

THE MUSIC GIG

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JEFFERSON STARSHIP

60's Rebels Without A 70's Cause

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Rolling Thunder Reviewed

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Acid Queen's Family Scene

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BAND'S
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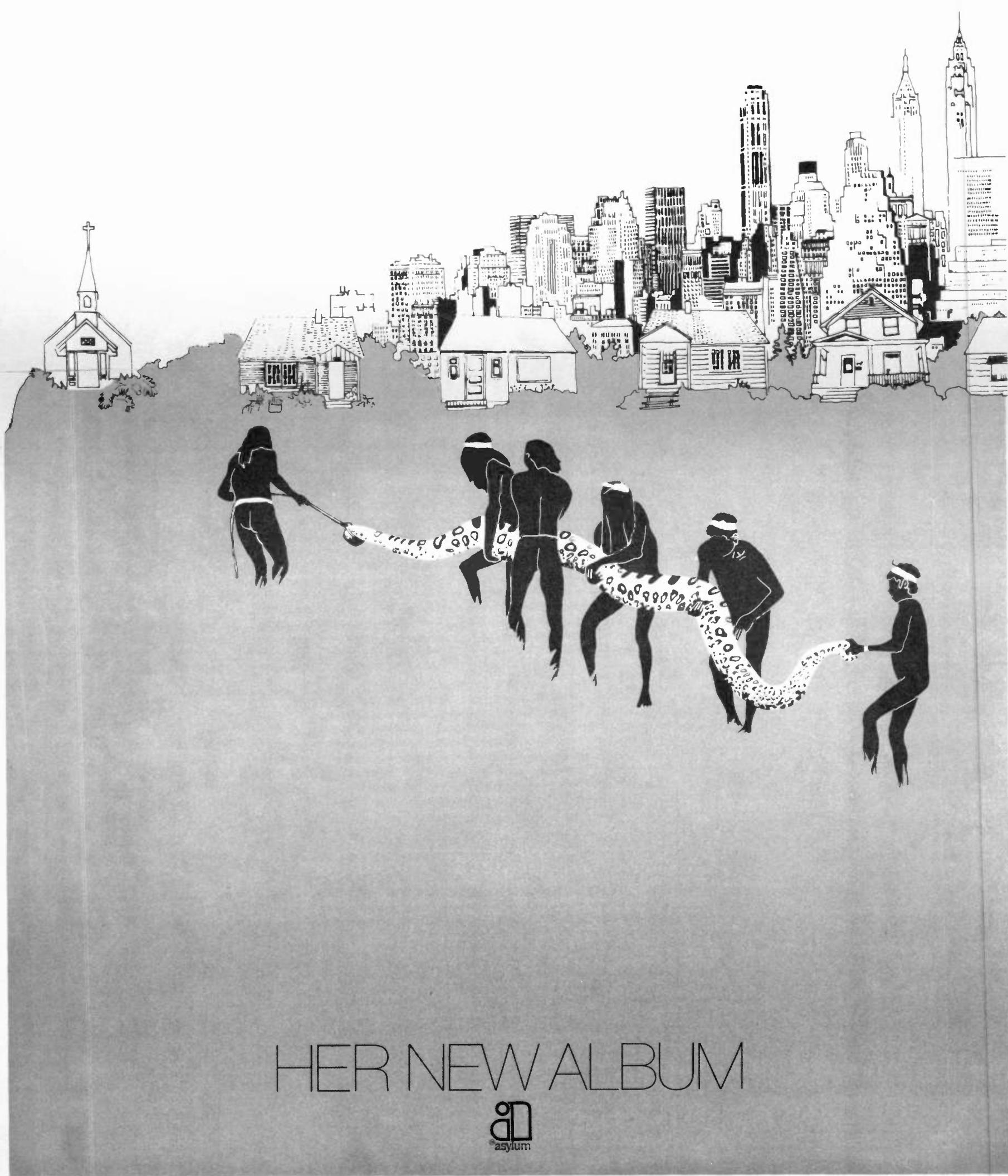
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THE MUSIC GIG

The Magazine for the record buying public Volume 2, Number 7

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LETTERS

To the Editor:

I am not aware of who was in charge of listing the choices for your Readers' Poll. I took one look at the names for guitar player of the year and couldn't believe it. I realize that this list is one of popular guitarists but to include Skunk Baxter, Richie Furay, Steve Stills and ten others without including the best rock guitarist, and in my opinion the best overall popular guitarist today is unreal. I am talking about Roy Buchanan. Roy probably had the best guitar album this year in Livestock. To not include Roy on your list shows me that your magazine is for the teenybopper and is not worth reading if you are a serious music lover.

Sincerely,
Rich Srulewitz

Editor's Reply: The Music GIG Readers Poll is not restricted to musicians listed on the ballot. Other choices are welcomed.

To the Editor:

Enclosed are 47 logos from unsold copies of Gig. Sorry we couldn't sell more but people just didn't like it. Your funky cover of Johnnie Baby didn't exactly help either.

However we received a copy of your new '76 issue of Gig in one of our record orders from a distributor in Cleveland. And I must say it is a 1,000 % improvement over your last issue. The articles about Black Oak Arkansas, Greg Allman and the Doobie Brothers were A1 top quality. It's very good to know that there are so many beautiful people in the music business and that they are doing so much to help people in society less fortunate than they are. After all, the way I look at it is, if God gives you a talent or skill that can benefit you greatly you owe it to people who aren't as smart, "slick", talented, etc. as you are.

I truly and honestly believe that sooner or later people in the rock and music in general business are going to show America that we aren't a bunch of stoned hippies, or black junkies, burnouts, etc., etc. that don't give a shit.

No Sir, I believe that in the next five years (as Bowie would say, "Five years that's all we got"), people in the music business will pour so much of their money and love back into programs for the poor, the starving hungry people of the world, the sick and blind people suffering in prisons and countless others. Jake Newmann

P.S. We would be proud to try another 50 copies of Gig. We think you're moving in the right direction, and I think we can "sell-out" your next issue completely. God bless you.

ED. NOTE: Due to error two photo credits were omitted from the January Issue. The Gregg Allman photo was by Dagmar and the Hall and Oates was by L. Bostick.

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ROCKED OUT

By Cynthia Spector and Joel Vance

They say that rock isn't as exciting these days, that it's not "significant" as a social force any more, that it's become fat and lazy and cautious. All of which is true, and all of which could have been expected.

Those who complain about rock not having the spirit it once did are usually referring to the last five years of the 1960s, when rock was not only becoming a way of life but seemed to be a preferable way of life. The Beatles were there to lead and inspire, black music was beginning to come into its own as something more than a novelty entertainment, and there were half a dozen British and American groups which, if they were not consistent, occasionally came up with something remarkable.

Then it suddenly all evaporated. 1970 arrived, and the fearful rumor about the Beatles breaking up that had made the last half of 1969 glum turned out to be true. In no time at all John Lennon, who had always been the most respected Beatle, began to make a fool of himself musically and publicly. Shortly after the Beatles' demise, the lifespan of other groups seemed to be shortened—they came and went so fast that it was hard to have any loyalty or expectancy. Black music became more and more popular but the beginnings of a deadening sameness about it, combined with an arrogance that either overwhelmed or repelled the listener, were also felt.

The use of drugs by rock musicians and their audience, which during the Sixties was explained away by comparing it to our fathers and grandfathers boozing it up during Prohibition, became an ugly and perhaps permanent problem during the present decade. 18 years or older, the new voters stayed away from the polls. More and more rock became an imitation of itself, and it's importance as part of the Youth Culture declined, even as the Youth Culture itself began to die out.

What happened? Why and how did the music rock itself out while giving falsely hearty cries of "rock on"?

Rock exhausted itself, the performers and the audience because too much was demanded of it and too much was promised for it. Rock has a basic strength, as any kind of folk music does, but that strength always depends on simplicity, and by 1970 rock had gotten much too complicated.

By the time of the Woodstock festival of 1968, rock was supposed to be, or become (1) the center of a way of life for young people (2) the sacred music of a social-

religious movement and (3) the marching music for the The Revolution. All of these things were ill-defined, or not defined at all, mostly because they would immediately appear silly and self-destructive if subjected to any kind of rational inspection. But even if any of the above goals had been possible for rock to achieve, it would still have been asking too much from a music based on three or four guitar chords. Rock simply collapsed under the weight of the impossible demands made upon it.

It should not be forgotten that Woodstock was not a celebration of music, despite the all-star lineup of performers. It was the audience celebrating themselves—the greatest mass ego-trip of the 1960s. The spectacle of 200,000 young people sitting in mud without adequate food, shelter, sanitary or medical facilities was marveled at by police and news commentators of the time, but looking back now it is possible to see this calm as an expression of superiority—the younger generation hypnotizing themselves to believe that, taken all together, they were a mighty force who could change the country by their will. This sense of superiority and power was not based on anything but emotion, although there were several "intellectual" apologists ready to explain this new-found solidarity of the Youth Culture and to predict titanic achievements for it. Woodstock marked the beginning of the end of rock as a musical form. Rock would now be almost exclusively a social event. The audience no longer came to hear the music and see the musicians; they came to see and hear themselves.

The hazy theories of the Youth Culture were based on the old idea of Romanticism, which began as an intellectual exercise in the 18th century, became a literary and artistic fad twenty years after, spread to the public at large almost overnight and soon turned into something vile and brutal. The Romantic theory held that anybody, no matter who, would automatically be a superior person if they believed in and gave their loyalty to spiritual things—an appreciation of nature, a sensitivity towards human feelings, a gentleness of character, the ability to love whether or not it was returned. So the Flower Children of the Haight-Ashbury district had their "summer of love" in 1967 approximately 135 years after the "Romantics" of Western Europe did—and they came to the same end. What started out as a theory of a preferable code of life became, very shortly, a rebellion against the

establishment—business, work, marriage, patriotism, government—and then degenerated into a literally suicidal (and often homicidal) plunge into swamps of self-gratification.

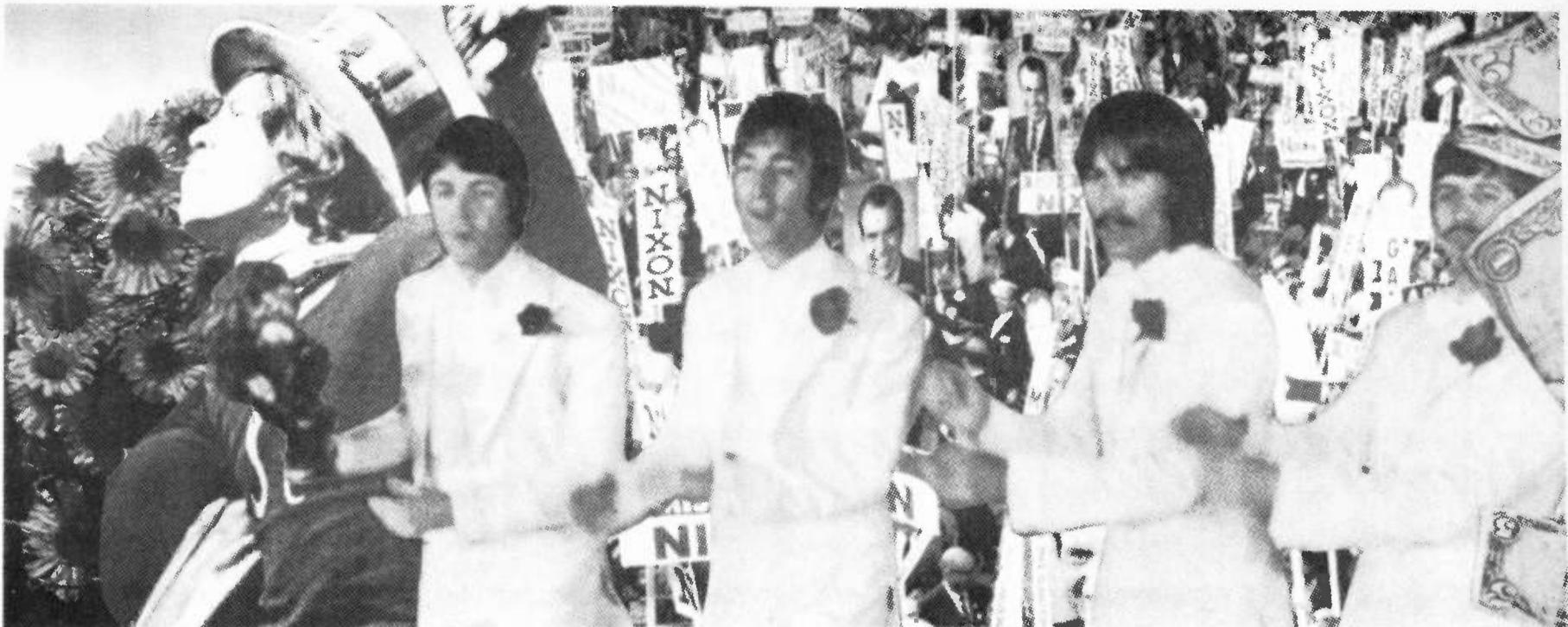
One hundred and thirty-five years ago, people who wanted to look like Romantics, even if they were not, dressed and spoke and behaved in certain ways. These people, almost all of them young and privileged and not having to worry about working for a living, never really understood—or cared to find out—the theories of Romanticism. It is exactly like a band which is not really a rock band *saying* they are a rock band and playing like a rock band, but not really making rock music.

The false Romantics of the last century also had their drug and alcoholic problems. They were extremely self-destructive—the suicide rate in Europe rose alarmingly—and some of them used the Romantic frenzy as an excuse to do what they had secretly always most longed for: the convenient circumstances to murder. Charles Manson and his hideous "family" would not have been strangers in the Romantic Europe of the last century.

It was also a time of great political upheaval in Europe—democracy battling monarchy—just as the political situation in the United States was chaotic during rock's greatest power in the Sixties. For all the loathing the Vietnam war inspired, not one person in a thousand can recall the name of a single battle fought in that war, yet millions can still remember the first time they heard a cut from *Sergeant Pepper*.

The Youth Culture of the Sixties was based on a 20th century Romanticism, with supposedly spiritual beliefs, but at root it was always a frenetic defense against growing up, of maturing, of having to face the realities of life which do not go away just because one rejects them. To hold back this fear, The Revolution would come. Exactly what The Revolution was, noboby ever said (they couldn't; nobody had the faintest idea what it was). All that anybody knew was the (1) young people are, because they're young, more spiritual and therefore superior to anyone over 30; (2) individual, superior, spiritual young people will all band together to form "Woodstock nation", thus becoming a "moral" and political power, which in turn will lead to (3) The Revolution, in which everybody over 30 goes away, disappears or is banished so that (4) in the final triumph of "Woodstock nation" nobody will ever





live to be 30, but they will live forever.

It sounds nuts and it was nuts but millions of young people believed it, and somehow rock was going to make it all happen.

It could not happen, of course. So rock worked itself to death trying to live up to its reputation.

The rock music we hear today, and the Black music we hear today, are the results of this exhaustion. Everybody has to grow up sometime, like it or not.

Rock still sells—and will continue to sell—millions of records, and will continue (for the foreseeable future) to make up 70% to 90% of all music released by labels and 65% to 75% of all music broadcast on radio. The Romanticism that fired it, made it feverish and brought the giddy dream of conquest is gone, as it had to go. What is lacking today in rock is what it first had, twenty-five years ago. Not a Romanticism which sinks into stale imitations of life—but Romance.

What is Romance? Romance is the voice of long experience which says that, as things go in this baffling and often weary world, the need to love is constant, the chance to love is fleeting, but when it comes you will take and treasure it, and you will no longer be just a speck on the planet. Music—any kind of music—can't do that for you. But the right kind of music—including the right kind of rock—makes the moment sweeter.

Jefferson Starship: Rocked Out In The 70's

The Jefferson Starship have renounced their brand of revolutionary music and their new album, *Red Octopus* is boogeying, dancing and sweet music. Grace rebuts the charge that they've sold out: "I know people think we've sold out because we've stopped singing all the heavy stuff. But I don't think that's it. All of a sudden we were all just writing love songs. Maybe the whole thing is for the first time we all just felt real good." Grace, reaching for another unfiltered Camel, thinks the audience just mellowed out as well. "It's something for people to hold on to. I'm an old rock n' roll singer. Marty came back—we're an old group, maybe that's the answer."

The reason Balin is back with the Starship has to do with a solo album that didn't sell all that well and his desire for money. His stated reason for it—"RCA

wouldn't pay me my money. All those years, ten years of record royalties, they just wouldn't pay us everything they owed us. I decided that if I could go up to them and say 'now, guys, I've written you a Top Ten single, with a Top Ten album. Now we can talk about all the money you owe me.' They probably thought I couldn't do it, but look," says Balin, absolutely chortling and rubbing his hands in anticipation of all that money. (RCA sources say, while Balin is quite correct about the money situation, the reason it's been held up is due to a contractual dispute between Airplane/Starship and a previous manager, and the money is being held in something like escrow.)

Balin, despite all the hoopla to the contrary, is not at this time signed to any record company. In fact, he has no commitment to the Starship. Grace says, "In San Francisco, we all sing on each other's albums, we all have always played and sung usually when anyone would ask. It's not all that unusual to have people drop in again. Marty just dropped in again and stayed for a while."

Balin's remarkable composing, production, vocal performances on *Miracles* makes him that rare and valuable thing—an uncommitted star.

Grace, always interested in film, but "no one will give me the money" is thinking about doing some television. Grace was recently offered a part in "Police Woman" she couldn't bring herself to put on a police uniform. Old feelings die hard. Grace and Paul Kantner have almost become the Richard and Liz of the rock world. They travel with their daughter China (who's name used to be God) and have turned somewhat bourgeois.

It's always been a dichotomy how the political group could work for a company deep into missiles and war gadgets. Long and painful disputes later, massive personnel changes, the addition and then deletion of Papa John Creach, the formation of Hot Tuna and trying to be their own record company executives have all taken a toll. Nowhere is the change more pronounced than in Paul Kantner's reversal. Despite the 'rule by committee' precept the group goes by, obviously the committee is now Marty Balin. Kantner taking second place. In fact, at a recent concert he wasn't even playing his guitar

through much of the set while daughter China was spotted sleeping on top of the amps. Kantner, who is pictured as being warm and articulate by his friends, was in fact, a pain to both reporters who interviewed him. The reason seems to be something that shows up in their stage presentations. The Jefferson/Starship just looks and sound bored. True, how many times can you answer the same dumb questions and how many times can you sing *White Rabbit*? (Jefferson Airplane's original line-up included Skip Spence on drums, he was shortly replaced by Spencer Dryden who is now flying in a quite different direction. Spencer is now the power behind the New Riders of the Purple Sage. Extremely popular on the East Coast, for some reason, they have never quite caught on that way in the West. That's all right with Spence though. The NRPS saved him from what he thought was the end of the world. "I just couldn't take it anymore. I looked down from the stage at Altamont and it looked like a Hieronymus Bosch painting done in sepia-tone," says the lean, black-clad Spencer who still shivers at the memory. "We had done all those concerts and nothing happened. No one even had said anything bad to us. I guess the Airplane thought it was invincible, and it was ...until that day."

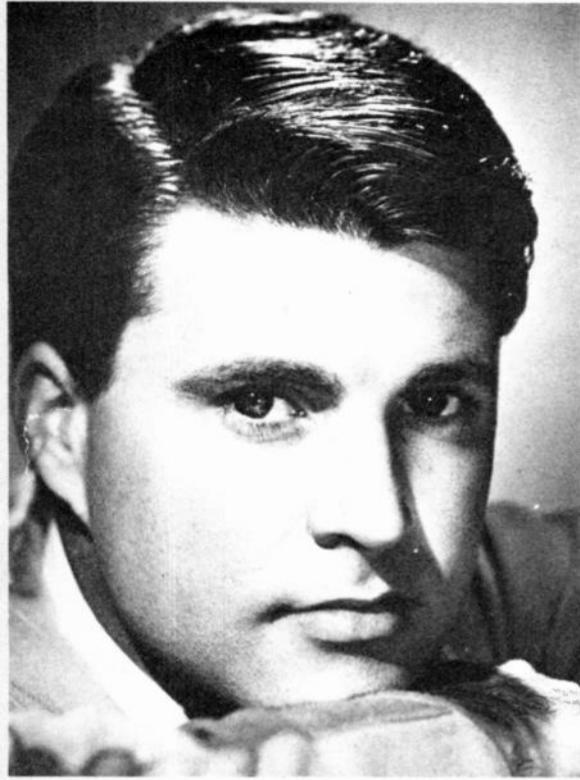
The movie made of the carnage, "Gimme Shelter" shows a much younger Marty Balin literally having the shit beaten out of him by the Hell's Angels, and Spencer Dryden and Paul Kantner trying to help. In fact, Spencer has a fan club just from that scene.

"I just couldn't believe there could be killing with music. From that day, I decided there had to be a change in my life. I'd, of course, done everything I could have done with the Airplane. I'd learned my job, and it was just like going to college. I'd put in my four years," muses Spence. "I'll always remember what happened to my mind that night."



RICK NELSON

A Lightweight No More



A combination of nightmare and good time music is what made up Rick Nelson's paen to paranoia, *Garden Party*. Told several people thought his well-documented being booted off the stage had nothing to do with him, but was instead directed to the managers for interminable waiting and bad sound, Rick says, "No way. I felt the hostility toward me the second I walked on the stage. That was for me and no one else. I wanted to do it. 20,000 people at Madison Square Garden...that was an ego trip for me. But all the rest of the act all came out in suits and with their hair slicked back, I came out with long hair and cowboy suits. No, it was me they were booing."

Nelson, despite giving starts to several now famous musicians, has always been considered something of a lightweight in the business which annoys him mightily. "I know people think I'm like Fabian or Frankie Avalon, but I think I have something to contribute."

Nelson will have plenty of time to contribute anything he wants. His father, Ozzie, known as having one of the finest business brains in the industry, engineered, personally a contract for his youngest son that is the envy of anyone in the record industry. Signed in 1963, he's MCA's until 1983, and he's financially set for life.



The Nelsons are the most visible of the extended-family idea. Ozzie's recent death still can only be alluded to by Rick, it seems to be too painful for him to discuss. But David is producing TV films, Harriet still sings, and Rick's own branch of the family is ubiquitous. Eric Hilliard Nelson married into the Harmons of Southern California. An All-American football player father-turned sportscaster, a movie star mother, a prize-winning football brother, and a sister who does those Raintree commercials are Kris Nelson's and she paints American primitives. And to show how far we've come, little Ricky is now the father of four.

"It's not that I'm ashamed of what I did then. It was my idea. I had to talk my dad into it. One week I'm an amateur singing *I'm Walkin'* on my dad's show. The next week the song was recorded and sold a million copies," says Rick, relaxing in his ranch house in the Hollywood Canyons. Signed Tiffany lamps co-exist with signed Andy Warhol Campbell Soup Cans. One of Kris' paintings takes up a whole wall and on the

FRANKIE VALLI

Right On Target



stairs to Rick's study there's a full-length painting of him in his Rio Bravo costume. All of the styles harmonize. A 1910 gas stove is the focal point of the kitchen, and the focal point of Rick Nelson is his hair. Around that still unlined choir boy's face, the brown hair is getting gray. Very gray.

Nelson just got his own star on Hollywood Boulevard, and is thinking about his new album. A guest-star appearance on Keith Moon's solo album led that rock'n roll zany to believe it was Nelson, not Moon who was crazy. Comparing his own life-style to Nelson's, Moon has been heard to mumble "he's nuts." The new album will probably have ex-Stone Canyon Band musician—now Eagle Randy Meisner sitting in, and this one too will probably be about love.

"I guess we have all just mellowed out," says Nelson. "There aren't that many songs around protesting anything. Maybe it will swing back to my way of singing, soon."

Somewhere in the middle of all of this, as he has been planted firmly in the middle of the road for years is Frankie Valli. Valli, apart from being a seminal influence on rock stars and a well remembered memory of our youth, is also selling records like a mother. He is currently working on his third and fourth gold records of this part of his career. Like Nelson, he appeals to two generations of fans. Unlike Nelson, he's firmly convinced he has always kept his fans because he's always been exactly what they wanted him to be.

Valli and Nelson, unlike many of the 60's stars have never completely retired. They'd always be appearing somewhere and Valli accomplished a feat of mind-blowing proportions—he sold out Madison Square Garden without a hit record. In fact, without a hit record for years. Those late-night movie ads for 2 album Four Season's Greatest Hits have sold enough to be platinum records, if they were counted and Valli in the second decade of his career has recently released four record albums. Asked whether this does not constitute something of an overkill, Valli replies, "No, it's good. My partner Bob Gaudio, one of the original Four Seasons, and I own all the masters outright. We bought out the other two guys and now it's ours. The album coming out on Motown is the really odd one. Berry Gordy, (president of Motown) is the biggest Four Seasons freak ever, and really wanted us on that label. He got busy being a movie director and that was the end of his interest in the record. I knew we had a hit on that record. For a while, I played in Vegas in one of the lounges and that wasn't too long ago, and each time I'd sing one song the people would scream. I'd call Motown, beg them to do something with that song, and nothing. Finally, I tried to buy the master of that record. They wanted too much money, all I could buy was the master to that one song. It was *My Eyes Adored You*.

Who Loves You? is the first song written by Gaudio in this new phase of the Four Seasons. Bob Gaudio wrote every one of those old gold records. Frankie now has a new young, Four Seasons band: Lee Shapiro, Don Ciccione, John Paiza, and Gerry Polce. Ciccione is an old Critter and the author of *Mr. Dyeingly Sad*. The new group are all fine musicians and Valli is dreaming of the days when this group of Four Seasons will be recording on their own. Says Valli, "I'm beginning to think in other directions. I've always had a problem with my ears and this month they're going

to do some operations on them, so I'll have to sit around for a while and think about where I'm going. I'm going to take some acting classes, it's something I've always wanted to do, and this new bunch of Four Seasons is really a thing I should work with. They are so good, and they have so much to contribute, maybe this enforced idleness will work for me."

