal? Commercial appeal does not necessarily mean, do they sing dumb songs with insipid lyrics? The term 'top forty' is a very misleading term. People think that in order to get noticed they have to do top forty bubblegum hits and it's not like that at all. I think Paul Simon and Janis Ian have proven that a top forty song can have some very intelligent things to say."

### MATERIAL

"Versatile material is equally critical," explains Donna, "we especially like artists who have a good variety of songs—Material which is strong enough to be both ways, AM and FM. There are many areas where there isn't a good progressive FM station, and in these markets if you don't get something on the top forty stations no one is going to hear the artist. Let's face it, radio sells records in this country so that's what we've got to gear ourselves to, to a degree. My feeling is, the artist should have at least one potential commercial hit which can be played on the radio and get him or her established. The rest of the material can be more esoteric and suitable for an album. Once people know who the artist is, they'll be willing to pay the six dollars, or whatever an album costs, to hear what else they've got to say."

What advice can she offer aspiring songwriters thinking of submitting tapes?

"It should have a bit of a unique style. Something just a little different. Also the flow of the words and music is important—it can't sound phony. A common problem with many inexperienced songwriters is they know what they want to say, but they can't quite make the words fit the music. You usually end up with the old moon-june-croon-spoon-baboon school of writing."

"It's got to sound natural—if it doesn't sound natural on a demo, it's not going to sound any better when we add the brass and strings."

"By all means use cliches, use slang, try to appeal to your audience, but don't talk down to your audience. Put no more than three or four of your best songs on a tape, and only those which you feel very positive about."

What about the quality of the tape?

"Naturally the better a tape sounds quality-wise, the better chance a person has of getting a positive reaction. We certainly don't expect a professional sounding tape but if I can't hear the singer, or I can't hear the words, or if the voice sounds like it was recorded in someone's sewer, then I obviously can't make a good judgement. So the quality of the tape is important only in so much as it is a tool—whatever the person is trying to show off should not be defeated by the quality of the tape."

Before finishing Donna offered some words on the current popular music scene.

"I think, like the sixties, pop music of today reflects the mood of the nation. With the economy struggling and hard times upon us, people just want to go out and have a good time to forget about the problems. Now you have a return to simpler music, good old rhythm & blues dance music."

She is quick to point out however there are certain markets which will always be viable no matter what the trend; soft-rock, folk music, "a song with a strong melody and honest lyrics." Could you have such a song in your repertoire?"

# REGIONAL

## ATLANTA/MACON UPDATE

by Jim Pettigrew

Easily the most talked-about show here in the last month was **Joe Cocker's** ap-



pearance at the Fox Theatre. Although he was the target of sniping during the disaster-ridden previous tour, this time out **Joe** evidenced plenty of power and control. His star-studded band, including **Cornell Du-pree** (guitar) and **Richard Tee** (keyboards), also had some surprises for the sellout audience who demanded two encores.

**Bowie's** "simplified" date at the Omni came and went with an absolute minimum of hubbub. It seems that even diehard fans were hard put for comments, most of them saying things like "... improved over the December '74 tour".

**B.B. King**, as usual, did a tremendous number on the Electric Ballroom crowds, who are supporting jazz and blues acts there to an increasing degree. Other high-



lights of the month were **Styx**, who were more than a little surprised to step onstage before a packed house of ardent fans calling for LP tracks by name. **Steamboat Springs**, a Macon-based country rock band now working on their first LP in Mississippi, also did quite well.

Before her recent concert here, **Helen Reddy** was presented an honorary Key to the City by Atlanta Mayor **Maynard Jackson**; a local cynic was overheard observing, "Huh, the biggest mayor in the country awards the ugliest woman in rock and roll, with those shoulders of hers, if she joined the Falcons—maybe they'd have a winning season...."

There is a lot of excitement around Bang records lately, where the **Muscle Shoals Horns** have a hit on their hands. It's titled *Born To Get Down*, and by press time, they'll have an LP out by the same name. The current **Paul Davis** single, *Thinking Of You*, is out from his new album **SOUTHERN TRACKS AND FANTASIES**. The Atlanta label is also releasing LPs soon from **Brick**, **Michael Zager & the Moon Band**, and **Reabo Bryson**.

The **Allman Brothers Band** are at the top of Macon/Capricorn news again; by the time you read this, they will be back in Capricorn studios working on a new album. **Grindeswitch** are also in the Macon studios with producer **Paul Hornsby** working on their newest LP, **PULLIN' TOGETHER**. It's due out in June, as is (finally!) **Bonnie Bramlett's** **LADIES CHOICE**, which was postponed in the spring for more vocal overdubs.

Other Macon bits focus on **Uncle Sam's**, the largest night club in the middle Georgia area. They've now gone back (thankfully) to a rock 'n' roll format and have several hot acts scheduled, among them **Stillwater** and **Grindeswitch**. Sam's, if you weren't there, was the scene at the **1974 Capricorn Barbecue** of a Superjam, when virtually every label star took part; at one point, **Gregg Allman**, **Elvin Bishop**, **John**



Geraldo Rivera walks to the stage with Richard Betts and Gregg Allman of The Allman Brothers Band.

**Hammond**, members of **Wet Willie** and the **Marshall Tucker Band** joined in on **Jimmy Reed's** *Honest I Do*.

Capricorn publicist **Mark Pucci**, who's an avid blues freak, informed us that the **Nighthawks**, a Washington, D.C. band of considerable note, have an upcoming date at the Bistro in Atlanta. Good news, since word about these guys' authentic strength has been circulating for some time now.

## UPDATE NASHVILLE

by Al Cooley

**NASHVILLE**—The Musicians Union here is in an uproar over **Melanie** and her producer (using the term loosely) **Peter Schekeryk**, who also happens to be Mr. Safka. Seems they came to town a few

months ago, cut some 36 sides at **Buzz Cason's** Creative Workshop and paid everyone with "rubberized" checks. That's right, **Melanie** and Co. stuck this town to the tune of \$50,000 and I don't think they'll be coming down this way for a long, long time.

**Elvis Presley** recently made his first concert appearance of the year in Johnson City, Tennessee. The King shed some sixty pounds for the shows (he weighed in at 195) and sold out the 21,000 available seats 15 hours after they went on sale. At one point during the opening show, a woman gave El a pair of sunglasses and he was visibly impressed by the gift—"Hey, where did you get these things, anyway?" he asked. After trying them on he cracked, "Makes me look like Elton John. Maybe even Isaac Hayes."

**Marvel Felts**, whose *Reconsider Me* was the top country song of the last year in both **Billboard** and **Cashbox**, says his ambition now is "to be artist of the year someday, but I guess that's a little far fetched. But I don't guess it's any more far fetched than what already has happened in the last four years."

**Jerry Lee Lewis** was hospitalized recently in Memphis to "fix his ugly nose," as one Mercury staffer explained. The Killer had been wanting a nose job for years. He had a suite in the hospital while recuperating and had an electric piano brought in, driving nurses, doctors and some patients gongzo with his boogie-woogie keyboard configurations. Jerry Lee says he's singing better and clearer than ever.

**Louis Belson**, a noted big band drummer, gave a benefit concert recently at the Musician's Union and just about every picker worth his grin showed up to dig the sounds. Belson has played some sessions in town and says one session he worked at Nashboro Sound Studios had a track where the producer used a symphony of fourteen pedal steel players. As one insider quipped, "Fourteen steel players on one session—that must be the Nashville version of a slow torture death."



**Kinky Friedman** shopping for a label (Epic maybe?) ABC has refused to release the album he recorded with **Huey Meaux** in Texas. One ABC official called it "a piece of shit."

**Willie Fong-Young**, one of the most versatile composers in town, says he's

close to signing with a major label for studio rights to his southern-rock-opera **UP ON THE MOUNTAIN**. **Willie** hopes to begin recording early this summer.

On The Nashville Disabled List: veteran **Lester Flatt**, 61 in the intensive care unit of a Nashville hospital recovering from emergency surgery for removal of his gall bladder. And **Bob Luman** is recuperating from a ruptured blood vessel in his esophagus. Wish 'em both a speedy recovery, cuz they're fine folks.

**Johnny Rodriguez**, we hear, turned down an offer for a nude center spread in **Playgirl** magazine.

Atlantic records putting together a **Willie Nelson** album featuring tracks left over from **PHASES AND STAGES** (*Me & My Cricket*) and alternate versions of previously released material like **Whiskey River** and **After The Fire Is Gone**.



The new **Billy Swan** album, set for an early spring release, features "guest appearances" by a pair of rock's pioneer guitarists—**Carl Perkins** and **Scott Moore**. After a take of the oft recorded **Blue Suede Shoes**, Perkins quipped, "At last that song has finally been cut!"

Does **Donna Fargo's** million dollar deal with Warner Brothers include appearances in some upcoming WB films?

**Gene Cotton**, who was aced out by the Bellamy Brothers on his recording of **Let Your Love Flow**, has begun work on his second ABC album.

**Delbert McClinton**, whose LP **VICTIM OF LIFE'S CIRCUMSTANCES** was on every critic's top ten list last year, completed sessions for his next package with **Chip Young** once again handling production.

**Barefoot Jerry** recorded ten sides for their forthcoming Monument LP at **Wayne Moss'** Cinderella Studios. Standout is a new version of the old Johnny Horton hit, **The Battle Of New Orleans**.

Look for a filmed mini-concert (three or four songs) to precede showings of the soon-to-be-released **Kristofferson** flick, **VIGILANTE FORCE**. Kris, whose currently working with **Barbra Streisand** on **A STAR IS BORN**, has ten new songs ready for his next album.

**Sandy Posey**, of **Single Girl** and **Born A Woman** fame, set to record her debut Monument LP with **Tommy Cogbill** at the controls.

Recommended: **NASHVILLE GIRL**, a cheapie filmed here last summer, opened at Nashville drive-ins recently. Because of

# UPDATES

an "R" rating, it's created quite a stir but take my word for it and go see it. It's one of the best B-flicks of all time, without any of the pretensions of Robert Altman's "Nashville" and the music is excellent. **Johnny Rodriguez** also make his acting debut in the film.

In closing, we'd like to say our report of the **Charlie Daniels Challenge** has prompted a lot of people to ask what's going to happen if Buddy Rich or Stan Kenton take him up on his bet. Well, I just would like to nominate myself as one of the judges but I don't think it would ever come off because Rich and Kenton realize that their bands just aren't in the same league with local pickers down here.

## MIAMI UPDATE by Jon Marlowe

The NARM Convention (National Association of Record Manufacturers) took over most of Miami's musical news this month. **Jimmy Carter**, Governor and Presidential hopeful, stopped into the convention's scholarship dinner complete with Secret Service Men everywhere and a speech laced with musical references. Carter informed everyone present that the Georgia state government was re-designed while the **Eagles**, **Grateful Dead**, and **Allman Brothers** blasted away from his stereo.



Meanwhile **Bob Marley** and the **Wailers**, after a heavy push in the musical trades, failed to impress any of the convention members while **Manhattan Transfer** walked off to a standing ovation. **Neil Sedaka**, **Mac Davis**, and **Glen Campbell** also turned in Convention performances.

The conventioners also listened to stock analysts inform them that "the youth market was shrinking slowly" and that to keep their business exciting they "must now go after the 26-65 adult market." The Convention produced the following statistics: The biggest record buyer is male, people listen to 28 hours of music a week, college graduates buy 11.5 albums a year, and the biggest surprise of all, the average record buyer only attends two concerts a year.

As if in answer to almost every Miami group's question "How do we get discovered and become big rock stars?", the first annual **Top Rock Search** will begin shortly. The 'rock Search' will be a 10 week long hunt for Florida's most talented group with the winners receiving a recording contract at **Criteria Recording Studios** and an appearance on the **Midnight Special** TV Show.

**Wolfman Jack** will be on hand for the two day finals to be held at Busch Gardens and **Steve Alaimo** of Miami's TK Studios will be a member of the judging panel.

**Law**, a group just signed to **Roger Daltrey's** Goldhawk label, have been in at Criteria Studios working on their LP. **Ronnie Lee**, vocalist with the group, explained the band's rags to riches story: "Somebody we knew had taken a tape to Roger of their songs and our material was on the other side. Somehow the kid put the wrong side of the tape on and when the kid started protesting, Roger just told him to let it keep playing, that he really liked it. A few hours later he was on the phone tracking us down. It's a real Cinderella story, just like in the movies."

As for Daltrey, while he was in Miami vacationing, the Who's lead singer caught himself a 300 lb. Marlin. **Kansas** and **Manhattan Transfer** also took in some deep sea fishing as did the **Sensational Alex Harvey Band** when they were here. **Herman Adelsohn**, Miami singer songwriter, has just been signed to the RCA distributed **Midlands** label and will be in New York shortly to begin work on an album project at the Record Plant. **Rod Stewart** is at Criteria with producer **Tom Dowd** finishing up vocal overdubs. Rod was joined by his lovely wife **Britt Eklund** and the two of them made it up to Bachelor's III to catch **Nancy Wilson's** act. **The Monkees** cancelled their Newport Seven Seas lounge engagement after signing with the William Morris Agency and deciding that they were now "a concert act."

**Dr. Feelgood** was dropped from Kiss' Miami bill after they protested about the size of their dressing room and other such trappings. **The Orange Bowl** may be out as a summer festival site but major acts will still be appearing in Florida this summer. Tampa Stadium has consented to allow musical acts to perform there and those already scheduled are **Eagles**, **Elton John**, **Neil Diamond**, and **Aerosmith**. **Cheech and Chong** impressed so many people in their three day Miami appearance at the Four O'Clock Club that the management is now bringing them back for a week.

While **Kansas** was in town they made the trek up to Peaches Record Store and put their classical-rock fingerprints in cement. **Rudy Guarino's** Swinger Lounge pulled off the surprise hit of the season with his booking of **B.B. King**. Everyone was expecting the blues guitarist to draw only a handful of flannel shirted, blue-jeaned kids, but the Swinger was SRO for every one of his ten days. **Bad Co.'s** **Paul Rodgers** and **Simon Kirke** dropped in to hear B.B. after their Jai-Alai Fronton sold-out concert that resulted in a bit of rioting when disappointed fans found out they couldn't get in and proceeded to smash the glass doors. **Bee Gees** are in at Criteria for another nine weeks finishing up their album. **Bob Marley and the Wailers** are also working on their new one. **Jimmy Buffet** returns to Miami for a concert appearance while

**Leo Kottke** will also be in... **Outlaws** are set to headline concert dates in Tampa, Orlando, Tallahassee, and Gainesville. **James Brown** will be coming into Bobby Van's Bachelor III.

**Henry Gross** slated for a Miami concert appearance. **Simon Kirke**, **Bad Co.'s** drummer, made the rounds of radio stations. Kirke's trips around town were a little less eventful than **Al Green's**, who spied a beautiful blonde in a Corvette parked alongside his limo at a traffic light. Joking, Green told the limo driver, "I'd love to have her in here." When Green came out of the next radio station, the girl was waiting for him in the back seat. After much explaining, Green continued on his way minus the young lady. And last but not least, this quote from **Kiss** bassist **Gene Simmons** on Miami: "Miami's a great place. You know, all the sun and the water and everybody's always smiling. But we could never live here. We've got to go back to the city and write. Get that real ugly evil feeling in our blood."

## LOS ANGELES UPDATE

### by Michelle Straubing

Congratulations to **Alice Cooper** who married **Sheryl Goddard** (Cold Ethel on Alice's last tour) in Acapulco. The wedding came as a surprise to everyone who thought Alice only went to Mexico to finalize negotiations on his **Carlos & Charley's** restaurant franchise. Alice has been looking for a location in Beverly Hills for this funky restaurant but hasn't found one as yet.

**Jimmy Page** coming into town to finish production on **Michael Des Barres'** album which **Jimmy Miller** has already started producing at the Record Plant. **Andy Morris**, English session musician, in L.A. looking for a label for his group consisting of **Stuart Brooks**, an original Pretty Thing, **Rod Davies** of Silverhead, and **Buffin**. **Queen** and the **Cate Bros.** stopped by **Cherokee** after one of their sold out performances at the Santa Monica Civic to visit **Rod Stewart** mixing his new album. **Bill Wyman** is considering producing **Lorna Luft**, who is moving to England.

Tight lid of secrecy being kept over tragic death of **Paul Kossoff**. Paul had another heart attack while napping on a plane. Group flew back to England with Paul's body but had no immediate plans for their future.

More legal hassles for **David Bowie**: he still owes \$30,000 to Cherokee Studios for the soundtrack he and **Paul Buckmaster** wrote on spec for **THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH**. British Lion Films turned down the score in favor of one written by **John Phillips**.

**Sweet** did a turnaround and threw a party for Capitol Records at the Beverly Hills Hotel to thank them for all they had done for the group. The party turned sour after everyone drifted down to the Polo Lounge where **Andy Scott** and **Steve Priest**,

minus passports, were refused service by a **Maitre D'** who was convinced they were under 21. The shouting match was resolved by manager **Ed Leffler** and the boys were finally served their drinks.

**REO**, recording their fifth album at San Francisco's Record Plant, have dropped the **Speedwagon** and have welcomed back their old lead singer **Kevin Cronin**. They are also celebrating the return of \$5900 they lost while on tour in Michigan last December. The money was found by 9 year old Michael Parker when the snow melted. Mike will be receiving a citation from the police department for turning in the money as well as a large reward from the group.

**Nigel Olsson** is recording his new album at Caribou. Be on the lookout for a smashing new single. **The Jackson V** recording their first album for Epic in April. **Leo Sayer** in town recording a new album at Richard Perry's studio. Leo says the best way to get a feel for the American music scene is to record here. **Dr. Feelgood** disappointed the large crowd at the Starwood when they had to cancel their show at the last minute due to the good Dr. coming



down with a very high fever. **Flo & Eddie** recording theme for TV project called **Best Friends** at Haji Sound. **Wings** concerts at the Forum sold out in less than



two hours. **Bay City Rollers** coming in to tape **Midnight Special**. **War** currently negotiating a major British tour. **Peter Frampton** had to add a performance at the Shrine to his already sold out Anaheim date due to pressure from fans.

And last but not least, Hollywood gadabout **Rodney Bingenheimer** was fired from **Gino's** Hollywood disco on Vine Street because he played too much of **Bo Donaldson and The Heywoods** new album, **FARTHER ON**. The crowd and the waitresses loved it but Gino felt everybody should "do the hustle and forget all this rock and roll." Rodney's only comment was "I don't care about the gig. Long live rock and roll!" Amen.

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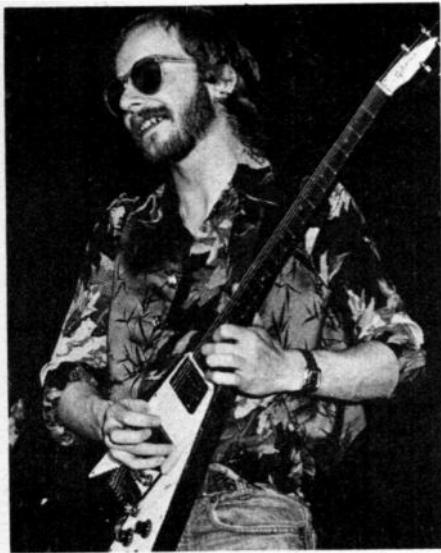
# WISHBONE ASH

## "Locked In At Last"

by Ronnie Nina Rosenberg

Wishbone Ash has gone through a lot of changes in the last year. They've moved to America, to Connecticut actually, shed one record company and signed up with Atlantic, gotten themselves Tom Dowd (Layla, Idlewild South) to produce their brand new LOCKED-IN album, and, for the first time in their lengthy career, featured keyboards on the album and on tour. Pete Wood played on the album and Graham Maitland plays on their current tour—"I'm only over for three months—the stint", the Scot burped softly.)

Although a fair number of English artists have moved to this side of the Atlantic, the question of why Wishbone, voted England's "Brightest Hope" in 1971, chose to follow the pack and stand in line to get their green cards with the rest, is an interesting one. Basically, it comes down to a question of economics. Wishbone has done a lot of American tours and they freely admit that they like the living and working situation over here. Drummer Steve Upton: "The initial reason is that we were living in England and trying to work in America and it was just a case of living and working in the same place. Environmentally, as far as music goes, I think it's a lot healthier, because there's a lot more music—every sort of music which naturally affects what we do."



Guitarist Andy Powell feels very positively about the move because he thinks that America's general ambience is a healthier climate in which to work than England. "People over here are more positive about things in general at the moment. OK, I know it's not great, and America's gone through a lot of crap in the last two years, but people on the average are optimistic, still, and in order to make music, a certain degree of optimism is necessary. Being here is like starting with a clean slate."

The band concedes that their leaving England will substantially affect their British audience. "It's got to affect English audiences", said Andy Powell. "Rock and roll is the sort of thing where if you hear it, you want it. It's a supply and demand situation and if there's no music there, people aren't

going to go for it. It happens with every band; even the Rolling Stones because they don't tour as much as they used to. They still sell a lot of records, but compared with when they were always on the road, well..."

Wishbone's new album, LOCKED IN, has been referred to as a "departure from previous albums" because of the addition of keyboards and a new emphasis on vocals. The band's trademark has always been, as the band itself refers to them—"the twins"—the dual guitars of Andy Powell and—more recently—Laurie Wisefield. Wishbone thinks the new album is considerably better than previous albums, one of the reasons being that they themselves produced the last two albums, and weren't happy with the results. They also feel that the "twins" are an intrinsic part of the band—the emphasis may have shifted, but it hasn't changed.

"Before, we used to be very much a guitar dominated band," commented Upton, "but with another instrument involved the attitudes in the playing have had to adapt to that new situation. Now the guitars can be less of an upfront thing, and more integrally involved with the keyboards. When we want to use the guitar as a dominant thing in harmony, we can use it a lot more effectively, because we've got that rhythm underneath the keyboards, which is really good with a harmony guitar. I think the guitars are still our trademark, but subtly employed. The playing of all the people in the band is a lot more subtle now—rather than quantity, it's quality."

And how does Wishbone feel about the gig at the Garden where they share the billing with Robin Trower? There was a suppressed muttering about "son of Jimi Hendrix", an optimistic and smiling, "It's guitar city: you've got the twins and you've got Robin, what more could one want?" from Andy, and the assertive: "we can go on the stage with anyone and not even know who's on the bill: that's what we want to do. We want to go on stage as Wishbone Ash and, who's ever on the bill, good luck to them, because they'll need it"—that, from Laurie.



PHOTOS BY GALE ROBBINS

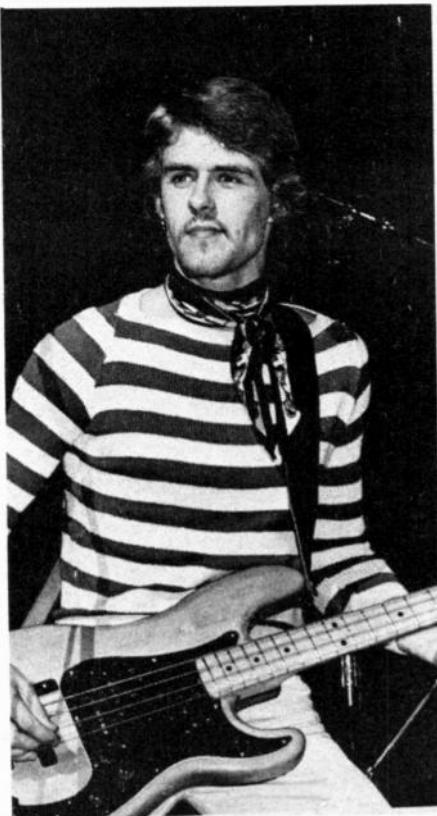
Back row: Laurie Wisefield, Andy Powell, Graham Maitland. Front row: Martin Turner, Steve Upton.

### CODA CONCERT REVIEW WISHBONE ASH AT THE GARDEN March 24, 1976

Opening for Robin Trower at the Garden isn't the easiest thing for a rock band to do, especially a rock band that, like Trower, has a reputation that rests solidly on its guitar work.

Wishbone had limited time in which to show their stuff: they did six songs including their encore. Kicking off with "Rest In Peace", the first track off their newest album, LOCKED IN, Andy Powell, veteran Wishboner, led out on his half of "the twins" with new guitarist Laurie Wisefield jumping in in short order. The two play exceptionally well together, probably because there is such a contrast between them. Wisefield is a vibrant, pixie-like creature with a mop of brown curls and the useful quality of being able to seize a stage without taking it away from anybody in particular. Andy, all sun glasses and smooth hair, is the steady force, the control. What one hears when Powell and Wisefield get going is an underlying tension: one guitarist trying to move more quickly, the other striving for more control. In a case like this, the tension is a positive thing; it creates a sense of excitement that communicates itself to the other members of the band and to the audience.

Although Martin Turner seems to do a lot of the vocals—and was especially effective on Rest In Peace—there is no lead vocalist per se. The band members share the vocal duties, and go in for a lot of har-



mony which works just fine: they're a musician's band and their power lies in the playing.

# GET MOVING! GET MOVING!

## Aerodynamics Of Body Movement Alexander Technique, Yoga and Dance

by Mara Sokolsky

As you read this, become conscious of how you're sitting. Are your shoulders hunched forward, is your back slumped? Is your chin jutting out or your head lowered to get closer to the magazine? Chances are you fit at least one description. Few Americans, aside from dancers, pianists and military, have a good conception. We happily collapse into a chair and let everything round, long in whatever position. We are compressing, without realizing that we're compressing muscles. We are setting the stage for becoming, as we grow older, stooped and bent and rounded.

The natural state of man is an active one. In today's world that natural state is destroyed, for we were never intended to sit for seven hours in an office. Hunching over desks is one of the most frequent causes of stooped shoulders and backaches. Even such a natural action as playing an instrument causes lopsidedness, because many instruments are played on one side of the body. Living in a society that acts out of a chair, or only uses certain parts of the body, it's doubly important to get some form of total exercise. Without a workout, the muscles and nerves lose their vigor and flexibility.

With the advent of self-encounter systems like TM, Gestalt therapy androlfing a whole new awareness of movement techniques evolved. All kinds of therapy groups started off with simple yoga and dance exercises. Regular yoga classes swelled, and martial arts were given in every after-school center. Suddenly it was "cool" to be in touch with your body. Especially men, who had hitherto been labeled "fags" if they took a dance class, were getting to know their bodies in a gentler way than just through sports.

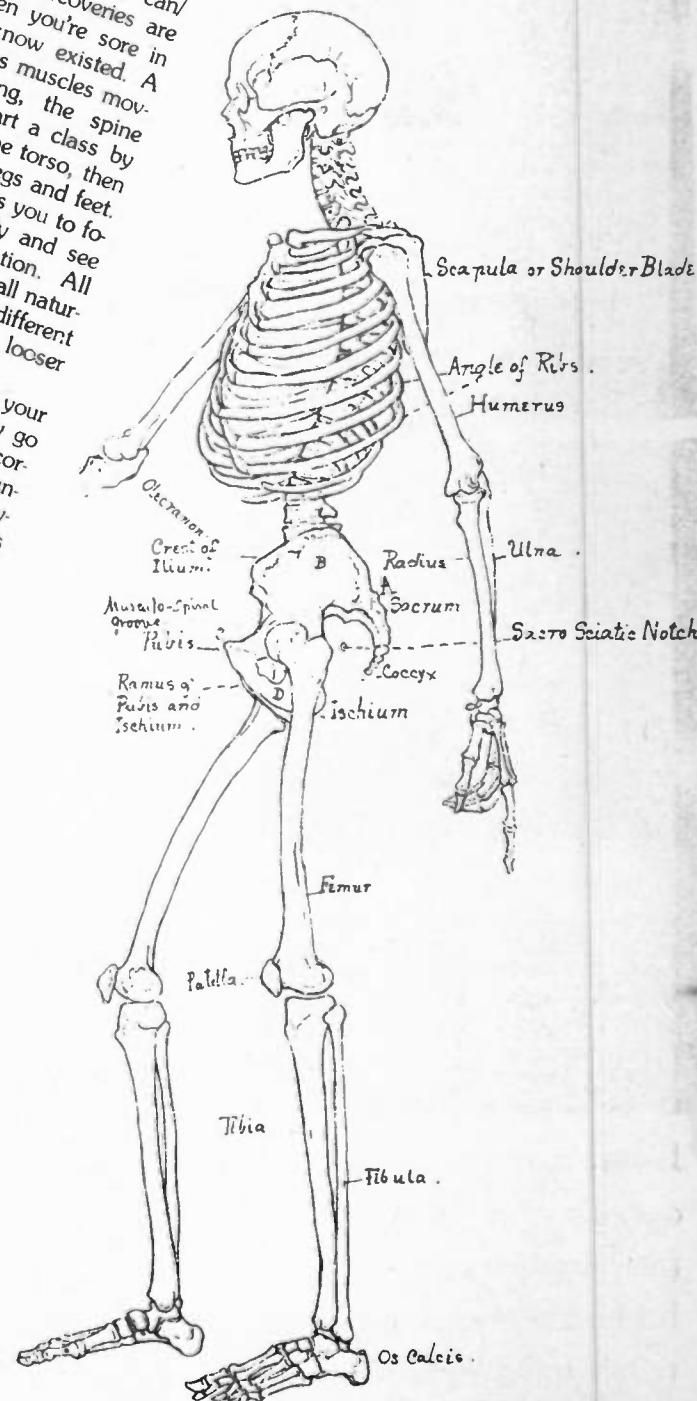
Why the sudden boom? As psychology gradually spread from the analysts' couches to the layman, so dance went beyond the bare wood studios. The importance of body and mind together being established, the body was able to strike out on its own. But for a long time the body was considered carnal, primitive, not the "civilized" side of man. Many people felt that movement was transient—only mental knowledge stayed with you. The whole store of body wisdom was chucked out the window. And body wisdom, unlike mental

wisdom, is much harder to learn at fifty than at twenty.

A good place to get a sense of body wisdom is in a basic dance or movement class. It's there that people make discoveries: "I have hipbones! My spine can't bend!" Many of the discoveries are made the next day, when you're sore in places you didn't even know existed. A dance class gets the lifeless muscles moving again, the blood going, the spine warmed-up. Usually you start a class by warming up the back, then the torso, then the neck and head, then the legs and feet. A systematic progression allows you to focus on each part of your body and see which parts need extra attention. All bodies are built differently. We're all naturally tight and naturally loose in different places. The more you exercise, the looser you become.

Once you've bent and stretched your body with various exercises, you may go "across the floor". Starting from one corner, the teacher will show a simple running, turning or leaping pattern and everyone follows, two by two. The combinations either get harder or are combined with each other to form more complicated patterns. Awareness of movement and one's body doesn't only mean that you can tie yourself up in knots. You should carry a certain grace and presence wherever you travel in space. If you think of sending all your energy out through the ends of your body—head, hands, feet—you'll usually have a lively and attractive carriage.

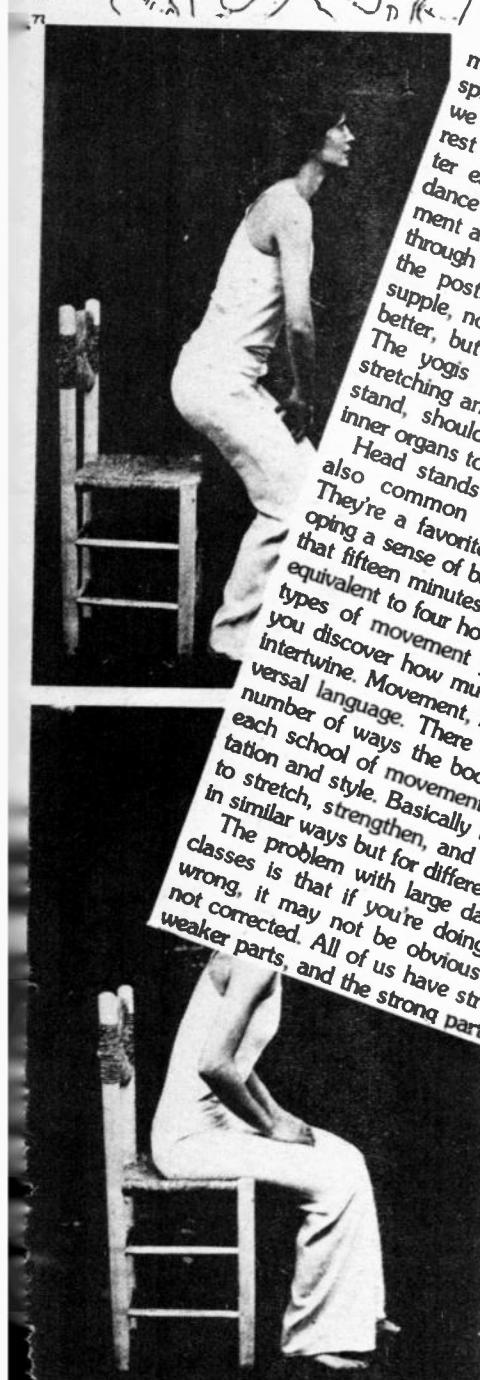
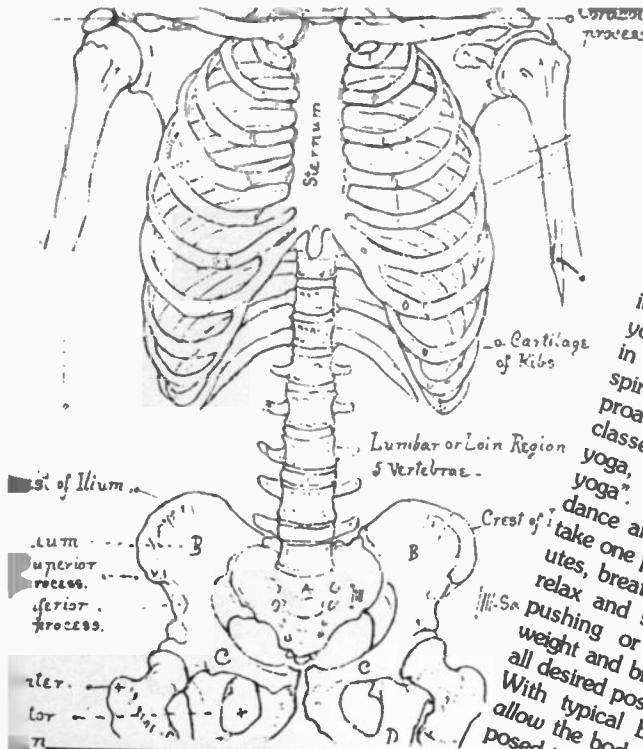
Not all dance classes are the same but many follow a certain pattern. After warming up the body and then moving through space, you complete the class with improvisation. Now that the body is activated the imagination follows. As with music, improvisation means taking elements you already know and combining them in spontaneous, unstructured ways. The results are always different. In dance there are varied types of improvisation and a good teacher will alternate between them. One type is to put on a certain kind of music and have someone start dancing with the flow of the music. Others join in and react to the first person, or the music can suddenly change, which forces the movement to change. Another type of improv is to give a story to the person/persons moving, and have them act and dance it out. Improvisation in dance, as in music, is endless.



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so everyone's body is an instrument  
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Of course, the more flexible your body, the more you can experiment when you improvise. One excellent way to gain flexibility is through yoga. Many turned to yoga at the height of the Indian movement in America, others were attracted to the spirituality, still others liked the gentle approach in contrast to strenuous dance classes. Though there are many forms of yoga, the physical side is called "hatha yoga". Hatha yoga differs from modern dance and movement classes in that you take one position and hold it for a few minutes, breathing into it, allowing muscles to relax and stretch. Yoga never advocates pushing or straining. By your natural weight and breath you will eventually reach all desired postures, or so the theory goes. With typical Eastern temperament, they allow the body to give and stretch, as opposed to the Western idea of forcing it. I remember how shocked I was during my first yoga class when, after doing a spiral twist to one side and then the other, we were told to lie down on our backs and rest for a few minutes. This "rest" came after each posture. What a contrast to a dance class where it's go-go, one movement after the other! But you never move supple, not so you then move and dance better, but so that your body is healthy. The yogis believe that by twisting and stretching and turning upside down (head stand, shoulder stand), you activate the inner organs to function as they should. Head stands and shoulder stands are also common to gymnastics classes. They're a favorite of gymnasts for developing a sense of balance, but the yogis say that fifteen minutes of a shoulder stand is equivalent to four hours of sleep. The more types of movement you study, the more you discover how much they overlap and intertwine. Movement, like music, is a universal language. There are only a certain number of ways the body can bend, and each school of movement differs in orientation and style. Basically they're all trying to stretch, strengthen, and align the body in similar ways but for different ends.

The problem with large dance or yoga classes is that if you're doing something wrong, it may not be obvious and thus, not corrected. All of us have stronger and weaker parts, and the strong parts tend to

Most of us are taller than we appear. Because of poor posture, laziness and rounded spines, we develop an inner slump that correlates to an outer one. What an Alexander teacher does is to literally make space between the vertebrae of your spine so that you elongate. The space is like one's potential; it's always there, only it often goes to waste.

After being elongated on the table you sit up feeling very light and airy. The second half of the session is devoted to doing simple actions and seeing what excess tension you put into them. The first few times all we worked on was getting in and out of a chair. Ridiculous! Everyone knows how to sit—or so I thought until my fifth lesson, when I felt my chin reach forward and my ribs stick out each time I got ready to sit down. By taking the movement slowly and repeating it under the teacher's hands, I was eventually able to make sitting a truly effortless action. Learning to walk was also a trip. There's a world of difference between clomping around, and

dominate when they can. So if you're doing sit-ups with a flabby stomach, you use your shoulder and upper back muscles to pull yourself up each time. This kind of cycle is best thwarted by a method of alignment called the "Alexander Technique." It's a method that began in England and is slowly but surely gaining notoriety in America. Basically, it's a process of aligning the body, relieving tensions and freeing one's energy so it can be used fully. The Alexander Technique goes well as a supplement to any other movement class, for example dance and yoga, the Alexander Technique can be traced to a single person, F.M. Alexander, an Australian actor who periodically lost his voice. Finding this in front of a three-way mirror and observed his larynx when he could speak and when he couldn't. He noticed his larynx tightening, becoming tense at those periods of laryngitis. Learning to relax it, he discovered other tense spots and, abandoning the theatre, he spent a good many years using the three-way mirror to explore this further. He was not a dancer but focused on such activities as standing correctly, sitting and walking, for these were the basics of one's everyday existence.

As opposed to a class, an Alexander session is given on a one-to-one basis. You lie down on a table. A few books are placed under your head as a pillow, and then your "adjustment" begins. This means that the teacher stands at different parts of the table and gently pulls your muscles. It's all done in a subtle, specific fashion and you don't feel anything except your spine beginning to lengthen on the table. As your arms are pulled, you feel a great space between your shoulder blades. When they come round to your head the books have to be moved back because you're lengthening so much. You grow two inches during an adjustment!

Most of us are taller than we appear. Because of poor posture, laziness and rounded spines, we develop an inner slump that correlates to an outer one. What an Alexander teacher does is to literally make space between the vertebrae of your spine so that you elongate. The space is like one's potential; it's always there, only it often goes to waste.

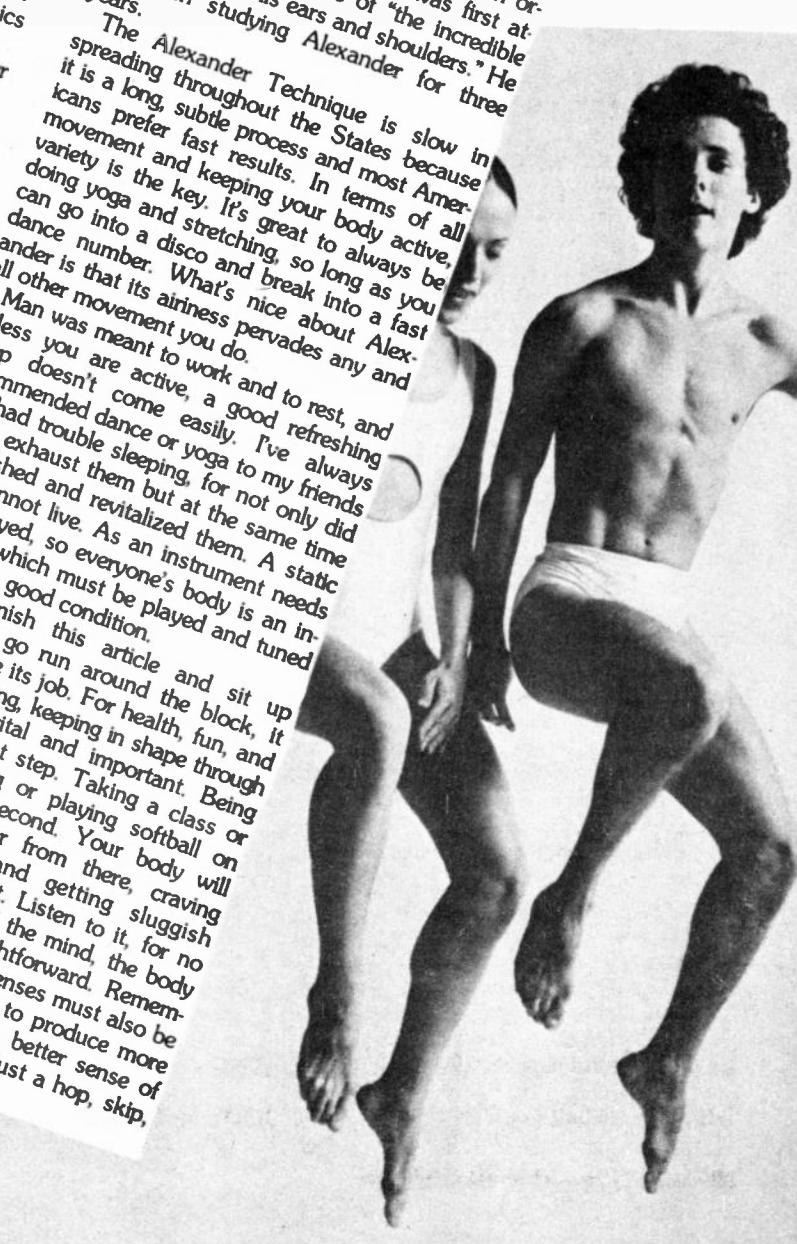
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making each step a massage of the foot, a stretching of the thigh. According to Alexander, you don't need a dance class; just by living and walking you activate the body. Since Alexander was himself an actor, he worked primarily with actors to gain better voice and movement control. Then the Technique became very popular with musicians, mainly those who played an instrument, more on one side of their bodies. Many flautists and violinists who complained of sideaches or lopsidedness were greatly helped by working this way. They would play and then show them how to stretch the other side once they were done. Dancers use the Alexander Technique for correct alignment, placement and relaxation. But the clientele is not restricted to artists; it includes housewives, business men, dentists, students and anyone interested in bettering his or her body. An orthodontist said that his wife was first attracted to him because of "the incredible space between his ears and shoulders." He had been studying Alexander for three years.

The Alexander Technique is slow in spreading throughout the States because it is a long, subtle process and most Americans prefer fast results. In terms of all movement and keeping your body active, variety is the key. It's great to always be doing yoga and stretching, so long as you can go into a disco and break into a fast dance number. What's nice about Alexander is that its airiness pervades any and all other movement you do.

Man was meant to work and to rest, and unless you are active, a good refreshing sleep doesn't come easily. I've always recommended dance or yoga to my friends who had trouble sleeping, for not only did it help exhaust them but at the same time it refreshed and revitalized them. A static body cannot live. As an instrument needs to be played, so everyone's body is an instrument which must be played and tuned and kept in good condition.

If you finish this article and sit up straighter or go run around the block, it will have done its job. For health, fun, and general well-being, keeping in shape through movement is vital and important. Being aware is the first step. Taking a class or going folkdancing or playing softball on Sundays is the second. Your body will probably take over from there, craving more movement and getting sluggish when it doesn't get it. Listen to it, for no matter how befuddled the mind, the body is usually pretty straightforward. Remember that your physical senses must also be nourished. Energy tends to produce more energy so Get Moving! A better sense of body, and thus of self, is just a hop, skip, and a jump away.



# BE-BOP DELUXE

by Dave Schulps

"Change is an important part of this band. We've got to keep ahead of the trends," says Bill Nelson, guitarist, vocalist, songwriter, and leader of Be-Bop Deluxe on the eve of his group's first American tour. Indeed it seems a strangely confident statement for a member of a "new" band to make at a time when the recording industry appears to have settled into a period of conservatism unmatched in the last decade. Yet there seems to be good reason to believe that there is a place alongside the static formula groups for a band based on the idea of steady progression. For as Nelson spoke, Be-Bop's newly released second American album, *SUNBURST FINISH*, was occupying a healthy position on the charts without benefit of the band's ever having played in this country.