The only time Valli has ever stepped out of character was a protest album recorded in 1968. It didn't sell five copies, and Valli sincerely believes that just isn't his thing. "I've been around the record business since I was 15. Do you think I know all about the record business? How can I possibly protest things I don't know as much about as I do records? I would take too long to learn about things to protest." Valli firmly believes he's been around this long because he can duplicate his records in person and he's never



done anything he thought his audience wouldn't accept. Valli, now 41, still listens to all the new record releases, loves Alice Cooper and is having the Elton John catalog sent to him to see what can be adapted for the Seasons. Not deliberately trying to do a disco song, he had a gigantic hit with *Swearin' To God in the Discos*, and he's focusing just a little differently on *Our Day Will Come*, a romantic disco record, not a raw sexual one.

All this is symptomatic of a phase the music business is going through (and not only in the States) that many see as part of the on-going cyclic nature of the industry.

Way back in the late Fifties records were made for dancing. Very few kids who bought *Little Darlin'* or *Mr. Blue*, or *The Stroll* did so in order to listen to them. These songs danced their way into our hearts and stuck there because we moved to their beat. Interestingly, the Beatles changed all that. Part of the greatness they brought to the music business was an intellectualism that, for many legitimized rock as an art form. We sat and listened and would no more think of dancing to *A Day In The Life* than to Beethoven's Fifth.

That appears to be changing now and has been for the past three years. The fiercely intense emotionalism of the late Sixties has given way to a form of the "Let's have fun and forget it all" sentiment that characterized much of the entertainment rolled out during the Depression Thirties. While sociological origins were at the root of much of the Sixties rock, economic roots must account for the first half of the Seventies.

In a few years, when 1975 will be a fond memory, we'll probably say: "Remember how we danced to *Get Down Tonight*? Ah, that crazy Seventy-Five!"

Bob Dylan's Rolling Thunder Revue: An Apocalyptic Experience

by Steve Weitzman



Somewhere in the dictionary of pop music it is written that great rock and roll is like a pair of Flo and Eddie's doubleknit pants. It stretches in all the right places. And the only way it can stretch is if it's loose to begin with.

Based on observations in Providence, Rhode Island (two shows) and Boston (three more), Bob Dylan's Rolling Thunder Revue, if anything, is loose — sometimes loose to the point of falling apart. But in its unpredictable moments, it lives up to the Great Rock and Roll Promise with such astounding regularity from night to night, that even the cynic in me is willing to admit this is IT. This vagabond troupe of folk hasbeens and rock usedtobes (Mick Ronson comes to mind) has somehow managed to rekindle a spirit for concerts that seemed as extinct as the brontosaurus.

Accompanied at various times onstage by Joan Baez, Roger McGuinn, Joni Mitchell, Ronee Blakely, Rambling Jack Elliot, Scarlet Rivera and the Rolling Thunder Revue Band which includes Bobby Neuwirth, Mick Ronson, David Mansfield, Steve Soles, Howie Wyeth, Bob Stoner, T. Bone Burnett and Luther Ricks, Dylan's manner would indicate he's having the time of his life. It was one thing to listen to him sing *Planet Waves* love songs on his '74 tour with the Band and have him tell us in so many words that, yes, he was finally happy. But it's another thing to watch him actually dance to the music of his band (he does the Dylan Shuffle — a couple of sidesteps, a lurch backward, a lurch forward, then a couple more sidesteps), smile a lot (even laugh and hold up a string when he breaks it, which is often) and hug and kiss his (female) stage pals (Baez and Blakely so far). Bob smooching Joni onstage would be a bit much for the weak-hearted to handle but the feelings appear genuinely contagious throughout the Revue and it invariably spills over into the audience.

Problems arise in communicating this spirit en masse when the Revue hits a larger hall, because of an inadequate PA and the nature of the act, and it has hit a few more arenas of 10,000 seats and up than was originally expected. Two shows at the Providence Civic Center (capacity 12,800) and one at the Springfield, Mass. Civic Center (100,000) were booked "to underwrite the rest of the tour," according to one spokes-

man. Later, however, two shows in New Haven were added (10,000 each), as well as Madison Square Garden, reportedly for a Hurricane Carter Benefit.

When the Rolling Thunder Revue was initially conceived by Dylan several months ago, he was quoted as saying he wanted to play "clubs." But apparently, the movie of the tour, being filmed by Howard Alk, necessitated a much larger cash flow and the move toward larger halls. Daily ticket prices have stayed from \$7.50 to \$8.50 everywhere, but overall financial logistics of the tour are almost impossible to obtain. When questioned about the change in policy, Dylan has said, "I never planned to play in anybody's living room." And Joan Baez retorted, "Tell them to just shove it up their asses."

Appropriately enough, those who've been fortunate to attend the more intimate shows such as the 1300 seat Harvard Square Theater in Boston, have been overwhelmingly ecstatic at the opportunity to hear Dylan, Joan Baez, Roger McGuinn, Joni Mitchell & company all on the same bill. Those, however, who find themselves in the rear sections of a hockey arena tend to view the same proceedings with a bit more reservation. This is one road show which has left itself completely at the mercy of the hall they play in. At Brandeis University, for example, where, according to a Revue spokesman, "Dylan knew the hall sucked but he wanted to play it anyway," the show was held in the gym — your normal concrete variety, and no one bothered to rent theater curtains which could've improved the sound; an obvious cutdown on expenses.

But when the conditions are ideal, everything clicks. The Rolling Thunder Revue Band led by Bobby Neuwirth, opens the show and is capable of delivering a beautifully, drunken set in the "loose as a goose with mah juice" country tradition of Dylan, Kristofferson, and Prine. Notes are missed, strings are broken and cues are blown but Neuwirth assures the audiences every night, "We'll all get to the end of the song at the same time." The individual members all get their own solo turns; Ronson introduces "Is There Life On Mars?.. from *Hunky Dory* as "a Roscoe West song" and his English rockstar poses seem humorously out of place amidst a stagefull of country musicians. Bassist Rob Stoner un-

veils "Catfish," a new Bob Dylan/Jacques Levy song about Yankee pitching star Catfish Hunter. The lyrics are surprisingly direct (lame even?) but some Dylan analyst somewhere will come up with a hidden meaning. The scene is a Yankee-A's baseball game:

Reggie Jackson at the plate
Don't see nuthin but the curve
Swing to early or too late
Gotta eat what Catfish serve
Catfish, the million dollar man
Nobody throws a ball the way Catfish
Hunter can.

After Neuwirth has sung "Me and Bobby McGee" (dedicating it "to someone who couldn't be here tonight"), Ronee Blakely is brought on and proves she can be as vocally pretentious as her album. (Why Emmylou Harris wasn't included either instead, or in addition to Blakely, remains the major mystery of this "Magical Mystery Tour" as Neuwirth calls it.) Joni Mitchell (earth-shattering applause) glides out to a mike, says naught, smiles naught, sings a total of seven minutes (two songs from her new album) seeming strangely distant and totally out of touch, and exits, stage right (more earth-shattering applause). Stage fright? After already being on the tour for two weeks? Only Joni knows. Neuwirth has to strum his guitar into the mike for several minutes while the applause for Joni continues. It halts only when he starts singing through it on a tune about Rambling Jack, at which time Jack saunters out, floppy leathers covering his jeans, carrying his guitar like a newborn babe. Rambling Jack delivers some tall tales ("912 Toulouse"), some taller yodeling ("Muleskinner Blues") and an incredible amount of warmth.

Usually after an hour or so, Dylan makes his played-down entrance, often choosing to come out unannounced and start tuning his guitar. With his Pat Garrett hat and his face painted white, so you can see his face from far away, he says, in the larger halls he usually is not perceived until he starts singing. And usually its "When I Paint My Masterpiece," accompanied by Neuwirth. Three new Dylan/Jacques Levy songs (out of seven such collaborations which will be on Dylan's next album from two intense writing sessions which produced fourteen

songs overall) have been premiered at various points in the shows. "Hurricane".. aided by a rangy and sinister-looking Scarlet Rivera on a cutting violin, tells (Dylan's) story of the incarcerated boxer, Rubin Carter. "Isis" (which got a standing ovation from Bruce Springsteen in New Haven), a lengthy half-spoken, half-sung narrative finds Dylan, minus guitar but backed by the Revue Band, arms flailing and eyes burning as he tears through the rendition with more theatrics than he's ever exhibited onstage, primarily due, it should be noted, to the suggestion of his new writing partner, famed off-Broadway director ("Oh Calcutta") Jacques Levy. The third Dylan/Levy tune in the show is "Romance in Durango," which Bob heartily dedicates to Sam Peckinpah. "And Sam," Dylan cracks, "if you're out there tonight, GOOD LUCK!" Dylan's effusiveness causes the stage to radiate. When a glowing Joan Baez joins him at the center-stage mike and their eyes meet and stay glued together for "I Shall Be Released," sparks fly. Baez wraps her arm around Dylan's neck for "Never Let Me Go," Mick Ronson contributes the most tasteful fills and solos of his career to a rendition of "I Dreamed I Saw St. Augustine," and the Dylan/Baez segment closes with "Blowin' In The Wind."

Dylan exits and Baez goes it alone for a half-hour, smoothing out the previously frenetic pace with consummate ease, singing a moving "Diamonds and Rust" to Dylan's absence. She sails through a half dozen more and McGuinn and the band replace her with an energized "Chestnut Mare" (a Roger McGuinn/Jacques Levy composition) and on special occasions like the late show at the Boston Music Hall, Ronson and McGuinn will trade hotter than hot licks on "Eight Miles High."

Dylan re-enters for a solo stint, perched on a stool for the first time, usually does "Mr. Tambourine Man," "It Ain't Me Babe," and "Sara" among others. The band joins him for "Just Like A Woman," McGuinn and Dylan share a mike for "Knockin' On Heaven's Door," which peaks over and over with each chorus and the entire troupe joins in on "This Land Is Your Land," at which point the show is nearly four hours old. Drained, exhausted and fulfilled, audience and performers alike slowly begin coming back to earth. And it ain't easy.

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DONNA SUMMER

Moanin' and Groanin' to Success

by Frederick Douglas Murphy



PHOTO BY DUCCI

What Donna Summer does for moaning and groaning is comparable to what Bojangles did for tap. She does it to the max, exactly 16 minutes and 50 seconds of it blended with lush strings, angelic choraling and the unmistakable highs and lows of an orgasmatic trip. From a woman's lib perspective, she would probably be considered the apple of every male chauvinist pigs' eye. A very sexy and intelligent woman, Donna Summer declares that her hit album, *Love To Love You Baby* (Oasis Records), especially the long version of the title tune, "is music to make love by but if you want to dance or just listen, it's cool." She finds it hilarious that she had to leave Boston nine years ago to go to Europe to pursue a career as a singer here.

A few months ago, she and her producers were putting an album together in Manheim Germany where she lives. Donna kept singing the words "love to love you baby" which was taken from another song and the team decided to lay some tracks behind it. The album was distributed first in the United States by Casablanca Records and within weeks had sold over 200,000 units in New York City alone. The initial success was the result of discotheques where it first caught on. Once the album received airplay, it went gold. *Love To Love You Baby* is one of those phenomenal records that is immediately monotonous but after a while becomes infectious. Not even Donna thought that particular cut would be a hit. "I never thought this record would take off the way it did," she candidly recalls. "I don't hype myself up because you can do that to a point where you believe something and it leaves you no peace and no sleep. I just went into the studio and did the song and let my producer take care of the rest of it. When he said it's a hit, I said, ok, out of sight."

Today, Donna Summer is the girl of the hour in the record industry. And like all one hit record newcomers, she is receiving all the pizazz, attention and acclaim that comes with a monster hit record. Someone thought of the idea of presenting her with a huge cake voluptuously shaped in her image in a seductive pose. One hip was missing from the cake. Donna said she had eaten it herself to keep anyone else from taking a bite of it.

A very funny, laughable woman, Donna Summer has more of a theatrical personality than that of a sexy songstress. She keeps you laughing with her gestures and wry comments in spite of the fact that she is constantly telling you what a really serious person she is. More than that, she is honest. "Someone told me I was singing commercial trash. If it's a matter of being rich or being poor and I have a choice, naturally I will take the opportunity to get rich. If commercial trash sells and makes the pennies, I'm going to sing it and make my pennies. This album will let people know who I am. I have no definite style or image. If this album sets it and gives me an identity, her I am. I've been in Europe too long to consider myself a soul singer. Soul music sells in Europe but my producers are into another direction. Besides, I wasn't trying to push myself that way. I'm just trying to get over! I don't care how they take me, just as long as they take me."

Donna Summers grew up in Boston and dropped out of high school nine years ago to prove a point. "I had to show them that I did not need a highschool diploma to do what I knew I was going to do, sing." She eventually left her parents and four sisters and a brother to travel with a white rock group called The Crow. The group toured the Boston college circuit, got as far as New York's Purple Onion club and split up. Distressed Donna auditioned for Melba Moore's role in Hair, met one of the original co-producers and a week later found herself in Germany. "This French guy asked my how far did I want to go and I told him as far as I could get. He placed me in the German production of Hair and that is where I established myself. It took me two months to learn the language." After Hair, Donna appeared in Godspell, The Me Nobody Knows and Porgy and Bess. "All the American musicals are done as operas in Germany which is very heavy. I had never had any professional training as a singer and found myself singing opera, surrounded by live elephants and horses on stage with a hundred people and all kinds of props. But I was different. There were other black singers but they were strictly opera singers. I had that show biz thing I learned in Hair and it set me apart."

She traveled throughout Germany, France, Holland and

Belgium but settled in Manheim which is a mecca for black and white American musicians. "Living in Germany is hard on all of us," she admits. "Most musicians are living in a 'financial ghetto' because they are handicapped. The music they are accustomed to making can't sell in Europe. When you record in the European market you have to have a very commercial sound by their standards. They are respected but have a limited following. I have a couple of gold records but I would never release them in this country. It's not the same kind of music."

Donna's kind of music is any music that will get her ahead. She is presently planning a tour of the United States using her four sisters as backup singers. Her plans about staying in Europe are indefinite. She's "looking ahead" and looking forward to her divorce which is almost final. "I could not see myself putting my husband through changes for the rest of my life so I figured it's better now than later. He'll have much more of his life because it's very hard to be with someone like me," she says with a look as though she was uncertain about what she meant. "And it's hard for a man to accept the fact that he is with a woman that is successful. And I have always been successful at whatever I was into. Sometimes I forget other people around me because I get that involved in my work. It's not being selfish. I am trying to do it so that I can reach a point so that I can say to somebody, here, now I am at the point where I can help you. But I can't help you if I can't help myself. As a kid no one ever took me seriously because I was always joking. I am a very sensitive sincere person. I started singing to show people I could feel something, that I was more than just a clown. I was so insecure that I used to stutter. I sang a song once called *I Found The Answer*, a spiritual by Mahalia Jackson. It taught me how to open my mouth and let it all out. And I intend to keep on doing it."

From a stutter to a million dollar moan is quite a trip. But there is much more to Donna Summer than sexy sighs and witty remarks. She is a natural for the stage. Although she is busy launching her recording career in the United States, she is also rolling a very seductive eye towards Broadway. !

A high-contrast, black and white photograph of the band Kiss performing live on stage. Gene Simmons is in the foreground, wearing his signature whiteface and a black leather jacket, holding a guitar. Paul Stanley is visible behind him, also in stage makeup. The stage is lit with dramatic, colorful lights.

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Between Songs

by Danny Fields

"Nostalgia!" snorted Roger Daltrey, "the press said this would be nostalgia. Well, it ain't no bloody nostalgia, and everyone saw that tonight. Bloody writers don't know what they're talking about!" As indignancy goes, Daltrey's was a bit forced, but he and the Who had just opened their American tour with a triumphant concert at Houston's Summit, this was the big party afterwards, and Roger was within his rights sounding off if he wanted to. Roger didn't stay long at the party, but Pete Townshend, John Entwistle and Keith Moon were there almost to the very end, meeting and greeting their many Texas fans lucky enough to have an invitation to this very lavish feast. I told Townshend that the group certainly seemed happier on stage than they were at Madison Square Garden in June 1974 (I'm sure they'd rather forget that one, but it was the last time I'd seen them play, so what the hell), and he responded by saying, "But Keith Moon laughed at me! Did you see that?" I actually had no idea what he was talking about, but agreed it was amazing and walked on. You don't want to get into any deep discussions with these musicians at their own parties, take my word for it. The party eventually turned into quite a wing-ding, when a bevy of topless dancing girls appeared, accompanied by Keith Moon on concertina (ie, "Squeeze Box"). It even turned out that dancing was not the only talent these girls had, for they were soon giving head to a member of the Who's road crew, right there on a stage in the Grand Ballroom of the opulent Royal Oaks Hotel, with everyone standing around grinning and giggling. Except the hotel management and the police, that is—at first paralyzed with astonishment, these grown-ups quickly decided to Put A Stop to all the debauchery and of course did. By the way, the Who never sounded better, and I've been going to their concerts since their first American appearance in New York in the spring of 1967, so that's saying a lot.

Speaking of Texas, that great state was the scene of ZZ Top's mammoth homecoming one week after the Who, and the boys went all-out for this one. The floors of the arenas in San Antonio, Houston, Fort Worth and Dallas were painted with an aerial view of the Rio Grande, complete with rocks, grass, etc. Around the stages, a corral was built with live cactus, boulders, wagon wheels, saddles and even trained rodeo vultures (who were, however, under strict orders not to swoop). Naturally, ZZ sold out every show, as they've been doing everywhere.



The Wings tour was denied entry into Japan, and the reason given was—can you believe it?—Paul McCartney's minor marijuana bust in the 1960's. Remember when they found some plants growing in his backyard on a remote farm many years ago? Well, because of that he and his group cannot set foot in Japan in 1975. Reportedly, Paul and Linda were both incredulous and hopping mad about the ban, but there was nothing that could be done. Paul, of course, has other problems besides Japan—he still does not have a performing visa for the United States, and this could complicate the projected Wings tour for 1976. Like John Lennon, who also does not possess this precious piece of paper, Paul can only play here at benefits. Who makes these rules anyhow?

Roxy Music has always enjoyed a warm welcome in New York City, but from the looks and feelings of things, it's pretty sure that their current tour and single will break them big all over the states. The night before their recent smash concert at New York's Beacon, the members of Roxy Music were guests of honor at a party given for them by Atlantic Records exec Earl McGrath in his sprawling West Side apartment. Among those who came to eat and drink were Andy Warhol, Sylvia Miles, Peter Wolf, Maggie Bell, Hamish Stuart of the Average White Band (without his current girlfriend, Bette Midler), and Bryan Ferry's own favorite covergirl of the moment, Ms. Jerry Hall, who is the "siren" on the album of that name.

The Tubes are finishing their first national tour just about now, and are making ready to enter the studio to do their second LP, to be entitled *The Tubes World Tour*. It is possible that Al Kooper, who produced their first album, may not produce this one, though nothing is definite as we go to press. Also, the group will be putting together a new show, retaining only two or three numbers from the extravaganza that made them famous. "This time the music will not be sacrificed to the theatrics," said Tubes synthesizer player and resident artist (along with drummer Prairie Prince) Michael Cotten. "There has been a tendency for that to happen, and we want to make sure everyone knows that the band can really play."

Ordered by his doctor to take a vacation, Elton John fled to Paris but after a little while decided he hated it there (everyone who's been to Paris can understand the feeling, as well as its opposite), and split for the Barbados, where he intends to spend much of the winter... Patti Smith's first album, "Horses," is a big commercial success, and what with all the publicity she's been getting, those close to her were becoming concerned that another Bruce Springsteen hype was in the making and cooled it out before it got out of hand. As everyone knows, the backlash against Springsteen has been very heavy, and the simultaneous Time and Newsweek covers did all but make him the laughing stock of the music business. In England it was even worse—the critics were obviously annoyed at hearing "the new Bob Dylan" was coming, and were very harsh on him. With Patti's talent, there's not too much danger of a real backlash, but the people she works with still know that "too much too soon" is a very dangerous proposition... Lou Reed has become an avid fan of a new New York band called the Ramones, and even made his own cassette tape of a recent performance of theirs at CBGB's, mecca for all the New York "underground" bands. Patti herself came out of the CBGB scene, and along with the Ramones there are several fantastically interesting bands playing there, such as Television, Talking Heads and Tuff Darts. It's still difficult to get record executives down there (the club is located in the Skid Row neighborhood), but for visiting musicians and journalists, especially those from the West Coast and England, the club is the number one "musical must" on any visit to the Big Apple... Led Zeppelin will not tour in America before June, but their next album will be out by March at the latest. See you well before that.



DESIGNED BY RON LIEBERMAN

10cc

From Singles To Soundtracks

by Steve Rosen



PHOTO BY NEAL ZLOZOWER

Though the success of 10cc has been explosive during the past year that prosperity was preceded by a year of slim pickings and frustration. The story really starts with The Whirlwind, an amateur outfit Graham Gouldman constructed to play at Barnitzvahs and other social functions. This group drew much of its sound from Buddy Holly but even at this early age (he was less than 20) he was writing and singing original material.

"Buddy Holly and Eddie Cochran were two of my biggest influences," the bassist explains. "Connie Francis and Duane Eddie were two others. Funny but the English artists at that time just didn't make it; Tommy Steele in a way didn't quite have it. I mean how could you say 'shake your oss'...you had to say 'shake your ass' (American slang)."

Following a disappointing period with them, Gouldman formed the Mockingbirds which again failed to break into the commercial mainstream. The most distressing aspect was that Graham was also writing for outside groups and the music he was writing for them was hitting instantly. Among those ten during this period were *No Milk Today* and *Listen People* for Herman's Hermits; *Pallyman* for Jeff Beck; *For Your Love* for Yardbirds; *Bus Stop* and *Look Through Any Window* for the Hollies. The material he was composing for The Mockingbirds was fully saleable but for some reason went unnoticed. This then accounts for the major change in writing style. When Gouldman would sit down to deliberately write a "pop" song he will now convene with Kevin, Lol and Eric.

Most of 10cc's material is group written accounting for another major difference and they work a song up from scratch and let it take whatever direction it may.

We've never recorded a track that one person has written. The songs arrive out of bits. On the new album (titled *How Dare You*) there's an instrumental that Kevin and Lol wrote nearly five years ago. Just waiting for the pieces to come together. It was easy in the old days... I'd just sit down and write a song in the pop vein. Now it's working with three other guys and using different pieces and it's much harder. I mean there's a time element too. We take a lot of time to write a song, much more than when I was writing those other songs. Remember, that was pure pop and I was thinking 100% pop. I mean I'd look at the time and if it was 3 minutes and 50 seconds I'd think, forget it, I have to cut a minute off it and I'd do it.

In 1968, Gouldman decided to abandon the group scene, released his first and only solo album titled *The Graham Gouldman Thing*. On it he converged all the songs he had been writing for outside parties (including *For Your Love* and *No Milk Today*). The Thing did moderately well; two singles were released but not enough to satisfy Gouldman. A year

later he fell in with Lol Creme, Kevin Godley and Eric Stewart who were busy building Strawberry Studios. Basically, the trio was a self-contained package. They would find the talent, write material, sing back-ups and record it. They did this with nearly dozens of artists hoping for a hit.

In 1971, Creme, Godley and Stewart put out the *Hotlegs* album (titled *Hotlegs Stink*) and had an English hit with *Neanderthal Man*. Using this leverage then, he released the single *Donna* under the name 10cc and shortly thereafter recorded an album under the same name. *Rubber Bullets* was the single from this album and broke both England and the U.S. Now, three albums later (*Sheet Music*, *The Original Soundtrack* and *10cc*) 10cc is a concert headliner and a record seller.

It was just last year that the group toured America for the first time and though they've all had years of seasoning in the studio their live experience was minimal. The results were obvious; nervousness, poor sound and generally immobile presentations. But Gouldman feels that it was beyond their control.

"Being a support act (as they were on their first tour) means that you're not allowed to bring in your own P.A. system; you are not allowed to bring in your own lights; you do not get adequate time for sound checks and you are not allowed to do your full show."

"And that all reflects on your show," maintains Creme, a shortish fellow responsible for the falsetto lead on *Donna*. "Because we pride ourselves on our sound and we went to great lengths to build our own system which is a reproduction of our own studio. But we weren't allowed to bring it so we didn't come back until we were in a position where we could."

Under those conditions Creme felt the band did reasonably well but was not indicative of what they're really capable of. On their current tour they are supported by their own lights and sound.

"Things have been growing in leaps and bounds," sights Creme, referring to the sales of *Soundtrack*, which now allows the band to command top billing. The instant and most obvious source of the record's popularity is the record company. "It's got to be more than coincidence...We've had records out that should have been hits that weren't, we felt. And immediately we go to Phonogram and we've got a hit."

The new album *How Dare You* is just released and one can be sure it will be as different from *Soundtrack* as that record was from *Sheet Music*.

"We're always pushing ourselves," says Creme. "We treat each track as a new thing. We won't do a 'I'm Not In Love Pt. 11' or a 'Paris Pt. 11.' We'll still have dramatic spots in the music and atmosphere but we'll always be changing."

AVERAGE WHITE BAND

The Right to Sing the Blues

By Lynn Kellermann



How did six white dudes from Scotland muster up enough chutzpah to come to America and intervene in what so many consider the strictly black territory of rhythm and blues? Well, it just so happens that soulfulness doesn't come packaged in one color only—you're either born with it or you ain't and Average White Band definitely's been blessed.

Despite what they choose to call themselves, mediocrity has nothing whatsoever to do with AWB's quality of musicianship. "They were sitting around figuring out different names for the group," drummer Stephen Ferrone explained. A relatively new addition to AWB, and, no profundity intended, it's only black member, Steve added. "At first they tried something like the Soul Fiends, but that didn't make it. Then someone brought up the saying that originated in Britain in the days of the colonies. All the white missionaries in India used to complain about the heat and the fact that it was too much for the 'average white man' to hack. So they thought, why not call ourselves Average White Band? It really clicked. I don't think it was a dig on how we play our music, but more of a dig on the whole white rock scene."

Members Alan Gorrie, Roger Ball, Molly Duncan, Hamish Stuart, Onnie McIntyre, and, at the time, Robbie McIntosh on drums, who died tragically of a drug overdose last year, came to the States never expecting to become strangers in a strange land of "black" music. "You can't say that this is black and this is white, because you're going to put barriers up between them and never come out with anything constructive," Stephen commented. "We'd all played rhythm and blues since the early 60's back home. That was all that was around. Then people started to get bored with all the monotony, and the freak sound invaded. It had to be way out, giant amplifiers and all, or it didn't make it. Everything we'd ever been influenced by was American; B.B. King, Aretha, Marvin Gaye. We had piles and piles of Motown records. So we came here, thinking it would be perfect to play the music we liked."

When AWB hit the States in 1973 they'd already established themselves in Britain by playing rowdy clubs and dance halls. Jaunting to the States, AWB opened for B.B. King at L.A.'s Troubadour and backed up Bonnie Bramlett on her first solo LP, hoping eventually to make the States their stomping grounds. Playing to surprisingly affable glitter crowds at Hollywood's Whiskey, they returned to Scotland, beaming from the rave reviews they'd received. After changing management, agencies and record companies, they returned for a second tour in 1974, ending it climactically with a hit album on Atlantic.

In the midst of all the imminent success, Robbie died. But the crisis was not overpowering enough to sap their strength. After doing several gigs with replacement drummers, Stephen was asked to join on a permanent

basis. He'd been friends with Robbie back in the days of their affiliation with Brian Auger's Oblivion Express. He'd adapted to and believed in the group's style and sticktoitiveness.

The fact that Stephen added some "color" to the band has stirred up inevitable analysis and interpretation among writers and musicians who've been skeptical from the beginning about AWB's detrimental whiteness. Were they making some sort of political platform or was it an attempt to be accepted, finally, as authentic rhythm and blues?

"They hired me because I was a good musician," Stephen pointed out emphatically, rocking on an antique chair he'd found in the garbage. "We don't and never have believed in musical walls. In fact, before we came here, we were unaware that R&B was considered black American music at all."

"Let's put it this way," he continued. "When it comes down to it, the origins of what is called black American music is African, not American at all. I'm British. Does that mean I can't play African music? True, rhythm has always been black, but blues is a blend of a million influences. It's the combination of the two that makes the best music."

Jagger Kissing Who?

"It was like being a child who grows-up thinking everyone is equal and finally realized the world doesn't agree," Stephen recalled laughingly. "The entertainment business for me has always been the one business I could count on not having any drawback because of my color. I've always thought that. Now I'm 25 and I realize it's different. Nobody said Billy Preston was kissing Mick Jagger's ass when he went on tour with The Stones. They took on a lot of black musicians, simply because they were good. Turn it around the other way; nobody said Jagger was kissing Preston's ass either. Yet they jump on us. Why? We're top-notch whether we're black, white, purple or green!"

My mind digressed to a past experience, watching Rashaa Roland Kirk perform at a NY club. Notorious for making political statements, the multi-mouthed jazz man went off on a tangent about AWB being "below" average, exploiting the black audience with fakery.

"What right has Roland Kirk to tell us what we can play or what we're trying to do?" Stephen said explosively. "He's an excellent musician and I respect him for it. James Brown is another one who's kicked us around a bit. But the thing is it's all a matter of influence. If Alan and Roger have collected Cannonball Adderley albums and John Coltrane all their lives, how on earth do you expect them to turn around and start playing rock and roll if they don't feel it? Put a rock album on and they'll walk out of the room. Play a Coltrane album though and they'll sit up all night listening to it."

Managing to make the necessary crossover that insures satiation for white and black audiences, AWB can now look back on the whole racial rigamarole lightly. "Most of the people in America thought the band was black," Stephen said. "When it suddenly dawned on them that they were white it freaked them out. Yet they'd already accepted us. The digs were unavoidable but the funny thing is that people didn't begin digging until the band had really made it. I guess that criticism is a sign of success!"

Despite all the controversy, AWB refuses to succumb to the "harshness" of rock & roll. And at this point they can afford to do whatever they want. Their second Album, *Cut The Cake*, is doing quite well on its own merits. Stuart and Gorrie's high-pitched sensual voices dance gracefully over a carefully contrived tempo, with a melody line that even gets the waste-up dancers off their chairs. As Alan Gorrie puts it: "Our policy is to keep the music as tough as possible, but not too complex. We try and combine the best of what we've learned from big band writing, like Oliver Nelson and James Brown. If you combine that with a simple melody, when you get up on stage you're not so hung-up on arrangements. So many of the black acts can't let themselves go on stage, they're so restricted by choreography and arrangements. It loses something because it stops the toughness."

The blues has been described in the dictionary as everything from "an unhappy depressed feeling" to "the mopes" or "the dismals." Add a solid rhythm to that and Average White Band definitely cuts the cake. "You can tell when people are emotionally involved in what they're playing," Alan commented. "I think the blues conveys true feeling. The word sincerity is abused, because so many studio musicians come out of sessions with good material whether they mean it or not. It's their technique. But most of the time you can separate computerized record making from the real thing."

Plans for the future? Aside from working diligently on their third LP, AWB would like to try a tour with the Brecker Brothers, an all white band bordering on R&B and jazz. It's a plan that brings AWB's message across more fervently—that R&B is a state of consciousness, emotion set to music, feeling . . . that can't be owned by anybody in particular. Yet the total abandonment of barriers has not been achieved.

"There's one guy that really did make the crossover work and that was Sly Stone," Stephen said. "He makes everybody happy. Stevie Wonder too. Nobody's saying that R&B wasn't born in the black man's soul, but it belongs to everyone now. Tchaikovsky said 100 years from his time the biggest influence in music would be the black American. That's certainly the truth. But it's all encompassing now. Music isn't hate, it's love. Play anything you want, any way you want to, as long as you put your heart into it."

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BACKSTAGE JITTERS

by Jim Pettigrew



Have you ever been sitting in an 18,000 seat hall, outdoors in a gigantic stadium, or even in a small club, and wondered what goes on in that rock star's head—or how they act—just before the show goes on?

Anyone who's ever had to confront an audience, whether it be for a speech, a grammar school play, an awards banquet, a class, or even a pep rally—can identify with the situation. The chilling moment of fear, combined with anticipation and other emotions, is a wondrous thing indeed. The prospect of facing a gathering of people throughout history has reduced some to tearful wrecks, and transformed others into larger-than-life demigods. Ever since the Dark Ages, when mummers and jesters who didn't deliver were roundly dosed with rotten tomatoes and other unsavory produce, going before an assemblage for whatever purpose—has had its inherent dangers. The basics have changed little. Now, at a rock show, the performer may get anything from a standing ovation to a random cigarette butt or wine bottle. The Band once sang about it this way:

See the man with stage fright
Just standing up there to give it all his might
And he got caught in the spotlight
But when we get to the end
We want to start all over again*

Since all Super acts are heavily guarded in this advanced age, it is difficult to observe the performers closely just before they go on. This is particularly true with the Rolling Stones. During the Summer '75 tour, access to any member was almost impossible, because the Stones' security people were, to say the least, overzealous. However, Janet Caldwell—assistant to Alex Cooley, one of the South's most influential promoters—had a first hand opportunity to watch them opening night in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

"Of course, everything was utter chaos," she said, "since it was the first show of the tour, but everyone was remarkably collected under the conditions. For example, Bill Wyman wandered into the auditorium office just before the first set, very cool and unruffled. He was looking for some 'paper clippers' and finally it dawned on me that he wanted a *stapler*. He was very professional, not nervous at all."

At the mammoth Gator Bowl concert in August (one of the tour's last dates), it was possible to get a close look at Mick Jagger as he stepped from his limo in the broiling Jacksonville, Florida sun. Walking quickly from the auto to the makeshift trailer/dressing room, he looked for all the world like a scared rabbit, and it was little wonder because there were thousands of fans directly overhead in the bleachers, cheering and stomping for the Stones. Moments later as he danced onstage confident and swaggering, it was almost as if he'd undergone some strange rock and roll metamorphosis.

On the whole, British groups seem to be more uptight and reticent than their American counterparts im-

mediately before the metal and thunder. Uncertainty as to what sort of reaction they will receive is often a factor. Roy Wood and Wizzard were notably anxious on the eve of an Atlanta show on the last tour. "I'm concerned," Wood confided, "because we've never played here before and we have heard that this crowd wants nothing but soul and boogie (a totally fallacious myth)."

It's not unusual to see groups including Ten Years After, Black Sabbath, Procol Harum, Renaissance, Robin Trower, and Fleetwood Mac moving towards the wings, tightlipped and clutching their instruments. These bands and others from England seem to go into a sort of tension void and then spill it all out once the first number has started.

Greg Lake once proved to be an exception. Giving a rare interview minutes before a sold-out Emerson, Lake, and Palmer concert, he appeared as relaxed and settled as he might be in his own home, having tea. As he pulled on a beautiful studded jacket, he could have been about to go for a walk instead of about to face a small city of people, for all his calm demeanor. "I guess I had better go and entertain," he smiled shyly as the roadie called the two-minute cue.

Many artists find it difficult to articulate what goes on in their minds preceding a show. A comment often heard is 'Man, I don't think about anything, least of all the crowd; I know they're out there but they seem kind of far away until the cheering starts.' Surprisingly, the crowd size does not matter in most cases. Many performers say there's no difference in the way they feel—if there is fifty or half a million people out there.

Martin Mull and Lily Tomlin, two very funny people onstage, are each very withdrawn and quiet, almost taciturn before their respective crowd-splitting vignettes begin. The "softer" performers—Melissa Manchester, Linda Ronstadt, Wendy Waldman, Harry Chapin, and others also fit into this introspective vein before they go on the boards, at times acting almost like lambs before the slaughter. Ronstadt, just prior to a recent set, appeared especially petrified; then, of course, she went out and knocked her adoring audience dead.

Folkies, including Jonathan Edwards, Jimmy Buffet, Judy Collins, and many others form a rather close parallel, from all outward appearances going into a sort of "mental tuning up" phase before they walk to the wings.

Even though it's a fragmentary theory at best, one could postulate a simple correlation between the artist's music and his or her (or their) actions ahead of showtime: the quieter the music, the more reserved (and/or nervous) the performer

The opposite holds true ordinarily for the louder and more raucous rock bands. With J. Geils, Kiss, and Marshall Tucker at the forefront, these groups are invariably joking and clowning around in the dressing rooms, as nonplussed as if they were going out bar-hopping—even when the tumult of thousands is audible just down the corridor. For instance, at a show not too

long ago, Peter Wolf (feet propped up on a dressing table), Magic Dick, and Seth Justman were harmonizing on ancient country standards, throwing beer cans at the wall, and poking fun at Mountain, who were outside winding down their earthquake; it was the antithesis of Stage Fear.

While not as boisterous as some of the former, the Allman Brothers Band are usually pretty loose before a concert. There is a lot of backslapping, telling of thrilling wonder stories, and hanging out with friends.

Last summer in Macon, Gregg Allman graphically showed the difference between the real person and the Rock Idol seen on stage. Walking down the steps to a local venue for an unannounced jam, he confided in a genuine whiskey-voiced whisper, "Man, I'm scared shitless! I haven't been out there in months . . ." A little later, as Gregg was standing at the organ and belting a familiar tune, a close friend furthered the story: "Last winter during Gregg's tour, we were opening for the Sons of Champlin on some dates in California. The first night, he said, 'Damn, I can't go out there, those guys are good, really good.' Later that night we went to see Ray Charles in San Francisco. The next night, Gregg went out and killed 'em . . ."

Touring blues acts and bands are unanimously the most relaxed before the first bars are struck, and this is probably because all of them have been on the road for years, the veterans of thousands of dates. You'll often see bandmembers—and leaders—including B.B. King, Muddy Waters, James Cotton, Howlin' Wolf, and John Lee Hooker sitting and mingling through the audience, only moments before their sets begin. B.B. King, as a good indicator, once gave me a complete interview while he was tuning up Lucille and his band was already onstage cooking up an enormous outdoor crowd.

Certain groups show an absolute paucity of either nervousness or frivolity just as the tension mounts and the lights dim for the emcee's announcement. Among the most notable is ZZ Top, who move toward the stage with the clam, singleminded elan of surgeons or nuclear technicians about to assemble an H-bomb. Drummer Frank Beard explained: "A lot of my friends ask me, 'How can you be so cool when there's a whole stadium full of people out there stomping and yelling?' It's simple (chuckling), they call me the Iceman . . . it really makes no difference if there's ten or a zillion people waiting, the music and the licks are gonna be the same. Most of the time we can't see beyond the third row anyway."

After an Atlanta Rhythm Section last Labor Day (they're poised and professional in the prelude), Robert Nix summed up ZZ Top's serene approach over a pre-dawn breakfast: "Man, there were 80,000 fuckin' people out there at the Florida Jam in Tampa and ZZ were the headliners. Billy Gibbons strolled up to the microphone, holding his guitar out by the neck, and said (drawling), 'Hey, I hear y'all want to hear some blues. . . .' The whole place just went nuts. I'm tellin' you, that took balls."

*Robbie Robertson; Canaan Music (ASCAP)



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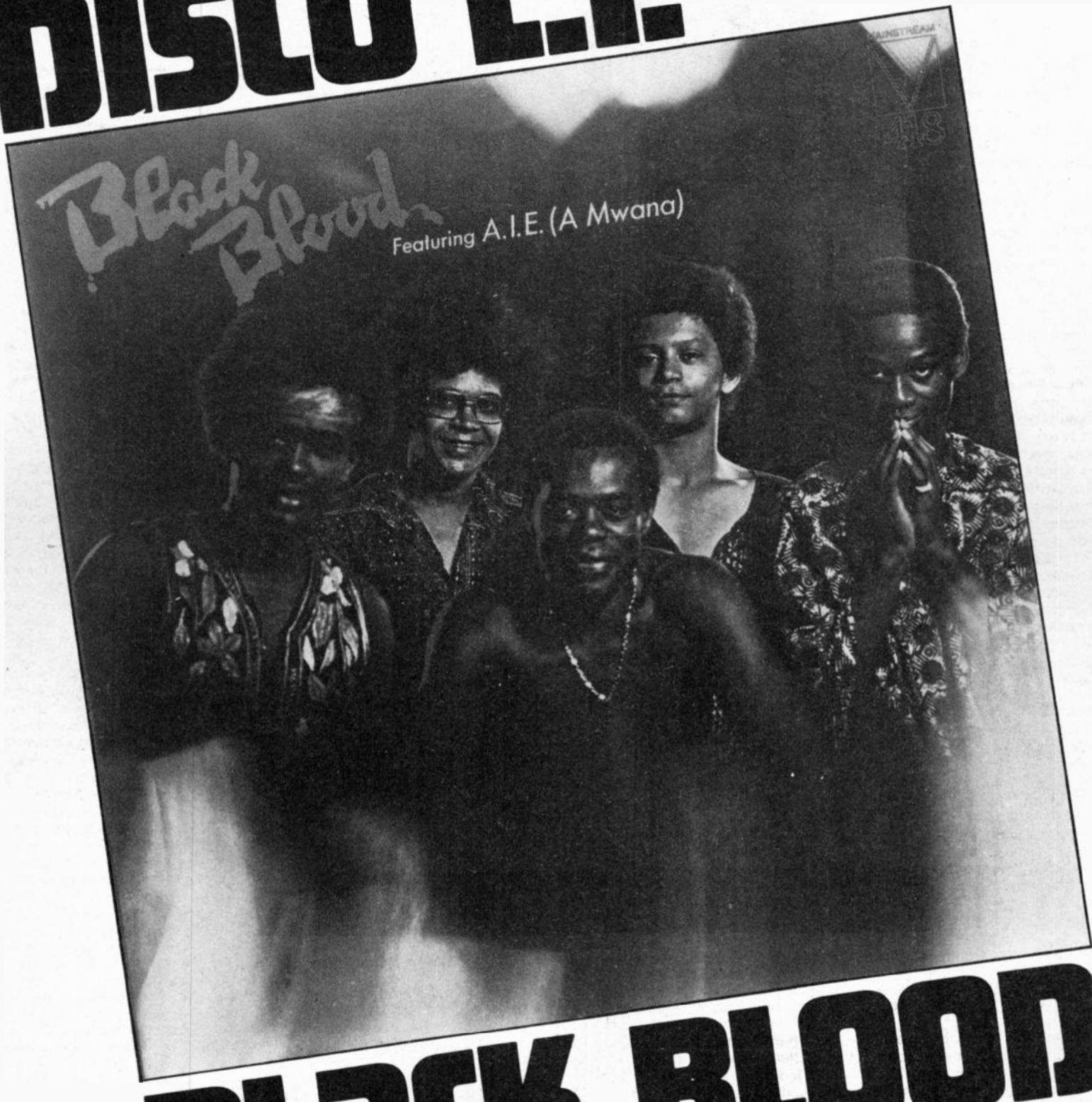
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STEPHANIE MILLS

Stardom In The Land Of Oz

by Kris DiLorenzo



PHOTO BY LEN DELESSIO

Usually meeting a "star" automatically deflates one's glamorized image of that star. Talking with that "star" dispels even more of the myth, and very often one walks away from an interview with that "gee, what a schmuck" feeling.

A conversation with Stephanie Mills, young star of Broadway's "The Wiz," was, happily, a different experience altogether. There was none of the "Don't touch me, I'm a Star" air about her, nor was there any cutesy precocity. Yet after less than an hour in her presence, one is convinced that Stephanie Mills is indeed a Star—a very special one.

Stephanie, for those unaware of the miracle on 44th Street, is the 16-year-old singer/dancer/actress who portrays Dorothy in the all-black Wizard of Oz currently playing at the Majestic Theatre. "The Wiz" is dazzling, from its imaginative rendering of the Kansas tornado to its Superfly-handsome hip Wiz, and even in the midst of such gloriously mind-boggling fantasy, little Stephanie shines so brightly as to make one forget Judy Garland. Time Magazine likened her singing to "an angel on furlough;" Newsweek and the N.Y. News both praised her big-voiced performances, and audience reaction varies from tears to joyous whoops as Stephanie/Dorothy eases her way through her onstage trials and triumphs.

It's easy to see why Ms. Mills excites such emotion in her role as the spunky little girl from Kansas who wipes out witches, tames lions, and unmasks frauds wherever she goes. Stephanie's singing is powerful, rich and gutsy, yet she can be appealingly lost and heart-breakingly sad at the right moments. There's nothing hokey about her performance, yet it's difficult to believe that Stephanie Mills is just 16 years old, and hasn't had a music lesson in her life. One is tempted to compare her to Aretha already, yet there's something not quite right about that. She's very definitely Stephanie Mills, and very definitely somebody important.

Offstage, it's almost a shock to see a 16-year-old "Star", standing no taller than your little sister, skin free of makeup, munching home-made brownies in her elegant star's dressing room. Stephanie looks like other 16-year-olds, but she speaks like a very special 16-year-old—one who knows where she's going and what she can do. Judging from her background and her performance in "The Wiz," there's probably nothing Stephanie Mills can't do, once she sets her mind and voice to it.

Stephanie's been singing since an early age, starting with her sister in a storefront church choir. Not long after, she won the Apollo Theater's famed Amateur Night Show—six weeks in a row. That feather in her cap won her an engagement at the Apollo and several other N.Y. clubs, including an off-Broadway appearance with the Negro Ensemble Company. "But," Stephanie says, "I wasn't interested in it right away. It wasn't until I did 'Maggie Flynn' (her first Broadway show) that I really wanted to be in show business. That was when I was about nine." She drops this bomb so matter-of-factly that it seems perfectly normal for a 9-year-old to begin the climb to stardom and reach it at age 16.

The Mills family was always supportive of Stephanie's career, yet she wasn't pressured into performing, as Garland was, by an ambitious parent. "My mother?" she says when asked about it. "No, she's not a stage mother. I wouldn't call her a stage mother, even though she pushed me and helped me to keep going forward." Today the whole Mills clan is involved in Stephanie's work, and they all obviously love it that way. Older brother Joey and sister Audrey are

Stephanie's managers and handle all her business; Joey is with Stephanie most of the time. "It's a family thing," Stephanie says with a trace of pride in her voice. "No outsiders, really, except for maybe my lawyer."

One of the first things one notices about Stephanie is her stature. Physically, she is small and sturdy, but more important is her amazing straight forwardness and the energy she projects even just lounging in her bathrobe. Stephanie looks you in the eye when she speaks; she doesn't have any of the myriad little nervous habits teenagers so often exhibit. She's relaxed yet assertive, friendly and real. She seems comfortable with her success, neither flaunting it nor minimizing it. Stephanie is not self-obsessed, which makes her all the more impressive. From her attitude toward her work, it seems doubtful she will fall easily into either an ego-trip or insecurity.

I asked Stephanie about her deceptively sudden stardom.

"Well, I think I took different steps and different people discovered me, but I never really was *discovered* and then Boom!, you know. It took a long time to get where I am now," she says wisely, and then adds the zinger, "and even now, it doesn't seem like it's that much. I still want to go much further." She feels she hasn't changed that much as a person since three years ago because her performing is so well-integrated with her life. "I think that I worked hard at what I have now, and I'm working even harder to get more, so—" she searches for an explanation. "It's like a thing that you *must* do. It's like someone who likes to draw—even if they don't make no money at it, they must do it because that's in them to do. Singing and dancing and all that is in me to do, so I'm gonna do it."

One of the side-effects, naturally, of being a star so young is the scheduling of all the other aspects of a teenager's life around Stephanie's career. "I go to school during the day, and I do the show at night," she explains, as if it were not at all unusual. Stephanie attends a private school in Brooklyn, her former home. Her family, originally from North Carolina, now resides in Mt. Vernon, a Westchester suburb, but Stephanie will finish her last year of high school in Brooklyn. She acknowledges that she is

able to fit in other activities "very seldom, and if it is social, it has something to do with business that I'm going to do."

Stephanie describes how she got the part in "The Wiz," also in a very matter-of-fact way. "At the time I had a record out on Paramount Records (her first album), and Ken Harper, the producer of "The Wiz," heard the record and wanted me to come and audition. I really didn't want to audition, you know, but finally I went; I auditioned three times and I got the role." She approached the part of Dorothy more as an actress than merely a singer. "I used to watch it (the Wizard of Oz) all the time when it came on television. It took a long time for me to create the Dorothy that I have now, but I'm still searching and looking for other things to create and do with Dorothy." Stephanie speaks of Dorothy as a person, which probably accounts for her credibility in the role. "I didn't go back and do any research on Judy Garland or anything, but every night I thought of new things to do, new ideas; I did it every night. I got used to it and used to it and used to it, and I created a lot of different things that could work for her."

Some of those "things" include a truly charming way of catching her breath, or grinning up at the other characters with a winning combination of sauciness and affection, or an expressively well-placed hand on hip. Stephanie created "things" like "the way she would dance, or different movements that could create an attraction or excitement in the show and help the show be livelier."

Lively is an understatement. "The Wiz" features some of the funkiest footwork outside a James Brown concert. Stephanie, in her white knee socks and bouffant dress, hoof it with the best of them, trucking along the Yellow Brick Road—or rather, *with* the Yellow Brick Road, represented onstage by a troupe of outrageously costumed young men who all seem to be Michael Jackson.

Despite the polish of her performance and her thorough professionalism, Stephanie confesses, "Sometimes I am nervous. 'Cause that's a different audience out there every night and every matinee, so you never know how they're going to accept it. You have to be nervous, 'cause it's different people. Sometimes people come back three and

four and six times, but the whole isn't old—it's always a new audience." Nice to hear there's one performer out there who actually cares about each and every show and each and every audience.

Her age doesn't make a difference to any of her fellow performers, Stephanie feels. "Only one that's near my age is the Scarecrow," she says; "he's eighteen. But they treat me the same; they don't treat me like I'm a little baby or anything like that."

"The Wiz" has been in N.Y. almost a full year, and it's still going strong. Companies will open the show in California and Australia, though Stephanie will probably remain in N.Y. "But I may go to California," she grins. Obviously Stephanie could play Dorothy till she turns 20, "but I doubt if I will," she says, laughing. "I wouldn't want to be like that," she states very definitely, "cause I'd have to grow up sometime, you know. Once you get stuck in a certain type... If you always be versible," Stephanie fractures the language in an absolutely disarming way, "then you don't have to stay in one type of situation."

It's obvious that this Dorothy won't be a little girl forever. She's already got post-Wiz plans. Stephanie feels ready for straight drama or a film. "I could be singing," she says thoughtfully, "but I would like to do something that's more acting than singing. That would be fun." Her ideas aren't specific yet, "but it'd have to be a good-type role. Maybe a love story or a mystery or something like that—or a ghost story, 'cause I like ghost stories." She concedes that even a horror movie isn't beyond the realm of possibility; Stephanie's not one to limit her horizons. For the future, she says, "I want to explore everything, really. I don't want to stay in one thing—I don't want to be only one thing. I can only do one thing—I don't want to be that. I don't want to be just a singer. I wanna be a singer, a dancer, an actress—do all of them." "And behind the scenes?" I ask. "Oh yeah," she smiles. "I could do that, too... I may settle down one day—but not no time soon!"

Stephanie has several irons in the fire right now; her album on Motown Records, *For The First Time*, has just been released. It's a collection of Burt Bacharach-Hal David compositions Stephanie selected herself ("That's the straightest I ever sung in my life," she grins).

I remember to ask Stephanie who her musical influences and favorite performers are, expecting the standard response, Billie Holiday and Bessie Smith, but she surprises and delights me by answering without hesitation, "Diana Ross. Diana Ross is my idol. She is the idol. I've always admired her, ever since I was a little girl, and I met her and... I'll always be a fan of hers." She also likes the Jackson Five. "I like everybody, really," Stephanie says expansively. "because everyone has their own unique style. But the only that really stands out to me is Diana Ross. And I like Aretha, too, 'cause Aretha does a lotta nice things with her voice."

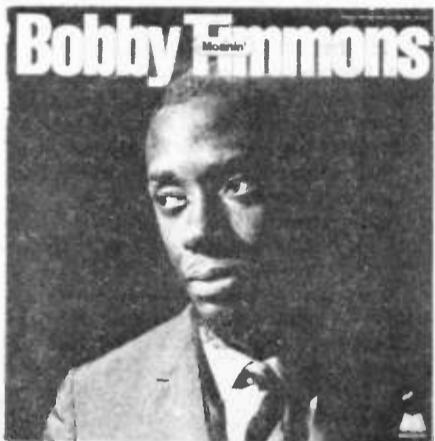
In closing I ask Stephanie if she can offer any advice to other young people struggling in show business. Again, Stephanie is neither pretentious nor self-effacing. "Only thing I could really tell them is that if they really believe that they're supposed to be what they dream they can be, then they should keep pushing on." She pauses to reflect a moment, and adds, "If they really feel that that's what they should do, then they should do it. And don't let nobody discourage them, 'cause no one can live their life but them."