The brief but action-packed story of Be-Bop Deluxe would seem to confirm Bill Nelson's commitment to constant change. Over the past five years he's covered more ground than most musicians could hope to cover in a career.

In 1970, Nelson was playing guitar in a religious-oriented band called the Gentle Revolution, performing exclusively in his home region of Yorkshire, in the north of England. As Bill tells it, the band was involved in more than just playing music, it was more a multi-media event with films, poetry, live drama, and mime all being incorporated into the show. By mid-1971, the Gentle Revolution had ended and Nelson, with the help of some friends at a record shop in his home town of Wakefield, recorded a locally distributed solo album called *NORTHERN DREAM*.

The album, a showcase for Nelson's rapidly developing talents, mostly stayed in a light folk-rock vein, reminiscent at times of Neil Young. Not content with the idea of going out as a solo act, Nelson formed a band called Flagship which quickly split and reformed as Be-Bop Deluxe with Nelson and Ian Parkin on guitars, Rob Bryan on bass, and Nicholas Chatterton-Dew on drums. In the meantime, someone at Harvest Records heard *NORTHERN DREAM* and became interested in Nelson. Four days after Be-Bop Deluxe had formed, they contacted him and asked whether he had a band. Some tapes were made on short order, at which time Be-Bop were told they should rehearse for awhile to better develop as a band before signing a contract.

In the year following, Be-Bop Deluxe became known as the "strangest" band in Yorkshire. Almost simultaneously with the arrival of David Bowie on the London scene, Be-Bop were shocking Yorkshire audiences with make-up, rouge, and outlandish costumes. "We were all working day jobs and thought it would be fun to try and do something outrageous in the evening. It was before the New York Dolls and things like that. A couple of guys in the band didn't have the physical stature to pull it off, which made it weird still. There was a very short, dumpy guy with eye liner and space boots who looked very strange. It was just supposed to be a total assault on the audiences up North. They weren't prepared for this sort of thing. And it worked. We got a reputation and people used to come just to see what we were wearing at first."



After a year on the Northern circuit, Be-Bop were finally deemed ready to record by Harvest. Their first album, *AXE VICTIM*, released only in Britain, had the band decked out on the back cover looking for all the world like the auxiliary Spiders From Mars, with the legend "Be careful... I'm an axe victim/Hung up on these silver strings/Like wings... Like time machines/Like voices on the wing..."

Surely this was an album for anyone who had ever felt the thrill of having a guitar in their hands. Inside, Bill Nelson showed himself to be a guitarist of extremely high quality, combining high-speed runs with genuine emotion and feeling. The songs themselves were maybe a bit too derivative of Bowie, but certainly showed that Nelson could work a phrase which would stick in your mind long after the record had left the turntable.

Be-Bop then toured Britain supporting Cockney Rebel. During the tour it became apparent that Nelson was outdistancing the rest of the band musically and at the tour's end, the whole band was replaced by two ex-members of Cockney Rebel and a newcomer, drummer Simon Fox. This partnership only lasted ten performances, however, when the two former Rebels were discovered to be no better than those whom they'd replaced.

Enter New Zealander Charles Tumahai, a nimble-fingered bassist and vivacious

stage presence, whose bowler hat and kangaroo hops quickly fit right into the new Be-Bop Deluxe image. With Queen's studio wizard, Roy Thomas-Baker, producing the trio, Be-Bop turned out *FUTURAMA* (Harvest ST11432), a brilliant progression form, though in many ways a continuation of, *AXE VICTIM*. Between albums, Nelson's marriage had broken up, due quite a bit to his devotion to the guitar. Nelson had become the axe victim of his own song, and *FUTURAMA* chronicled a man torn between the two loves of his life. Lyrically brilliant, the music matched the intensity and fire of the words, while Nelson's guitar playing was some of the best to be heard on a rock album since the death of Jimi Hendrix. The album was released in the States and was well received for a debut album by an unknown group. Be-Bop Deluxe was on their way, and they no longer needed make-up and costumes to impress anyone.

Before recording their latest album, *SUNBURST FINISH*, in an effort to achieve a fuller sound, Be-Bop added a fourth member, 19 year old Andrew Clark on keyboards. With the addition of Clark, they now have the capacity to reproduce their recorded sound on stage, and on a good night, Be-Bop could be one of the best performing bands to grace a stage.

As for *SUNBURST FINISH*, it's the culmination of everything that's come before it,

yet it continues to expand the range and reach of Be-Bop's unique sound, whether mixing Bill Nelson's own melodic songwriting style with a bit of rock 'n' roll on *Fair Exchange*, a touch of boogie on *Life in the Air-Age*, or some dreamy guitar soloing on *Crying In the Night*. There's even a song with great single potential called *Ships In the Night*, and a tongue-in-cheek poke at evangelism called *Blazing Apostles*. In short, plenty of variety.

Above all, Bill Nelson reveals himself to be a man of many ideas. Whether they be about staging or recording, Nelson has some extremely interesting projects in mind for the future. Among these are making his own films to use in place of an opening act, and exploring the sound possibilities of the guitar thing, with each track recorded in a different natural environment. Over a lake, a seashore, trying to harmonize a feeling. Let the waves come in and destroy the amp. Then I'd like to record from an amp in a truck moving on a highway with a boom mike traveling alongside picking up all the noise."

Whether any of these projects will ever see the light of day is anyone's guess, but one thing is for sure, Be-Bop Deluxe will never stagnate as long as Bill Nelson's around.

"There'll always be changes. The music's going to evolve simply because I get bored very quickly."



# ROCK & POP SINGLES



by Bob Grossweiner

**LOU REED:** Charley's Girl (RCA 10573)

Punk rock at its finest with Lou's slashing vocals, pronounced Velvet Underground underpinnings, and a weird story about Sharon squealing to the cops and having the band busted. And do you know what Lou would do to Sharon if he ever meets up with her? Repeated listenings are in order to make sure what you thought you heard was really what you did hear. But, it's not one of Reed's best singles or even the most commercial track on CONEY ISLAND BABY.

**JAN BERRY:** Sing Sang a Song (Ode 66120)

Jan, of Jan & Dean fame, almost comes up with a winner, but the overall production quickly engulfs his surfin' pipes and drowns him in a cascading wave. By the time he resurfaces, it's too late.

**BLACK OAK ARKANSAS:** Great Balls of Fire (MCA 40536)

Surprisingly, Jim Dandy comes to the rescue and even sounds a bit like Jerry Lee Lewis with some pistol shot 88's barreling along over the heavy handed bottom. Black Oak's originals were never this potent.

**BAD COMPANY:** Young Blood (Swan Song 70108)

The only non-original on RUN WITH THE PACK, this Coasters' cover is more than adequately revived with Paul Rogers' excellent vocals and a punchy rhythm section.

**GRIMMS:** Backbreaker (DJM 1001)

An off-shoot of the weird Bonzo Dog Doo-Dah Band, Grimms is only unusual vocally on this 50s style love tune.

**WILLIE NELSON:** I Gotta Get a Drink (RCA 10591)

A rousing, barroom tune with a morale. Willie knows why he should stop drinking, but he can't, even if he knows he'll regret spending his whole pay check on demon alcohol.

**ELVIS PRESLEY:** For the Heart (RCA 10601)

Dennis Linde's tune gets a fine rockabilly treatment, deeper than most of Pres' latest sides, with a good cushion from the chorus and sparkling piano. The flip, *Hurt*, is orchestrated country complete with Elvis talking to his love, saying he would never hurt her. Oh yeah.

**BOBBY PATTERSON:** If He Hadn't Slipped Up and Got Caught (Granite 536)

A tender soul ballad about being caught cheating on your loved one. *Intrigue:* She's glad he got caught because her chances would have been mighty slim (if he hadn't been caught), but now she can get even in this orchestrated, easy flowing tune.

**DICK FELLER:** Some Days Are Diamonds (Some Days Are Stone) (Asylum 45306)

Feller's a countrified humorist with soul (not the r&b variety), but he plays it pretty straight here. The narrative flip *Doin' the Best I Can* is the Feller I like best and besides, it's good advice.

**THE BAND:** Orphelia (Capitol 4230)

Good Lovin', down home funk with Garth Hudson's flowing organ and Robbie Robertson's bright guitar leading the way. Garth's overdubbed brass makes it even more of a jolly good time, especially on the fade-out tuba. Backed by another more somber dramatic tune, *Hobo Jungle*. The Band is possibly the best band in America, or the world for that matter.

**THE DOOBIE BROTHERS:** Takin' It to the Streets (Warner Bros. 8196)

The Doobies are getting funkier and closer to the "Streets" with a deep, prominent bass, subtle piano mix and a fine horn lead.

**LUCY SIMON:** Sally Go'Round the Sun (RCA 10582)

Carly's sister Lucy is not a newcomer; they were both known as the Simon Sisters and had a hit entitled *Winkin', Blinkin' and Nod*. After a long hiatus devoted to raising a family, Lucy returns to music with this strange tune about a shopping bag lady that roams the streets of New York. A fine production (by Joel Dorn) but the imagery is complex on this folk-rock tune.

**THE OZARK MOUNTAIN DAREDEVILS:** You Made It Right (A&M 1809)

Mid-western country is harder around the edges than normal country-rock, and the Ozarks are one of the best proponents of this mode. They're lyrical; floating with an emphasis on pedal steel and sumptuous harmonies with some good pickin' too, but it won't be as popular as the monster hit *Jackie Blue*.

**SEALS & CROFTS:** Get Closer (Warner Bros. 8190)

Not the typical religious or pretentious Seals & Crofts here as they added soul vocalist Carolyn Willis to a "Featured" role—they've never been more convincing nor loving.

**TRAVIS WAMMACK:** You've Got Your Troubles (Capricorn 0250)

A Greenway/Cook pop tune convincingly executed with nary a countrified underbelly—a nice, soft wah-wah interlude stimulates the overall "Dusty Springfield sounding" production.

**NEIL YOUNG WITH CRAZY HORSE:** Drive Back (Reprise 1350)

Refurbished with the "new" Crazy Horse, Young has more zing to give him the courage to say "Drive back to your old town, I wanna wake up with no one around." Young's guitar lead stings on this tune from ZUMA with superb support from Ralph Molina, Billy Talbot, and Frank Sanpedro.

**PRETTY THINGS:** Remember that Boy (Swan Song 70107)

Possibly a bit long at 5:04 and too confusing, but the Pretties know how to sock it to ya with a rhythmic, pounding beat, some crazed vocals and a desperate drive in their momentum. Backed by an earthy rock 'n' rolling *It Isn't Rock 'N' Roll*.

**MARMALADE:** Falling Apart at the Seams (Ariola America 7619)

Are these guys still around? I guess they've got it together for one last try (they scored many years ago with *Ob-La-Di Ob-La-Da*). Their British pop wears well with an intriguing lead vocalist, but the over all production is a bit stifling.

**SWEET:** Action (Capitol 4220)

Power-packed, dramatic pop with the lushness and passion of Queen and vocals that will suck you into the action. Incredible production is their major strength while the flip *Medusa* is another engaging, multi-tracked tour-de-force. I foresee a two-sided smash.

**FLEETWOOD MAC:** Rhiannon (Will You Ever Win) (Reprise 1345)

Newcomer Stephanie Nicks' engaging vocal is spiced by some adventurous, ethereal instrumentation—Fleetwood Mac's trademark—in this tune about a schizoid Welsh witch.

**DANNY KIRWAN:** Ram Jam Citt (DJM 1004)

A fine comeback from the former Fleetwood Mac guitarist; this bouncy rocker is enhanced by acoustic textures and a Paul McCartney/Wings feeling.

**ROSALYN KIND:** She Loves to Hear the Music (Columbia 10290)

Barbra Streisand's sister tackles this Peter Allen/Carole Bayer Sager upbeat ballad about a secretary in a music firm who knows music inside out but is lonely at home. A nice debut, but she doesn't come close to her sis.

**BOBBY WOMACK:** Daylight (United Artists XW763-Y)

Womack's in a mellow groove at 5:00 a.m. with the party still going strong. People are getting down in their stocking feet as daylight is coming up on the horizon. Womack's rich vocals can keep any party going strong 'till daylight.

**CALIFORNIA SOUL:** Jamaica Farewell (RCA 10572)

Undoubtedly an all-star L.A. session by friends of the Beach Boys (produced by Terry Melcher, Curt Becker, and Gary Usher) day-o-ing it down Jamaica way in a calypso fashion. Confusing but light and fun.

**CONWAY TWITTY:** After the Good Is Gone (MCA 40534)

Deep, deep country—sad but true. Twitty's high pitched vocal makes you feel the pain—it hurts so bad.

**VIC TAYLOR:** Country Boy (Mercury 73736)

Non-obtrusive pop reggae that's a bit too orchestrated for any funk to surface. Ditto on the flip *You're My Life*, another mainstream Jamaican muzak offering.

**EMMYLOU HARRIS:** Here, There and Everywhere (Reprise 1346)

Emmylou transforms the Lennon/McCartney classic into a sweetened, countrified vein, never losing the song's impact and proving once again why she is the newest heart throb in country-rock. Too bad the Beatles cut the song first!

**THE STAPLE SINGERS:** A Whole Lot of Love (Curtom 0113)

Curtis Mayfield penned this aural soundtrack of how a little bit of love can wash away hard times as the Staples squeeze out some of the most inspirational truths you've ever heard with the subtlest of productions. The flip *New Orleans* is a rousing ode to that city.

**ARTFUL DODGER:** Silver and Gold (Columbia 3-10282)

An uncanny pop presence is felt on this light love song with the lead vocalist rightfully earning all the kudos. Watch out for them—real sleepers.

**KOKOMO:** Rise and Smoke (Columbia 3-10283)

These British soul rockers don't cut the mustard (as they did on *I Can Understand It*) with a revamped group that seems to be heading for more of a rocking pop solution.



# ROCK & POP SINGLES



by Bob Grossweiner

## JOHN KLEMMER: Touch (ABC 12172)

A succulent instrumental featuring Klemmer's tenor sax—mellow, yet highly expressive with subtle percussion. In a word: melodic.

## BANKS & HAMPTON: Make Due with What 'Cha Got (Warner Bros 8177)

They've written hits for the Staple Singers, Johnnie Taylor, and Luther Ingram, and now they try for their own with this bouncy, soulful tune heightened by pronounced bass lines bumping the realistic lyrics along.

## CHRIS SQUIRE: Lucky Seven (Atlantic 45-3317)

Yes' bassist goes solo from the mother group, and this is definitely a diversion. It shows that Squire has a pleasing voice and decent though simplistic arrangements (his bass stands out, naturally).

## TERRY GARTHWAITE: Slender Thread (Arista 0176)

One of the former female leads of Joy of Cooking, Garthwaite still has a female vocalist to scat off of, but this tune is not one of the best offerings from her album *TERRY*. However, the vocal interplay between Terry and Willow Wray, niece of actress Fay Wray of *King Kong* fame is brilliant.

## SCORPIONS: Speedy's Coming (RCA 10574)

Scorpions are the best German hard rock group but totally unknown stateside. Spiralling, shotgun guitar pellets are their forte, but the production here is a bit jagged. Listen carefully to the lyrics and hear who's who in rock.

## THE NITTY GRITTY DIRT BAND: Mother of Love (United Artists XW741-Y)

Not the Dirt Band's best as they increase the volume and rush through a tune that needs mellowness—they're trying to sound too much like the Eagles here.

## ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL: Nothin' Takes the Place of You (Capitol 4283)

Chris O'Connell's lead vocal slows down the pace of the western swing Wheel for a smooth love ballad.

## MIKE OLDFIELD: Theme From Ommadawn (Virgin ZS8-9505)

Not as enthralling as his *EXORCIST* theme, but it still shows the multi-talents of the multi-tracked Oldfield. It starts with primal chanting and tom-toms progressing into an ethereal, spacey textured tune, building up to a momentous mid-section.

## GERALD JOHNSON: All in the Family (Arista 0177)

No, it's not the theme of the smash TV series, but rather a soulful tune with substance and fine lyrics about the problems of a family.

## THE TREMELOES: Hard Woman (DJM 1008)

From the ashes of one of the earliest British rock groups, The Tremeloes try to score in '76 with some basic, primitive instrumentation without letting modern technology influence their style. Typical early rock lyrics: "Hard, hard woman/I don't wanna fight you, I wanna spend a night with you." O.K.

## PETER FRAMPTON: Show Me the Way (A&M 1795)

The voice bag, the enthusiastic audience and Peter's easy, drifting rock are the atmosphere for rock's newest (finally) hero. His sound is so refreshing that you want to delve into the double live LP immediately. This is an edited version, time-wise.

## FLOYD CRAMER: Candy Pants (RCA 10597)

There are licorice-laced, all candy underwear on the market calle *Candy pants* for both men and women in three flavors—hot chocolate, banana split, and wild cherry. With Chet Atkins at the controls, Cramer's hot licks are heightened by some sexy female vocals for this country novelty. Very unusual!

## DIANA LYNN: Candy Kisses (Artists of America 112)

A traditional country tune with orchestration, upfront pedal steel and Diana's sweet, sweet vocal. *Candy Kisses* is a George Martin classic ("Do candy kisses mean more than the real thing.")

## KID CASMIR & WINNIE LE COUX: Happy Birthday U.S.A. (Phantom 10574)

A Bicentennial spoof in a hard rockin', good lovin' style that could easily be a Top 10 hit with different lyrics.

## KENNY RANKIN: Sunday Kind of Love (Little David 732)

Some cool jazz overtones, a bit of soul, and folkie. Rankin's purest vocals in this subdued ballad.

## BILLY CONNOLLY: D.I.V.O.R.C.E. (Private Stock 066)

A humorous ditty (recorded live) about spelling words out rather than saying them in front of children b-e-c-a-u-s-e y-o-u-d-o-n-t w-a-n-t t-h-e-m t-o h-e-a-r t-h-e-m. In this case, the "child" happens to be a dog!

## OSIBISA: Sunshine Day (Island 053)

Osibisa's Afro-soul rhythms are softened for this soulful vocal tune that is unfortunately hampered by its banal lyrics.

## EDGAR WINTER GROUP WITH RICK DERRINGER: Diamond Eyes (Blue Sky ZS8-2673)

A muddy mix flaws this fine ballad ("We are children looking at the world through diamond eyes") showing another side of the high energy Winter/Derringer team.

## THE THREE DEGREES: Free Ride (Philadelphia International ZS8-3585)

The Edgar Winter Group's smash was captured live in England, but their gyrating voices don't retain the consistency they could get in the studio.

## MINNIE RIPERTON: Adventures in Paradise (Epic 8-50190)

The many octaved vocalist soars on this rockin' swing excursion into paradise ("I believe any dream that I want to . . .") and it's optimistic expectations. Good for early morning risers before going to work; her voice'll send you there with a smile.

## LARRY GATLIN: Broken Lady (Monument ZS-8680)

As a country artist, Gatlin has a rare style. Instrumentation is minimal at first, then builds up in momentum. And his imagery is not ordinary country either: "She's a broken lady, waiting to be mended."

## JULIE: One Fine Day (Tom Cat 10454)

Julie (Budd) revivifies the Chiffon's classic, a vocal song that progresses into a slight hustle with strings but is more pop than disco or soul.

## RONNIE LAWS & PRESSURE: Momma (Blue Note XW777-Y)

Saxophonist Laws is synthesized and funkadelized on this spacey but too busy instrumental. Ronnie, by the way, is Hubert's brother.

## LEROY HUTSON AND THE FREE SPIRIT SYMPHONY: Feel The Spirit (in '76) (Curtom 0112)

The former Impression and ex-roommate of Donny Hathaway feels the spirit—music that glides and makes you feel good all over with delicious female voices as the icing on the cake.

## CLARENCE CARTER: Dear Abby (ABC 12162)

Clarence writes a letter to Abby so his girl will get the message 'cause she only seems to respond to Abby. Drippy.

## DAN FOGELBERG: Below the Surface (Epic 8-50189)

Country rock's newest hero plays all the instruments except drums on this ordinary tune about slowing down to see where you're coming from.

## COUNTRY JOE McDONALD: Save the Whales (Fantasy 765)

Country Joe has abandoned his radical politics for ecology, relating a message that should be heard by all. Reinforced by some soft, lilting rock and whale (?) sounds.

## JEAN-PIERRE RAMPAL/CLAUDE BOLLING: Sentimentale (Columbia AE7-1096)

Classical music meets jazz in this snippet from a suite for piano and flute. It's very pretty and will surprise you as the non-classical instrumentation is introduced.

## BARRETT STRONG: Man Up in the Sky (Capitol 4223)

Strong's ebullient, easy flowing style glides you into almost spiritual lyrics that are the highpoint here.

## O'JAYS: Livin' for the Weekend (Philadelphia International ZS8-3587)

An upbeat bouncer with a wonderful title as the mid-week blues turn to partying time with some terse horn frills.

## GOLDEN EARRING: Sleep Walkin' (MCA 40513)

These Dutch hard rockers could never sleep walk with this pounder; their synthesis of basic American/British roots is strenuously achieved with changing tempos and moods as well as potent vocals.

## THE FLYING BURRITO BROTHERS: Bon Soir Blues (Columbia 3-10287)

Louisiana fiddler Gib Guilbeau's cajun flavor adds more texture to these re-formed country-rockers with a loose "French" style that's rare in music today.

## THE J. GEILS BAND: Where Did Our Love Go (Atlantic 45-3320)

The old Supremes smash re-interpreted soulfully by the bad boys of blues rocking fame. Peter Wolf's vocal does Holland-Dozier-Holland justice, and the band is in a subtle groove. They should continue to cover the oldies.

## CLIFF RICHARD: Miss You Nights (Rocket 40531)

Richard has been a rock idol in Britain since 1958 but has never broken in America. He won't on this tender love ballad penned by Dave (brother of Pete) Townshend either, since it's orchestrated a bit too much.

# ROCK & POP SPOTLIGHT ALBUMS



NILS LOFGREN: *Cry Tough* (A&M)

In terms of stance, this is the quintessential Nils Lofgren album: even as he's biting off more than he can chew, he's preening as if he were the Compleat Mastigator. Where Lofgren's first solo album was a concise pop record with hook-laden 2-3 minute songs, *Cry Tough* spreads out, not only in terms of song-length, but with even more intelligence and an increase in aesthetic problems. His fluid, off-hand guitar snappiness just doesn't lend itself to protracted noodling around, and as a songwriter he simply must face the fact that he's "cursed" with the gift of writing immaculate 3-minute singles.