And that, in short, is why Stephanie Mills is a star.

4 JAZZ GIANTS FOR 1976



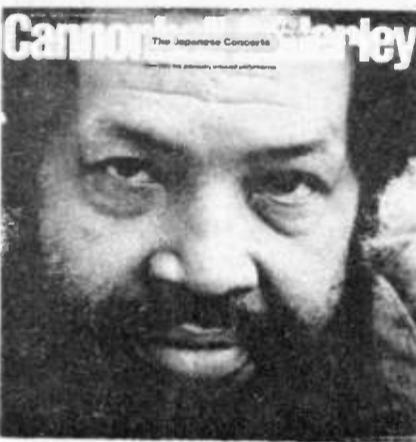
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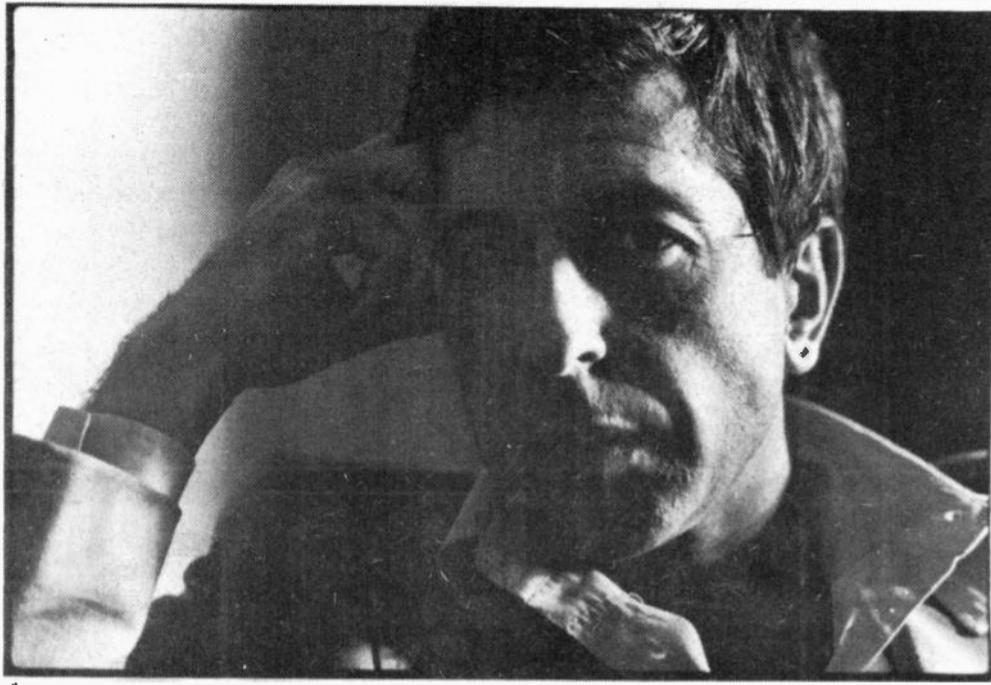
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LEONARD COHEN

The Irony and Mystique

by Russell Shaw



After a long, ho-hum shrug and a good minute of deliberative contemplation, Leonard Cohen admits the obvious. "I suppose it's true," he replies to the oft-proclaimed allegation that his writings are becoming more and more sarcastic with each new album or book. "But, in the final analysis," he adds, "the interpretation and definition of my lines are up to the individual listener or reader. He or she may look at it from a private perspective and reach an interpretive conclusion completely different from the next person."

It's all there on public record: two novels, six books of poetry, and, of course, five albums. Spanning nearly two decades, the material available constitutes a viable personal and literary archaeology full of changes and eras, if not constitutable epochs. The emphasis on the sardonic was not quick in coming, but the sense of bitter irony present in his last release, *New Songs For the Old Ceremony*, and his last published poetry collection, *The Energy of Slaves*, has always been there. This is best documented by tracking Cohen's thoughts on love. Save for a few permissible McKuenesque excesses at the start of his career (he's a fine poet, by the way, says Leonard) Cohen's favorite tack has been an examination of this subject from the point of view of its very fallibility. Through parable, the ongoing message seems to be that although we think of love as omnipotent, it really isn't.

Master Song, on the debut 1967 album entitled simply *Leonard Cohen*, aptly illustrates this point. Special emphasis is devoted to mockery of the "lover as God" syndrome. There are lines about riding with him in a private plane, cruising above the rain, the same, downpour which "chases the crowd from the stands." Obviously, the image is that of one with mighty wings, who can, according to the female's conception, swoop down and protect her through the trials and tribulations of life as no other one could. Accordingly, she bows to him in homage, kneeling for him to come. Now you hear your master sing and your shirt is all undone. Yet references are made to the fact of "when your master fails," chastizing the woman. In the story, it turns out, she was a former lover of Cohen's; yet has forsaken him for a more macho, sexual ambience (in several works, Leonard derides himself in this area). So when an ensuing relationship, of an exclusively sexual nature, hits a rough spot, a strong suit of derisive envy is worn.

Yet when Leonard Cohen does find love, it is most often fleeting. He definitely has the same streak of Jewish literary martyrdom other writers as Neil Diamond (*Play Me*) and Paul Simon (*The Boxer*) have exhibited. More precisely, the image of the itinerant, uprooted soul, the afflicted poet, unable either by choice or inadequacy to establish a long term satisfactory relationship with a female. Loneliness, although fuel for creativity, cannot suffice all the time: one must settle for remedy in a series of quick and stormy affairs, or as in the previous two examples plus Leonard's classic *Sisters of Mercy*, the affections of hired ladies.

"Oh, the Sisters of Mercy were just waiting for me when I thought I could not go on." Far from a religious order, they are revealed later in the song by their trade: "don't turn on the light, you can read their address by the moon. You won't make me jealous if I hear they sweetened your night. We weren't like that and besides it would still be all right."

Cohen makes it plain that the cathartic panacea is fleeting, just like in Dylan's *Frankie Lee and Judas Priest*, with those classic lines of "don't go mistaking paradise for that home across the road." This is but a sampling of the Montrealer's religious allegory, separate treatment of such prohibited by sheer space. Suffice it to say, though, that in Cohen's mind, love and religion are related, and both can be false securities. Here's where he and Diamond differ: one could imagine Cohen singing *Play Me*, but never *Holly Holly*.

Another consistency, both in early and in recent work has been the deceptively permanent but oh-so-temporary nature of the orgasm in human relations. Both in present day fairly blue remarks about spermicidal jelly (do we hear a dose of Zappa?) all the way back

to the slightly syrupy *Hey, That's No Way To Say Goodbye*, the theme is often subtly implied. "Many have loved before us, we know we are not new; in city and in forest, they smile like me and you." However, "now it's come to distances," and things are not as rosy as they were when we decoupled.

This wistfulness, almost pristine in reverie, is replaced seven years later on *Chelsea Hotel*, from the album *New Skin for the Old Ceremony*. No longer is he able to look fondly on playful prostitutes or innocent love affairs of short duration. Involvements are now not the playful scamperings through the flowers with camouflaged sexual logarithms. Now, irony rules all.

"Giving me head on an unmade bed while limousines waited on the street," is how Leonard describes a stormy relationship in a flea bag hostelry. Far from being a one night stand, however, it developed into a series of emotionally bereft liaisons. "I never heard you say I need you," chants Cohen into his emotional rear view mirror, as it is obvious from the references that the affair has been over for some time.

'Yet there is solace for the ego. "You preferred handsome men but for me, you would make an exception," chortles Cohen, who as previously stated, has a humble concept of his own appearance. Other writings of his, it might be added, evoke wishes that he were fair-haired.

Despite the inferiority complex he chooses to emit, he seems to have an accurate and vital capacity for spiritual regeneration. Always slightly morose, he manages to spend his afflicted and depressed moments in the arms of some woman. He's never completely alone. Yet as a writer whose rhymes are packed with references to temporary illusory, it is not surprising that the subject of death should be more and more of a factor in his verbiage. Even this, though, he does not face directly.

Only after careful listening is it obvious what Cohen's talking about on *You Know Who I Am*, off the second album *Songs From A Room*, released in 1969. Even then, we're not sure. Is it the angel of death, or the holy ghost? There are no such hidden meanings on *Dress Rehearsal Rag*, written two years later: it is a song of contemplative suicide, not unlike an apolitical *Hollis Brown*, (Bob Dylan), or a completely private *Ticking*, (Elton John-Bernie Taupin). Those two compositions deal with the syndrome of weapon as phallic symbol, as the protagonist warmly fondles the instrument of destruction as foreplay to the crime, yet Cohen's deadly weapon, a razor blade, is never used. There are the pseudo-autobiographical lines which are supposed to give background to this regrettable state. The "veins stand out like highways all along your wrist," but then the cameras pan in and they call for the stunt man. It's all a play.

Death is paid the ultimate tribute on *Who By Fire*, recorded last year. It's simply a list of the ways one can disappear from this earth: everything from avalanches to barbiturates. Even here though, Cohen is the observer, the play-by-play caller, not directly involved in the action. On the infrequent occasions when he does get mixed in, it is never with a case of absolute, depressed helplessness. Once again, there's always a woman around. *A Singer Must Die* preaches that the dreaded fate is avoidable. If pride lost be the price of survival, then so be it. "In the hinge of your thighs where I have to go begging in disguise" is Cohen's prescription.

When exhaustively quizzed about death, love, etc., Cohen insists that "these are best observed by an outsider." This may be explained by a few lines from his most recent book, *The Energy of Slaves*. "Perhaps it is because my music does not sing for me...I hate my music, I long for weapons." What he may be expressing is the occasional inadequacy of the word when battles—emotional, psychological, physical, social—have to be fought.

Despite the obvious immersion of his psyche in the numerous works he has written, Leonard Cohen is able to isolate the creative process per se from its emotive

constructs, even though its foibles slightly mystify him.

I wish I knew how I write, or to write, or I'd do it more often, shrugs Cohen over a glass of white wine. I wish I knew the actual mechanism. I guess you have to hit it before it hits you," he says rather obliquely, searching for the right word. "You have to want to write a song. There's not much you can leave to pure inspiration. Generally something plants a seed—a place, a glance, or an event," Cohen reveals.

The beardless bard also stresses the values of discipline. He states that he's just been through a rigorous schedule, having just completed his third novel. "There's a time element there. You have to give yourself a quota every day. But you have to stick to it, because it's just as easy to write a bad book as well as a good book." In his eyes, he does not feel the recently completed work is his best, so he won't release it.

Cohen's also been writing some new songs. "It takes me a long time to write a song," Cohen explains, and that may be why he's only scribed four in the past year. Obviously he believes in quality rather than quantity.

The congregation at Atlanta's Great Southeast Music Hall, one which radiates an artistic burgundy-astrology mentality, is the ideal testing ground for these new compositions. Pleased by the warm reception each of them received, he announces his intention to include each of them on a new album, due this February or March.

The Traitor Song is more in my traditional mode. It's done as an Irish-American ballad," explains the Canadian native. "You know, it's a long, confessional story, and it tries to portray the feeling that you get when you stay in one place and overrun yourself.

Beauty Song is not particularly universal, but fairly common, I feel. It's a version of the "boy meets girl" theme. It also tries to stress that in our selection of a mate, we're doing the same things our fathers did."

As a part of his new-found poetic machoness, *Guess It's Time*, "somewhat of a saloon song," according to Cohen, is now part of his repertoire. "Tony Bennett should really be singing it," he adds with a chuckle.

Guerrero, the fourth new tune, is a musical, rather than a philosophical departure. "For the first time in my life, I'm collaborating with another writer on my music. This was co-written by my keyboard player, John Lissauer." A fun song, the melody and beat are delivered to a distinctly Mexican cadence.

Longtime Leonard Cohen fans should not take Lissauer's involvement as an abdication of responsibility for the keyboardist brings a fresh melodic perspective to Cohen's compositions and performances alike. He fronts a fine backup group which amplifies rather than obstructs the lyrics. Two female singers, handsomely attired in black pantsuits, provide further vocals where harmonic colorations are desirable.

"This band knows a lot of music," boasts Cohen. Never known for the frequency of his roadwork, he plans "an early spring tour of concert halls as soon as the new album is recorded."

As to the further contents of his new album, Cohen does not inform, except to infer that the songs are being composed at the moment. Judging by the four new titles, we may expect to see a chanteur unencumbered by the strife, torment and illusion that has marked most of his previous work. That slurring, half-spoken, seemingly apathetic style of vocal delivery, reminiscent of Randy Newman (whom Cohen greatly admires) is still there. It's easy, then, to read irony into Leonard's aura.

That is part of his mystique. A singer of underrated flexibility, his semi-croak perfectly juxtaposes his oft-morose, frequently sarcastic lyrics. He projects, through his words and music a man who is almost, yet not quite good enough at persuading himself that he is really not that lonely. Often dismissed by critics for soapy sentimentality, he's far from the pity-seeking whining puppy dog. Dressed in stately clothing, his rhymes have a faintly regal presence.

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SYLVERS

A Family Conglomerate

by Cynthia Spector



The Sylvers started out as a four member group, have since grown to nine and emerged as a family conglomerate. They are a self contained unit—they write, they sing, design their clothes and the stage set.

Starting out in the 60's as "The Little Angels," the family started the second time around when Leon Frank the III entered a contest in Watts. Thinking he'd have a better chance with his brothers and sisters, he went home, worked on their dance steps and their harmonies. The Little Angels were now the Sylvers.

Despite all the touring and trucking around indigenous to life on the road, the Sylvers maintain their close family life. Introductions to the rest of the group are in order: Olympia-Ann, who writes poetry in her spare time; Leon Frank, the writer of most of the songs; Charmaine; Jonathan; Edmund; Ricky; Angie; Pat and Foster.

The family that plays together stays together. As Olympia says: "Our momma has always been right there with us and we still even now, do almost all our rehearsing at home. With all of us living together, singing doesn't even become a chore. We do it around the house and it just works out real well."

All this togetherness would seem to be a strain on the older members of the group. Charmaine would really like to go to college but there's no time. Olympia finds being a woman on the road sometimes painfully surprising. "They're just not set up for

ladies in most places. But we've been lucky, our brothers have always been with us to protect us."

Foster, the charismatic 13-year old of the group, has some ideas about being a football hero when he gets tired of being a star.

"I've wanted to do it but I'm not so sure anymore. I saw them gettin' mashed... maybe I won't do it." Foster is still improving his slinky style. "You know I kept listening to the records and you know what? I say 'yeah' at the end of every chorus. No one

should say 'yeah' all the time. It's dumb and I'll have to watch that from now on."

Leon composes songs on his bass and says, "It's not really that hard. I hear the basic beats in the bass and my mind fills in all the rest of the instruments. I think the thing that has made me the happiest recently is that one of my songs was covered by Ahmad Jamal. Although we kind of like to keep all our songs, covering doesn't do that much good. Except of course when someone like Jamal does it," he says with a big grin.

The Sylvers are working in tandem with producer Freddie Perren, noted for his work with the Jackson Five, the Four Seasons and Martha Reeves and the Vandellas.

Perren is amazed, not only by the Sylver's musicianship but as he says, "the total commitment to each other as a family. There are no arguments. They are very mature and level-headed. Their approach to singing, their dynamism and particularly the ease they bring is just dynamite to work with."

The group's first single, *Boogie Fever* was rush-released and has sold out in advance orders all over the country, demonstrating the group's mass appeal once again. One of the innovations on the group's forthcoming album is some of the group singing in duets and trios instead of them all singing on everything. No one in the group anticipates any problems or any breakups. "Singing is our favorite thing," says Ricky. "We'll always be doing it."

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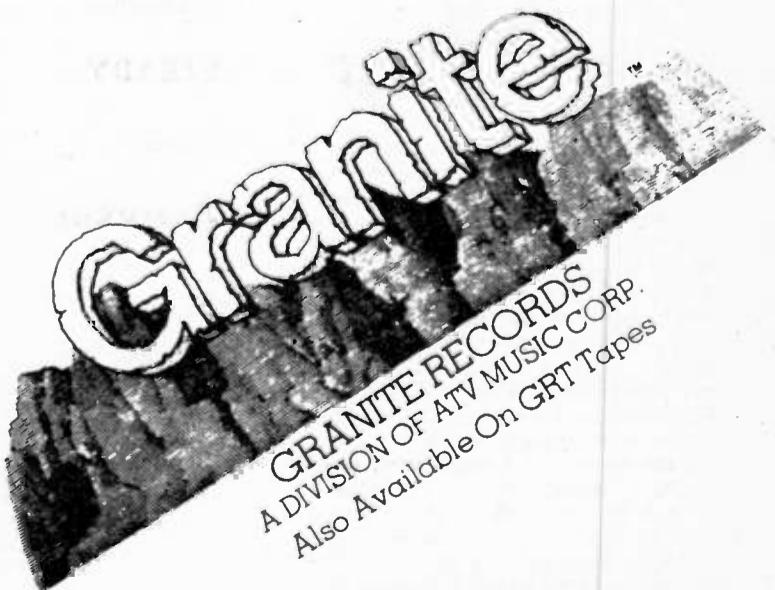
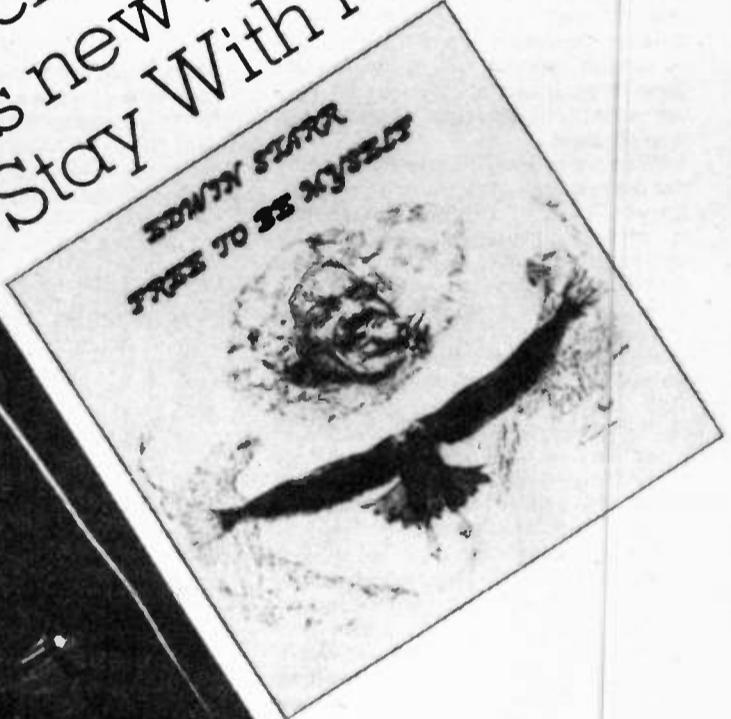
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BOOZE IS BACK

by Nick Tosches

In his 1951 book, *The Lure of Rye*, David S. Newberger wrote of the ties between booze and popular culture:

"As Apollo shuns drunkenness, so Dionysos cannot do without it. As the daintier, more refined arts mirror a philosophy of moderation, so the rawer, more visceral arts reflect the way of excess. A glass of claret and a plate of splayed radishes may go nicely with a performance of Stravinsky's *Apollo Musagetes*, but they would be drear companions for an evening of Negro bebop music. In popular culture, it is as mythology: When Dionysos prevails, the rye flows like nobody's business."

Looking back, Newberger's words seem a prolegomenon to rock 'n' roll, that golden Dionysian haint that slashed the aorta of the fifties. It is more theorem than coincidence that the greatest rock 'n' rollers are, to one degree or another, drunkards.



For a brief moment in the late sixties, dope consumption outshined that of booze among the hepcats of America. Everybody sat around giggling and poring over mandalas. Never before in the history of western civilization had tedium been so much fun. But it ended; the inevitable realization shook the sky: Why sit around yawning over some endless game of pantological solitaire when you can go out and get loaded? Drunkenness reigned anew.

What are people drinking these days? Not the over-forty crowd, but the ex-hippy-dippies? First of all, there are mixed drinks. In an uncompromising mood, former lightweight champion of the world Lew Jenkins said, "There is only one reason to order a mixed drink, and that is to announce to the world that you are a friggin' idiot. Liquor comes already mixed, cut with water. Why go stickin' lemons in it and sissyin' it up with Kool-Ade and A-1 Sauce and whatever the hell else those geeks use?" Lew has a point, but the truth of the matter is that a lot of people, especially women, do not like the taste of booze. Hence, mixed drinks.

Making the rounds of three of New York's trendier bars, Ashley's, The Bottom Line, and Corby's, I discerned marked preferences for five mixed drinks. The most popular is the traditional vodka-and-tonic. Less in demand but more revolting are tequila sunrise, screwdriver, bloody mary, and bourbon-and-soda. Significantly, none of the humans observed drinking these putrid hybrids could be termed heavy drinkers.



As always, beer and wine are popular. Lately, the phenomenon of the cult beer has grown obvious. People will swear by Coors or Lone Star, two beers not available in the East. Coors is about as cherishable as Schlitz, while Lone Star is actually good. Truth be told, though, only about three percent of the beer-drinking population can discern one beer from another by taste. The most obscure cult beer, available in the back room of Corby's, is Pennsylvania Quill. Perhaps the wisest words on the subject of beer come from the mouth of Kim Lobach, who wears glasses: "I drink beer, I'm not ashamed of it. A lot of broads, they'll shy away from beer, drink them grenadine fizzies and stuff like that. I like beer, it loosens me up, makes me social. But when I wan-

na drink, I reach for that bottle of Whiskey. That's the ticket, chum. Beer makes me pee a lot, too. Sometimes I like that, sometimes I don't. It all depends, know what I mean?"

On the matter of wine, pop writer and



noted lunger Lester Bangs has this to say: "I think I speak for most of my generation, or at least the young people of Michigan, when I say that wine stinks. When I settle down for an evening of slashing guitar flights, cocaine-scorched emanations of teenage mania, and compulsive churning of white-sound, I don't want no wine, buddy. S-C-O-T-C-H, that's my stuff. Offer me wine and you might as well spit in my face. It's an insult, pure and simple."



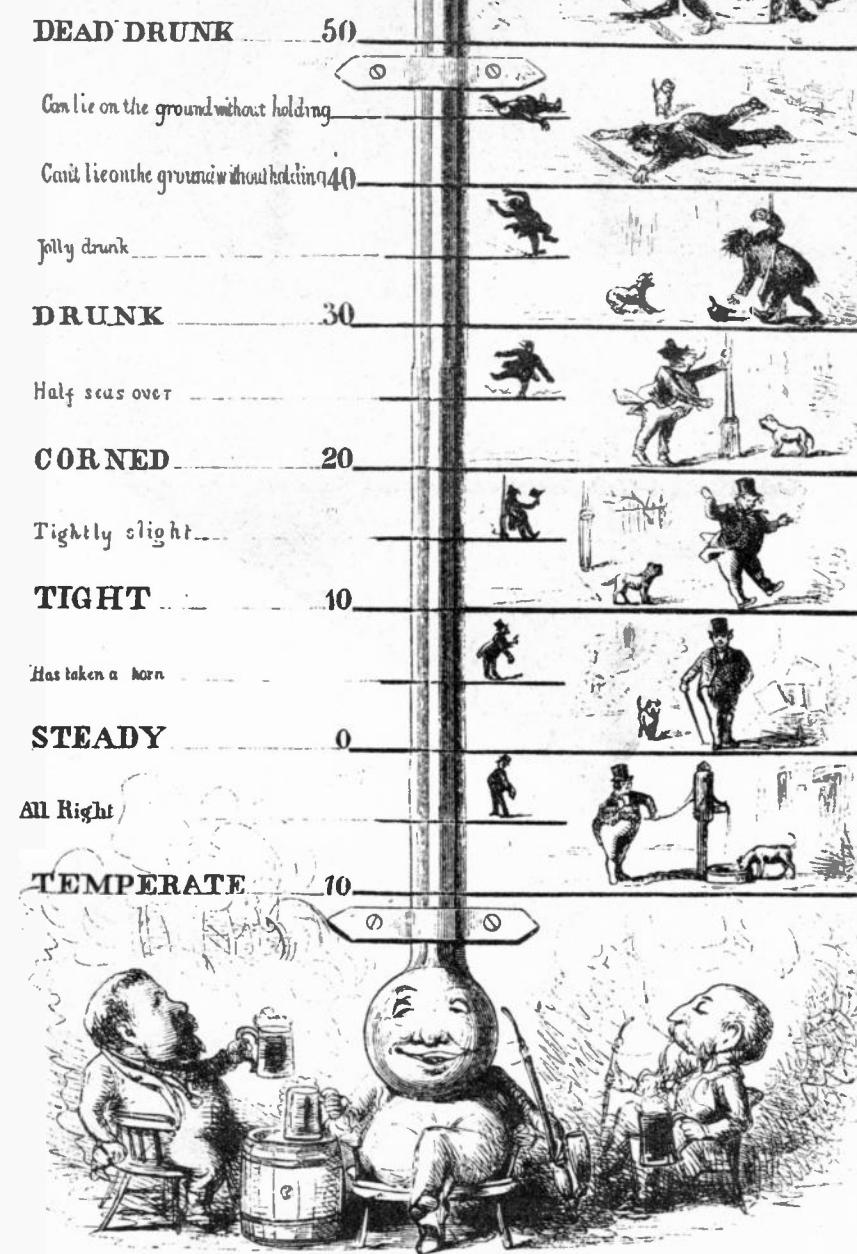
David Roter, a mainstay of the New York rock scene and heir to the Roter-Rooter fortune, disagrees with Mr. Bangs: "I like wine," says he, terse and to the point. He continues in a less terse fashion, but forfeiting neither pith nor charm: "Wine complements my social activities, whether I'm strumming a tune on my old

guitar here or just lolling aboard the *Telos* with a coven of vivacious vulvs." (How does the lucky dog do it?!)



Although mixed drinks, beer, and wine account for the better part of booze consumption in hippy-dippy circles, the serious drinkers prefer straight liquor. The most popular brands among the whiskey drinkers are Three Feathers, Old Overholt, Ten High, Rebel Yell, Carstairs, (the ladies' preference), and Pindar's Revenge. For gin it's Tangueray, Bombay, Gordons, and 666-Clear. Vodka chart-toppers are Smirnoff's Silver, Mafia Regina Stir 'N' Sip Stolichnaya, Commie Star, and Woolf's. Rum-dums prefer Ron Rico, Bacardi, Sweet Seven, Maricon Sol, and Pain-Cane. Tops in tequila is Maguay Rose, followed closely by Cerveza.

Devotees of straight booze find all other forms of drinking deplorable. Mary



Jane Geiger, president of Broads for Booze, states her case bluntly: "Not drinking booze straight is like eating a steak with marbles in your mouth. Whiskey is king, no matter what all the Debby Dollies and Frank Fags say. When I go into a bar, I go there to drink, not to sip some sugary treacle and make goo-goo eyes at the bartender." Writer and man-about-town Richard Meltzer agrees: "I saw a mixed drink once. It was green and had some kinda vegetable sticking out of it. If people want to drink stuff like that, that's their problem. But doing it out in public where other people have to look at it, to



me that's a bit too much. I gave my little boy Lazslo a bottle of Jim Beam for his eighth-grade graduation. 'Lazslo,' I said, 'Don't let me ever catch you polluting good liquor with confection crap.' He'll thank me some day."

Even though some hepcats can't tell the difference between one brand of booze and another, they stick to their favorites. Handsome Dick Manitoba, lead singer with the world-famous rock group the Dictators, sheds light on this phenomenon: "Johnnie Walker Black is the only thing I'll drink. I can't tell the frickin' diff between it and Johnnie Walker Red. I can't even tell the diff between it and Four Roses. I admit it, I admit it. But, heck, I can drink it and only it without knowing the diff between it and anything else. I can do this because I am Number One, the King. I am above taste and refinement. I cannot be bothered with the difference between this and that. I drink what I want because I want it. And I want to because it is the best Scotch there is. I've been told this, and it's true." Jeez, whatever happened to rock bands like the Incredible String Band, for the love of Pete?!



What is the *ne plus ultra* of boozes? That question has been thrown about since the medieval ages, or at least the late thirties. It is a moot matter. Some believe that a bottle of Guinness served at 60° is the world's finest drink. Others hold that two ounces of Jameson's Irish Whiskey served in a glass with two ice-cubes and a touch of lemon is the ultimate intoxicant. Some will tell you that a shot of Wild Turkey and a short chaser of Canadian ale is the top shelf. A few folks echo the words of the late Wynonie Harris: "I don't care what color the trolley is, just so long's it gets me there." Truer words, etc.)

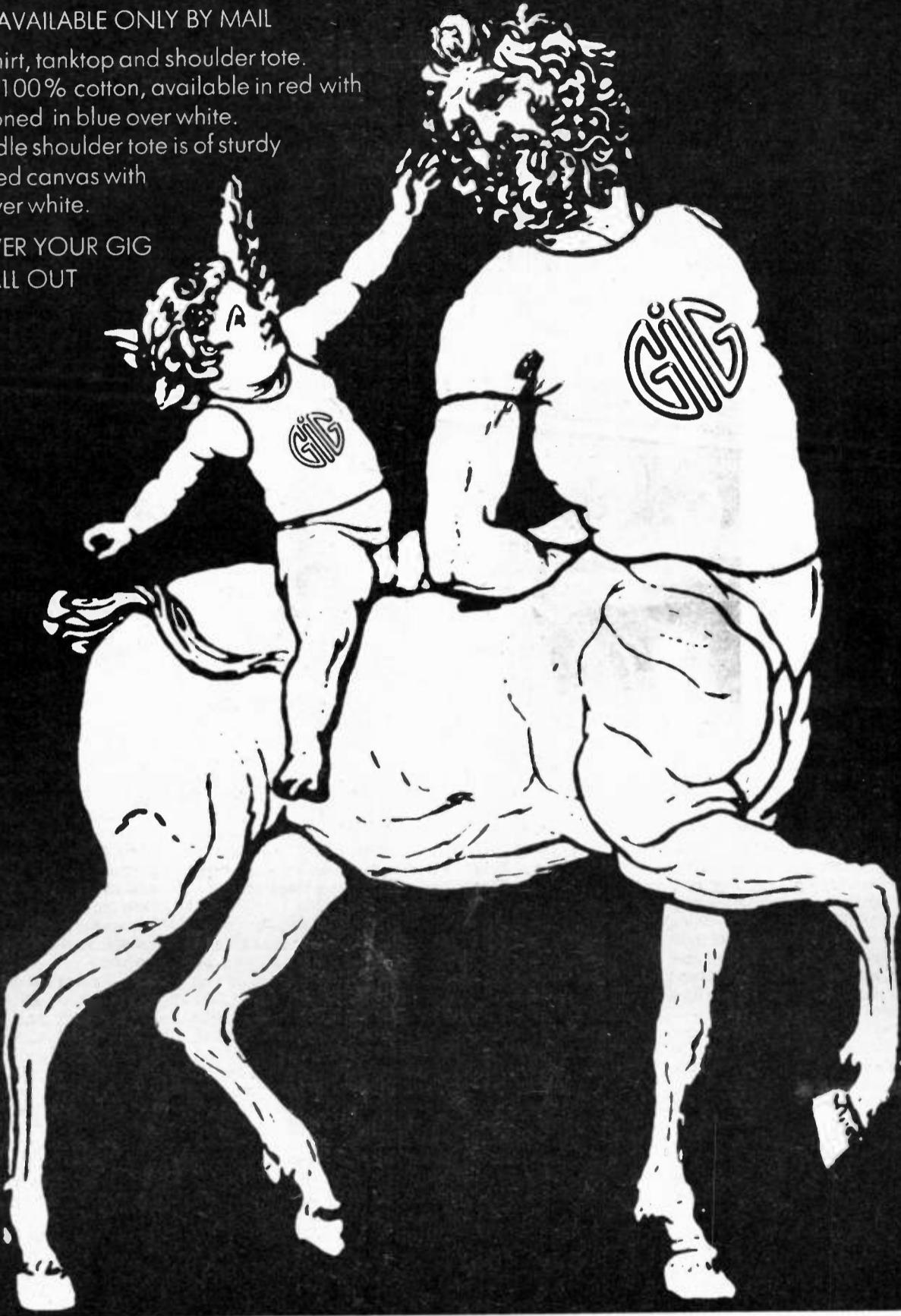


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DOLLY PARTON

Eyes Posterity

by Jerry Flowers



Dolly Parton may be fighting a losing battle! If it was anyone other than Dolly the odds would be heavily against her, but what Dolly wants she usually gets. What Dolly wants is to be recognized and appreciated as a songwriter. Never mind her buxom figure, Dolly wants people to think of her as a songwriter. She may be asking too much of some of her more wordly minded fans. That she is both a strikingly beautiful and an engagingly charming person should be assets, but Dolly has found that far too many people for her liking never try to look past her body beautiful and into her mind.

"I wanna be loved as me and appreciated as me first. There are so many women that just take physical things and build a whole career around it. That's all they have to offer, because they have no goodness and realness from the inside. It's almost like me being trapped in some other form. The real me inside is so different from the way I may look on the outside!"

For as long as she can remember the real Dolly has wanted to be a songwriter. Even as a five-year-old growing up on Webb Mountain in the Smokey Mountain foothills of eastern Tennessee, she was "always making up songs," dictating them to her mother for transcription. "As long as I can recall rememberin' I was makin' music," says Dolly. "When I was a kid I'd get lost in my fairytales and actually live whatever I was actually writin' about."

At 30, Dolly still lives in her imagination at times, drawing from her dream world and her childhood to produce some of the best of contemporary country music. That her music does not follow the three-chord-country convention, that it draws heavily from the modalities of folk music and is influenced by jazz, bluegrass and even blues, makes Dolly's some of the most unique music ever to be called country. In some circles she is considered something of a female Willie Nelson.

"I don't consider myself a music rebel," says Dolly, "so much as I aim to do as I please! I ain't got time to worry about whether people are resentin' me or not, because I'm too busy tryin' to make somethin' out of myself and to make my life worth livin', somethin' that I can leave behind for somebody else to study and analyze when I'm gone."

That her dream will be realized seems certain. Other singers, especially other female artists like Maria Muldaur and Linda Ronstadt, have recently recorded Parton songs. Dolly has also been seen in Los Angeles, the mecca of pop music, and was there recently to sing harmony (with Ronstadt) on Emmylou Harris' new single. When word that Dolly had performed on record with another artist got out, her office was deluged with requests for her to sing other artists' recordings. Ronstadt has even asked Dolly to write some material for her to record.

Such ventures with singers who are considered pop artists (even though they frequently turn up on country charts) are sure to open new audiences for Dolly's work. It is almost as if the way is being paved for Dolly to test the pop market, as much of her recent work is obviously pop oriented in either structure or production. Dolly neither refutes nor acknowledges such characterizations: "There's no way I could ever be anything except a country person, because that's my life. It's my roots. It's my personality. As long as I am a country person my music will always say country, because it says me. I would like for my music to just be Dolly Parton's music. I sing it in my own way; I write 'em in my own way."

Dolly's music can be considered to be an extension of

the personality and experiences of a simple mountain girl. *My Tennessee Mountain Home* and *The Coat of Many Colors*, so full of the imagery and folklore of the hills, could hardly have been written by an idealistic, city-dwelling pop writer.

The story Dolly tells in *The Coat of Many Colors* is a true one. Dolly was the fourth of a dozen children and much of her early life was spent in near poverty. Though times were hard, she was apparently a happy child and spent her days chasing butterflies and dreaming of the day when she would "dress up fancy" and go to Nashville to become a star. "We didn't have things we wanted, but we didn't starve," Dolly recalls. "We were hungry for a variety of things, but as far as going hungry with our bellies empty, we never had to do that. We just had simple things. Like for breakfast we always had just biscuits and gravy. For dinner and supper we had beans and potatoes. We were lucky to have it."

Because he made his rent and groceries working the land and raising crops for the owners, Dolly's dad had to move his family frequently. The cabin on the front of Dolly's *Tennessee Mountain Home* album is one in which the Partons actually lived, though Dolly says it has been extensively renovated since they lived in it. She recalls that their typical dwelling had bare, roughly poured concrete floors. "We didn't have a ceiling inside the house," she says. "I remember we had rafters. Then I remember we put wallpaper up over the rafters to hide the bare tin roof. But it was home to us."

A Country Gypsy

Though she now is settled in a large, comfortable house complete with two kitchens (one modern and one like she knew as a child), Dolly still has fond memories of the days when the family moved often. For that reason she does not particularly mind the time she spends traveling between shows: "I still love to move; I can't stand to be idle. In fact, I like to always be idlin'. I'm always goin'. I guess I'm like a gypsy, a country gypsy."



The morning after graduating from high school in 1964, Dolly made her first move away from home as she packed her songs and a few clothes into a pasteboard suitcase and left Caton's Chapel on a bus for Nashville. With the help of her uncle Bill Owens, Dolly began seeking auditions at the publishing houses and record companies, finally landing a \$50 a week job at Monument Records.

Monument eventually released a few records on Dolly, but *Dumb Blonde* and *Something Fishy*, the most successful ones, sold only moderately, and she spent days at a time with nothing to eat but mustard and relish. In 1967 Porter Wagoner called and asked Dolly to come by his office. Since she had sent a couple of her songs to Porter for Norma Jean, the female star of his show, Dolly assumed that he wanted to talk with her about recording them. When Dolly sat down in his office Porter revealed that Norma Jean was leaving the show, and he wanted Dolly to be her replacement.

As he became aware of the songwriting ability of his new protégé, Porter took Dolly by RCA to audition for Chet Atkins, but Chet wasn't crazy about her voice and balked at signing her. "Porter told him he believed I was commercial," says Dolly, "and what RCA would lose in record sales on me they could take out of his royalties." That proved to be unnecessary as Dolly's first RCA single, *Just Because I'm a Woman* sold 150,000 copies, very good for the first release by a new country artist.

Dolly stayed with Porter for seven years before leaving in early 1974 to develop her own show. They continue to record together as a duet, and Porter produces Dolly's records. They also own a publishing company together, and both maintain that they are still best of friends.

Ashamed of Nothing

Once Dolly Parton starts to talking, she literally bubbles over on a variety of subjects. She talks about the syndicated television show which she is developing, about her "Traveling Family Band," about how much she loves people, about cutting her own firewood with her new chain saw, but she always comes back to talking about her songwriting. It is the most important single aspect of her life outside her family and friends. She wants it to be remembered, long after she is gone, that Dolly Parton wrote songs like *The Bargain Store*, *Love Is Like a Butterfly*, *Jolene*, *I Will Always Love You*, and *The Seeker*.

"I pride myself in being original and unique as far as the sound and style that I have," smiles Dolly. "I take a lot of pride in them. I know they're as good as I can possibly do 'em, so when I'm finished with one I know it's my best. I have nothing to be ashamed of."

In October Dolly was named female vocalist of the year by the Country Music Association, having been nominated five previous times but never having won. Most people would have been a little bitter, but not Dolly. When asked if she felt she should have won it sooner she said: "No. I felt like I wanted to, but whether I would ever have got an award, I've been rewarded time after time after time. My reward is being able to know that somebody liked my music, that somebody enjoyed it, somebody accepted it. I can look at my royalty sheets and know that it's being accepted. The award is nice to have. It's something that you can show your kids and your grandkids and say, 'Look what your mama and your grandma did. One time in my life people thought I was really important.'"

TINA TURNER

Metamorphosis: Cotton Picker to Oscar Nominee

by Cynthia Spector



ILLUSTRATION BY ARNIE SAWYER

Who was Janis Joplin's favorite singer? None other than the "Acid Queen" herself, Tina Turner. Janis of course, was not the only one who enjoyed the raw, sexual funk of the Ike and Tina Turner Review, but until comparatively recently, total fame, which the Turners have enjoyed in England has eluded them here.

Robert Stigwood, the executive producer of "Tommy," only thought of two people to play the "Acid Queen"—Tina and David Bowie. The Turners have toured all over the world 52 weeks a year, and a whole generation of little girls grew up wanting to be an Ikettes, but that career holding pattern just needed one spark. Now they have it, but it seems Ike is just a little put out that it comes from Tina, by herself.

Columbia pictures took a long hard look at prize money-maker "Tommy" and decided there were a couple of Oscar possibilities. The first choice with all the vast studio hoopla behind it is Tina Turner, nee Annie Mae Bullock, ex cotton-picker from Tennessee. She's dazzling. Walking into our interview room, she mentions, "even being considered for an Oscar is a dream come true for me." Contrary to expectations, she doesn't come swooping in in full Acid Queen drag, she's stylishly if not conservatively dressed in brown silks and tweed, with only a huge shell on a chain around her neck and a gold wedding ring for jewelry.

"I've been watching the Academy Awards for years, and when I found I might have a chance at it, I went out and bought my dress and started working on my acceptance speech." Tina's shopping trip even included a new suit for Ike to

wear, but he just may not be using it. "Ike," says Tina, "always says when people ask him, 'That's Tina's trip, not mine'. In fact, he'd never seen 'Tommy' till we went to Paris and he sneaked in the theater just to see the sequence. Recently, in our concerns people have been screaming out for me to sing it, and Ike finally put it in the act. Reluctantly, because he just doesn't like to play the song. But, he'll change his mind, I'm sure."

Annie Mae Bullock metamorphosed into Tina Turner and has been singing since the days she was quite literally picking cotton in Tennessee. One of her girlfriends was dating Ike Turner, then a struggling lounge act. She kept singing and singing in front of Ike so he would notice her and finally he did. Shortly thereafter, he married the lanky 16 year old.

"I think of myself as a very realistic person. I don't mix my real self with Tina. She's just an act to me. It's what the people want. What I do on stage, however, I couldn't do any other way. I could stop being Tina Turner tomorrow and it really wouldn't matter to me. I'm very domestic, very family oriented. I think it's unhealthy to become a star and then try to live that image you have projected on stage. Some people are just hung up on the fact they are loved by other people. But, no matter how far my career happens to take me, I will always be basically Annie Mae Bullock who used to pick cotton. I'm comfortable with Annie Mae. I'm just not as comfortable being Tina."

Tina, 36, has four sons. Ike Junior, in fact, may be escorting his mother to all

those functions his father thinks are "Tina's things." She loves to cook, housekeep and works just as hard at home as she does on stage. In fact, the almost palpable cross-currents between Ike and Tina on stage have made the show into the only act that is being done not only for their audience, but for each other. All of Tina's solos are sung with part of her back tilted toward Ike, and all of his basso profundo mumbles seem to be aimed just for his wife's ear. The constant touring and rehearsing however, keep Tina a bit out of touch professionally.

For example, she'd never heard of the Who of "Tommy" until she received the script. "I didn't want to do it really, because I didn't want to play the part of a hooker and of course, Ike wasn't so happy about me doing it. But I'll tell you, when I was on that set, I realized the importance of the things I'd learned from Ike. It was easy for me to work with Ken Russell, for example, because he wants everything you can give, just like Ike. With him being the way he is, it was just an easy step for me to get into that. That one scene took us four days to film, and it was really hard to keep up the intensity. That's where working every night on the road in one night stands is good. You have to have intensity all the time."

You'd better have that intensity, too. Ike has been seen to very obviously take a player who he felt was not giving his all off the stage, pull him into the wings and inform him of his mistake quite forcibly. Tina performed wearing ice packs to lower her temperature when ill, performed all during her pregnancies and has

sometimes hypnotized herself to go on stage.

Tina was allowed to work out her own treatment of "Acid Queen". The touches of the macabre machine and the red, red lipstick were Ken's, but she agrees now they work better than what she would have thought. "In the movies," says Tina, "you have to do everything full-blown. That's why I played the scene completely insane. In concert, I do the song with a 'let's go get a room' type of feeling."

Tina's been thinking a lot recently about doing a blues album. Her last album, Acid Queen features a line of English rock songs that she's always wanted to sing and only one side is produced by Ike. "I was sitting in my dressing room the other day," says Tina, "and a very old song came into my head, a song I heard on the radio when I was a little kid. I told Ike I really would like to record it. Just a really right-down blues song, I was raised on that kind of music and that's what I would love to do."

"Ike's whole life is the recording end of everything. He's always playing around with new techniques and sounds. I cook."

Tina also dabbles in reincarnation. A totally religious lady, she believes she's lived before. As a French cabaret singer in her last incarnation. "I know the language, without ever learning it, and I know I've been there before."

Asked what she'd like to be in her next incarnation, Tina says, "I think I'd like to be like, maybe Jackie Onassis. Not particularly her, but you know, just a great lady". At which point, everyone in the room screams out. "You Are Already, Tina!"

PATTI SMITH

Rock 'n' Roll Laureate

by Lee Underwood



"If there is one hellish, truly accursed thing in our time," said Antonin Artaud in his Preface to *The Theater And Its Double*, "it is our artistic dallying with forms, instead of being like victims burned at the stake, signalling through the flames."

In the song Kimberly on her debut LP, *Horses* (Arista 4066), Patti Smith stands on stage in the "electric whirlwind" of rock 'n' roll, while "the sea rushes up my knees like flame and I feel like some misplaced joan of arc."

Patti's electroshock poetry is a far cry from surface fact, traditional forms, and harmonious relationships and experiences "recollected in tranquility." Her poetic tradition is that of Charles Baudelaire, Arthur Rimbaud, Antonin Artaud, William Burroughs, Allen Ginsberg and Bob Dylan. Her surrealistic world seethes with phantasmagoric angels, fire, murders, rapes, seaweed, horses, hair, ravens, and profound religious yearnings for the ecstatic experience of the absolute. Artaud would have loved her.

While the music behind her incantations is usually melodically and harmonically puerile, it rhythmically and dynamically perfectly matches her madcap journeys from the objective, prosaic world of fact that we all share, to the subjective and violently bizarre inner world of her personal (and archetypal) fantasies. In truth, the Dream is her foundation. It is also her inspiration for achieving an intense poetic awakening, not only for herself, but for us all.

At the heart of Patti Smith's work is a functional relationship between moral vice and metaphysical virtue, between truth and falsehood, positive and negative, beauty and ugliness, Good and Evil. A judge could not exist without a criminal; order would be inconceivable without chaos. St. Theresa and the harlot are two sides of one woman. Patti Smith unites male and female, the rapist and the raped, the killer and the savior, the blasphemer and the priest. Reality for Patti is a synthesis of dynamic opposites. In merging her vision with rock 'n' roll, she has created a long-sought religion of her own which enables her to be as "bad" as she likes and to be "saved."

She uses rape, murder, and other forms of violence to reinforce her religious assault on those barriers which human beings have established to contain their most primitive and superstitious fears of death and God. She purposely violates taboos. She revels in sacrifice. Each time she does, she strips away the conventional appearance of ordered beauty and directly confronts our universal fears of death and degradation.

She abandons herself to the unseen powers of the occult, for "Got to lose control, and then you take control." (*Land*) By her own illuminating energy and ritualistic transformation, she takes us with her to those cosmic planes where, freed from fear, we unite with the Absolute. Through isolation and fantasy she finds union and transcendence. She ascends to those levels where "there is no of the land/there is no keeper of the keys up there/there is just the sea/the sea of possibility." (*Land*)

On the jacket of *Horses*, Patti calls her hallucinogenic images "charms." She addresses them as "sweet angels," and says, "You have made me no longer afraid of death." Patti Smith ventures in-

to "the eye of the forest" of her own mind, destroys her own fears and reservations (usually brutally), ascends to orgasmic heights of revelation, and again returns to Earth, were "being burdened with the body is sweet, so sleep." The violent sexual experience is not only sexual for Patti. It is also a metaphor of religious transcendence. As Rimbaud, Patti's most significant poetic influence, said in *A Season In Hell*, "spiritual combat is as brutal as the battle of men."

While each of Patti's eight "songs" contains certain revealing images, the weight of *Horses* is carried primarily by *Land*, *Birdland*, and *Break It Up*.

In each of these songs, the central figure is initially earth-bound, stabilized, and emotionally protected and contained. (Level I) He/she is then overwhelmed by violent inner conflict, represented by figures who have wings—a brutal rapist, Angel, in *Land*; a loving but demanding angel in *Break It Up*; a horde of demonic ravens in *Birdland*. Whatever their style, brutal or loving, these "angels" are inevitably both destroyers and liberators. They create inner conflict and terror (destruction) by urging and/or forcing the central figure to "break up" his/her rigid, orthodox perspectives and to journey to unknown heights (liberation). One's "normal" self with its patterned thinking and its fearful inhibitions must be overwhelmed by massive forces—waves, horses, ravens, angels, etc.—until one is completely passive and defenseless, "crawling on his back."

Then, as soon as the victim is inwardly "torn apart" and "out of control" (Level II), he/she is catapulted to the macabre levels where conventional order and conventional relationships are completely shattered, and where one's eyes are "like two white opals," turned inward, all-seeing (*Birdland*).

Here, there is "a sea of possibilities" (Level III), where previously separate forces of power, destruction, virility, fear and glory are merged and synthesized into one swirling, supernatural reality: "coils, snakes, white and shining, twirlin' and circlin', our lives by now entwined, together, turning, your nerves, the black shining horse, mane in my fingers, entwined like water . . . eyes of a horse,

blade, pressing it against his throat . . . his vocal cords/shot/opened up/possibility/bad/pituitary glands . . . the sea, the sea of possibilities." (*Land*)

The soul or spirit is itself a bird/angel imprisoned by the body (physical) and by fear (psychological). In each case, the soul is freed by its own inner/outer angelic struggles. The angel/rapist in *Land*, a figure who merges "perfectly with the mirror in the hallway," could well be Johnny's alter-ego. The raven/angels of *Birdland* are the angel-ravens of the boy's own dreams. The female of *Break It Up* cannot ascend until her own inner angel can figuratively fly to join her already liberated boy/angel guide and lover. As Rimbaud said, "One see one's own Angel, never the Angel of another."

As the ascension occurs, and as the soul is freed and whirled onto the plane of phantasmagoric experience, the environment also alters: "the sky was raging" and "the atmosphere broke up" in *Break It Up*; flat planes of sand coagulate "like a river of glass" in *Birdland*; the school hallway of *Land*, where Johnny was drinking a glass of tea, becomes a nightmare of "horses, horses, horses, comin' in all directions, white, shining, silver studs with their noses in flames"; later, the land becomes a sea, where "the waves were comin' in like radiant stallions."

In each instance, isolation, inner disorientation, violent acts, and terrifying dependence are transformed into unity, inner integration, self-fulfillment, sexual-spiritual ecstasy, and an overwhelming sense of power (Level IV). Opposites synthesize. And in each instance, as in the fulfilled universal sexual experience, the climactic vision is followed by calm.

Conventional morality, ecclesiastical dogma, artificially imposed ethics, and so-called "normal" states of mind are obviously prisons for Patti. She thinks much like Rimbaud, who said, "I saw that all creatures have a fatality of happiness: action is not life, but only a way of spoiling some force, an enervation. Morality is a weakness of the brain . . . I am a master of phantasmagoria . . . I came to regard as sacred the disorder of my mind."

An hallucinator at the age of five, Patti, 29 in December, cultivated and nourished her poetic resources, for in

the Dream, all controls are self-imposed, all events are self-created (or realized through the self), and everything and anything is possible to experience. Unbound by nature or by other people, one psychically becomes all-powerful. And the greater the intensity of the Dream, the more complete the synthesis of opposites, the greater the connection with the Absolute.

"People say I go too far," Patti told Deborah Batterman, "but there's no too far you can go . . . I like to masturbate a lot because I can have a lot of brain travel through masturbation . . . I can come up to twelve times a day. That's where I get a lot of my mental images and a lot of my rhythms to write. You can come once and you go to one plane, come twice, and you go to a second plane, and by the time you're up to the twelfth time you're past the birds, past the planes."

In her highest planes of fantasy, masturbatory or otherwise, conventional order is "broken up," and one is free to "check out the planets" of the stratosphere "and go down where it's hot hot in arabia babia/then cool cold in fields of snow." (*Free Money*) The intensity of fire and the intensity of ice are one. All extremes posit their opposites and are nourishing to the freedom-hungry soul.

For Patti, the Dream is far superior to conventional reality. "Anything's allowed," she says in *Gloria*. And in *Free Money*, she can ominipotently "scoop pearls up from the sea," and dollar bills come "swirling around my head, and all our troubles are gone."