These criticisms aside, *Cry Tough* is a really terrific record. Lofgren has always jostled with adolescent romance situations, and as the King of Rock & Roll Petulance his misogyny is undercut by a testy vulnerability and basic thoughtfulness. *Incidentally... It's Over* is the prime example of this, and also perhaps his best song. The hoarse earnestness on *You Lit a Fire* is completely convincing, and he nearly pulls off a bleary reggae-ish remake of the old Yardbirds hit, *For Your Love*.

Lofgren's guitar playing throughout is extraordinarily sensitive, every bit as temperamental as his lyrics and voice, but always under control.

by Kenneth Tucker

Red  
Army  
Buckle



... one of the most popular souvenirs for Westerners visiting Moscow... Soviet authorities have now banned the sale... tourists will have to pay more for them... PARADE, Oct. 26, 1975.

Authentic bronze replica. Only \$8.95. Three for \$25. Add \$1 for postage and handling.

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Led Zeppelin: *Presence* (Swan Song SS 8416)

So here is *PRESENCE*, Led Zeppelin's latest studio contribution arriving just in time for the Spring/Summer album sweepstakes. It immediately becomes apparent that this LP is really a Jimmy Page "tour-de-force," as he brings the fine art of electronic "pastiche" to its logical conclusion. Partly due to lead singer and primary songwriting collaborator Robert Plant's spiritual absence from the band (automobile accident and subsequent difficult psychic recovery), the incomparable Mr. Page has had to shoulder the musical direction responsibilities. Continuing a trend from *HOUSES OF THE HOLY* and *PHYSICAL GRAFITTI*, Page creates extended electric guitar montages with a jagged, metallic edge to them; Plant essentially sings the lyrics—with customary fervor—"over" these finished instrumental entities. Jimmy still proves to be undisputed master of the new embellishment on the standard-sounding rock/R&B lick. On tracks like *Nobody's Fault But Mine* and *Tea For One*, he shows that he can still squeeze new sounds and melodic colors out of the electric solid body guitar. Page's group concept is basically sound and in line with the contemporary flow towards



"mechanization" (Bowie's *STATION TO STATION*); but the music tends to flow right through the brainpan, classic Zeppelin "tunes" like *Stairway To Heaven* seem to be a thing of the past. This is occasionally inspired and superbly constructed "temporary" music.

Side One opens with a surging *Achilles Last Stand*, built on a propulsive Page guitar motif the track achieves powerful moments but ultimately fails to resolve convincingly; meandering on and on it eventually turns into a "good idea gone bad." *For Your Life* and *Royal Orleans*, which follow, feature a tighter sound, partly due to the quasi/rigid funk rhythm signatures shoring up these tunes.

*Nobody's Fault But Mine* starts off side two and boasts an interesting slide/phase guitar texture combining with Plant's stratospheric moan. Plantie successfully doubles up on some of the crashing guitar lines with forceful and plaintive harp work. Ironically, Page doesn't rely heavily on sound modification devices for *PRESENCE*, he produces on a very treble-ey, steely gut guitar sound with a lot of echo variation; the distortion is achieved "naturally", probably using a cherry old guitar and cranking it through a small amp. Phasing makes subtle, intermittent appearances as a concession to contemporary musicotechnology. *Tea For One*, the long, bluesy mood piece which closes the LP, starts out as just another steelfunk piece, then slides into a dark and languorous showcase for some of Page's more recent melodic tendencies. This cut shows that if Page wasn't "saddled" with the Zep concept on every LP, he could undoubtedly develop as an important fusion music proponent in a solo context—just like his old pal Jeff Beck. Finally, this is an excellent Page album and a fair-to-middlin' Led Zeppelin effort.

by Jean-Charles Costa

Paul McCartney & Wings: *At The Speed Of Sound* (Capitol)

The arrival of *AT THE SPEED OF SOUND* brings with it more of a composite group feeling than on previous Wings albums. In a band usually dominated by Paul and Linda, Denny Laine (vocals and guitar), Jim McCulloch (lead guitar) and Joe English (drums) contribute a good deal of lead vocals as well as a few signatured compositions.

This LP can be described in a nutshell as "funloving." Though its qualitative merits and degree of innovation are certainly not beyond reproach, its lighthearted nature makes it refreshing and worth a bunch of listens.

The first side begins with a disco-fied tune, *Silly Love Songs*. McCartney utilizes string and horn technique extensively here, undoubtedly making it a marketable item among disco lovers. There's an interesting lyrical hook as well: "You'd think that people would have had enough of silly love songs, I look around and see it isn't so." Using the hook as a sort of justification for what's to come, he proceeds with a chorus of "I love you's."

Linda McCartney's vocals on *Cook Of The House* assume their usual imperturbable but relentless form, salvaged only by a catchy lyric and a lively, nostalgic boogie beat. *Must Do Something About It*, sung by Joe English, has the most potential in terms of musical recall, while reminders of past McCartney tunes come back to haunt its freshness, especially Paul's *Every Night* from a few albums back.

Closing the first side, *Warm And Beautiful* has a moving religiosity about it. McCartney dramatizes this mood with a controlled one-note sustain which gradually flows into a spiritual melody, perfect for wedding material. Laine's child-like voice on *The Note You Never Wrote* and *Time To Hide* (remember Laine's plaintive solo vocal work on *The Moody Blues' Go Now?*) is complemented by those famous melancholy McCartney choral backgrounds, Paul's own droning bass line and some excellent horn work by Tony Dorsey, Thaddeus Richard, Steve Howard and Howard Casey, who add an extra layer of funk-jazz, never essayed before on a Wings album. The wailing harmonica on *Time To Hide* (not specifically credited to anyone) is reminiscent of the Beatles' classic *Love Me Do*.

Jim McCulloch's guitar solo on *The Note You Never*



*Wrote* is very memorable with the same inventive quality as the cathartic break on McCartney's *Maybe I'm Amazed*. It also reaffirms the virtuosity of the Wings musicians, who are too often buried underneath the contrived, overly-tight shallowness of this LP. It all seems to work though, as is always the case with McCartney. There is something very unique within the boundaries of his calculated style and though none of the cuts are particularly outstanding, the album as a whole is consistent and understated to just the proper degree of professional taste.

by Lynn Kellermann



# ROCK & POP ALBUMS

by Kenneth Tucker



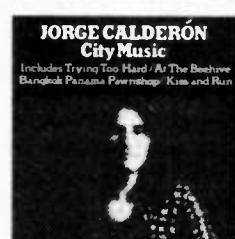
**STARLAND VOCAL BAND:** Starland Vocal Band (Windsong)

This is the annoying, crappy side of John Denver's Wooden Machine Music. Two-fourths of this bunch wrote *Take Me Home Country Roads*, and having seen them perform it, let's put it this way—they needed Denver to make it sound minimally authentic. "Commercial" in the bad sense.



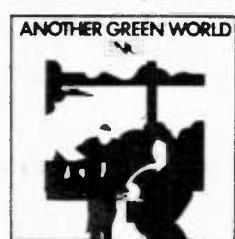
**AMERICAN TEARS:** Tear Gas (Columbia)

*American Tears* is a hard rock trio with emphasis on all sorts of keyboards. The first side of this record is as good as anything around if you like expansive but catchy noodling within each of its longish cuts. The first song, *Back Like Me (Parts I & II)* is especially wonderful: clean, moving rock. The second side's trio of war songs is silly, but all the more reason to admire them for their nerve. If you'll buy half a record, this is highly recommended.



**JORGE CALDERON:** City Music (Warners)

Very attractive; Calderon deftly explores a number of genres in any given song with a goodly amount of success. This time around he doesn't really rock out the way he could, but these slinky ballads are fine for now, especially *Kiss and Run*, a very good song indeed.



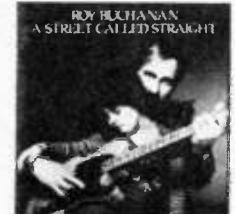
**ENO:** Another Green World (Island)

*Another Green World* fairly ripples with Eno's intelligence and invention. What first strikes one as placid, almost "quiet" music is revealed to be, upon repeated listenings, a melancholy, even despairing, but consistently vigorous solitary exploration. Of what, I don't know, but there's a lot more to this than its surface loveliness.



**LARRY GROCE:** Junkfood Junkie (Warners)

Beware of this one. I'll bet my Patti Smith T-shirt that the applause, laughs, and cheers one hears on this record are canned, making Groce a fraud. Of course, that's not all that makes him a fraud: try a phoney twang and an evocation of country life and morals he doesn't comprehend/agree with. I also wouldn't mind pulling on his beard, just to be sure.



**ROY BUCHANAN:** A Street Called Straight (Atlantic)

Roy's bid for mass popularity displays a voice that reminds one of a hoarse Tony Joe White (gulp) and a bunch of short, to-the-point tunes—an improvement, in general. The standard comment about Buchanan is that the guy's got a great technique but has nothing to say. It's a good comment.



**WET WILLIE:** The Wetter the Better (Capricorn)

These boys are so saturated in their own masculinity they threaten to soak through the damn turntable. Where their comparative literacy has heretofore made them the thinking person's Elvin Bishop, this new wallow in sopping sexism renders them as the Southern equivalent of Golden Earring. Drip drip.



**THE KINKS:** The Kinks Vol. 2 (Pye)

If you don't have the Warners Collections (as I don't) this is a marvelous look at the early Kinks. Of course, you may disagree with my preference for the Middle Period, *Waterloo Sunset* Kinks to the naughty schoolboys edition, in which case you may find these oldies tedious. To me, this record is a small revelation.

**ELVIS PRESLEY:** The Sun Sessions (RCA)

If you're under 20 and wonder what the brouhaha was (is) over Elvis, here's the best introduction. His first 16 recorded tunes, and this is not a review, just an exhortation: buy it. Then read Greil Marcus' *Mystery Train*, now in paperback. C'est tout.



**BILL WYMAN:** Stone Alone (Atlantic)

I can sympathize with Bill, feeling left out while Mick monkeys around on bass when the whim strikes him, but that doesn't mean I have to listen to this record more than once. Wyman is at once cloyingly vain and self-effacing to the point of non-existence; thus he's busy pushing forward all his neat guest-stars (Joe Walsh, Ron Wood, Van Morrison, Al Kooper) and then making them perform his pokey, derivative tunes. What was intended to show his fondness for old-style rock and roll becomes a tiresome portrait of ennui. And the last cut, with Wyman doing a Louis Armstrong imitation, qualifies it as a better comedy album than George Carlin's latest.



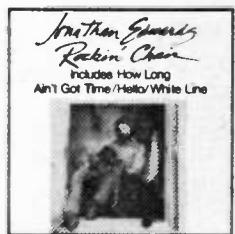
**ASHFORD & SIMPSON:** Come as You Are (Warners)

As performers, Ashford and Simpson have always sounded shrill and defensive to me, as if they were trying to "pass". As performers, that is. Their songwriting is as catchy as ever, but they have yet to establish any sort of sympathetic personality as a duo. Gladys Knight will probably work *Believe in Me* into her repertoire, though it's not a good song. Any number of one-hit disco groups ought to work *Caretaker* into theirs; it is a good song.



**JONATHAN EDWARDS:** Rockin' Chair (Reprise)

The "Easy-Listening Hippie Cowboy" returns. Depending on your point of view, Edwards' hooking up with Emmylou Harris' band is either a great idea or a disappointing way to make a comeback. No, wait—I just thought of a third possibility: you don't care. Let's see some hands, here. Vive James Burton.



**STEVE GIBBONS BAND:** Any Road Up (MCA)

Gibbons writes all the tunes, and he's an Englishman well-versed and influenced in/by Chuck Berry and Elvis. Unfortunately, these heroes are either sloppily evoked ("Johnny Cool") or not at all. But this is a solid band, and with hard work their next will be much better.



**STARWOOD:** Homebrew (Windsong)

Starwood is the solid, decent side of John Denver's Wooden Machine Music. Led by Bob Carpenter, Starwood are masters of the California rural pop music of people like Thomas Jefferson Kaye. This first record doesn't expose any consistent thought by Carpenter: at this point, getting the sound right is more important than the words, an altogether sensible beginning. Their next album will be the one to make or break 'em intellectually, but this is very good for now.



# Music Poets

## TAPEDECK

by Ronnee Blakley

He's got a tapedeck in his tractor and he listens  
to the local news  
He finds out where the bass are biting while he's  
plowing to the country blues  
He was a cowboy and he knew I loved him well  
A cowboy's secrets, you never tell  
No, there's nothing like the loving of a hard-  
working cowboy man

He's got a tapedeck in his tractor and he's plowing  
up his daddy's land  
He's got more horse sense than I ever seen in  
any man  
He was a cowboy and he knew I loved him well  
A cowboy's secrets, you never tell  
No, there's nothing like the loving of a hard-  
driving cowboy man

On Saturday nights we go dancing in town  
And all the boys'll order up another round  
When the summer comes we're waiting for the  
rodeo

On Saturday nights we go dancing in town  
And all the boys'll order up another round  
When he rides saddle bronc  
I wait to hear that whistle blow

He's got a tapedeck in his tractor  
I can hear him when he's coming home  
Then he holds me in the rocking chair  
And sings me a love song  
He was a cowboy and he knew I loved him well  
A cowboy's secrets, you never tell

No, there's nothing like the loving of a hard-  
working cowboy man  
No, there's nothing like the muscle of a hard-  
driving cowboy man

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ARTIST: K. DOGARD



LARRY GROSSMAN

## Chick Corea

by Glenn Abel

To even the most casual jazz buff Chick Corea needs no introduction. Working under the auspices of Miles Davis, Herbie Mann, Stan Getz and others, the young pianist/composer from Chelsea Mass. quickly became a substantial contributor to the modern jazz world of the sixties. His solo recordings, including two volumes of piano improvisations, and his work with Circle, a powerful but short-lived avant-garde quartet, met with immediate critical and commercial success.

As an artist Corea has evolved from an "art-for-art's-sake" musician into one of the most popular and influential proponents of the new jazz rock genre. Along with his group, Return to Forever, Corea has forged a sound—steeped in jazz, classical, Latin rhythms and rock—that holds equal appeal for the hardened rock audience and the discerning jazz listener.

As an individual, Corea's personal philosophy lies in Scientology, a complex and controversial science of behavioralism developed by ex-Science Fiction writer L. Ron Hubbard. Corea's involvement with Scientology has affected his approach to music profoundly, yet he is quick to point out the very real difference between his philosophy and his art.

"In my music I don't express anything but my music," he says. "And with my music there is one very simple intention—to have fun with people. It's not anything more complex than that."

Both onstage and off, Corea exudes a steady, infectious energy. His hands—away

from the keyboard—are constantly in motion: illustrating a point with wide circles in the air, lighting a cigarette or tapping out countless polyrhythms on a nearby tabletop. Intelligent, articulate and immediately likable, Corea is very sure of his place in modern music.

"Right now I see Return to Forever as the major innovators in our form of music," he says with a wide, ever-present grin. If popularity is any indication, a quick look at album sales charts or any of the jazz polls the group, individually and collectively, will back up the pianist's claim. "Ours is a musical effort that is very successful, tending toward a place of uncompromising aesthetic realities combined with a success in communicating."

If there is a focal point to Corea's music it is found in communication. And that emphasis is the result of a major turning point in Corea's life.

"There's some kind of median to my music that I haven't found yet, but I know it's possible," he told an interviewer during his stay with the Miles Davis group. The search for that median brought Corea toward two major developments in the evolution of his art: the release of his highly-spirited solo improvisations and the formation of the first Return to Forever with bassist Stanley Clarke, Brazilian songstress Flora Purim and percussionist Airto.

"Right around that period of my life was the first time I started to be aware of this goal I had sitting around in my gut for some time, which was to reach out to the people

with my music. At the time of my solo piano albums it was first taking shape. I know that piano music isn't immediately accessible to many people, but the intention of the improvisations was much the same as with Return to Forever. I intended that music for all people."

With the inception of Return to Forever, Corea was able to expand his musical vision, and, at the same time, reach an audience heretofore unreachable by the jazz musician. Through a series of personnel changes and musical transformations (their first recording was described by Clarke as sounding like "Sergio Mendes on acid"; the later recordings are more electronically influenced.) the group has retained that audience and cultivated it, while other jazz greats like Miles Davis remain distant, esoteric and largely inaccessible to a mass audience.

"I think the difference in popularity is that we communicate better, and it's only because we intend to. There are different kinds of intentions here. Miles as an individual and as an artist has a very deep place in my heart. I really love him. But I don't think the creation of his art form has ever put direct emphasis on communication."

Corea, who participated on Davis' Grammy Award winning BITCHES BREW, was told not to worry about charts, but to just "drop it in" when he first joined the trumpeter's group. "I think Miles is more involved in the sound and feeling of his music to himself, which is the way a lot of people approach art. I, myself, find that confining. It leads to a dead end. It's like saying, 'music is the reason I play music' or 'shoes are the reason I make shoes.' People are what life is all about. So when you do something you do it because there are other people there...you do it with and for other people. That's what we do. That's the difference in approaches."

For Return to Forever, who recently headlined at New York's prestigious Carnegie Hall, first exposure came with the opening spot for popular acts like Steve Miller, Argent, Al Green and Leslie West's Wild West Show. "What would happen," Corea explains with a bemused grimace, "is that the audiences, these particular audiences, felt they had to be hysterical to be there. It was really insane. So we just persevered through it, just kept on doing it the way we do it. But audiences are changing. I love the phenomena that's happening now. What's happening is that the audiences are becoming more truthful...not so hysterical. If we do something that's really great, they'll respond. If we do something that's so-so...well, they don't."

While the current edition of Return to Forever remains the basic vehicle for Corea's compositions, his fellow musicians (Stanley Clarke, bass; Lenny White, percussion; Al DiMeola, guitar) write for the group and maintain individual careers. All have released solo efforts in the past year—the third for Clarke, already an established artist in his own right, the first for both White and DiMeola. Corea's newest, THE LEPRECHAUN, is his first solo venture in more than four years.

The unmistakable mark of Corea the composer and arranger is readily heard on the recordings of past and present members of the group, leading some critics to label the group the "Chick Corea School of Music." Is Corea, at 35, a father figure?

"I don't mind being a father," he says, "It's a part of life to help. That sort of responsibility comes naturally out of the workings of life. If someone learns to do something, if he takes responsibility for it, then he will help others do it. I certainly don't see myself as a soloist who goes through all sorts of sidemen, that sort of shit. All that is irresponsibility on the part of the leader, it's the fault of the guy who hasn't learned to work with people."

At first with this group I put the whole trip together. I wrote the music, I had the conception of the thing and then I got some musicians to play with me. Now what should happen with such a project, ideally, is that the individuals who join, who really want to be there, should be allowed to grow as individuals so they can take more responsibility for the project and be able to develop the qualities of leadership in themselves. This way you get more and more co-creation and less and less giving of orders. What you get out of that will naturally be leaders. And the phenomena of very powerful people being able to work together, with one guy supporting another and then the other guy supporting him, is an ideal situation...the way life should be. That's the way I see groups to be, that's the way this group is beginning to be. I've never had a group that did anything less than that."

Onstage, interaction among group members is the most apparent facet of Return to Forever. Audiences delight in the interplay that—given the right time and atmosphere—explodes across the stage with apocalyptic intensity or whispers of the sensual, exotic jazz roots of its creators. Corea and Clarke, the two remaining charter members of the group, seem to have developed a fluid, musical language, using their instruments as effortlessly as natural voices.

"Music is an incredible means of communication," Corea explains, "With it you can really bypass the usual way of feeling another's spirit. You get more of the essence of the person coming through to you. You pick up on his feelings and if what that person is doing is highly developed, you get his intentions also. You feel why he's doing it."

Corea feels intergroup communication in Return to Forever is "great," but adds there is "a lot of room for improvement. I certainly feel that our apex is far away. I'm happy that we are improving, but my ideals are very, very high. There is much more space to move into."

Corea's interest in Scientology began in 1971. "I find it indispensable to everything I do in my life," he asserts. "As far as the group and the music goes, it has helped enormously. I've been doing research in the past ten years, having a lot of experiences and applying them with myself and with the recent trends in religious, spiritual and philosophical movements of young people on the planet, especially in America. Of course, any sort of religious or applied philosophy is something which a person studies himself, to find out more about himself. That's what I do with Scientology. I study the subject to find out more about myself and how I relate to other people in life around me."

"But," he quickly adds, "It is important to realize that philosophy and music are two completely different things. Spirituality is not music...consciousness is not music. Music is music."

# Herbie Hancock

by Howie Blumenthal

The line that separates jazz from funk is not easily drawn for Herbie Hancock, a man who has seen his music grow proud and strong as part of this decade's Black experience. Measuring success not by gold records or money, Hancock is fulfilled when his music actually reaches the people. Figuring prominently in a group of favorites that includes the O'Jays, James Brown and Earth Wind and Fire, Hancock does not feel as though he is competing with Chick Corea and Weather Report; he works for a completely different audience. His music fills concert halls with an 80-90% black audience, a situation that pleases the keyboard master and encourages him to find greater relevance in his existence as a black American.

Which is not to say that Hancock does not appeal to everyone. It simply marks a change for a man whose original jazz audiences were almost totally white. Developing a jazz keyboard style as a high-schooler because he was "jealous of other students," Hancock started working with "improvisational music" in the fifties. "We didn't call it 'jazz'... that word was an invention of the white man, used to describe the music of the black man, played in... whore houses," Hancock explains, "it wasn't an art form... it was a derogatory term..."

Hancock, a native Chicagoan, escaped from the Windy City when his local reputation brought about a replacement gig with Donald Byrd in 1959. Byrd was pleased with Hancock's keyboard work and asked him to join the band full-time.

Two years later, while still a member of Byrd's group, Hancock set his sights on a solo album and wrote *Watermelon Man* to help sell an LP to Blue Note Records. Playing a weekend gig with Mongo Santamaria's local New York band in a Bronx lounge, Hancock introduced *Watermelon Man*, a song made top ten by Mongo a few months later. Hancock recalls, "Mongo and Donald (Byrd) were talking about... the relationship between Afro-American music and

Afro-Cuban music... because our ancestors came from the same area in Africa. Donald asked me to play *Watermelon Man* for Mongo... I had no idea why... and Mongo got on congo drums, everybody else started playing, and the whole audience started dancing and screaming and carrying on... it looked like something you see in the movies... it was incredible!"