In the Dream, her sins and transgressions are her own—"They belong to me/People say beware, but I don't care." (*Gloria*) In the Dream she is Absolute. In blending the images derived from conventional reality (birds, horses, knives, seas, etc.) with fantasy, she emerges with stunning perceptions and revelations. When she communicates them to us, our eyes, like hers, are opened—we are awakened.

We too can make love to other women, to Rimbaud, Baudelaire or Jimi Hendrix, having them, or anyone else we choose, as our "brainiacamours." We too can rape, fly, murder, visit the galaxies. Freed, we too can experience the depths of our subconscious, and out of its chaos extract rolling seas, thundering stallions of domination, fire/ice sensuality, spewing pituitary glands, birth, life, death.

By piercing through and psychically/spiritually sailing "beyond race gender baptism mathematics politricks" and their limitations and fears, we too can experience order—the union with God, with All. "Tower of Babel," Patti chants like some prehistoric shaman, "they knew what they were after."

Compared with those of us who cling to our relatively comfortable and illusory world of work, "politricks," pizza, football and two-week vacations, poet Patti Smith has indeed become an Artaud visionary, "burned at the stake, signalling through the flames." Like the Russian dancer, Nijinsky, Patti Smith might honestly say, "I have also been mad. I lost my reason, but I understand the truth."

Is she any good? As she herself says on the back of the album, "only histoire is responsible for the ultimate canonizing . . . as for me I am truly totally ready to go."

TOP SINGLES

The Music GIG's record charts are the compilation of sales figures from various record stores across the country.

rock and pop

1. LET'S DO IT AGAIN—Staple Singers—Curtom CMS 0109
2. THAT'S THE WAY I LIKE IT—KC & The Sunshine Band—TK 1015
3. SKYHIGH—Jigsaw—Chelsea 3022
4. MY LITTLE TOWN—Simon & Garfunkel—Columbia 3 10230
5. NIGHTS ON BROADWAY—Bee Gees—RSO 515
6. FLY ROBIN FLY—Silver Convention—Midland Int'l. 10339
7. I LOVE MUSIC—O'Jays—Phil. Int'l. ZS8 3677 1
8. VENUS AND MARS ROCK SHOW—Wings—Capitol 4175
9. LOVE ROLLERCOASTER—Ohio Players—Mercury 436
10. I WRITE THE SONGS—Barry Manilow—Arista 0157
11. SATURDAY NIGHT—Bay City Rollers—Arista 0149
12. SING A SONG—Earth, Wind & Fire—Columbia 3 10251
13. I ONLY HAVE EYES FOR YOU—Art Garfunkel—Columbia 3 10190
14. OUR DAY WILL COME—Frankie Valli—Private Stock 45k043
15. ISLAND GIRL—Elton John—MCA 40461
16. THEME FROM MAHOGANY (DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOU'RE GOING TO)—Diana Ross—Motown 1377
17. LOW RIDER—War—United Artists XW 706 Y
18. FEELINGS—Morris Albert—RCA 10279
19. FULL OF FIRE—Al Green—Hi 5N 3200
20. YOU SEXY THING—Hot Chocolate—Big Tree BT 16047
21. HEAT WAVE / LOVE IS A ROSE—Linda Ronstadt—Asylum 45282
22. THE WAY I WANT TO TOUCH YOU—Captain & Tennille—A&M 1725
23. THE LAST GAME OF THE SEASON (A BLIND IN THE BLEACHERS)—David Geddes—Big Tree 16052
24. WHO LOVES YOU—Four Seasons—Warner Bros./Curb 8122
25. EVIL WOMAN—Electric Light Orchestra—United Artists 729
26. FOX ON THE RUN—Sweet—Capitol P 4157
27. I'M ON FIRE—5000 Volts—Phillips 40801
28. EIGHTEEN WITH A BULLET—Pete Wingfield—Island 026
29. ROCK AND ROLL ALL NIGHT (LIVE VERSION)—Kiss—Casablanca 850
30. GOLDEN YEARS—David Bowie—RCA JH 10441
31. FOR THE LOVE OF YOU—Isley Brothers—T-Neck ZS 8 2259
32. HE AINT HEAVY...HE'S MY BROTHER—Olivia Newton-John—MCA 40495
33. CARRY ME—David Crosby & Graham Nash—ABC 12140
34. THIS WILL BE—Natalie Cole—Capitol 4109
35. PART TIME LOVE—Gladys Knight & The Pips—Buddah RDA 513
36. WAKE UP EVERYBODY (PART 1)—Harold Melvin & The Blue Notes—Phil. Int'l.
37. OPERATOR—Manhattan Transfer—Atlantic S292
38. IT'S ALRIGHT—Graham Central Station—Warner Bros. 8148
39. WOMAN TONIGHT—America—Warner Bros. 8157
40. FLY AWAY—John Denver—RCA JH 1057
41. SECRET LOVE—Freddy Fender—ABC/Dot DOA 17585
42. MIRACLES—Jefferson Starship—Grunt 10367
43. WINNERS AND LOSERS—Hamilton, Joe Frank & Reynolds—Playboy 6054
44. TIME OF YOUR LIFE—Paul Anka—United Artists 737
45. OVER MY HEAD—Fleetwood Mac—Reprise 1339
46. FIRE ON THE MOUNTAIN—Marshall Tucker Band—Capricorn 0244
47. SUNDAY SUNRISE—Anne Murray—Capitol 4142
48. BAD BLOOD—Neil Sedaka—Rocket 40460
49. CARIBBEAN FESTIVAL—Kool & The Gang—Delite DEP 1573
50. NICE, NICE, VERY NICE—Ambrosia—20th Century 2244

disco

1. I LOVE MUSIC—O'Jays—Phil. Int'l. 3577
2. I COULD HAVE DANCED ALL NIGHT—The Biddu Orchestra—Epic 3708
3. AGGRAVATION—Martha Velez—Sire 722
4. LADY BUMP—Penny McLean—Atco 7038
5. EVERY BEAT OF MY HEART—Crown Heights Affair—DeLite 1575
6. CHICANO—Black Blood—Mainstream 5574
7. MAKE ME BELIEVE YOU—Patti Jo—Wand 11255
8. LOVE SOUNDS—Ebb Tide—PYE 71039
9. SOUL CITY WALK—Archie Bell—TSOP 4774
10. ELUSIVE—Babe Ruth—Capitol 8276
11. HOW HIGH THE MOON—Gloria Gaynor—MGM 14838
12. WALK AWAY FROM LOVE—David Ruffin—Motown 1376
13. CHANCE FOR PEACE—Lonnie Liston-Smith—Flying Dutchman 10392
14. YOU SEXY THING—Hot Chocolate—Big Tree 16k047
15. THEME FROM SUMMER PLACE—Jon Wite—Cenpro 45007
16. FOOL—Al Matthews—Columbia 10224
17. CHLOE—Cy Coleman—RCA 10440
18. LITTLE DRUMMER BOY—Moonlion—PIP 6513
19. DRIVE MY CAR—Gary Toms Empire—PIP 6509
20. FIND MY WAY—Cameo—Chocolate City 801
21. SUMMER PLACE '76—Percy Faith—Columbia 10233
22. CAN'T TAKE MY EYES OFF YOU—Gerri Granger—20th Century 2241
23. THE ZIP—MFSB—Phil. Int'l. 3578
24. DO THE BUS STOP—Fatback Band—Event 227
25. DUNNY '76—Bobby Hebb—Laurie 3638
26. ONE MAN AIN'T ENOUGH—Jabara—A&M 1741
27. NEVER GONNA LET YOU GO—Jobell And The Orchestra—Jan 300
28. DO IT WITH FEELING—Michael Zager—Bang 720
29. OH NO, NOT MY BABY—De Blanc—Arista 0161
30. DISCO BELLS—Walter Murphy—Major 32
31. THAT OLD BLACK MAGIC—The Softones—Avcp 4663
32. CREOLE LADY—Jon Lucien—Columbia 10232
33. TRYING TO GET BACK—Jockey Beavers—DADE 2041
34. FULL OF FIRE—Al Green—Hi 2300
35. WHY?—Taj Mahal—Columbia 10260
36. NOWHERE—Hokis Pokis—Black Magic 001
37. GIRL YOU BETTER WAKE UP—Liberty—BASF 15152
38. HALF A CUP—Reggie Garner—ABC 114k40
39. IT IT WASN'T FOR THE MONEY—Nanette Workman—Atco 7034
40. WISE UP GIRL—David Geddes—Big Tree 16052
41. CHEER UP SYRUP—David K. & The Blueties—Spigot 2
42. THEME ONE—Chequers—Creole 111
43. SMILE—Simon Said—Atco 7041
44. LOVE FOR SALE—Vast Majority—D&M 1001
45. BALI HAI—Al Allen & Co.—Fantasy 757
46. LIFE IS A SONG WORTH SINGING—Mistura—Fusion 001
47. CARAVAN—Deodato—MCA 40469
48. MIDNIGHT SPIRIT—MBeeghon'n—BLSW 10978
49. MY WAY—Bobby Azzeff Orchestra—Aquarius 5046
50. JOHANNESBURG—Gil Scott-Heron—Arista 0152

country

1. IT'S ALL IN THE MOVIES—Merle Haggard—Capitol P 4141
2. SECRET LOVE—Freddy Fender—ABC/Dot DOA 17584
3. LOVE PUT A SONG IN MY HEART—Johnny Rodriguez—Mercury 73715
4. EASY AS PIE—Billy Crash Craddock—ABC/Dot DOA 17584
5. ALL OVER ME—Charlie Rich—Epic 8 50142
6. I LIKE BEER—Tom T. Hall—Mercury 73704
7. COUNTRY BOY (YOU GOT YOUR FEET IN L.A.)—Glenn Campbell—Capitol 4155
8. LYIN' EYES—Eagles—Asylum 45279
9. ARE YOU SURE HANK DONE IT THIS WAY?—Waylon Jennings—RCA JB 10379
10. LOVE IS A ROSE—Linda Ronstadt—Asylum 45271
11. SHE EVEN WOKE ME UP TO SAY GOODBYE—Ronnie Milsap—Warner Bros. 8127
12. ROCKY—Dickey Lee—RCA JH 10361
13. TODAY I STARTED LOVING YOU AGAIN—Sammi Smith—Mega MR 1236
14. WESTERN MAN—LaCosta—Capitol P4139
15. FASON'S FARM—Cal Smith—MCA 4047
16. YOU RING MY BELL—Ray Griff—Capitol 4126
17. WHERE LOVE BEGINS—Gene Watson—Capitol P4143
18. SINCE I MET YOU BABY—Freddy Fender—GRT 031
19. WARM SIDE OF YOU—Freddie Hart & The Heartbeats—Capitol 4152
20. CONVOY—C.W. McCall—MGM 14839
21. ME AND OLD C.B.—Dave Dudley—United Artists UAXW 722Y
22. FROM WOMAN TO WOMAN—Tommy Overstreet—ABC/Dot DOA 17580
23. LUST AFFAIR—Mel Street—GRT 030
24. SOMETIMES—Bill Anderson & Mary Lou Turner—MCA 40488
25. FLAT NATURAL BORN—Gary Stewart—MCA JH 10351

TOP LP'S & TAPES

rock and pop

1. HISTORY-AMERICA'S GREATEST HITS—America—Warner Bros. BS 2894
2. GREATEST HITS—Seals & Crofts—Warner Bros. BS 2886
3. ROCK OF THE WESTIES—Elton John—MCA 2163
4. STILL CRAZY AFTER ALL THESE YEARS—Paul Simon—Columbia PC 33540
5. GREATEST HITS—Chicago—Columbia PC 33900
6. BREAKAWAY—Art Garfunkel—Columbia KPC 33700
7. THE HISSING OF SUMMER LAWNS—Joni Mitchell—Asylum 7E 1051
8. FACE THE MUSIC—Electric Light Orchestra—United Artists UALA 546 G
9. ONE OF THESE NIGHTS—Eagles—Asylum 7E 1039
10. NUMBERS—Cat Stevens—A&M SP 4555
11. WINDSONG—John Denver—RCA APL1 1183
12. THE BEST OF CARLY SIMON—Carly Simon—Elektra E 1048
13. RED OCTOPUS—Jefferson Starship—Grunt BFL1 0999
14. WISH YOU WERE HERE—Pink Floyd—Columbia PC 33540
15. ALIVE—Kiss—Casablanca NELP 7020
16. WIND ON THE WATER—David Crosby/Graham Nash—ABC ABCD 902
17. BARRY WHITE'S GREATEST HITS—Barry White—20th Century 493
18. GRATITUDE—Earth, Wind & Fire—Columbia PG 33694
19. SAVE ME—Silver Convention—Midland Int'l. BKL 11 1129
20. BLAST FROM THE PAST—Ringo Starr—Apple SW 3422
21. CAPTAIN FANTASTIC & THE BROWN DIRT COWBOY—Elton John—MCA 2142
22. BY NUMBERS—The Who—MCA 2161
23. BORN TO RUN—Bruce Springsteen—Columbia PC 33795
24. PRISONERS IN DISGUISE—Linda Ronstadt—Asylum 7E 1045
25. FEELS SO GOOD—Grover Washington Jr.—Kudu KU 24S1
26. SHAVED FISH—John Lennon—Apple SW 3421
27. LAZY AFTERNOON—Barbara Streisand—Columbia PC 33815
28. TRYIN' TO GET THE FEELIN'—Barry Manilow—Arista AL 4060
29. ROCKY MOUNTAIN CHRISTMAS—John Denver—RCA APL1 1201
30. ZUMA—Neil Young With Crazy Horse—Reprise MS 2242
31. LOVE TO LOVE YOU BABY—Donna Summer—Oasis OCLP 500
32. JOURNEY TO LOVE—Stanley Clarke—Nemperor NE 433
33. FAMILY REUNION—The O'Jays—Phil. Int'l. PZ 33807
34. FLEETWOOD MAC—Warner Bros. 2225
35. CAPTURED ANGEL—Dan Fogelberg—Epic PE 33499
36. HONEY—Ohio Players—Mercury SRM 1 1038
37. MAN-CHILD—Herbie Hancock—Columbia PC 33812
38. INSEPARABLE—Natalie Cole—Capitol ST 11429
39. LOVE WILL KEEP US TOGETHER—Captain & Tenille—A&M SP 3405
40. GREATEST HITS—Elton John—MCA 2128
41. EXTRA TEXTURE—George Harrison—Apple SW 3420
42. THE LAST RECORD ALBUM—Little Feat—Warner Bros. BS 2884
43. WHY CAN'T WE BE FRIENDS?—War—United Artists UALA 441 F
44. RUFUS FEATURING CHAKA KHAN—Rufus—ABC ABCD 909
45. AN EVENING WITH WALLY LONDO FEATURING BILL SLASZO—George Carlin—Little David LD 1008
46. WAKE UP EVERYBODY—Harold Melvin & The Bluenotes—Phil. Int'l. PZ 33808
47. THE HUNGRY YEARS—Neil Sedaka—Rocket PIG 2157
48. SEARCHIN' FOR A RAINBOW—Marshal Tucker Band—Capricorn CP 0161
49. MAIN COURSE—Bee Gees—RSO SO 4807
50. PRESSURE DROP—Robert Palmer—Island ILPS 9372

soul

1. LOVE TO LOVE YOU BABY—Donna Summer (Oasis OCLP 5003)
2. LET'S DO IT AGAIN / ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK—Staple Singers with Curtis Mayfield (Curtom CU 5005)
3. HONEY—Ohio Players (Mercury SRM 1038)
4. INSEPARABLE—Natalie Cole (Capitol ST 11429)
5. GRATITUDE—Earth, Wind & Fire (Columbia)
6. WAKE UP EVERYBODY—Harold Melvin & The Blue Notes (Phila. Int'l. PZ 33808)
7. YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL—Stylistics (Avco 69010)
8. KC AND THE SUNSHINE BAND—KC & The Sunshine Band (TK 603)
9. WHO I AM—David Ruffin (Motown M6 849 S1)
10. SAVE ME—Silver Convention (Midland Int'l. BKL 11129)
11. PICK OF THE LITTER—Spinners (Atlantic SD 18141)
12. HIGH ON YOU—Sly Stone (Epic PE 33835)
13. MOVIN' ON—Commodores (Motown M6 848 S1)
14. RUFUS FEATURING CHAKA KHAN—Rufus (ABC ABCD 898)
15. AIN'T NO BOUT' A DOUBT IT—Graham Central Station (Warner Bros. BS 2876)
16. MAKING MUSIC—Bill Withers (Columbia PC 33704)
17. 2ND ANNIVERSARY—Gladys Knight & The Pips (Buddah HDS 5639)
18. DRAMA V—Ron Banks & The Dramatics (ABC ABCD 916)
19. FEELS SO GOOD—Grover Washington, Jr. (Kudu 24 S1)
20. PHILADELPHIA FREEDOM—MFSB (Phila. Int'l. PZ 33845)
21. YOU—Aretha Franklin (Atlantic SD 18151)
22. THE HEAT IS ON—Isley Brothers (T-Neck PZ 33536)
23. IN THE SLOT—Tower of Power (Warner Bros. BS 2880)
24. FAMILY REUNION—O'Jays (Phila. Int'l. PZ 33807)
25. WE GOTTA GET OUR THING TOGETHER—Dells (Mercury SRM 1 1059)
26. CATCH A FIRE—Bob Marley & The Wailers (Island ILPS 9241)
27. FREE TO BE MYSELF—Edwin Starr (Granite GS 1005)
28. CITY LIFE—Blackbyrds (Fantasy F 9490)
29. COKE—Coke Escovedo (Mercury SRM 1 1041)
30. HOT CHOCOLATE—Hot Chocolate (Big Tree BT 89512)
31. THE SOUND OF SUNSHINE—The Sunshine Band (TK 604)
32. AFRO-DESSA—Lonnie Smith (Groove Merchant GM 3308)
33. THAT NIGGER'S CRAZY—Richard Pryor (Reprise MS 2241)
34. AL GREEN IS LOVE—Al Green (Hi HSL 32092)
35. BOOGIE DOWN, U.S.A.—People's Choice (TSOP KZ 33154)
36. ODE TO MY LADY—Willie Hutch (Motown M6 838 S1)
37. WHY CAN'T WE BE FRIENDS?—War (United Artists UALA 441 G)
38. MAN-CHILD—Herbie Hancock (Columbia PC 33812)
39. THIRTEEN BLUE MAGIC LANE—Blue Magic (Atco SD 36 120)
40. PRESSURE SENSITIVE—Ronnie Laws (Blue Note BNLA 452 G)
41. NON-STOP—B.T. Express (Scepter/Roadshow RS 41001)
42. SUPERSOUND—Jimmy Castor Bunch (Atlantic SD 18150)
43. SPIRIT OF THE BOOGIE—Kool & The Gang (Delite DEP 2016)
44. FANCY DANCER—Bobbi Humphrey (Blue Note BNLA 550 G)
45. SAFETY ZONE—Bobby Womack (United Artists UALA 544 G)
46. MAHOGANY / ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK—Diana Ross (Motown M6 858 S1)
47. LUCILLE TALKS BACK—B.B. King (ABC 898)
48. PLACES AND SPACES—Donald Byrd (Blue Note BNLA 549 G)
49. JOURNEY TO LOVE—Stanley Clarke (Nemperor NE 433)
50. GREATEST HITS—Barry White (20th Century T 493)

country

1. ARE YOU READY FOR FREDDY—Freddy Fender—ABC/Dot DOSD 2044
2. BLACK BEAR ROAD—C.W. McCall—MGM 5008
3. NIGHT THINGS—Ronnie Milsap—Warner Bros. 2870
4. PRISONER IN DISGUISE—Linda Ronstadt—Asylum 7E 1045
5. REDHEADED STRANGER—Willie Nelson—Columbia PC 33482
6. CLEARLY LOVE—Olivia Newton-John—MCA 2148
7. DOLLY—Dolly Parton—RCA APL1 1221
8. SAY FOREVER YOU'LL BE MINE—Dolly Parton & Porter Wagoner—RCA APL 1116
9. WINDSONG—John Denver—RCA APL1 1183
10. HOLY BIBLE-NEW TESTAMENT—Statler Brothers—Mercury SRM 1 1052
11. LOVE IN THE HOT AFTERNOON—Gene Watson—Capitol ST 11443
12. THE BEST OF THE STATLER BROTHERS—Statler Bros.—Mercury SRM 1 1k037
13. HEART TO HEART—Roy Clark—ABC/Dot DOSD 2041
14. RHINESTONE COWBOY—Glen Campbell—Capitol SW 11430
15. WHAT CAN YOU DO TO ME NOW—Willie Nelson—RCA APL1 1234
16. GREATEST HITS VOL. II—Tom T. Hall—Mercury SRN 1044
17. SINCE I MET YOU BABY—Freddy Fender—ABC/Dot DOSD 2044
18. DREAMING MY DREAMS—Waylon Jennings—RCA APL1 1117
19. GREATEST HITS—Don Williams—ABC DOSD 2036
20. BEFORE THE NEXT TEARDROP FALLS—Freddy Fender—ABC/Dot DOSD 2020
21. GREATEST HITS, VOL. I—Narvel Felts—ABC/Dot DOSD 2036
22. TODAY I STARTED LOVING YOU AGAIN—Connie Smith—Mega MLPS 612
23. HERE COMES JOHNNY RUSSELL—Johnny Russell—RCA APL1 1211
24. THE FIRST TIME—Freddie Hart—Capitol ST 11449
25. TEXAS GOLD—Asleep At The Wheel—Capitol ST 11441

jazz

1. FEELS SO GOOD—Grover Washington, Jr. (KUDO DU 24S1)
2. JOURNEY TO LOVE—Stanley Clarke (Nemperor NE 433)
3. MAN-CHILD—Herbie Hancock (Columbia PC 33812)
4. VISIONS OF A NEW WORLD—Lonnie Liston-Smith & The Cosmic Echoes (RCA BDL 1196)
5. DON'T IT FEEL GOOD—Ramsey Lewis (Columbia PC 33800)
6. PRESSURE SENSITIVE—Ronnie Laws (Blue Note BNLA 549 G)
7. PLACES AND SPACES—Donald Byrd (Blue Note BNLA 452 G)
8. MELLOW MADNESS—Quincy Jones (A&M SP 4526)
9. TOUCH—John Klemmer (ABC ABCD 922)
10. A FUNKY SIDE OF THINGS—Billy Cobham (Atlantic SD 18149)
11. HAVE YOU EVER SEEN THE RAIN—Stanley Turrentine (Fantasy F 9493)
12. SWEET HANDS—Dae Liebman (Horizon SP-702)
13. MARCHING IN THE STREET—Harvey Mason (Arista AL 4054)
14. FIRST CUCKOO—Deodato (MCA 491)
15. CHAIN REACTION—Crusaders (ABC/Blue Thumb BTSD 6k022)
16. FROM SOUTH AFRICA TO SOUTH CAROLINA—Gil Scott-Heron & Brian Jackson (Arista 4044)
17. SATURDAY NIGHT SPECIAL—Norman Connors (Buddah BDS 5643)
18. BAD LUCK IS ALL I HAVE—Eddie Harris (Atlantic SD 1675)
19. MISTER MAGIC—Grover Washington, Jr. (KUDO KU 20S1)
20. REINFORCEMENTS—Brian Auger's Oblivion Express (RCA APL 1210)
21. BACKHAND—Keith Jarrett (Impulse ASD 9305)
22. RETURN TO FOREVER—Chick Corea (ECM 1k022)
23. BAD BENSON—George Benson (CTI 604581)
24. BELLAVIA—Chuck Mangione (A&M SP 4557)
25. FANCY DANCER—Bobbi Humphrey (Blue Note BNLA 550 G)

Music Poets

Music by Nancy Ford
Lyrics by Gretchen Cryer

CHANGING

Michael in the present
Michael in the past
Michael walking through my life
Michael did not last
We are changing, always changing
Tomorrow, I wonder who I'll be
Got a scrapbook filled with photographs
And none of them,
Not one of them is me

Lonely in the present
Got troubles with the past
Looking at those photographs
Of things that did not last
Always had the feeling
He was stopping in to call
Lately now I wonder
Was Michael here at all?
We are changing, always changing
Tomorrow I wonder who I'll be
Got a scrapbook filled with photographs
Of all the years
From one to thirty-three

Twice I was a mother
once I was a wife
Tore off all the labels
Now all that's left is life
And the changing, oh the changing
Tomorrow I wonder who I'll be
Got a scrapbook filled with photographs
And none of them,
Not one of them is me
Changing, always changing
Tomorrow I wonder who I'll be
Got a scrapbook filled with photographs
And none of them,
Not one of them is me
None of them,
Not one of them is me.

Lyrics by Gretchen Cryer
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RANDY

Randy was a sailor
Sitting in a bar
Listening to the waves
Singing to a star
His voice was oh so peaceful
His eyes were like the sea
And oh his eyes could hypnotize
Smiling down on me

Take it easy, take it slow
It's a long time getting where we want to go
Take it easy, easy, easy
Easy love

He asked what I was thinking
I told him with a smile
He said I had the softest hair
He'd seen in quite a while
He said he'd like to touch it
His touch was like the sea
And then the tide came moving in
Moving in on me

Take it easy, take it slow
It's a long time getting where we want to go
Take it easy, easy, easy,
Easy love

He looked just like an angel
With the moonlight on my bed
Casting down a silver light
Around his curly head
And the waves, they kept on pounding
He was moaning like the sea
I thought his soul was casting out
Casting out for me
I thought that I would follow him
Forever and a day
If only he would love me
In that slow and gentle way

Loving's easy when it's slow
And I would follow wherever he'd go
It was easy, easy, easy
Easy love

But morning brought some changes
I'll never know just why
Randy's eyes were cloudy
I heard a lonely sigh
I knew the wind had shifted

He was looking out to sea
And then I felt him drifting out
Drifting out from me

"Take it easy, I've got to go
Got the world to see and the wind's blowing slow
Take it easy, easy, easy
Easy, love."