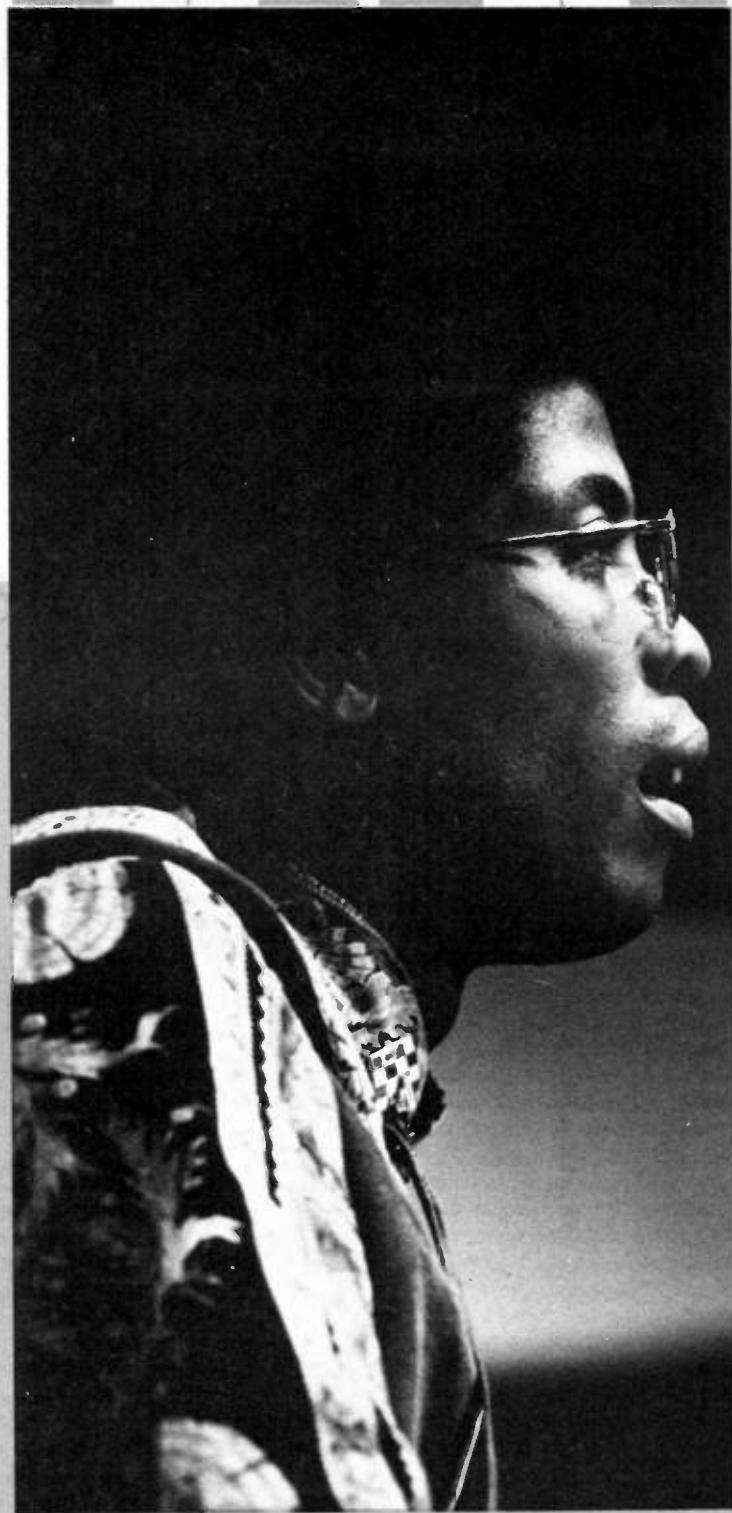
Not quite ready to understand the importance of his song before this incident, Hancock suddenly realized his gift for composition and environmental interpretation.

He recorded as a Blue Note solo keyboardist for almost a decade, producing gems like *TOYS*, *MAIDEN VOYAGE*, and *SPEAK LIKE A CHILD* over a span of 7 beautiful albums (whose finest moments are collected in a recent Blue Note re-issue—with one conspicuous omission, Herbie's own version of *Watermelon Man*).

Soon after, Hancock was asked to join the 1963 Miles Davis group, a creative ensemble whose stylized readings of *My Funny Valentine* and the like made them popular and very influential in jazz circles. After a year or more with Miles, Hancock and Davis were soaring with the tantalizing *NEFERTITI* and the easy-to-enjoy *MILES SMILES* albums.

Realizing his talent for composition and musicianship, Hancock formed his own group in 1969 (after a fruitful year working with TV commercials—Chevrolet, Eastern Airlines and Pillsbury). Says Hancock, "When I did my (Blue Note) album *SPEAK LIKE A CHILD*, the instrumentation appealed to me so much that I knew the group I wanted... still a small group, but with flexibility..." With a commitment toward the Black movement throughout his career, Hancock continued to seek influence and inspiration from his surroundings.

As a result of this acute sensitivity, Hancock and his *MWANDISHI* album became rock-press favorites. There was a spiritual sense pervading the album, probably the result of his earnest practice of the Nicherin



Shoshu Buddhist faith ("Mwandishi" was the name given him by the religion). Elated because he had found a perfect blend of spiritual expression and relevant music, Hancock was motivated by this philosophy through the early seventies. He tells a story about his introduction to meditation, the result of a sleepless night in Seattle 3 years ago. On that particular evening, none of the band's members felt like playing the gig—they were just dragging themselves through the motions. Bassist Buster Williams, who had been meditating regularly but was afraid to tell his friends 'lest they laugh at him,' cut loose on this particular night, probably because of meditation-derived power. Buster, who opened the show, led the others through a fantastic set, explaining the science of meditation after the show.

Herbie adopted the technique, and with renewed confidence in his playing abilities, put together a new band months later. Replacing Buster (who played acoustic bass)

with electric bassist Paul Jackson, he built a band that included the incredible Bennie Maupin, percussionist Bill Summers and drummer Mike Clark. This is undoubtedly Hancock's funkiest group to date. Concentrating not so much on the fine art of jazz, but on the best way to reach people instead, the Headhunters have proven themselves to be very expressive musicians.

Together, they have recorded 3 solid albums (and a soundtrack), *HEADHUNTERS*, *THRUST*, and *MAN-CHILD*, all of which combine Herbie's earlier jazz influences with the hard-line funk that's so popular today. The albums should be taken as a series with the newest, *MAN-CHILD*, as the most sophisticated work. *HEADHUNTERS* is the best mix of old and new ideas, of jazz and funk, leading off with a successful single called *Chameleon* and a new version of Hancock's *Watermelon Man*, the song that serves as a constant reminder of what this man is all about.

# George Duke

by Steve Weitzman

Given time, George Duke will probably do for jazz-rock what Frank Zappa did for regular rock (if you can call Frank's rock "regular")—that is, dose it with a healthy amount of humor and absurdity while keeping the music highly sophisticated. A paper shark hangs from Duke's ARP Odyssey, a Frankenstein mask keeps him company. An electric train does loops around his keyboard instruments. He introduces Billy Cobham, his awesome drumming partner these days, as "the one with the short haircut." But these leanings are no accident, since George had been Zappa's primary keyboardist from 1970 to 1975, except for a stint accompanying the late Cannonball Adderly.

The bulk of George Duke's musical education took place in San Francisco where he received a masters degree in music composition and taught for a period of time. His first noteworthy sessions were in 1969 with violinist Jean-Luc Ponty at a now-defunct club called The Experience on Sunset Strip in L.A., although he had performed with Don Ellis in '67 & '68. The club date at The Experience, though, included one Frank Zappa in the audience. Not content with just watching, Zappa sat in with Ponty and Duke and the collaboration of the three resulted in KING KONG (Jean-Luc Ponty plays the music of Frank Zappa). George Duke was the featured keyboardist over Zappa's own Ian Underwood.

The Experience date was significant to Duke in one other respect. "You know," he says, "that was one of the first times I actually played electric piano doing that kind of music. They had no acoustic piano, so I had to play electric. I had played a little electric piano with Don Ellis and I thought, 'Well, that's cool, but I'm an acoustic pianist.' And that night I had to play electric piano and they happened to have a Rhodes and that's the night I said, 'Hey! Hmmm... I'm electric!' And then my hair got longer."

With CHUNGA'S REVENGE and a tour, Zappa provided George with his first intense touring and recording experiences. Coming primarily from a college atmo-

sphere, it was a bit much to digest. "It was a little bizarre for me," he laughs. "I have to admit, I don't think I was quite ready for the band at that time." What exactly was bizarre for him?

"O.K. Pauley Pavilion. That was the first gig I did, not as a member of the band, but as a member of the L.A. Fill, so to speak. The music he was doing was similar to 200 MOTELS. I was into that, but then he would always do that 50's rock and roll stuff which I HATED. And that's his first love. I now like it. I've developed a taste for it and I see his humor in it, but at that time I said, '50's rock and roll! He wants me to play Da Da-Da-Da-Da? You must be kidding. And he's going to pay me all this money?? Why am I in this band???' He could hire Joe Schmuck to play that!"

A tour later, George was gone, having received a call from Cannonball Adderly, an idol of his at the time. Duke can be heard on Adderly's SOUL OF THE BIBLE, THE BLACK MESSIAH, SOUL ZODIAC and THE HAPPY PEOPLE. But it was back to Zappa for most of 1973, '74, and '75. He left last summer to pursue his own career which he's been cultivating via four solo albums on BASF. "My records were doing pretty good, so I figured, hey, if that's the case, what if I get out there and started pushing? Maybe I'd really sell some records. See, Frank's stamp on his music is so strong, it's hard to let yourself shine through. So when I left the band, I had two choices. One, to go out on my own which I did for a while, or co-lead a band. So I called Billy (Cobham)."

Cobham had just broken up his band with the Breckers, and, with Doug Rauch on bass and John Schofield on guitar, the George Duke/Billy Cobham band was born. Alphonso Johnson, Weather Report's bassist, has recently replaced Rauch. The addition of Johnson, who just released his first solo album on Epic has Duke understandably excited: "That's a big factor in making this band. Doug Rauch was an excellent bassist, but Alphonso adds another dimension. He's more comprehensive and open to all kinds of ideas. He ini-

tates change."

A March Bottom Line gig which saw them set a new one-night club record in attendance, was evidence that this is the first ensemble in which George Duke has been able to stretch out and utilize his all. Much of the material is Duke's (and although he is a prolific writer, only Uncle Remus came out of his association with Zappa), he is the only vocalist, the leading personality in the band and enjoys his lengthy solo spot in the show immensely. To construct an entire wall of sound, he cross-utilizes his ARP Odyssey, a Mini Moog, a Hohner Clavinet, a Wurlitzer piano and an ARP String Ensemble. The ARP, in fact, is the first synthesized instrument that has enabled him to simulate the bending of a note as a blues guitarist would. He solos with his right hand and varies the pitch with his left. And with his present set-up, he can solo with both hands and bend the note with his foot.

"I've always had a liking for blues," he explains. "It's a point that I was trying to make on my last record I LOVE THE BLUES—SHE HEARD MY CRY; it's not all blues, but that's the way I approach the music, even if I'm playing classical music. But yeah, the synthesizer really freed me, once I found out you could play blues on it. Or at least what I consider the blues—the aura of the blues. That feeling. Not the blues per se, but putting that kind of 'nookie' on a note. I can do it on either the ARP or the Moog. Piano players have never been able to bend a note like that. And I can even play chords with the Rhodes, play a melody line with the Moog or the ARP and use the pedal to bend the note."

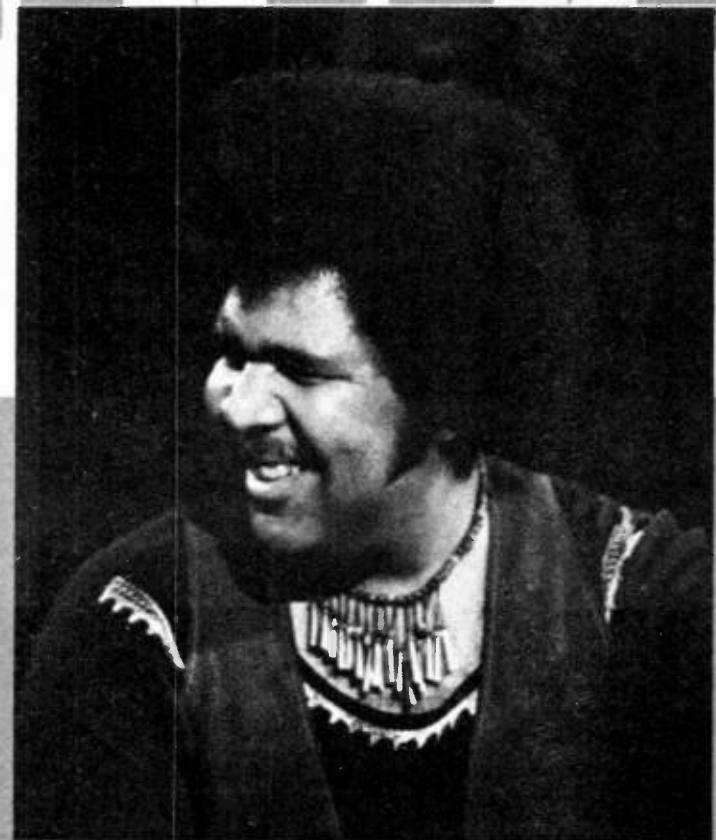
Some people feel that synthesized keyboards have gotten out of hand but George

offers his own reasons for his choice of effects. "By growing electronically, I can enhance the sound of my instruments. It'll better enable me to get out what I'm thinking if I have everything that sounds right. I'm working for studio quality."

Studio quality isn't all he's working for. "I'm in the process of getting this band its own personality aside from the music. All the personal bands have made it—the Stones, the Beatles, Frank, Captain Beefheart. I'm not saying that Beefheart's made it, but he's established a certain audience. But there's gotta be something that makes this band different from all the other jazz-rock bands out there. And it's happened. The band is developing a personality. I think it's possible to combine intelligent music with theatrics, drama and humor."

The other night in Rochester, a very weird thing happened. Everything was very serious. We were playing and the audience was listening to all this intricate music and it got to the spot in the show where I do whatever I want. So at this particular point, I really wanted to see where these people were at so, in my announcer-type voice I said, 'Hey kiddies, it's the fun part of the show. It's time for the first annual Billy Cobham Dance Contest!' And man, people jumped up and they started screaming. They said, 'YEAH!' Can you imagine that? A Billy Cobham Dance Contest?? It just makes no sense.

"So Billy started playing this teen beat and we had some dancers come up on stage, two chicks and a guy, and we had audience applause for the best one. We didn't have any prizes so we gave away some salami and a couple of onion rolls. That was the night we became a band."





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Chicago's best rock.



# JAZZ ALBUM REVIEWS

by Richard Weitzer



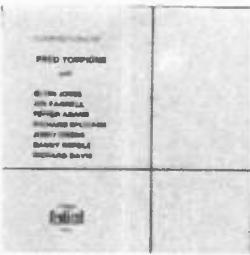
**CLIFFORD JORDAN QUARTET:** *Night of The Mark Seven* (Muse MR 7076)

Nothing earth shaking and in all, rather straight forward. This live session recorded a year ago in Paris is paced by some brilliant piano work from Cedar Walton. Walton shines on Jordon's *Highest Mountain* and nearly steals the show. Their tribute to John Coltrane by Bill Lee is especially moving.



**KENNY BARRON:** *Lucifer* (Muse MR 5070)

It is possible that there is nothing new to be said with electric keyboards given where the jazz fusion music has taken us so far. But no one has told Kenny Barron. He uses space inside the notes much like Monk did on an acoustic piano. This technique, however, seems lost on the post-McLaughlin electric generation. Brother Bill Barron is excellent on soprano; James Spalding on alto, Charles Sullivan on trumpet and Billy Hart on drums (along with K. Barron on acoustic piano) lend some first class support.



**FRED TOMPKINS:** *Somesville* (Festival 9002)

Tompkins takes a serious, almost chamber-music approach to jazz, notating most of the parts for his players. Dave Liebman, Steve Grossman, Elvin Jones and Buster Williams are capable of reading as well as improvising, as this disc demonstrates. Tompkins veers from jazz to classical almost at will, but he never fails to fulfill the minimal requirements of each and frequently transcends both.



**ERROL PARKER:** *My Own Bag* (Sahara 1003)

Errol Parker is a pianist with a very light, but not a flippan-  
t touch. He seems not to be hampered at all by the  
automatic aspects of the electric piano and instead uses  
the electricity to say rhythmically what an acoustic can  
only hint at. He also does some standards like *Blue Moon*,  
but takes off in a direction hardly imagined by the  
composer. Lady Tee backs him on flute and the incomparable  
Ray Mantilla on congas.



**CHICK COREA:** *Circling In* (Blue Note LA 472)

This two-disc re-release captures Corea at an important point in his development. Nearly half of it was recorded in 1968 with a trio (Miroslav Vitous on bass and Roy Haynes on drums). It shows Corea loosening up, taking chances and then quickly ducking back into the melody. The rest was recorded two years later with his European-based group Circle, featuring Anthony Braxton on reeds, Dave Holland on bass and Barry Altschul on drums. It shows Corea on the front lines of experimentation—a period he seems to want to forget right now. But these records will be a reminder to all who care about Corea's tremendous potential as a piano innovator.



**PAUL HORN:** *In India* (Bluenote LA 529)

Not jazz, but then what is these days. This is not the Paul Horn of the early sixties when he did play a west coast version of jazz or even the Horn who recorded solo flute albums in the Taj Mahal. This re-issue (originally on World Pacific) is straight Indian music with Horn taking jazz-like liberties on the flute. He has a beautiful circular tone and amazing breath control, which doesn't hurt the Indian music that he lays it on.



**JOE HENDERSON:** *Black Miracle* (Milestone M-9066)

Henderson gets a sound on his tenor that has been filtered through almost the entire history of the instrument, yet it remains unique to Henderson. He is laid back enough to appear at ease with his horn, but he can also come on strong. This release is slightly junkier than previous ones—hopefully this is not even an unconscious bow to the commercial pressure of disco.

**PAT MARTINO:** *Starbright* (Warner Bros. BS 2921)

Martino seems equally at home with Spanish-tinged classical guitar and electric fusion music. He has surfaced from the myriad assortment of identical sixties acoustic players to be one of the few who are dealing intelligently with the melodic needs of electric music. Gil Goldstein on keyboards is an important ingredient in this album.

**LEROY JENKINS—THE JAZZ COMPOSER'S ORCHESTRA:** *For Players Only* (JCOA 1010)

The title might give a hint to the level of inter-musician communication going on, sometimes to the detriment of the audience. Jenkins, violinist with the Revolutionary Ensemble, demands that the audience listen as closely as the musician. And if his instructions are carried out, the rewards can be great. Anthony Braxton is present here on clarinet, Dewey Redman on Musette, Charles Brackeen on soprano, Leo Smith on trumpet, Joseph Bowie on trombone, Dave Holland and Sirona on bass and Jerome Cooper on drums. A veritable "who's who" of the Avant-Garde.

**CAL TJADER:** *Amazonas* (Fantasy F-9502)

With the exception of Gary Burton, the vibes got lost somewhere in the late fifties and early sixties. Now Cal Tjader has entered the seventies with his customary Latin rhythms; with Airto producing and a dynamite group backing him up, including David Amaro on guitars, Hermeto Pascoal on flute and a small contribution from trombonist Raul de Souza. Tjader is best on Marimba, but also acceptable on vibes. Airto must be the hero of this session.

**KENNY WHEELER:** *Gnu High* (ECM/Polydor 1069)

Kenny Wheeler is a surprising choice for ECM. He sometimes reminds you of a saner, younger Freddie Hubbard, but his tone is pure and breath strong. He ultimately fits well into Manfred Eicher's understated ECM mix. Keith Jarrett is more subdued than normal here, but it is impossible to hide him on any recording. Dave Holland and Jack DeJohnette contribute their usually faultless rhythm work. But without Eicher's production, this session could turn to oatmeal.

**BOB MOSES:** *Bittersuite In The Ozone* (Mozown MZ001)

Moses, who distinguished himself as a drummer with Gary Burton and Dave Liebman, has produced his first album with a scope that is usually missing on drummer's albums. His harmonies and horn charts owe to Carla Bley and his choice in musicians is impeccable. Howard Johnson on tuba and bass sax, vocalist Jeanne Lee and Dave Liebman on reeds. Moses is heard on vibes and piano.

**ALICE COLTRANE:** *Eternity* (Warner Bros. BS 2916)

Alice Coltrane has always been an acquired taste for even the most permissive jazz enthusiast. Her dedication to eastern music and the spirit of her late husband presented some problems for the earth-bound listener. She has branched out lately playing harp, electric piano and organ while still occasionally writing for strings. Here she has a string piece with an unmistakable blues feeling, parts of Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* and a Latin piece. It is an eclectic album and spiritual only if you are looking for it. Welcome back Alice.

**RETURN TO FOREVER:** *Romantic Warrior* (Columbia PC 34076)

Is RTF a refuge for Chick Corea, the warrior who'd rather fight the romantic battles than the tough dirty ones? Only Chick's conscience knows and he's not talking. RTF is the ELP of jazz and as such always manage to come up with one excellent tune that makes the other tunes (admittedly pleasant ones at that) bearable. It is the title cut here, as it was on *NO MYSTERY*, that makes a memorable impression. Their spoken goal, however, is to produce fun, 'accessible' music and they do.



# STEVE MARTIN'S HUMOR

## Another Variation On Looniness

by Penelope Ross

There are perils connected with interviewing Steve Martin that have less to do with him than the milieu, which is the dressing room of the Troubadour in Los Angeles. The tiny room is wallpapered in posters, but just before the interview starts, one of them starts to move. A cockroach. Martin does a "single" and so does your none-too-humble reporter, who takes off her shoe and ends what may have been a promising career in show business.

Steve Martin, though, is more than alive and his career is not only promising, but on the verge of flourishing in a big way. In the past couple of years, he has been playing a variety of clubs and concerts ranging from the coffeehouse/college circuit to a recent stint at the glittery Harrah's in Lake Tahoe. In between have been several appearances on the *Tonight Show*, the one place that can really launch or destroy any young comic's career. For Martin, it has been a boom. Glimmering ahead is the prospect of writing and performing for movies.

Martin's success comes from an act that is unique—a surreal amalgam of bizarre one-liners, peculiar sight gags, some banjo-playing (which he does quite well) and a bit of juggling. There is very little in his performance that could be called a conventional routine; a brief description of why he has such bad luck with women, which turns out to be that he says the right thing at the wrong time e.g. "Hello, was it good for you?" There are no reminiscences about his childhood or hometown, only an ersatz folk song that starts out soppy and ends in a frantic jumble of words such as "obsequiousness and cacophony" that keeps the audience both laughing and singing along. What holds it all together is his off-the-wall attitude that allows the audience to relax and enjoy the weirdness, prepared to laugh at anything.

It was not always thus. Martin has started out playing coffee-houses and small clubs in his native California, then, in 1968, began writing for the Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour. He continued to work in television for the next three years, and then decided to go back to performing.

Flashback: Village Gate, New York, Winter, 1971.

Martin is the opening act for the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band at a press party. He appears wearing a trick arrow on his head and launches into his act, culminating at one point in his "famous nose on the microphone routine," which consists of him resting his nose on the microphone. The audience is puzzled and unresponsive, and talks through his show.

Flash Forward: The Troubadour, Los Angeles, Spring, 1976.

Martin is headlining, and the club is packed with admirers, one group of which have arrived dressed in trick arrows. He is still wearing his own arrow through half his act, until he realizes with feigned surprise that it is on his head, apologizes for such a comy old joke and removes it, only



to replace it with a tacky pair of bunny ears secured with some elastic under his chin.

Only a few bits remain from the original act—arrow, the banjo playing, the balloon animals. What has remained unchanged is his devotion to this particular brand of zaniness in the face of a career that began with a lot of nights like the one at the Gate when "they would just sit out there and I did my show and nobody laughed." Now, "they expect the weirdness and when they get it, if they don't understand it, they still don't hate it. It's a mood. They laugh. Sometimes, they'll just laugh at anything."

Troubadour: The lights dim, and Martin edges on to the side of the stage, where he announces that "the show will begin as soon as the drugs take effect." A moment later, he is center stage, prepared to start "by attempting one impossible thing." He then proceeds to try and swallow a grand piano by sucking it through a straw. He fails.

Offstage, Martin is rational and quite serious as he talks about comedy and his career. It doesn't seem to be a major act of courage that he started and stayed with the style he's developed. "When I first started doing it, I just thought, well this is funny. It just didn't occur to me that it wouldn't work. I was young and confident and I just forced it to work." He then explains, perhaps as a

joke, that the basis of his comedy "really comes from Sartre."

Martin: "I'm happy to be in Los Angeles, because basically, I'm an intellectual. I read all the philosophers—Socrates, Plotinus. I think about philosophical questions like is it all right to yell movie in a crowded firehouse."

The individual bits come and go, while Martin maintains a steady two hours plus of material from which he can build his show. The nose on the microphone routine was the first to leave permanently. "That was one of the first jokes I did and it was a symbol for me to take it out of the act, a sign that I had moved on. The arrow is harder to take out, because it gets bigger laughs, but I've been trying to phase it out. The only thing that's integral to this act is a good audience. It's just an attitude or mood that you create in a crowd or yourself. The audience tells me in a general way over a period of time if something is working. If something doesn't work consistently, then I take it out. But if there is something I think is not that good and it starts working, then I leave it in and get a better edge on it and start to see why it's funny. I just throw things out there and, through experience, have learned to organize them into a show. Where the original ideas come from, I couldn't tell you. They come from me, but I don't know what the source is."

Martin faces one problem common to all comedians who gain recognition at least partly through television—the depletion of

material. "It bothers me very much that the material is familiar to anyone who watches television. I can't write fast enough and break material in and get it honed to keep changing it. Fortunately, at this stage of my career, people like seeing the same thing, so I can get by on that. Otherwise, I don't know what I'd do."

Near the end of the show, Martin says that he will now do "Balloon animals." Cheers from the audience. He looks appalled. "You've seen it. Well, I'll do it, but I won't blow up the balloons." In a frenzy, he ties airless balloons together, then relents and fills them with air and starts putting them together, rapidly advancing from the standard "giraffe" and "puppy dog" to "venereal disease" and an abstract shape entitled "contraceptive," which he places on his head. "Wear this and no one will come near you."

Audiences are willing to come near Martin, attracted by the looniness and sensing that his comedy has no axe to grind. "I don't have a vision and I don't think I'm doing anything important. It's just comedy of the 70s. In 3 years, it will die out and something else will come along." And when it does? "I'm saving my money. No, I'd like to go into movies. You have to change your medium, at least. Get out of night clubs. I try not to think about it, I just try to accept that someday it will decline. Or maybe it will ascend."



# SOUL ALBUM REVIEWS

by Ibutu Mugumba



## GIG SPOTLIGHT REVIEWS



### JOHNNIE TAYLOR: Eargasim (Columbia PC 33951)

Johnnie Taylor has come back from the dead with an LP that shakes up the complacent hierarchy of soul. Except for a few of those to whom Taylor represented one of the great soulman of all time, Taylor had been almost forgotten in spite of the fact that classics like *Who's Making Love* and *Jody's Got Your Girl And Gone* were around just yesterday. In the spin of things, yesterday is only the beginning and Taylor has found his new beginning.

Pretenders and other rogues, take notice! Producer Don Davis, who has been with Taylor from the Stax days, has shrewdly engineered Taylor's comeback. The album has that pulsing, synthesized undertow that made the Bee Gees' *MAIN COURSE* more interesting than the standard soul discourse, but Davis has not forgotten the beauty of sparsity and restraint, Stax's legacy of the sixties.

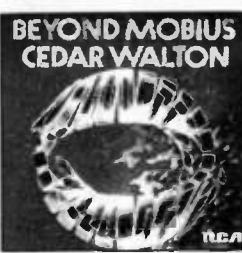
The hit single *Disco Lady*, like the Staple Singers' *Let's Do It Again* is a ray of hope that in the midst of this disco craze (which has resulted in almost as much genuinely bad music as could be found among the worst psychedelia), a good song can make it over a good chant any day. The song astonished everyone with a swift ascent to the top of the charts, and might be the song that will eventually prove to have broken the stylistic calcification that disco music has been reduced to. The only thing "disco" about it is the title and who knows what this could lead to? I like the bass line and the way the song develops, Davis has another monster bass line in *Don't Touch Her Body* and, on side two, *Somebody's Getting It* continues to ask, who's making love?

This album marks the triumph of real soul music in a wasteland of crafted dreck. Amen!



### SOUL CHILDREN: Finders Keepers (Epic PE 33902)

Don Davis is obviously serious about keeping the Stax Sound alive. The Soul Children are like having Millie Jackson, Johnnie Taylor and Teddy Pendergrass in the same group. If you had a group like that, could you do anything bad with them? Davis doesn't and this album can't be ignored.



### CEDAR WALTON: Beyond Mobius (RCA APL 1-1435)

Pianist Walton will also be accused of joining the sellout sweepstakes, but his kids prefer fresh milk to the powdered variety too. This kind of "jazz" isn't hard to like once you accept it, even though this is probably the most commercial date ever done by a major jazz artist. Except for the solos, it's hardly possible to tell this album from the Sal-soul Orchestra, and the version of *Bad Luck* could segue into those by The Bluenotes and The Atlanta Disco band without missing a beat. At this rate Walton will soon be able to buy some chocolate for the kiddies' milk.



### BLACK SATIN featuring Fred Parris: (Buddah BDS 5654)

These are the Five Satins (*In The Still Of The Night*) in a new disguise. It's a good thing they are in disguise because except for the poignant *Everybody Stand And Clap Your Hands*, this album is a total loss.



### ESTHER PHILLIPS: For All We Know (Kudu KU-28)

Obviously we don't know much, even after all these years, because the title tune is not only the worst cut on the album but the worst "cover" of a standard to come out of the "let's cover a standard disco-style" rush. It's too bad this one tune casts such a pallor over the rest of the album, because it's really quite better than you'd expect.



### BARRY WHITE: Let The Music Play (20th Century T-502)

In spite of the hit single, "disco-smash" title tune, this is the first Barry White album not to go over the top forty on the charts and not to be "gold" after such a long time on the street. White suffers without Gene Page's arrangements, especially since Page could always put the right touch of humor into White's ponderous banality. Barry's initial creative surge has now run its course and his staying power is finally about to be tested.

### AL GREEN: Full Of Fire (London SHL 32097)

An optimistic title at best. Green's latest album contains more of the same malaise that has pervaded his career. The title tune works well as Green's first concession to dance mania and *Together Again* and *Soon As I Get Home* can stand with the best, but Green is really a symbol of the growing isolation of the greats. I would rather hear Al Green doing his version of familiar tunes, than listen to an album of self-composed but spiritless material.



### FIRST CHOICE: So Let Us Entertain You (Warner Bros. BS 2934)

With this album, The First Choice finally live up to the threat of becoming the female trio of the seventies. They're tied for looks with The Three Degrees, who are the only other contenders, but they win hands down in the soulfulness dept. When Labelle comes back from space, they might be able to give them a run but in the meantime First Choice has got it. Philly Soul polished and gleaming with memories of The Supremes and The Toys. I'd let them entertain me all night.



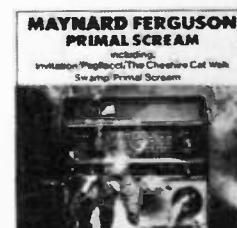
### ASHFORD AND SIMPSON: Come As You Are (Warner Bros. BS 2858)

Ashford and Simpson try so hard to write "meaningful" songs, but sometimes you can feel them straining. My favorite song on this album is *One More Try*, which they didn't write. The other songs have all the right heart-thumping emotion but it all seems a bit forced.



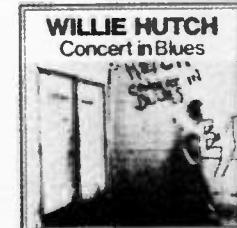
### MAYNARD FERGUSON: Primal Scream (Columbia PC 33953)

Bob James brings the CTI to a brilliant jazz-funk romp from Ferguson. Guests include Chick Corea, Eric Gale, Joe Farrell, Ralph McDonald and Jon Faddis. Ferguson has successfully negotiated the new jazz dilemma with an album that is toe-tapping and heady enough for the purists.



### WILLIE HUTCH: Concert In Blues (Motown M6-854S1)

Willie Hutch always manages to get untracked every other album and since his previous album was his best, this outing is no exception to his erratic rule. He'll be feeling better in a few months after he sleeps this off.



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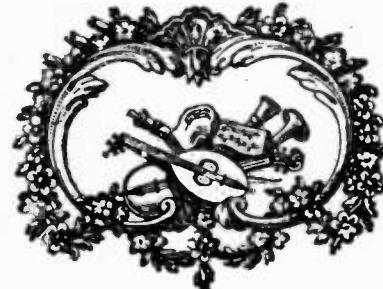
# LONG HAIR for LONG HAIRS

by Alan Pechansky

## 41st Annual Ravinia Festival

CHICAGO—Special attention to the works of Beethoven and an accent on American music keynotes the eight-week season of the 41st annual Ravinia Festival—summer residence of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra—that gets underway June 24. James Levine, in his fourth year as the festival's music director, conducts the first Chicago-area performance of Schoenberg's titanic *GURRE-LIEDER* cantata, opening night. The season closes on a simpler note, Aug. 21, with John Green presenting an all-Richard Rodgers program. In the interim, a medley of solo, symphonic chamber, operatic and oratorio programs, highlighting scores of important soloists, will echo throughout the suburban 36-acre festival site.

Among those scheduled to conduct are Lawrence Foster, music director of the



Houston Symphony; the Toronto Symphony's Andrew Davis and veteran Erich Leinsdorf. The Boston Opera Company's Sarah Caldwell leads the orchestra Aug. 3 in an unannounced program featuring soprano Beverly Sills. Andre Previn takes the podium July 24, for a performance of Walton's *BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST*, with Sherill Milnes baritone and the Scottish Na-

tional Orchestra Chorus making its first American tour.

Twenty-two "one composer events" are slated, including a performance of Berlioz' *DAMNATION OF FAUST*, a "Mozart Marathon" and an all day "Bach Fete." Ten programs are devoted exclusively to the music of Beethoven; among other material to be heard are his Third, Eighth and Ninth Symphonies, and all six of his cello-piano sonatas on two evenings, with cellist Lynn Harrell and James Levine at the keyboard. Surely RCA intends to have the double LP recording of this set.

Levine—the recitalist appears in the June 27 Preview concert playing piano rags of Scott Joplin. Then, quickly donning his conductor's guise, he leads the CSO through an all-Gershwin bill with Lorin Hollander as soloist in the Rhapsody.

American composers represented this year include Gershwin, Ives, Bernstein, Copland, Barber, Schuller, Paul Chihara and Benjamin Lees.

While classical is clearly the main course, Ravinia has not overlooked the popular element. Benny Goodman, Ella Fitzgerald, the Preservation Hall Jazz Band, Harry Chapin, Neil Sedaka, Barry Manilow, Kris & Rita, Judy Collins, Arlo Guthrie and Pete Seeger are among the popular entertainers on tap. Chicagoans must look elsewhere for hard rock.

The July 27 program defies categorization—"American songs of Innocence and Experience: Songs of Charles Ives, and Jerry Lieber and Mike Stoller." Such intriguing eclecticism is the offering of soprano Joan Morris and pianist William Bolcom, whose superlative Nonesuch recordings of American song bode well for the event.

Among those making their first Ravinia appearance this year are pianists Andre-Michel Schub and Horacio Gutierrez, and sopranos Regine Crespin and Carol Neblett. Festival audiences will welcome the return of Leontyne Price, Alicia de Larrocha, Gary Graffman, Isaac Stern and other stellar.



## CLASSICAL ALBUM REVIEWS

**STRAVINSKY:** Firebird Suite

**DEBUSSY:** Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun  
**MOUSSORGSKY:** A Night On Bare Mountain Electronically Created by Tomita (RCA ARL 1-1312)

Tomita's essentially literal recreations recall Marshall McLuhan's observation that new media are programmed initially with the content of older media, making for unidiomatic and second rate expression, at best. If sound per se is your bag then sample the sheer quantity and variety packaged here. However, Tomita's electronic synthesis cannot match its antecedent medium—the orchestra—at projecting the music in these scores.

**VIRGIL THOMSON:** The River, The Plow That Broke The Plains (Music from Films), Autumn (Concertino for Harp, Strings and Percussion) Angel S-7300

**RESPIGHI:** Ancient Airs And Dances (Angel 937301)  
Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra  
Neville Marriner, conductor

The L.A. Chamber Orchestra was founded in 1968 and Neville Marriner appointed its artistic director the following year. Marriner, who earlier shaped the peerless Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields—"perhaps the most comprehensively recorded chamber orchestra of the twentieth century"—has guided the L.A. ensemble to prominence and into the recording studio in a brief span of time. However, the group's first domestic recording sessions have yielded uneven results. Respighi's three suites of Ancient Airs and Dances are accorded a shallow run-through. Limp accents, rushed and unphased playing diminishes the aural enchantment afforded by these lute pieces of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, arranged for modern orchestra. The Dorati performance on Philips Golden Imports is clearly preferable. Virgil Thomson's pair of depression-era time capsules fare markedly better, partly because this recording has more proximity and is more transparent than the others. The Los Angelinos vividly depict these haunting midwestern scenes, culled from scores to documentary films made in 1936 and 1937.

for the Farm Security Administration. To enhance the listener's enjoyment, Angel has reprinted moving episodes of original narration from THE PLOW THAT BROKE THE PLAINS. Completing this attractive catalogue addition is the premier recording of Thomson's Concertino for Harp, Strings and Percussion, Autumn—a charming bagatelle.

**PADEREWSKI:** Symphony in B Minor, "Polonia"  
The Pomeranian Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra in Bydgoszcz  
Bohdan Wodiczko, conductor  
Polskie Nagrania SXL 0968

Completed in 1907, this grandiose score was charged with political import at the time Germany, Australia and Russia partitioned Poland. Polish promoters had difficulty obtaining permission to stage the work for fear that demonstrations would result; of particular concern to the czarist and German authorities was the final movement in which the national hymn "Poland Will Not Perish" is pitted several times against a "suppression motif" that runs throughout the work. Such extra-musical significance has faded largely; what remains is long-winded and highly derivative, though deftly constructed and sensitively scored. There is but one game in town for Paderewski's patriotic symphony—this cleanly-pressed modern recording imported from the homeland by the Polish Record Center of America (3055 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago 60618), who, in addition to Polish classics, stock rock and jazz albums of Polish origin.

**BRAHMS:** Sonata No. 2 for Violin and Piano  
**PROKOFIEV:** Sonata No. 1 for Violin and Piano; David Oistrakh, violin; Sviatoslav Richter, piano  
Melodiya (Angel SR-40268)

The Brahms is warm and inviting in contrast to Prokofiev's stark and knotty opus. Each is proffered with breadth and insight by the preeminent Soviet instrumentalists of the cold war era, captured in a 1972 Moscow Conservatory recital. Richter's playing has great strength, yet remains subordinate to the net result. Oistrakh's tone, big and velvety when it first reached American audiences, has coarsened with time. It sounds rather woolen here, but there is musical intelligence to compensate.

**BEETHOVEN:** Piano Sonatas Nos. 30 and 32

Arthur Schnabel; Victrola AVMI-1410

RCA has not abandoned its low-end Victrola label since instituting the slightly costlier Gold Seal line, but Victrola now is reserved solely for historic monaural recordings. Or so it appears. Schnabel was the first pianist in phonographic history to command Beethoven's entire keyboard output. His landmark integral edition of all 32 sonatas, available on Seraphim, was waxed between 1932 and 1937. Again in 1942, Schnabel recorded two of the final self-defining chapters in this monumental survey. His approach was consistent: These versions, which have reposed in RCA vaults until now, are near duplicates of the earlier vaunted readings. There is a fuller-bodied piano sound and none of the infinitesimal pitch fluctuation one hears in the older set.

**SPIRIT OF '76:** Andre Previn, piano; Orchestra conducted by Andre Kostelanetz (Columbia MG 33728)

Kostelanetz' double-pocket treasury of orchestral Americana debuts delightful miniatures by Creston, Cowell, Grofe and Richard Rodgers, and premieres in stereo three consequential scores: MEDITATION ON ORPHEUS by Alan Hovhaness and Charles T. Griffes' WHITE PEACOCK and THE PLEASURE DOME OF KUBLA KAHN. Overlook the unpromising start—a slushy reading of Ives-Schuman Variations on America—and it adds up to quite a handsome package, selling at a reduced price. A scintillating rendition of Gershwin's Piano Concerto provides the centerpiece, and closing things out is the Intermezzo from Sanual Braber's opera VANESSA, probably the oldest of these sundry tapings. The unidentified orchestra is the N.Y. Philharmonic, or portions thereof. Bill Zakariasen's liner notes omit explanation of the apparent connection between Henry Cowell's TWILIGHT-TEXAS and Paul Creston's MIDNIGHT-MEXICO. Eastern Airlines commissioned these and other descriptive movements for IMAGES IN FLIGHT, A NORTH AMERICAN ODYSSEY, recorded by Kostelanetz a decade ago and issued privately through Columbia Special Products. The Creston and Cowell contributions appear commercially for the first time.



# COUNTRY ALBUM REVIEWS

by Russell Shaw



## GIG SPOTLIGHT REVIEWS



### FLOYD CRAMER: Country (RCA APL 1-1541)

Maybe COUNTRY is a temporary diversion off the MOR path. Perhaps this collection of classics is little more than a kind of a cathartic workout in which Nashville's most famous ivory tickler has recorded some music which has been inside his soul for a long while, longing to burst out. One could even be optimistic and surmise that after countless drab semi-Muzak albums, Cramer has stopped being the poor man's Peter Nero and has chosen material more in line with his emotive capabilities.

For these reasons, COUNTRY is a most welcome release. On this definitive statement, we find a veritable potpourri of material, from the timeless *Shenandoah* (best version since Charlie McCoy's four years ago) to the comparatively new *Today I Started Loving You Again*. The stress is on folk melodies, some old and well-known; to pigeonhole them into a country and western category would be a gross inaccuracy. After all, what can you say about *Wabash Cannonball*, except that it is one of the great standards of American folk music? Ditto *Cotton Fields*, *Goodnight Irene*, and *Tennessee Waltz*. The Cramer renditions feature transposition of his style, an adaptation accomplished with both taste and fidelity. Ledbetter's *Cotton Fields* especially stands out with its slightly accelerated tempo and peppy Chet Atkins arrangements.



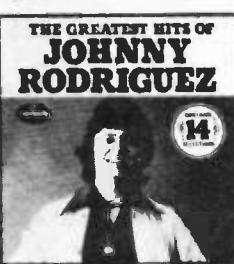
### NARVEL FELTS: Narvel The Marvel (ABC DOT DOSD 2033)

Felts' resonant quiver is starting to bore. No one is denying the depth and strength of his vocal equipment; on sheer power alone his pipes might be the best in country-dom. Yet formula is starting to seep in. The wails are in all the right places. Narvel may be hemmed in by the narrowness of his repertoire; predominantly tearjerkers with a couple of token rockers thrown in. With some fresh material, subsequent efforts should recapture the initial excitement of his earlier releases.



### CHARLIE RICH: Silver Linings (Epic KE 33545)

Rich has the sincerity of tone and delivery to be a creditable gospel artist. Such classics as *Amazing Grace* and *Sometimes I Feel Like A Motherless Child* are delivered with intense passion. Another side of the Silver Fox.



### JOHNNY RODRIGUEZ: The Greatest Hits Of Johnny Rodriguez (Mercury SRM 1-1078)

The long overdue Rodriguez sampler is finally here. All the tunes which have catapulted him to fame are included: *Pass Me By*, *Love Put A Song In My Heart* and *We're Over* (which should have gone pop but didn't) are highlights.



### MOE BANDY: Hank Williams, You Wrote My Life (Columbia KC 34091)

On his first Columbia release, Bandy sings some truly meaningful songs. Very little manufactured melancholia; more true feeling and guts. Check out *The Hard Times*, a mournful country blues.