Randy was a sailor
Sitting in a bar
Listening to the waves
Singing to a star
His voice was oh so peaceful
His eyes were like the sea
I never will forget him
Making easy love to me
Easy, slow
Had a good time loving 'til you had to go
Take it easy, easy, easy,
Easy, love

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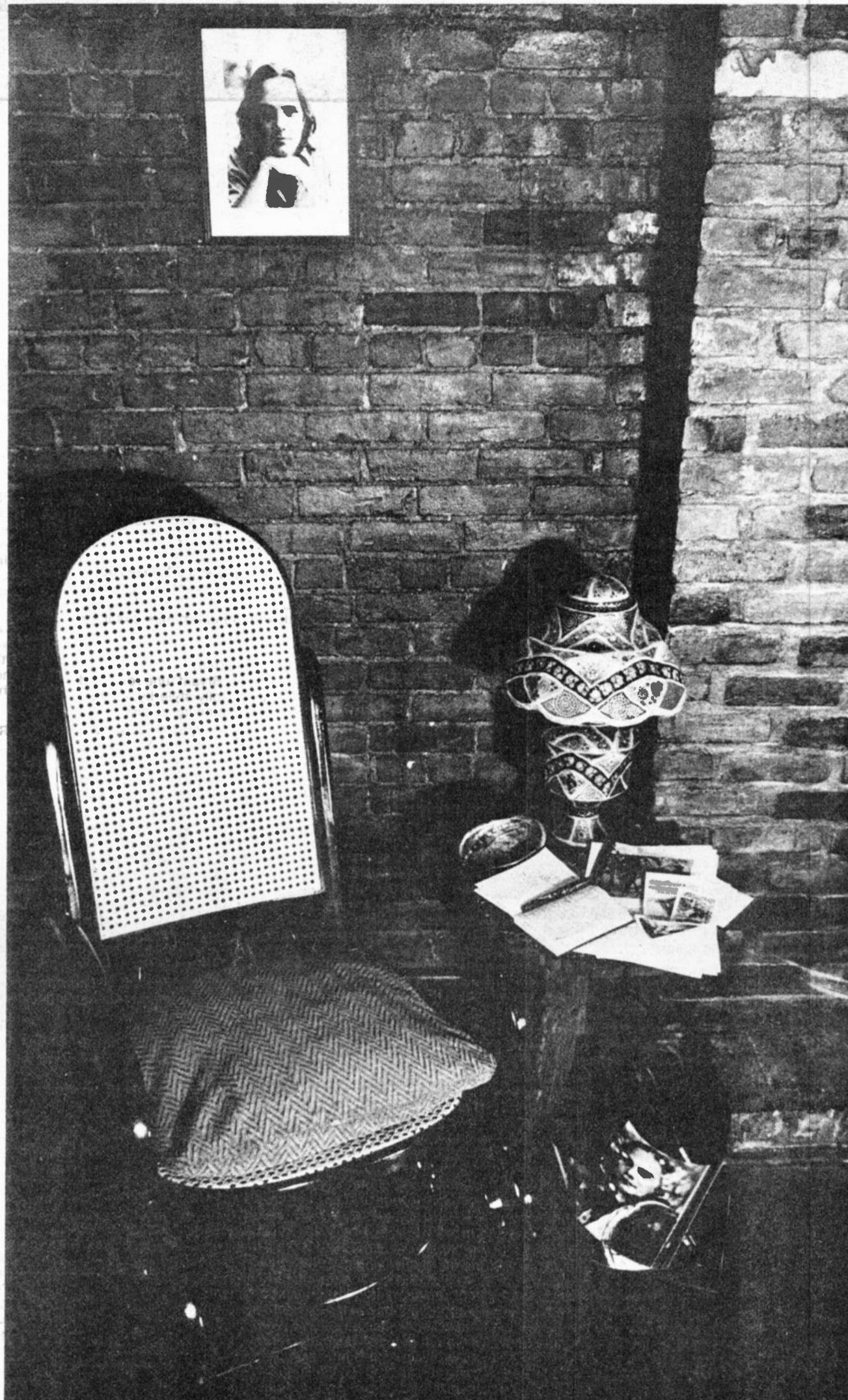


PHOTO BY JOPHES VASTA

ROCK & POP SINGLES

FLORENCE WARNER: Anyway I Love You (Columbia 8-50152)

Often-interpreted Dan Fogelberg song is given the slick, Nashville pop-C&W run for the money by a plaintive-voiced songstress. Not as good as some of her earlier efforts, but the Olivia Newton-John similarities give it a good shot at riding up the charts.

BEVERLY WRIGHT: For The Sake of the Children (Epic 8-50162)

Standard country-pop sad-eyed ballad by a fascinatingly endowed new female singer. Beverly's voice palpitates and slides in all sorts of unusual ways, and with the right material, she could be a real killer!

MICHAEL ALLEN: The Big Parade (Slipped Disc E-45288)

Those Were The Days soundtrack with new live-for-today lyrics by Neil Sedaka, John Phillip Sousa-pop.

JON LUCIEN Creole Lady (Columbia 3-10232)

Jazz' vocalist in a superficially smooth, soothing disco setting with lots of rhythmic turbulence underneath. A mood piece good for dancing, but hardly distinctive.

THE JIMMY CASTOR BUNCH: The Christmas Song (Atlantic 45-3302)

Surprisingly pleasant instrumental version of old chestnut with leader Castor on King Curtis-like sax most of the way. A bit o' soul amidst tons of lyricism.

ANGELO BOND: Eve (ABC 12134)

Solid debut performance by a cool-voiced warbler. Maybe a touch over-produced and the storyline comes up short, but Bond has the makings of the new Al Green or new Otis Redding or new whoever. Probably the new Angelo Bond.

COUNTRY JOE McDONALD: Breakfast For Two (Fantasy 758)

If I told you what Joe and his lady ate for breakfast, I'd be censored. Possibly too much innuendo for airplay, but it's very tasty.

YVONNE ELLIMAN: Walk Right In (RSO 517)

Eric Clapton's current traditionalism spreads to a recent co-conspirator, but this former *Jesus Christ Superstar* luminary adds horn-punched funk to this old Rooftop Singers' folk ditty. Pleasant, even slightly bawdy, though nothing special.

WILSON PICKETT: The Best Part of a Man (Wicked 8101)

The best Wilson Pickett record in years is also his debut on his own label. It's a cliche-ridden, mid-tempo bopper, and Wilson was always great at wacking home inanities in his inimitable raw-throated style. Deft Brad Shapiro production is also decided plus.

D.C. LaRUE: Move In Closer (Claridge 411-AS-SV)

Very interesting invitation seductively stated by a girlish-sounding lady, with hot under-rhythms, a loose feel, and some very funny lines vis à vis sensuous ones. A strange but fun disc.

DAVID GEDDES: The Last Game of the Season (Big Tree 16052)

The man who thrust *Run, Joey, Run* upon us is back with another clawingly emotional talk and sing number. This time football gets kicked around. Too bad it can't kick back.

CLIMAX BLUES BAND: Using The Power (Sire SAA-721)

Bouncy blues-rock twist on the *Power To The People* riff, but there's little head-pounding or cliche-mongering here. Good, clean, supportive production, too.

JONATHAN CAIN: 'Til It's Time To Say Goodbye (October 1001-AM)

Pleasant, predictable pop ballad that opens with a flashy guitar-synthesizer intro then scales down quickly to a standard organ-based riff. Surprisingly durable, yet you've heard it all before 100 times.

WILLIE NELSON: Blue Eyes Crying In The Rain (Columbia 3-10176)

Ol' Willie's gentle-strong, rust-hued voice bails out another lame C&W soap 'n' tears ballad. Off the *Red-Headed Stranger* album, on which there are at least seven better songs.

THE AMAZING RHYTHM ACES: Amazing Grace Used To Be Her Favorite Song (ABC 12142)

Not exactly standard top forty fare, this real old C&W-bluegrass tearjerker is given an amiable run thru by the *Third Rate Romance* crew. More enjoyable and mid-Byrds-like than you'd think.

JAMES TALLEY: Red River Memory (Capitol 4170) Slight re-working of the old folk song *Red River Valley*. Pleasing performance, done with acoustic guitar and no frills.

TOOTS & THE MAYTALS: Country Road (Island 040)

Positively the best single of the month! John Denver's near-standard never sounded so good, and who ever would have thought that the song would make a great chug-a-chug reggae number!?! Sweet 'n' tangy Toots is tops, and he proves it beyond any doubt here.

BOBBY SHEEN: Love Stealing (Chelsea 3034)

A real old-fashioned grinder brought up-to-date with a dynamic, full production and a sweet, soulful vocal. Draw the blinds and have fun!

MICHAEL FENNELLY: Turn To Me (Mercury 73738)

Former Crabby Appleton lead vocalist is captured in one of his weakest efforts yet, as this momentum-gathering rock ballad goes virtually nowhere. A little-known big talent at an inconsequential moment.

GREG LAKE: I Believe In Father Christmas (Atlantic 3305)

One of the strangest seasonal ballads from one of the least likely sources. Greg Lake, of Emerson, Lake, and . . ., starts out a firm believer in all of the myths, but two short verses later he's a clear-sighted cynic. A most intriguing disc, if nothing else.

MICHAEL DINNER: The Promised Land (Fantasy 750)

A fine straight a head, brash rocker with soaring guitar lines and good, even marginally relevant lyric imagery. Dinner's voice is smooth and rather ordinary, but it fits in here perfectly. A find.

JIM CAPALDI: Love Hurts (Island 045)

An old Boudeaux *Bye Bye Love* Bryant tune rendered in an odd '50s, almost Buddy Holly style by Traffic's "other" lead vocalist. An underpinning of disco-fried strings makes for genre confusion, yet this mid-tempo song and Capaldi's performance are truly endearing in an off-beat fashion.

JOHN FOGARTY: Almost Saturday Night (Asylum E-45291)

Fogarty created a succession of classic rock singles with Creedence Clearwater Revival, and though the group is long gone, the great singles keep a-comin'. Here we have a chunkily powerful, mid-tempo chugger with a growling vocal, happy, optimistic lyrics, et al. And boy, oh boy, does it grow on you.

SPARKS: Looks, Looks, Looks (Island 043)

The mechanical Mael Brothers and company leave usual flash-rock to take on '30s swing, and, yes, it's o-o-oh so campy. For that matter, it's also wacky enough to be a novelty hit single.

ROBERT PALMER: Which of Us Is The Fool (Island 042)

A top-flight vocalist in search of a song . . . and a producer. Palmer's throaty, emotive tones do give a rather weak, self-penned tune more credence than it deserves; however, a slushy, string-filled production almost buries the singer, and that's not good.

THE LOVEMAKERS: Down and Out (Island 046)

A disco-bopper with a par-r-ryt (!) feel, this record is some fun, with a loose flute solo and all. Yet, in the end, one more ordinary danceable number whose beat and attitude are the sole redeeming merits.

KISS: Rock and Roll All Nite (Casablanca NB 850)

Well, thud my thud and bang a gong, Kiss want to rock 'n' roll all night and party every day, and they slug that to ya time after time after time on this live version of one of their more popular charts. The manic crowd'll have a blast.

THE ROWANS: Take It As It Comes (Asylum E-45281)

Once over-hyped as Jerry Garcia's favorite band in the whole wide world, the youthful Rowans are growing up to be a very solid "California sunshine—country-rockin'" outfit. This hot, bouncy mover may even be their high-point thus far, with high-flying vocals, credible lyrics, and even a few Beatle references.

ELECTRIC LIGHT ORCHESTRA: Evil Woman (United Artists XW729-Y)

For some reason, this song sounds a lot better as a single than on ELO's *Face The Music* album. Probably because it's an atypical R&B-tainted haunter from these Kings of classical-rock overkill. Could be a bigie, though.

JUDY COLLINS: Angel Spread Your Wings (Elektra E-45289)

Would you believe a pretty Danny O'Keefe ballad glossed-over and then prettified even more? Believe it. Sorry, Judy, this is strictly for the M.O.R.-easy listening bunch.

ANDREW GOLD: That's Why I Love You (Asylum E-45286)

Linda Ronstadt's lead guitarist steps out with this ebullient little love ballad that's almost quaint . . . it's good, easy rollin' nature. Gold sounds a bit like Rick Nelson, and with more songs and performances of this quality, his current employer will be looking for a new guitarist quite shortly.

BILL O'NEILL & THE GREAT SCOTT BAND: I See You (United Artists XW748-Y)

"I see you/You see me/I wonder/Do you know-know-know" and little else repeated over and again and again on top of a hesitantly rockin' disco undercurrent. And what do you see?

AWB: Groovin' The Night Away (Atlantic 45-3304)

Another tough R&B chugger from these Scotsmen, complete with party invitations and a *Pick Up The Pieces* horn break. Tight, tight, and spunky, for sure, but these blue-eyed soul brothers have done much better.

FLO & EDDIE: Let Me Make Love To You (Columbia 3-10204)

These two crazies recall the triumphs of their first group, The Turtles, on this light-hearted popified rocker, and it's a tribute to that buoyant sound that it stands the test of time. Then again, who wouldn't want to be *Happy Together* again?

DUDES: Saturday Night (Columbia 3-10212)

Here's a real delight. The latest Canadian contribution to the rock scene debuts with a snappy punch pop-rocker whose chief charms are a great, stuttering bass-line, light, buoyant vocals, and traditional invitation to "rock, jump, and kid-around." Almost a throw-back to happier times, but Dudes make it distinctive and fresh.

TELLY SAVALAS: Who Loves Ya Baby (MCA 40468)

In a way, this record was so inevitable and so inevitably bad that it's actually funny. Kojak himself reciting Macho, "I-told-ya-so" lyrics in a fully disco-fried setting. Worth a good chuckle, anyway.

GEORGE CARLIN: New News (Part 1) (Little David 731)

The king of scruffy comics reels off one one-liner after two-liner as a decidedly non-emotional newscaster counting the casualties. Sample: "Terrorists blow up Central America, and leave note." Very droll.

DAVID CROSBY & GRAHAM NASH: Carry Me (ABC 12140)

Ever in search of the perfect plaintive ballad, this on-again/off-again duo have come up with another solid contribution in the *Helpless* tradition. The harmonies are as smooth and as uplifting as ever, and Crosby's throbbing lead voice sounds even better than in the past. A good 'un.

10cc: Art For Art's Sake (Mercury 73725)

The ever-sniping 10cc take on money in this multi-voiced, lowslung rocker, and, more often than not, the British foursome win out. It'll make a better album cut than a single, though.

PINKIES: Porto Rico (Phillips 40802)

Latin-flavored disco mover deliciously produced with good use made of a girlie chorus chanting minimal lyrics, sandwiched between synthesizer-horn breaks. One of the better of its type.

SCHEREE: Little White Lies (Goddess 1101)

Formula C&W tearjerker poured forth by a sometimes whiskey-hued female voice. Not much, but it doesn't pretend to be more than it is either.

BACHMAN-TURNER OVERDRIVE: Down The Line (Mercury 73724)

Every once in a while Randy Bachman slips into an all-too-comfortable imitation of past glories of either his work with B.T.O. or the Guess Who. This sputtering stomper is a confused collection of references to both group's hits.

TIM MOORE: Lay Down A Line To Me (Asylum E-45287)

Moore's written better songs, but the *Second Avenue*-like production here is terrific. The song is about reminiscing, I think, but the lyrics hardly count; it's the overall effect of the studio created atmosphere that carries this tune.

BOBBY BLAND: I Take It On Home (ABC 12133)

The great Kenny O'Dell song that Charlie Rich made famous is tackled by the equally supreme talents of Bobby Bland. However, Bobby "Blue" seems uncomfortable in the countrified mode, and the record is badly over-produced, to boot.

POCO: Georgia, Bind My Ties (ABC 12126)

An atypically tough, moody, charged rocker from the original country-rockin' bunch for lunch. Solid, though missing something. The sparsely instrumented slipside, *Keep On Tryin'*, is somewhat better, as it features the group's patented floating harmonies at their best.

TINA TURNER: Whole Lotta Love (United Artists XW724-Y)

Old Led Zeppelin power vehicle lustily interpreted by the Queen of raunch R&B-rock, and it's very odd hearing a woman belt out: "Ahm gawna give ya ev'ry inch o' ma love!" Rating: one pair of tight pants with the fly open.

ROCK & POP SINGLES

SPARKS: Looks, Looks, Looks (Island 043)

Ron and Russell Mael are two Americans who have struck it somewhat big in England. They understand perfectly that the secret of British humour is to be terribly polite while being demonstrably insane. This single is goofy and cute. Try it.

LOVE CRAFT: Ain't Gettin' None (Mercury 73707)

Love Craft is a Chicago group of long standing originally known as H.P. Lovecraft, naming themselves after the author of morbid and gory tales who is considered a 20th century Edgar Allan Poe. The group started out being self-consciously vague and arty but with the passing of time they have become a very tight band and considerably changed their style. They're worth a listen.

10CC: Get It While You Can (Mercury 73725)

One of the most interesting and innovative groups of the last five years, 10CC seem to have begun with near-perfection and are casually taking their time about being absolutely perfect. Outstanding.

JUSTIN HEYWOOD/JOHN LODGE: Blue Guitar (Threshold 67021)

Two refugees from the defunct Moody Blues doing a very Moody-ish song. Like most of the Moody Blues recordings, this single smothers mediocre thoughts and songwriting with a feather pillow arrangement and altar-boy vocals. Fans of the former group, on hearing this record, may feel the tickle of an old thrill. They may also sneeze.

LYNSEY DE PAUL: Sugar Shuffle (Mercury 73739)

Ms. Lynsey De Paul knows how to flirt while she sings, and once you've heard her fix-my-doll-mister voice pronouncing "shuffle" as though the word was French ("shuf-felle") you are likely to be a goner.

AL MATTHEWS: Fool (Columbia 10224)

One of the very, very few black records released in the last five years which has what black music used to have all the time—charm, humor and strength. Don't pass this up.

SWEET: Ballroom Blitz (Capitol 4055)

The song is about a riot in a dance hall, with everyone being very mod amid the carnage. The single was designed to be funny but it comes off as a giggly brat joke. The vocals are a combination of lisp and sneer.

DELBERT McCLINTON: Object of My Affection (ABC 12132)

Sloppy and amateurish but a lot of fun. It makes up in crude charm what it lacks everywhere else.

ENCHANTMENT: Call On Me (Polydor 14287)

God of all gods who seeth and knoweth all, take pity upon your children and send them a good black record and not, O God, this commercial jive.

RHYTHM: Make Some People Happy (Polydor 14288)

As I was saying, God. . . .

BEANO: Candy Baby (London 20085)

A takeoff on 1950s I-met-her-at-a-dance songs. A clever and affectionate satire, but it takes too long to get started and the idea is far from new.

THE GOSPEL TRUTH: Uphill Peace of Mind (Kayvette 5123)

Somewhere in the midst of this interesting soul single there is a good tune struggling to get out. The vocal is assertive. Even though the band is blowing standard black riffs they put some spirit and lung-power into it. One of those perplexing singles that is good enough as it is but could have been even better.

THE YOUNG SISTERS: Let's Do the Latin Hustle (Philips 40803)

Made for the disco market. It may have a lot to do with the Hustle but it has nothing to do with Latin music. A record made yesterday which will be forgotten at noon tomorrow.

DR. HOOK: Only Sixteen (Capitol 4171)

Well, here's a switch—Dr. Hook doing a gentle song straight. *Only Sixteen* is that charming, shy ballad by Sam Cooke (along with Buddy Holly, he was a master at writing simple and openly sentimental songs). The performance is muted and tasteful, showing respect for superior material.

THE GRASS ROOTS: Naked Man (Capitol/Haven 7021)

One of those peculiar, hilarious and slightly bent songs Randy Newman writes about the cuckoo types of the world. The naked man is a purse snatcher preying on old ladies while crying for help (presumably psychiatric care). Three Dog Night ordinarily does the best job with Newman songs but The Grass Roots, a sturdy group making a comeback, give them artistic competition here.

BOB DYLAN: Hurricane (Parts I and II) (Columbia 10245)

Dylan trying to be socially significant again with a song about a convicted murderer who says he's innocent.

Dylan thought George Jackson was a swell guy, too. Sanctimonious drivel.

JILL BABY LOVE: My Way or Hit the Highway (Grand Prix 206)

Produced by Walt and Andy Kahn and written by Walt, the song is very much in the style of Holland-Dozier-Holland/early Motown, and the socko vocal by Jill Baby Love sounds like all three of The Honey Cone (Want Ads). Cookin' good soul single.

DAVE EDMUND: Need A Shot of Rhythm and Blues (RCA 10118)

If this isn't a monster smash hit then there ain't no justice. The album from which the single is taken has already scored big in England and is just being released here. Bravo, Dave Edmunds for his lean and mean rock and roll!

TONY ORLANDO & DAWN: Skybird (Arista 0156)

Curiously weak single from the usually surefire trio. Perhaps the cut was originally an album track; the production, arrangement and performance are done at half-power.

PERRY COMO: Just Out of Reach (RCA 10402)

Not meant for top-40 competition. But you've got to admit that Mr. Como still has great pipes, and his expertise is a treat to hear.

THE CHOICE FOUR: Until We Said Goodbye (RCA 10445)

Van ("The Hustle") McCoy did the strong arrangement for this very well made soul ballad. Fine vocals.

OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHNS: He Ain't Heavy (He's My Brother) (MCA 40495)

Ms. Newton-John has a pleasant voice with a limited range. It sounds as though she is very close to the microphone and doesn't want to sing too loudly for fear of hurting her ears. The tune was a major hit for The Hollies and is enough of a tearjerker to be ready for a second go-round.

MARGO THUNDER: Don't You Have Any Love in Your Heart (Capitol/Haven 7018)

The girl is suspicious that her man doesn't love her the way he says he does. The name of the artist, her delivery and the belligerent arrangement suggest that the man may find himself undergoing cranial surgery performed with a frying pan.

DON WILLIAMS: Turn Out the Light (and Love Me Tonight) (ABC/Dot 17568)

Cheapo song—a slight rewrite of Dylan's *I'll Be Your Baby Tonight* done for the country market. Keep the lights on.

LINDA LEWIS: This Time I'll Be Sweeter (Arista 0151)

Better than average soul-pop love oozier. Good performance. Ms. Lewis sounds like a cross between Anne Murray and Karen Carpenter.

BARRY MANILOW: I Write the Songs (Arista 0157)

Either Manilow is trying to be cuter than he is already or he suffers from a Messiah complex. The character in this ditty is cast as All Music, Reaching Into the Hearts of Mankind blah blah. The arrangement is skillful but a bit overdone.

BARBRA STREISAND: My Father's Song (Columbia 10198)

Streisand worshippers will find it perfect. Those who believe she is mortal and fallible will find it to be showbizzy but okay.

SOUL TRAIN GANG: Soul Train '75" (Soul Train 10400)

Average bumpety-bumpety dance number given a mechanical performance. Based on the syndicated TV series, this record is presumably no different from "Soul Train '74" or, for that matter, "Soul Train 1961, 1933 and 1882."

SWEET: Fox on the Run (Capitol 4157)

Not to be confused with the bitter, eerie country-folk tune recorded by Manfred Mann and others. This is a teenybopper ditty with clumpy production and fumbling vocals. The Osmond Brothers shouldn't lose any sleep over this one.

AZTEC TWO-STEP: It's Going on Saturday (RCA 10419)

A band which hasn't made up its mind whether they're going to play rock, pop or jazz, so they mess around with all three. Produced by Paul Leka (*Green Tambourine*; *Na Na Hey Hey Kiss Him Goodbye*; *Will You Be Staying After Sunday*).

HARRY CHAPIN: A Song for My Daughter (Elektra 45285)

Harry Chapin, believing himself to be a poet, remorselessly gives his unqualified opinions on everyone he meets or has ever heard of. Now it's his daughter's turn. Chapin, who can find sympathetic things to say about lonely disc jockeys and mass murderers, complains about his daughter growing up and away from him. If Life strikes him on the jaw, then maybe he shouldn't stick his chin out so far.

RONNIE SPECTOR: You'd Be Good for Me (Tom Cat 10380)

Ronnie Spector is the former lead singer of The Ronettes. The song was written by Gerry Goffin, a former writing partner with Carole King, and Barry Goldberg, formerly of the Electric Flag and a sideman on some of the hotter Mitch Ryder sessions of the Sixties. This single is so formally done by former people that it is all form and no substance.

RUSH: Lakeside Park (Mercury 73737)

A throwback to the days when almost anything would seem important if it had echo and slightly weird chord changes. You've heard it all before, even if you haven't heard it yet.

THE NICKY NEWARKERS: Love Me Baby (Mercury 73727)

Soul single with a commercial and completely false reggae rhythm. The lyrics are sappy and the lead singer has been carefully instructed to babble in falsetto. Pure lard.

HEARTSFIELD: Rocking Chair (Mercury 73742)

Very pleasing performance with a mousetrap guitar figure that snaps at the end of every verse and sets you up for the chorus. The tune is one to whistle.

BRIAN AUGER'S OBLIVION EXPRESS: Happiness is Just Around the Corner (RCA 0085)

If Auger's around the corner then happiness is miles away. He is a musician of limited ideas played at great length.

CHOCOLATE MILK: My Mind is Hazy (RCA 10421)

Allen Toussaint and Marshall Sehorn produced this New Orleans group. Their rhythm ideas seem to come from The Meters (another Toussaint-Sehorn client) and their vocal ideas owe something to War. But it's a well done, solid record.

GINO CUNICO: Fanny (Be Tender with My Love) (Arista 0162)

Written by The Bee Gees, this song would be corny but workable in their hands. Here it's just flat.

LEO KOTTKE: Power Failure (Capitol 4177)

The great guitarist's mostly vocal version of the Procol Harem tune, done because he admires the group. Could be stronger.

HELEN REDDY: Somewhere in the Night (Capitol 4192)

Gooey, smarmy thing meant to be sung in Las Vegas or on the average Saturday night TV "variety" show. Ms. Reddy is a competent singer who is careful never to rise above her material.

TAVARES: In the Eyes of Love (Capitol 4184)

It might as well be The Stylistics. Smooth pop ballad by a polished soul group, complete with mushy spoken interlude.

DICK FELLER: Uncle Hiram and the Homemade Beer (Asylum E-45290)

C&W novelty tune about exploding homemade beer that's kinda silly. And very sudsy. (Chuckle, chuckle.)

DOLENZ, JONES, BOYCE & HART: I Remember the Feeling (Capitol 4180)

Mickey Dolenz and Davy Jones were two of The Monkees, for whom Tommy Boyce and Bobby Hart wrote material. Apparently none of the four has been doing much lately so they decided to make a record where nothing much happens.