### BENNY MARTIN: Tennessee Jubilee (Flying Fish 012)

One of the great bluegrass fiddlers of all time, Martin has produced a landmark album. It's an all star session; sitting in are such living legends as John Hartford, Lester Flatt; dobroist Buddy Emmons and fiddler Buddy Spicher. Laden with some rhythmic Pig Robbins piano, the outcome appears to be a synthesis of traditional bluegrass with more uptempo honky-tonk textures. A prize album for collectors and a record for the ages.

### TOM T. HALL: Faster Horses (Mercury SRM 1-1076)

There are two Tom T. Halls. One is kind of a countrified Sesame Street, singing tunes to kids about "sneaky snakes" and other assorted phenomena. Nothing wrong with a little fun, yet I found *FOX HOLLOW* rather tiresome and boring.

FASTER HORSES, however, represents Hall at his best; the witty philosopher, standing on the ship of human existence, alternating heartfelt and caustic comments on anything and everything. This is the special genius of Tom T.; his sense of rural, homespun detachment.

This album boasts many examples of the Hall style. *Faster Horses*, the title cut, describes a true-to-life confrontation between a cosmopolitan yet unmaterialistic philosopher and a whiskey-drinkin' woman-lovin' cowboy. The two discuss their widely divergent sense of values, and the singer is eventually persuaded that the hedonistic side of life is the better course.

Keeping the penchant for self-descriptive analogy in mind, other tunes provide an accurate indicator as to where the singer's mind is at. *The Songwriter* describes the often force-fed trial and error process all tunesmiths are slaves to, and *I'm Forty Now* (Hall's true age) is an introspective examination of the aging process.



### WILLIE NELSON: The Sound In Your Mind (Columbia KC 34092)

Quite likely one of the hottest country acts of the moment, Willie Nelson has followed up his *RED HEADED STRANGER* with another stellar effort. There are less instrumentals here, yet as with the material on the previous work, the tunes are mostly ballads. Some of the best stuff is his own. In addition there are other treats: a Lefty Frizzell sampler plus *That Lucky Old Sun*, an old spiritual first popularized by Ray Charles.



### CHEAT ATKINS AND LES PAUL: Chester and Lester (RCA APL 1-1167)

A living pop guitar legend combines with a country counterpart to sculpture a work of art which transcends classification. Paul, coming out of a ten year retirement, is a bit rusty, yet ol' Chet picks up the slack as they wade through a collection of tunes totally congruent with their vast abilities.



### VARIOUS ARTISTS: Texas Country (United Artists UA LA 574-H2)

This two record set contains classic performances by artists who were with the label early in their careers. The vaults are rich in musical bullion. Check out Willie Nelson's *Funny How Time Slips Away* (he wrote it), Freddy Fender's *Wasted Days And Wasted Nights* (original version) and *Asleep At The Wheel's Take Me Back To Tulsa*. An added bonus: side four is an anthology of some of Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys' best work.



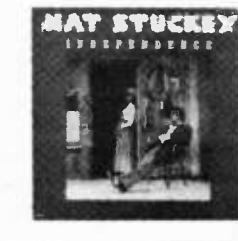
### THE STATLER BROTHERS: Harold, Lew, Phil and Don (Mercury SRM 1-1077)

By now, the tight four-part Statler harmonies are legend. Nothing as overpowering as *I'll Go To My Grave Loving You* here, but nothing that disappointing either.



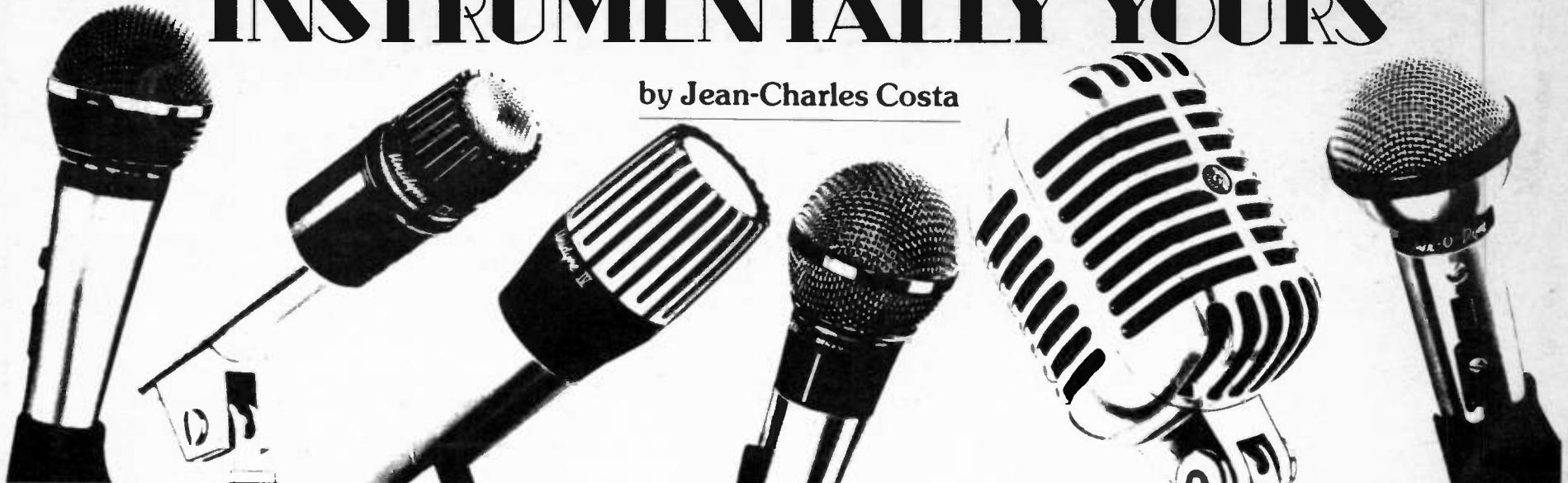
### NAT STUCKEY: Independence (MCA 2184)

More unaffected, one hundred percent country vocals from one of the finest yet most underrated artists in the business. Especially noteworthy is Nat's version of the Eagles classic, *Layin' Eyes*.



# INSTRUMENTALLY YOURS

by Jean-Charles Costa



Inundated by a flood of guitar-dominated material in the last two columns, the casual peruser—who probably couldn't give two figs about a 1959 Les Paul Golden Sunburst in immaculate condition (currently going for a mere \$3500 on 48th st.)—will be glad to know that your intrepid reporter is moving hesitantly into another slice of the musical hardware spectrum, amplifiers and microphones. 'Cause when you get right down to it, no matter how sweet your instrument sounds, if your amplification and p.a. systems are lackin' power, "presence" or clarity, your group hasn't got a prayer of coming across effectively these days. After all, the middle/late sixties period featured an arsenal of "expansion" drugs making the listener more receptive and tolerant (since one could usually "compensate" with personal imagination). These days the live concert phenomenon is much more of a cold-blooded, "professional" scene on all levels. For confirmation, just ask any of the up and coming bands on the professional circuit who have to open for big name acts. Lurid tales of aural rip-offs keep popping up in interviews with these guys. That, plus the sad fact that these bands have to plow through a dense curtain of "contraction" or downer/alcohol-

oriented goodies, making sound transmission equipment a top priority consideration.

Having saluted the British Marshall "legend" earlier, we now turn our attention to some leading American amplifier manufacturers, Ampeg and Sunn. Ampeg, which has been used by quite a few British bands including the Stones, is known as the "workhorse" of the contemporary amp family. Producing a big, tough and "dirty" sound which is ideally suited to hard-assed rock 'n roll, these big bruisers almost never break down on the road, making them more practical than their refined and "temperamental" British cousins (Marshall, Orange, Hiwatt etc.). Starting out with monsters like the V-4B (100 watts RMS minimum, tube circuitry, two 15" Altec Lansing 421A speakers) and the SVT (300 watts RMS minimum, tube circuitry, sixteen 10" speakers), Ampeg offers a wide variety of reliable equipment that ranges on down to the good ol' "little" VT-40 (60 watts RMS minimum, tube circuitry, four 10" speakers). We owned one of these little blockbusters once, and having watched it survive repeated drop-kicks across the room during feverish Peter Townshend impressions—small scale—we can personally testify to the VT-40's durability.

Sunn has always made decent equipment and every major group has gone through a Sunn "phase" at one time or another. These amps just come and go quietly, always maintaining a decent level of popularity with working musicians. For openers, we have the Model T Tube Amplifier, which allegedly reproduces that rich harmonic distortion characteristic of funky fifties models. As the Sunn people put it: "This type of distortion is rich in harmonic overtones that both expand and fatten individual notes." All well and good, but until they send us one to check out first-hand, that is somewhat hard to confirm. "Old sound" reproduction notwithstanding, this amp offers 150 watts RMS at any load impedance, 2 channels (bright and normal), provision for combining both channels at the input, a versatile preamp section and a

master volume control.

Sunn also shines on through with the popular Coliseum and Concert Series amps for lead, bass and keyboards, while the Concert Slave Amplifier will deliver an additional 200 watts RMS "to beef-up your musical instrument system or public address complement." Sunn also makes mixing boards for live sound, ranging from the "simple" PA6 to the aristocratic PA12-Stereo Mixing Console with goodies like SUNN-SENSOR (a system of LED indicators on the 9-band graphic equalizers to display the frequency which is producing feedback) and COMP-LIMIT, which allows you to preset maximum levels on each channel.

And now for those critically important, but often overlooked, microphones. Shure has been a common choice among musicians and vocalists for quite a few years

and they do make a fairly consistent product that improves in quality as you move up the price spectrum. Most of their PE series mikes are unidirectional, which may be a minor disadvantage if you like to move around the mike a lot. Of special interest is the slick, new PE589, "the shape of things to come," as Shure calls it, which boasts an "extra-efficient filter to minimize breath 'pop'" and wind noises, a symmetrical cardioid pickup pattern to combat feedback, and an extremely smooth frequency response for lifelike sound. The design is very streamlined, with a balanced 20mm (3/4") handle that slips "whisper quiet" in and out of the microphone stand.

When you get into a studio situation however, you are more likely to run across Sennheiser equipment—the Rolls Royce of the microphone world. Made un-

der the factory name of Sennheiser/Maestro and distributed through Norlin, these beautiful, precision instruments will help any voice sound better. Two specific models you might investigate include MD 409 Directional Microphone for live performance and the MD 421 Studio Cardioid Microphone for session work. When Sennheiser talks about features like (Wide response—5K to 15,000 Hz, close talking design that eliminates background noise, a super Cardioid directional pickup, anti-feedback design, insensitivity to mechanical vibration, gold plated casing and a built-in, noiseless on/off switch) they mean it. Of course, we can't guarantee that these gems will be in your price range, but you might be able to afford some of the Sennheiser accessories like stereo headphones, stand adapters, windscreens and cables.



\*\*\*\*\*  
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\*\*\*\*\*  
A large illustration of a glass bong with a chamber and a mask attached to the top, with a smaller illustration of a stack of bongs to the right.  
\*\*\*\*\*  
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\*\*\*\*\*

# Before Gibson designed the S-1, Ron Wood had his guitars customized.



The guitars that Ron Wood has played with Jeff Beck, Rod Stewart & Faces and the Rolling Stones were customized to the point that the names on the pegheads were meaningless. But this isn't the case with Ron's new Gibson S-1 guitar. It's a genuine Gibson right off the production line.

Ron's forte is loud, hard, powerful rock & roll, and the three high frequency pickups put out everything he needs. They're flexible too, under the control of a four position pickup/phase selector switch, plus a bypass switch that shuts off everything but the lead pickup. So, Ron can evoke the mood he needs for a mournful *Maggie Mae*, or make the music burn for *Gimmie Shelter*.

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# GIG TOP L.P.S and TAPE SALES GIG

The Music GIG's record charts are the compilation of sales figures from various record stores across the country.

## ROCK & POP

- 1 STILL CRAZY AFTER ALL THESE YEARS PAUL SIMON (Columbia PC 33540)
- 2 THOROUGHBRED CAROLE KING (Ode SP 77034)
- 3 FRAMPTON COMES ALIVE PETER FRAMPTON (A&M SP 3703)
- 4 THEIR GREATEST HITS 1971-1975 EAGLES (Asylum 7E 1052)
- 5 RUN WITH THE PACK BAD COMPANY (Swan Song 8415)
- 6 A NIGHT AT THE OPERA QUEEN (Elektra 7E 1053)
- 7 DREAM WEAVER GARY WRIGHT (Warner Bros. BS 2868)
- 8 THE OUTLAWS WAYLON JENNINGS, WILLIE NELSON, JESSI COLTER, TOMPALL GLASER (RCA APL1 1321)
- 9 DESIRE BOB DYLAN (Columbia PC 33893)
- 10 STATION TO STATION DAVID BOWIE (RCA APL1 1327)
- 11 SECOND CHILDHOOD PHOEBE SNOW (Columbia PC 33952)
- 12 ONE OF THESE NIGHTS THE EAGLES (Asylum 7E 1039)
- 13 HAIR OF THE DOG NAZARETH (A&M SP 4511)
- 14 THE SALSOUL ORCH. SALSOUL ORCHESTRA (Salsoul SZS 5501)
- 15 FLEETWOOD MAC FLEETWOOD MAC (Warner Bros. BS 2225)
- 16 RUFUS FEATURING CHAKA KHAN (ABC ABCD 909)
- 17 GIMME BACK MY BULLETS LYNYRD SKYNYRD (MCA 2170)
- 18 SONG OF JOY CAPTAIN & TENNILLE (A&M SP 4570)
- 19 AEROSMITH (Columbia PC 32005)
- 20 BETTER DAYS & HAPPY ENDINGS MELISSA MANCHESTER (Arista AL 4067)
- 21 FOOL FOR THE CITY FOGHAT (Bearsville BR 6959)
- 22 BRASS CONSTRUCTION (United Artists UALA 545 G)
- 23 EARGASM JOHNNIE TAYLOR (Columbia PC 33951)
- 24 IF THE SHOE FITS PURE PRAIRIE LEAGUE (RCA APL1 1247)
- 25 THE BEST OF GLADYS KNIGHT & THE PIPS (Buddah BDS 5653)
- 26 DIANA ROSS (Motown M6 861 S1)
- 27 GIVE US A WINK SWEET (Capitol ST 11496)
- 28 COME ON OVER OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN (MCA 2186)
- 29 AFTERTONES JANIS IAN (Columbia PC 33919)
- 30 CITY LIFE BLACKBYRDS (Fantasy F 9490)
- 31 CLASSICAL BARBRA BARBRA STREISAND (Columbia M 33452)
- 32 REFLECTIONS JERRY GARCIA (Round RX LA 565 G)
- 33 HE'S A FRIEND EDDIE KENDRICKS (Tamla T6 343 S1)

The GIG-let denotes upward movement.

**GIG** 34 WE SOLD OUR SOUL FOR ROCK 'N' ROLL BLACK SABBATH (Warner Bros. 2BS 2923)

35 MOTHERSHIP CONNECTION PARLIAMENT (Casablanca NBLP 7022)

36 BABY FACE WING & A PRAYER FIFE & DRUM CORPS. (Wing & A Prayer HS 3025)

**GIG** 37 ROCK 'N' ROLL LOVE LETTER BAY CITY ROLLERS (Arista AL 4071)

38 NATIVE SON LOGGINS & MESSINA (Columbia PC 33578)

39 MAIN COURSE BEE GEES (RSO SO 4807)

40 FACE THE MUSIC ELECTRIC LIGHT ORCHESTRA (United Artists UALA 546 G)

41 CHICAGO IX (CHICAGO'S GREATEST HITS) (Columbia PC 33900)

42 TED NUGENT (Epic PE 33692)

43 FAMILY REUNION O'JAYS (Phil. Int'l. PZ 33807)

44 ELITE HOTEL EMMYLOU HARRIS (Reprise MS 2236)

45 TOYS IN THE ATTIC AEROSMITH (Columbia PC 33479)

46 MOVIN' ON COMMODORES (Motown M6 848 S1)

47 WHO LOVES YOU FOUR SEASONS (Warner Bros./Curb BS 2900)

48 THE LEPRECHAUN CHICK COREA (Polydor PD 6062)

**GIG** 49 SWEET HARMONY MARIA MULDAUR (Warner Bros./Reprise MS 2235)

50 A TRICK OF THE TAIL GENESIS (Atco SD 36129)

## SOUL

1 EARGASM JOHNNY TAYLOR (Columbia PC 33951)

2 DIANA ROSS (Motown M6 861 S1)

3 GRATITUDE EARTH, WIND & FIRE (Columbia PG 33694)

4 RUFUS FEATURING CHAKA KHAN (ABC ABCD 909)

5 HE'S A FRIEND EDDIE KENDRICKS (Tamla T6 343 S1)

6 BRASS CONSTRUCTION (United Artists UALA 545 G)

7 GROOVE-A-THON ISAAC HAYES (ABC ABCD 925)

**GIG** 8 I WANT YOU MARVIN GAYE (Tamla T6 342S1)

9 CITY LIFE BLACKBYRDS (Fantasy F 9490)

10 FAMILY REUNION O'JAYS (Phil. Int'l. PZ 33807)

11 LET THE MUSIC PLAY BARRY WHITE (20th Century T 502)

12 INSEPARABLE NATALIE COLE (Capitol ST 11429)

13 THE BEST OF GLADYS KNIGHT & THE PIPS (Buddah BDS 5653)

14 SMOKEY'S FAMILY ROBINSON SMOKEY ROBINSON (Tamla T6 341 S1)

15 BABY FACE WING & A PRAYER FIFE & DRUM CORPS. (Wing & A Prayer HS 3025)

16 LOVE TO LOVE YOU BABY DONNA SUMMER (Oasis OCLP 5003)

17 FEEL THE SPIRIT LEROY HUTSON (Curtom CU 5010)

18 TURNING POINT TYRONE DAVIS (Dakar DK 76918)

19 FULL OF FIRE AL GREEN (Hi HSL 32097)

20 THE SALSOUL ORCH. (Salsoul SZS 5501)

**GIG** 21 LOVING POWER IMPRESSIONS (Curtom CU 5009)

22 SILVER CONVENTION (Midland Int'l. BKL 1 1369)

23 LOOK OUT FOR #1 BROTHERS JOHNSON (A&M SP 4567)

24 WAKE UP EVERYBODY HAROLD MELVIN & THE BLUE NOTES (Phil. Int'l. PZ 33808)

**GIG** 25 THE LEPRECHAUN CHICK COREA (Polydor PD 6062)

26 CHOCOLATE MILK (RCA APL1 1399)

27 LOVE & UNDERSTANDING KOO & THE GANG (Delta DEP 2018)

28 THAT IS WHY YOU'RE OVERWEIGHT EDDIE HARRIS (Atlantic SD 1683)

29 DISCO-FIED RHYTHM HERITAGE (ABC ABCD 934)

30 SPINNERS LIVE! (Atlantic SD 2 910)

31 DISCO CONNECTION ISAAC HAYES MOVEMENT (Hot Buttered Soul ABCD 923)

32 ARCHIE BELL & THE DRELLS (Tsp PZ 33844)

**GIG** 33 WHEN LOVE IS NEW BILLY PAUL (Phil. Int'l. PZ 33834)

**GIG** 34 ON TOP OF CLEAR CHOICE FOUR (RCA APL 1-1400)

35 BOHANNON (Dakar DK 76917)

36 PLACES AND SPACES DONALD BYRD (Blue Note BNLA 549 G)

37 HONEY OHIO PLAYERS (Mercury SRM1 1038)

38 SHOWCASE SYLVERS (Capitol ST 11456)

39 WHO I AM DAVID RUFFIN (Motown M6 849 S1)

40 YOU GOTTA WASH YOUR ASS REDD FOXX (Atlantic SD 18157)

41 TRUCKLOAD OF LOVING' ALBERT KING (Utopia BUL1 1387)

42 RAISING HELL FATBACK BAND (Event EV 6905)

43 I DON'T KNOW HOW TO LOVE HIM GLORIA LYNN (ABC/Impulse ABCD 9311)

44 COLONIAL MAN HUGH MASAKELA (Casablanca NBLP 7023)

45 ODYSSEY CHARLES EARLAND (Mercury SRM 1 1049)

46 BEST...ISLEY BROTHERS (Buddah BDS 5652 2)

47 COLLAGE EDDIE DRENNON & B.B.S. UNLIMITED (Friends & Co. FS 108)

48 2ND RESURRECTION STAIRSTEPS (Darkhorse SP 22004)

49 MASADA JOE THOMAS (Groove Merchant GM 3310)

50 TOTAL EXPLOSION SYL JOHNSON (Hi HSL 32096)

## COUNTRY

1 IT'S ALL IN THE MOVIES MERLE HAGGARD (Capitol ST 11483)

2 THE WHITE KNIGHT CLEDUS MAGGARD & THE CITIZEN'S BAND (Mercury SRM 1 1072)

3 WANTED: THE OUTLAWS WAYLON JENNINGS, WILLIE NELSON, JESSI COLTER, TOMPALL GLASER (RCA APL1 1321)

4 ELITE HOTEL EMMYLOU HARRIS (Reprise MS 2236)

**GIG** 5 WHEN THE TINGLE BE-COMES A CHILL LORETTA LYNN (MCA 2179)

6 SOMETIMES BILL ANDERSON & MARY LOU TURNER (MCA 2179)

**GIG** 7 LOVIN' AND LEARNIN' TANYA TUCKER (MCA 2167)

8 EASY AS PIE BILLY "CRASH" CRADDOCK (ABC/Dot DOSD 2040)

9 JESSI JESSI COLTER (Capitol ST 11477)

10 THE SOUND IN YOUR MIND WILLIE NELSON (Lone Star KC 34092)

11 NARVEL THE MARVEL NARVEL FELTS (ABC/Dot DOSD 2033)

12 ROCK N' COUNTRY FREDDIE FENDER (ABC/Dot DOSD 2050)

13 THE GREAT TOMPALL & HIS OUTLAW BAND (MGM M3G 5014)

14 200 YEARS OF COUNTRY MUSIC SONNY JAMES (Columbia KC 34305)

15 BLACK BEAR ROAD C.W. McCALL (MGM M3G 5008)

16 JASON'S FARM CAL SMITH (MCA 2172)

**GIG** 17 CHESTER & LESTER CHET ATKING & LES PAUL (RCA APL1 116)

18 THIS TIME I'VE HURT HER MORE THAN SHE LOVES ME CONWAY TWITTY (MCA 2176)

19 COME ON OVER OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN (MCA 2186)

20 LONGHAIRRED REDNECK DAVID ALLAN COE (Columbia KC 33916)

## LATIN

1 SE ME OLVIDO OTRA VEZ YOLANDA DEL RIO (Arcano 3283)

2 BEFORE THE NEXT TEAR-DROP FALLS ANGELICA MARIA (Internacional S1 8014)

3 MEXICO ES LOS DIABLOS (International D1ls 2037)

4 EL AMOR JULIO IGLESIAS (Alhambra 23)

5 TREMENDO CACHE CELIA & JOHNNY (Vaya XVS 37)

6 CONTRABANDO Y TRAI-CION TIGRES DE NORTE (Fama 528)

7 UNFINISHED MASTER-PIECE EDDIE PALMIERI (Coco Clp 120)

8 FREDDY FENDER (Canta CC 1012)

9 BROWN STUFF LA FAMILIA (Buena Suerte 1054)

10 CREMA DE CUMBIA COSTA DE AZUL (NV 309)



# TOP SINGLES SALES



## ROCK & POP

- 1 **LONELY NIGHT (ANGEL FACE)**  
Captain & Tennille (A&M 1782)
- 2 **DREAM WEAVER**  
GARY WRIGHT (Warner Bros. 8167)
- 3 **DECEMBER 1963 (OH WHAT A NIGHT)**  
FOUR SEASONS (Warner Bros. 8168)
- 4 **DREAM ON**  
AEROSMITH (Columbia 3-10278)
- 5 **LET YOUR LOVE FLOW**  
BELLAMY BROTHERS (Warner Bros. 8169)
- 6 **RIGHT BACK WHERE WE STARTED FROM**  
MAXINE NIGHTINGALE (United Artists 752)
- 7 **DISCO LADY**  
JOHNNIE TAYLOR (Columbia 3 10281)
- 8 **SWEET THING**  
RUFUS FEATURING CHAKA KHAN (ABC 12149)
- 9 **ALL BY MYSELF**  
ERIC CARMEN (Arista 0165)
- 10 **ONLY SIXTEEN**  
DR. HOOK (Capitol 4171)
- 11 **DEEP PURPLE**  
DONNIE & MARIE OSMOND (Kolob 14840)
- 12 **SWEET LOVE**  
COMMODORES (Motown 1381)
- 13 **MONEY HONEY**  
BAY CITY ROLLERS (Arista 0170)
- 14 **GOLDEN YEARS**  
DAVID BOWIE (RCA 10441)
- 15 **FANNY (BE TENDER WITH MY LOVE)** BEE GEES (RSO 519)
- 16 **ACTION** SWEET (Capitol 4220)
- 17 **THERE'S A KIND OF HUSH (ALL OVER THE WORLD)**  
CARPENTERS (A&M 1800)
- 18 **BOOGIE FEVER**  
SYLVERS (Capitol 4179)
- 19 **GOOD HEARTED WOMAN**  
WAYLON & WILLIE (RCA 10529)
- 20 **BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY**  
QUEEN (Elektra 45297)
- 21 **SHOW ME THE WAY**  
PETER FRAMPTON (A&M 1795)
- 22 **TANGERINE**  
SALSOUL ORCHESTRA (Salsoul 2004)
- 23 **TAKE IT TO THE LIMIT**  
EAGLES (Asylum 45293)
- 24 **ONLY LOVE IS REAL**  
CAROLE KING (Ode 66110)
- 25 **LOVE FIRE** JIGSAW (Chelsea 3037)
- 26 **LOOKING FOR SPACE**  
JOHN DENVER (RCA 10586)
- 27 **YOU'LL LOSE A GOOD THING**  
FREDDY FENDER (ABC/Dot 17607)
- 28 **I DO, I DO, I DO, I DO**  
ABBA (Atlantic 3310)
- 29 **LIVIN' FOR THE WEEKEND**  
O'JAYS (Phil. Int'l. 3587)
- 30 **LORELEI** STYX (A&M 1786)
- 31 **INSEPARABLE**  
NATALIE COLE (Capitol 4193)
- 32 **FOPP** OHIO PLAYERS (Mercury 73775)
- 33 **FOOLED AROUND AND FELL IN LOVE** ELVIN BISHOP (Capricorn 9252)
- 34 **WE CAN'T HIDE IT ANYMORE**  
LARRY SANTOS (Casablanca 844)
- 35 **SARA SMILE**  
DARYL HALL & JOHN OATES (RCA 10530)
- 36 **HIT THE ROAD JACK**  
STAMPEDERS (Quality 501)

- 37 **WITHOUT YOUR LOVE (MR. JORDAN)** CHARLIE ROSS (Big Tree 16056)
- 38 **STRANGE MAGIC**  
ELECTRIC LIGHT ORCHESTRA (United Artists 770)
- 39 **UNION MAN**  
CATE BROTHERS (Asylum 45294)
- 40 **I THOUGHT IT TOOK A LITTLE TIME (BUT TODAY I FELL IN LOVE)** DIANA ROSS (Motown 1387)
- 41 **SHANNON** HENRY GOSS (Lifesong 45002)
- 42 **MOZAMBIQUE**  
BOB DYLAN (Columbia 3 10298)
- 43 **RHIANNON (WILL YOU EVER WIN)** FLEETWOOD MAC (Reprise 1345)
- 44 **TRYIN' TO GET THE FEELING AGAIN** BARRY MANILOW (Arista 0172)
- 45 **MISTY BLUE**  
DOROTHY MOORE (Malaco 1029)
- 46 **COME ON OVER**  
OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN (MCA 40525)
- 47 **YOUNG BLOOD**  
BAD COMPANY (Swan Song 70108)
- 48 **GET UP AND BOOGIE**  
SILVER CONVENTION (Midland International 10571)
- 49 **HAPPY MUSIC**  
BLACKBYRDS (Fantasy 762)
- 50 **SHOUT IT OUT LOUD**  
KISS (Casablanca 854)

## SOUL

- 1 **MISTY BLUE**  
DOROTHY MOORE (Malaco 1029)
- 2 **DAYLIGHT**  
BOBBY WOMACK (United Artists 763)
- 3 **HAPPY MUSIC**  
BLACKBYRDS (Fantasy 762)
- 4 **DISCO LADY**  
JOHNNIE TAYLOR (Columbia 3 10281)
- 5 **HE'S A FRIEND**  
EDDIE KENDRICKS (Tamla 54266)
- 6 **NEW ORLEANS**  
THE STAPLE SINGERS (Curtom 0113)
- 7 **LET'S GROOVE (PART 1)**  
ARCHIE BELL & THE DRELLS (TSOP 4775)
- 8 **I'VE GOT A FEELING (WE'LL BE SEEING EACH OTHER AGAIN)** AL WILSON (Playboy 6062)
- 9 **FOPP** OHIO PLAYERS (Mercury 73775)
- 10 **LIVIN' FOR THE WEEKEND / STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN**  
O'JAYS (Phil. Int'l. 3587)
- 11 **THE LOVE I NEVER HAD**  
TAVARES (Capitol 4221)
- 12 **HEAVY LOVE**  
DAVID RUFFIN (Motown 1388)
- 13 **LOVE AND UNDERSTANDING (COME TOGETHER)**  
KOOL & THE GANG (Delite 1579)
- 14 **IT'S COOL** Tymes (RCA 10561)
- 15 **LET'S MAKE A BABY**  
BILLY PAUL (Phil. Int'l. 3584)
- 16 **QUEEN OF CLUBS**  
KC & THE SUNSHINE BAND (TK 1005)
- 17 **MAKE YOURS A HAPPY HOME**  
GLADYS KNIGHT & THE PIPS (Buddah 523)

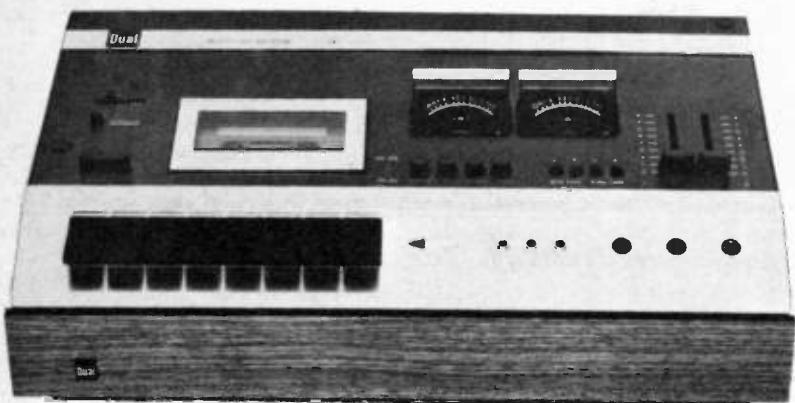
- 18 **P. FUNK (WANT TO GET FUNKED UP)**  
PARLIAMENT (Casablanca 852)
- 19 **BOOGIE FEVER**  
SYLVERS (Capitol 4179)
- 20 **KEEP HOLDING ON**  
TEMPTATIONS (Gorday 7146)
- 21 **SWEET THING**  
RUFUS FEATURING CHAKA KHAN (ABC 12149)
- 22 **FROM US TO YOU**  
STAIRSTEPS (Darkhorse 10005)
- 23 **YOU'RE MY ONE WEAKNESS GIRL**  
STREET PEOPLE (Vigor 1728)
- 24 **THE JAM**  
GRAHAM CENTRAL STATION (Warner Bros. 8175)
- 25 **YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL**  
STYLISTICS (Avco 1664)
- 26 **SWEET LOVE**  
COMMODORES (Motown 1381)
- 27 **TURNING POINT**  
TYRONE DAVIS (Dakar 4550)
- 28 **MIGHTY HIGH**  
CLOUDS OF JOY (ABC 12164)
- 29 **DO IT WITH FEELING**  
MICHAEL ZAGER'S BAND FEATURING PEABO BRYSON (Bang 720)
- 30 **GRATEFUL** BLUE MAGIC (Atco 7046)
- 31 **GET UP AND BOOGIE**  
SILVER CONVENTION (Midland Int'l. 10571)
- 32 **QUALIFIES MAN**  
LATIMORE (Glades 1733)
- 33 **TELL THE WORLD HOW I FEEL ABOUT 'CHA BABY**  
HAROLD MELVIN & THE BLUE NOTES (Phil. Int'l. 3588)
- 34 **SUPERSOUND**  
JIMMY CASTOR BUNCH (Atlantic 3316)
- 35 **MORE MORE MORE PT. 1**  
ANDREA TRUE CONNECTION (Buddah 515)
- 36 **CADILLAC ASSEMBLY LINE**  
ALBERT KING (Utopia 10544)
- 37 **MOVIN'**  
BRASS CONSTRUCTION (United Artists 775)
- 38 **DISCO CONNECTION**  
ISAAC HAYES MOVEMENT (Hot Buttered Soul 12171)
- 39 **I THOUGHT IT TOOK A LITTLE TIME (BUT TODAY I FELL IN LOVE)** DIANA ROSS (Motown 1367)
- 40 **MERRY-GO-ROUND**  
MONDAY AFTER (Buddah 512)
- 41 **PARTY DOWN**  
WILLIE HUTCH (Motown 1371)
- 42 **TRAIN CALLED FREEDOM**  
SOUTH SHORE COMMISSION (Wand 11294)
- 43 **INSEPARABLE**  
NATALIE COLE (Capitol 4193)
- 44 **FINDERS KEEPERS**  
SOUL CHILDREN (Epic 8 50178)
- 45 **I'M SO GLAD** JR. WALKER (Soul 25116)
- 46 **SEXY WAYS-PRETTY LEGS**  
ALL POINTS BULLETIN BAND (Little City 10102)
- 47 **HUSTLE ON UP (DO THE BUMP)**  
HIDDEN STRENGTH (United Artists 733)
- 48 **YOU SEE THE TROUBLE WITH ME**  
BARRY WHITE (20th Century 2277)
- 49 **CAN'T HIDE LOVE**  
EARTH, WIND & FIRE (Columbia 3 10309)
- 50 **SAY YOU LOVE ME**  
D. J. RODGERS (RCA 10568)

Not all these records may be available in your record stores. Ask your dealer for them.

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# amplifications



The Dual cassette deck features automatic reverse, continuous playback and bi-directional recording. Automatic bias switching is also provided for pre-coded standard and chromium dioxide tapes. Built-in oscillator allows the Dolby noise reduction system to be calibrated for any tape. The recording level meters are designed with the ballistics of broadcast-quality VU meters; pointer movements give precise indications of recording level. Other features include: Continuous-Pole/synchronous motor; precision belt-drive system; inter-mode switching without use of stop watch; ALC; indicator lights for direction, recording, Dolby and peak overload.

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U.S. Pioneer Electronics Corp., Moonachie, N.J. has just introduced its highest powered stereo receiver, the SX-1010. It is designed for the audiophile who wants the flexibility and superb performance specifications of separate tuner and integrated amplifiers combined with the convenience of a single, multipurpose component. Conversatively rated at 100 watts continuous power per channel, with both channels driven into 8 ohm loads, the SX-1010 will deliver full power at less than 0.1% THD at all audio frequencies from 20 Hz to 20,000 Hz.

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## The Psycho-acoustic Factor Or Where Sound Really Comes From

by Robert V. Weinstein

The sound that pours out of your stereo gives no end of pleasure. Rich vibrant tones envelope your room and senses at the same time. You close your eyes and hear the bass coming out from the bottom of the speakers, lifting slowly and then surrounding you. Electric guitars screech back at the bass and intrude into the middle section of your listening range. On top of that, voices permeate the uppermost reaches of the room.

Consider listening to a Beethoven symphony. Knowing every eighth note of the Ninth Symphony by heart, you don't doubt for a minute where every single sound is coming from. If you have a quadraphonic system, it's like having the entire 110 piece New York Philharmonic right there in your living room. It is your private, intimate concert hall and you relish every moment of listening pleasure. You will not be deceived. That secure feeling of being encircled by strings, having horns and brasses cut in and across your listening room, harps floating contrapuntally above you, close to the ceiling, broken intermittently by the crack of timpani splashing diagonally across the room. It all seems very real. But is it really happening?

Psycho-acoustics is the study of the way in which people hear. However, it is often contrary to what people "think" they hear. In



stereophonic sound, there are two speakers, left and right. If the listener closes his eyes, he could be told there is a speaker in the center, between the two other speakers. He would imagine sound emanating from that other source. Is he crazy, or just too open to suggestion? Neither one. This is the psychoacoustic factor at work. It wouldn't take too much pressure to convince anyone that there was a physical body radiating sound from the center of the room, creating a central image or body of sound. When opening your eyes, however, you can see that there is nothing there.

For the past 30 years psycho-acoustic experts have been studying the phenomenon of listening.

These studies center around the amount of change affected before the listener actually hears the sound.

The question arises, are we being duped? Are the physicists, sound engineers, and record companies toying with our senses, deceiving us into hearing sounds that are actually not there? In some cases yes, but in general, no. Because of the psycho-acoustic limitations of the human ear, most of us are vulnerable to suggestion. Sometimes all it takes is the mere suggestion that a sound exists. From that point on we have placed that sound within our aural and visual field. The sound becomes lifelike, real, and it would take heavy reconditioning to convince us it doesn't exist.

"Anybody who is trying to make us hear something that is not there is taking advantage of psycho-acoustics," says Gerry LeBoux, a Vice President at Frank Barth Advertising, Sansui's American sales representative. "The dispersion of a speaker, for example, has psycho-acoustic properties."

According to LeBoux psycho-acoustics dramatically comes into play with quadraphonic sound. Quadraphony takes four corners and creates a 360 degree sound field. Not only the four corners, but all the places around the listening circle sound real.

Can the ear be trained to hear only "real" sounds, or what is actually coming out of a speaker? "In order to train your ear," explains LeBoux, "you would have to become familiar with unreal settings, and sounds over a protracted period of time, thus changing your mental cues. Since childhood, we've learned that if a noise was coming more from the front, there was somebody or something in front of you. And if the noise was coming equally from front or rear, there was somebody on the side. It would be very difficult to change this basic learning process. You can fool anyone—from record producers and sound engineers to laymen. We all operate off a basic set of cues which our mind has formulated from the real world. When we try to create a real world atmosphere electronically, you can fool those cues every time, once you know what they are."

Psycho-acoustics studies those cues and tries to find out where they are coming from. By learning more about specific cues, an artificial sound can be created. Right now quad producers can not only produce four corners of sound, they can also create the illusion of upward movement. Utilizing phase and balance rela-

tionships, one can experience sound coming from above.

"For a long time psycho-acoustics was badmouthed as black magic," says LeBoux. "People said psycho-acoustics was an excuse, a substitute for things that were or were not real. That's ridiculous. In actuality, it happens to be a very important science that is just being defined. The reason it is so difficult to understand is because it attempts to find out what makes your mental cues operate. And there really is no simple way, even by trial and error, to determine that. It takes

long, involved computer analyses, hundreds of tests to learn things in order to refine the art. Continual refinement will inevitably give us a book that says if you want to make someone think a train is hitting you from the back at 40 miles per hour, then veering off and plowing into a brick wall, here is what you do. You determine the phase and level of the train at such and such a second and adjust the phase accordingly. And that's how you do it."

Playing with psycho-acoustics offers untold possibilities for record producers. Not only can audi-

itory and visual effects be created, but visceral cues as well. Acute feelings of fear, tension, excitement, elation and depression can be created with sound. At its most sophisticated point, psycho-acoustics can manipulate the human organism. It can open sensory parameters, creating a brilliantly synthetic world where auditory cues are hypnotically interwoven around the listener. The ramifications are endless. If you're clever enough, you might even create your own simulated sound environment right in your living room.

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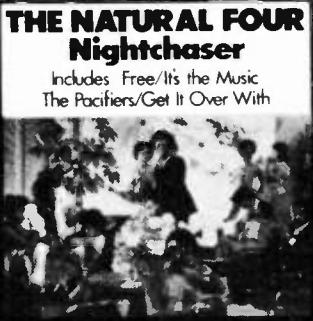
## Notations



**NOTATIONS**  
Includes Take It Slow  
Since You've Been Gone  
Make Believin'  
There I Go  
  
This R&B quartet's debut LP was produced by four separate teams — Chuck Jackson/Marvin Yancy, Gerald Dickerson/Emmet Gardner and Curtom-Gemigo's Rich Tufo with Dickerson and with Lowell Simon. Titles include "I'm Losing" and "Make Believin'." On Gemigo Records and Tapes



## The Natural Four/Nightchaser

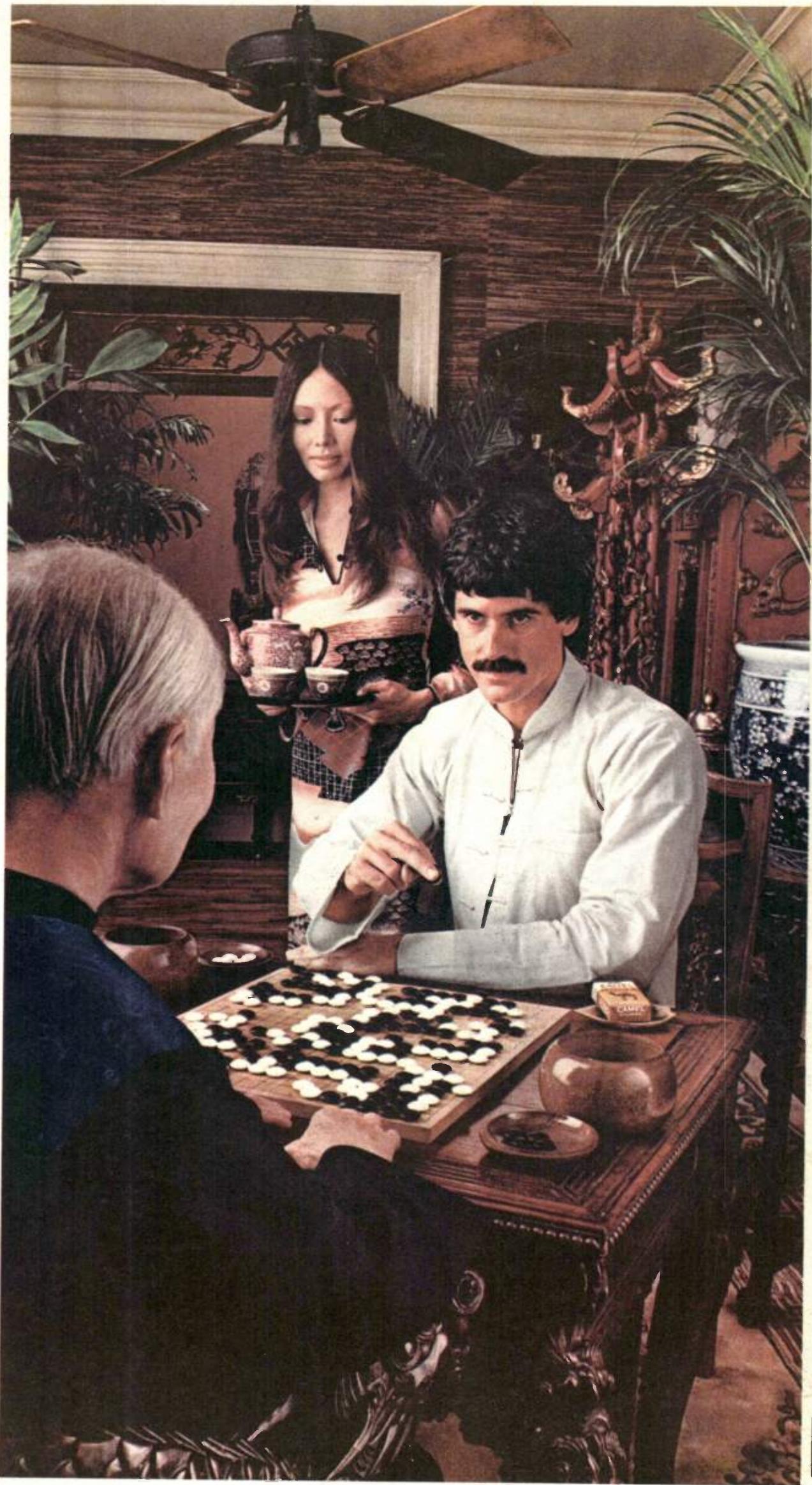


**THE NATURAL FOUR**  
**Nightchaser**  
Includes Free/It's the Music  
The Pacifiers/Get It Over With  
  
This versatile quartet again provide a wide variety of R&B stylings, with titles including "Nightchaser" and "The Pacifiers," following such past hits as "Heaven Right Here on Earth" and "Can This Be Real?"

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