LINDA HARGROVE: Half My Heart's in Texas (Capitol 4153)

Upbeat country song, sung with sparkle. Produced by Pete Drake, king of pedal steel guitarists.

NIGEL OLSSON: A Girl Like You (Rocket 40491)

The great tune by Felix Cavaliere and Eddie Brigati from their Rascals days given a fine reading by Nigel Olsson with an arrangement based closely on the original.

BLACK OAK ARKANSAS: Strong Enough to Be Gentle (MCA 40496)

Loud and clumsy group whose lead vocalist attempts to imitate early Captain Beefheart. The Captain should sue for misappropriation of style.

GLEN CAMPBELL: Country Boy (You've Got Your Feet in L.A.) (Capitol 4155)

Good follow-up to Campbell's *Rhinestone Cowboy* hit—same plot, same form, same content; almost the same song.

BIG MOUTH AND LITTLE EYE: Yo-De-Lay-Dee (Mercury 73741)

At first hearing this sounds like an obsolete satire of motorcycle-era rock. But judging from the label credits it is a product of several Dutch citizens singing English phonetically. It has the appeal of *Waterloo*, a phonetic rocker done by the Swedish group Abba that was a hit awhile back. Try it out for fun.

CARAVAN

Trouping Onward From Canterbury

by Jim O'Connor

Strange things were happening at London's historic Church of the Holy Innocents last summer. At odd hours of the day and night decidedly un-clerical figures—thin, pale, long-haired—would suddenly appear at a secluded entrance where, after a short wait, they would be let inside. Shortly thereafter strange music would be heard by passersby. The church's huge 17th century organ was playing not Brahms, Beethoven or selected Gregorian chants but something that sounded very much like rock and roll.

Which is precisely what it was. Caravan, the veteran British band from Canterbury, was auditioning keyboard players in preparation for their fall tour of the U.S.

"The auditions were actually in the church hall, not the actual church itself," explained drummer Richard Coughlan. "But then that was part of the original church a couple hundred years ago."

All the auditioning paid off when the band finally found Jan Scheelhaas a veteran of thousands of recording sessions and also a one time member of Peter Banks band, Flash.

"We had a list of about thirty names and Jan was second from the end. As soon as he started playing we knew he was the person we needed to replace Dave."

He was referring to David Sinclair who, together with Richard and guitarist Pye Hastings, had founded Caravan. Sinclair had left and rejoined the band once, but this time the departure was permanent.

"It had reached a point where it was the whole band against Dave," Richard recalled. "He just had a different concept of what he wanted to do and none of us

could see it. So now he's starting up something new and we're touring and promoting *Cunning Stunts*."

By a strange coincidence both *Cunning Stunts*, Caravan's new album, and their stage show open with Sinclair's "The Show of Our Lives."

"It just worked out that way. David hadn't had any songs on the album before *Cunning Stunts*. Then he came up with "Show" and all of side two, *The Tab-song Conshirtoe*. Show is a great song to open any concert with—especially when we're the first act and only have forty minutes to play. It gets us going."

"Yes, that's right," Jan said in his rich Liverpool accent. "If we had more time we could start hard, ease off, and then build up again at the end. With 40 minutes we have to hit hard and hope for the best."

Caravan's lineup includes, besides Richard, Pye and Jan, lead singer/bass player Mide Wedgewood and Geoff Richardson on electric viola, flute and guitar.

"Geoff joined about three years after we organized the band. We'd been using flutes on all our albums so he fit right in. The viola and extra guitar give us more freedom in concert and on records which is nice," Richard explained.

Although the band has no leader on stage or elsewhere, Pye Hastings has currently been writing most of the songs. He "He hives the song to us in a sort of skeleton form," Jan said as he ran his fingers through his curly blond hair. "Then we fill in with whatever will work."

"When we record we try and have about two or three more songs than we need," Richard continued. "That way, after we



get a feel for where the album is heading we use the material that fits best. If there's ever any indecision about what to put on, Dave Hitchcock, who's produced our last five albums, makes the final choice."

The U.S. tour held a number of surprises for the band. First they had the happy experience of having an album on the charts for the entire tour. In addition, the single from *Cunning Stunts*, *Stuck in a Hole*, was on the singles charts.

Most enjoyable, though, was the enthusiastic response they were getting from audiences everywhere even though this was only their second tour and they were the opening act.

"It's been a great tour for us. When you open a show you really have nothing to lose and everything to gain," Richard cut in. "We feel that we've gained a lot. It's tough touring and being with the same people all the time—every once in a while somebody's mind goes. But then we get back together and it works out."

With the tour over the next thing on

Caravan's collective mind is a short vacation and then recording their next album.

"We have most of the material ready. There will be a lot of songs from Pye and one or two from Jan. The hardest thing will be getting a title. We should follow up *Cunning Stunts* with the punch line from another dirty joke, I suppose."

When a record company publicist suggested a title mentioning Canterbury or the Canterbury Sound, both Richard and Jan laughed.

"There is no such thing as the Canterbury Sound," Richard said with a smile. "It was just something that people thought up for publicity when both Caravan and the Soft Machine were first playing because both bands were from the Canterbury area. We all still live near there, but that's all there is to it."

"In fact," he said, "maybe we should call the new album *We're Guilty of Perpetuating the Myth of the Canterbury Sound*."

"I'd rather have the punch line to a dirty joke myself," said Jan. □

MIRABAI

Singer With Heavy Motives

by Peter Simon

Considering the plethora of talented new female vocalists emerging in the mid 70's (Phoebe Snow, Natalie Cole, Patti Smith, to cite just a few), it would seem a difficult task to predict which new artists stand a chance of "making it big." Clearly, it's not enough just to have a strong voice, solid material, and hip production. Atlantic Records recently broke "Mirabai," and judging from her product reactions so far, she stands a fine chance of breaking through.

What sets Mirabai apart from so many of the others is the spirit which she infuses into every song she writes and performs. While many artists sniffle incessantly about good loves gone bad, paranoia striking deep, and general chaos, Mirabai's songs are about overcoming fear and doubt. Her love songs are universal, rather than single-pointed love objects who never come through in the clutch. She sings with devotion in her heart. And yet, she manages to stay away from the sappy effect you might expect. Her lyrics are specific, sometimes humorous, and always inspiring. As Maxanne Sartori, Boston's favorite female radio personality (WBCN) said "It's really nice to hear a woman sing about something else besides how she lost her old man and what it's like now that he's gone. Mirabai's unflagging optimism and God intoxication can be insidiously catching as her music melts over you like warm sunshine."

A concept that has indeed helped her is that of believing that the singing and songwriting isn't really her action alone, but that it is pouring through her from a higher source. This gives her a certain detachment from her work, allowing for a less self-conscious performance, and guarding her from being brought down by an occasionally roudy listener. But more often than not, the cynics wind up being believers, and the person that entered the room grumbling, goes back home with the "cosmic glow."

Mirabai puts it this way: "Performing is a two-way communication. I like to talk to my audience so that they can respond as an actual human being, otherwise it would be like watching a T.V.

Personal contact is a key ingredient, even in a large hall. I like to put a lot of guts into my shows, lifting lilly figures just don't make it anymore. I try to be just as I am in real life, people like to see that kind of slice." She likes to instill a few ideas along the way as well. "I want people who hear me to realize that man is responsible for his own actions, not to forget that 'peace on earth' is up to us. US. We can make it happen." And never was that message more in evidence than the night that Mirabai sang at the "First Planetary Celebration" held last November at the Nassau Coliseum in connection with the United Nations. She had her audience swaying and standing on their seats as she did a particularly moving new tune about the plight of the American Indian. Afterwards, she asked everyone to light a flame (in the same manner that audiences ask for an encore) if they really cared about universal peace and brotherhood. The arena lit up like a hundred full moons—her magnetism cannot be denied. At a time when we are constantly reminded how depressing the world has become (just read a newspaper or listen to Joni Mitchell), Mirabai's outpourings are a welcome relief.

Mirabai takes her name from the ancient Indian Goddess who was depicted as a Queen who devoted herself to singing to God, rather than carrying out the traditional role of servicing her King husband.

While this horrified the King and many of the local townspeople at first (as the legend goes), it wasn't long before the example of her divine devotion swept through the kingdom like a tidal wave. The ancient Mirabai, who is depicted as a saint with an ekta (one stringed Indian instrument, looking a bit like a sitar) and tambourine singing ecstatically to God, became a leading figure in the Bhakti tradition, which is the path of loving God as a lover might love her worldly mate.

The current Mirabai feels this same sort of devotion for her "guru" whose name is Hilda. Hilda lives in New York, and holds



PHOTO BY PETER SIMON

weekly gatherings, or "Satsang," where Mirabai leads group singing. Hilda has greatly inspired Mirabai's music. "As soon as I met Hilda, I felt my heart open up. When I looked into her eyes, everything in the whole universe suddenly blanked out, except for her eyes. I felt like I was falling, like my soul was alive for the first time in my life." And it wasn't long before "Hilda started asking me to write some original devotional songs for her group, so I sat down and wrote OM all over the paper with a big star and cross and said the song was for Hilda. I just sat there, waiting for something to come through me. I wound up, finally, writing a song about love, about the love I felt for Hilda and I sang it at the meetings each time." So now, her mission is to open up the hearts of all the people who encounter her, not just those who already know, who are part of the Hilda entourage. It would certainly be easier

for Mirabai to keep it small and simple, but she is so filled with that divine love, that she can't keep it all just for herself and her cult following.

The sound of Mirabai's music on record isn't what you might expect from a "spiritual" singer. Her universal lyrics are put to a hard rock beat by producer Bob Johnston (of Bob Dylan "Blond on Blond" fame) and her record is akin to an almost Janis Joplin sound. Mirabai feels this odd combination works because "the format will reach all the people who don't really understand the message, but can dance to the beat. The rest can slowly sink in."

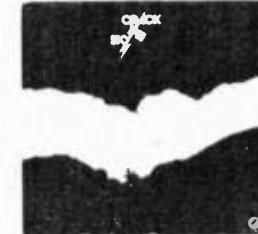
She plans to record her second record this winter with the same producer. She has written over 150 different songs to choose from! The album will be released in the spring, and hopefully will reinforce the ideas and emotions set forth in her debut album. With her kind of determination, how could she fail? □

ROCK & POP ALBUMS

CHICAGO

Greatest Hits—(Columbia PC 33900)

Today's version of the Big Band era's sound—Chicago—delivers a double gilded edition of some of the best rock of the 60's. The classics *Wishing You Were Here*, *25 or 6 to 4*, *Make Me Smile* and *Colour My World* are all here and lots more. A great album of greatest hits you wouldn't want to miss.


JONI MITCHELL

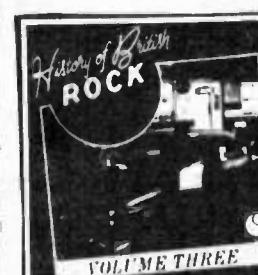
Hissing Of Summer Lawns—(Asylum 7E-1051)

Joni painted the illustrations on the front cover depicting all the houses she's ever lived in including her present mansion. The songs on the inside of the album are not quite up to par Joni's standards, although far superior to most of the other releases.


ROXY MUSIC

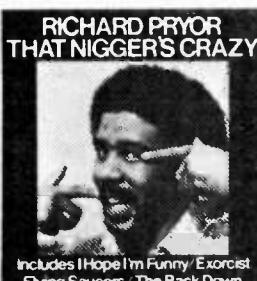
Siren—(Atco SD 36-127)

Brian and the gang strike up reminiscences of the old Velvet Underground this time around. I'm not sure if the person on the cover is a guy or a girl. The album is a let-up, get down, listen easy masterpiece.


RICHARD PRYOR

"That Nigger's Crazy"—(Reprise MS 2241)

Richard is one crazy nigger. Didja hear the one about the guy who turned down a blowjob becauz he thought he'd lose his unemployment benefits? How about the guy who thought Kotex was a matress for mice? How about the priest who refused to marry Linda Lovelace and Euell Gibbons because he thought between the two of them they would eat the whole wide world? Hee-hee.


KISS

Kiss Alive—(Casablanca NBLP 7020)

Rock and roll's leading exponents of getting down to the basics are here again. Their anthem song *Rock And Roll All Night* is perky and their unruly, manic fans won't be disappointed. Very ballsy.

CRACK THE SKY

Crack The Sky—(Lifesong LS 6000)

Better music was expected from Cashman and West's new label. Crack The Sky play uncomplicated rock'n'roll and have nothing to substantiate their weak vocal harmonies. The beat is there but there's no reason to make you dance or listen to it. Disappointing.

HELLO PEOPLE

Bricks—(ABCD-882)

Some people are thick as a brick, maybe Hello People know that and are trying to see how far our patience will go. Go away Todd Rundgren! Enough already!!!


KANSAS

Masque—(Kirshner PZ 33806)

Masque is "a disguise of reality created through a theatrical or musical performance." And that's what Kansas are trying to pull over your eyes. Competent and intelligent musicians, they somehow get caught in pretentious dilly-dallying around *Icarus* (really, hasn't this been done before?) and several attempts at lyrical intelligence which almost make it (*The Pinnacle*).

DAN HILL

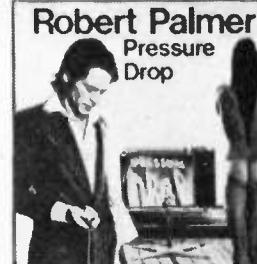
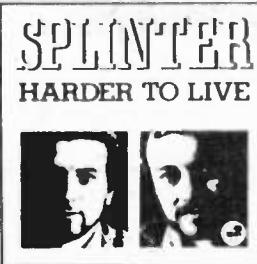
DAN Hill—(20th Century T-500)

A gifted new singer-songwriter similar to Happy Chapin (though certainly not as boring or droll). Dan talks optimistically about growing up. You might want to check out *Growing Up* and *People*. Then again, you might not. Go ahead, why not?


PETE WINFIELD

Breakfast Special—(Island ILPS 9333)

Pete is a former rock'n'roll critic and if he has succeeded, maybe there's hope for me yet. Pete composed all the songs, wrote all the lyrics, sang all the lead and background vocals, played piano, organ, ARP synthesizer, and deserves a well-round of applause. Included is the big single *Eighteen With A Bullet* ("be my B side baby") and *Lovin' As You Wanna Be*. Good for any time.


ROBERT PALMER

Pressure Drop—(Island ILPS 9372)

It's pretty hard to follow up a masterpiece like Palmer's last album (with production and help by Allen Toussaint) but instead of trying to duplicate his success by doing the same trip, Palmer has adroitly changed direction. Moving into the reggae area (witness the classic reggae title tune), Palmer shows he has the potential to become one of rock's guiding lights in a very short time. His time may even have arrived. Excellent, tasty stuff.


BETTY DAVIS

Nasty Gal—(Island ILPS 9329)

If you are the mild-mannered type, steer clear of this album because Betty's language and hot sound will make you pale with embarrassment. Ex-husband Miles accompanies on *You And I*, a raspy, kinky song. Betty brings the bedroom out into the open (*He Was A Big Freak*) and the album is a mother. Nasty too.

THE ALLMAN BROTHERS BAND

The Road Goes On Forever—(Capricorn CP 0164)

It's odd for the Allmans to be releasing a greatest hits package since they had only one song which could be considered a "hit"—*Ramblin' Man*. Dating back to Idlewild South and bringing it up to date with Brothers and Sisters, this double lp is a fine collection of all the Allman material. Very surprising for the band to release a greatest hits lp but word is that the group has disbanded.

LILY TOMLIN

So Funny She's Almost Frightening

Lily Tomlin's genius lies in her innate ability to expose human foolishness innocently, through the marvelous resource of comedy. One of the world's truly funny people, Tomlin is a philosopher in her own right, ("Life is perverse. It can be beautiful but it won't.") clutching the world at its throat and shaking the laughter out of it.

Camouflaging herself through loving and biting characterizations, Tomlin provides a common denominator for all who listen, a painless way of reflecting on ourselves...that denominator is humor.

It all comes together on her latest LP *Modern Scream*, a perfect enmeshment of the characters Tomlin's made famous, and simultaneously, a tender portrait of the real woman she is.

From the scratchy-voiced, sardonic Ernestine the operator, who switches roles with a gynecologist by forcing him to indulge in medical obscenities with the phone receiver; to the hyper, overly-patriotic Suzie Sorority ("Yes, I love the Lennon Sisters and I'm not ashamed to play their records!"); to the wise little Edith Ann ("We're trying to get rid of my baby brother. Everytime I put him in the bed to take his nap, he keeps kicking the blankets off. So I had to scotch tape them to his legs!"), Tomlin sweeps up precious time and remembrances in her hands, and molds them back to life like a skilled sculptress.

Between live tracks, Tomlin carries on an incessant dialogue between herself and a fictional, obnoxious, nameless reporter who wants to get the 'real truth' out of Lily. The results are hilarious, and Tomlin's digs on journalism would make William Randolph Hearst hide his head in the sand.

Tomlin is sheer madness, so vivid in her sarcastic appraisal of life, it's almost frightening. She captures all the flaws, the self-righteousness that defines the human comedy.

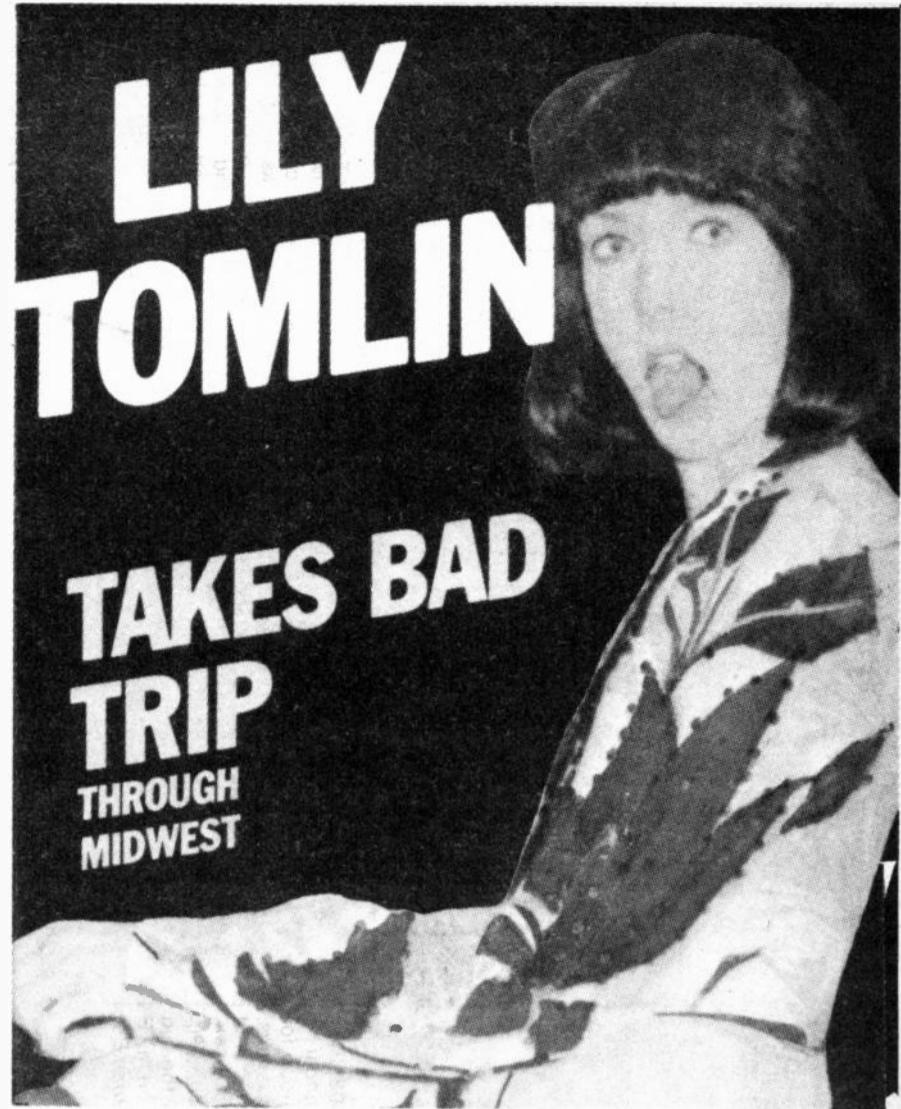
The Woody Allen of women comics, Tomlin is captivating. The omniscient critic of life, she stands aloof from criticism herself. Reminiscent of Lenny Bruce without the dirt, she really knows how to hit home. But somehow it all helps rather than hurts.

The following is a cut from *Modern Scream* of Ernestine the operator, the character who made Tomlin famous during the Laugh-In days.

Pretend you're in a windowless, musty room, sitting next to a kinky-haired operator with too much lipstick on, a mouthpiece at her chin and a switchboard in front of her. She's about to plug in on a call...

ERNESTINE: "This is installation and repair service, Miss Tomlin speaking. Who's calling please? The A.M.A.? What does that stand for? Anna Maria Alberghetti? Oh, don't get so uptight. Just a little joke, not unlike medicare. So...what's up, doc? Interference on the line? From whom, your insurance man? O.K., just a few questions. Have you had this interference before? Well...you've got it again! Tell me, is there any history of it in your family? Well, let's run a few simple tests and see if we can get a specimen of your problem. Now, take your receiver, place it under your tongue and say Ahhhh. Hold it right there, be patient...I'll be right back." (pause)

Unplugging her call for a moment Ernestine turns to her fellow operator, Phoenititia, and says giggling:



"Phoenititia, you wouldn't believe what I've got this fool from the A.M.A. doing!" Plugging back in to the good doctor she continues: "Good...Now sir, remove all your clothing and fold it neatly on your chair. Yes, ALL of it. Now, don't be that way, after all your secretary is a professional person! Good, now take your instrument, sit on it, turn your head and cough. Oh, my goodness...that doesn't sound good, you're really sick. Perhaps our installation specialist left a clamp inside your equipment.

I'm gonna need a second opinion on this from our repairman, Vito. How about a week from Wednesday at 1:10? Oh, no forget that. Vito plays golf on Wednesdays. No...today is impossible. I SAID TODAY IS IMPOSSIBLE! You have a lot of nerve asking us to make a house call. Oh...is that SO? Is that SO? Well...if it's such an emergency, put your phone in an ambulance, drop it off at our back door and we'll have one of our trainees take a look at it!"

L.K.

LONG HAIR for LONG HAIRS

by Claus Meyer

There are three—perhaps apocryphal—stories to show us the conductor's personality. Serge Koussevitzky, the long time conductor of the Boston Symphony and the one to bring that orchestra to its present high level was said to have put down one of his musicians at a rehearsal. He became somewhat abusive and the musician decided to walk out of the rehearsal. As the instrumentalist passed the conductor's podium he divested himself of an expletive that we shall delete. Koussevitzky, whose relationship with the English language was a distant one replied: "It's too late not to apologize."

A visitor to Arturo Toscanini was waiting for a rehearsal to finish. The time seemed interminable, and the loudest noise emanating from the closed rehearsal studio were the maestro's imprecations. He finally asked the doorman when the rehearsal would be over. The doorman replied: "When you see the blood trickling under the door."

These two vignettes are only to illustrate the ego of most of the great conductors. One cannot conceive of his men saying something unkind to him, the other can drive his men till they bleed. This is the way most conductors are—perhaps have to be. They know that most of their musicians feel that they can do better than the man on the podium.

There have, of course, been notable exceptions such as Bruno Walter and Felix Weingartner. The third story concerns Walter's rehearsing the Symphony #8 by Gustav Mahler, known as the Symphony Of A Thousand. The work requires a large orchestra, vast chorus and soloists. Walter noticed that some people were absent at each rehearsal. At the dress rehearsal he complemented one musician for being the only one to attend each and every rehearsal. That man responded with thanks and said "Unfortunately I won't be able to make it to the performance."

The half century ending in the early 1970's was truly the heyday of the conductor. Some of the towering figures of that time that come to mind include—in



alphabetical order—such names as Sir Thomas Beecham, Wilhelm Furtwängler, Erich Kleiber, Otto Klemperer, Serge Koussevitzky, Gustav Mahler, Fritz Reiner, Leopold Stokowski, George Szell, Arturo Toscanini, Bruno Walter, and Felix Weingartner. This list is by no means complete, it is but a sampling of the men who made their years the age of the conductor. Many of these were intimate friends of some great composers of their day and the recorded legacy they have left us is one of the blessings of recorded music. These men were not only unsurpassed in conducting that music for which they had a true affinity, but almost all of them were able to bring us superb performances of the classics; such composers as Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, etc. Conducting was actually just one facet of their musical personality. Another was the building of orchestras. They were either able to assemble and train musicians for an orchestra so that the end result was actually often better than the parts, or when they became permanent conductors of an existing aggregation, they enhanced it and retained the highest

levels of musicianship. Most of these men lived to a very old age and very often were active into the eighth decade of their lives. Nevertheless, their time came and that age is now past.

A few, such as Karl Boehm and Fugen Jochum, seem to be a bridge between the past and the present.

In our time there are but two conductors who may be compared to the greats of yesteryear. They are Sir Georg Solti of the Chicago Symphony and Colin Davis. There are numerous good competent conductors, some quite young so that they some day may be ranked with the greats—such men as Georges Boulez, Leonard Bernstein, Berard Haitink, Zubin Mehta, Seiji Ozawa and Michael Tilson-Thomas.

We are now living in what may well be called an interregnum. Any one of the present day conductors can give us a transcendently beautiful reading of a given work, but either their specialties are narrowly limited, consistency is lacking or some of the great works of orchestral literature are performed in a manner that many of us find unusual to say the least. Of course, a musician studies a work and then gives his own interpretation. Just the same there is a standard that has been set and that most listeners would like to harken back to. A performance of a work of serious music should be a fine balance of emotion and intellect. If this balance goes too far one way or the other we get an unfortunate reaction to the performance. On records we also find performances that consist of too many "takes" and therefore lack spontaneity.

We now have decided that we would like to buy works of a certain established composer and we like a number of conductors and we don't know who should do what in our record collection. We are fortunate in that we can pick and choose. By and large one conductor doing—for example—all the symphonies of Beethoven may not be all that advertising says it is. Works of that type are readily available on FM radio, so that we may audition a number of them before we take one into our homes. Another consideration is recorded sound. This is a matter of surpassing importance to some of us and great performances may be found on recent recordings. Again I refer to the output of Solti and the Chi-

cagoans. The reader will no doubt differ with much of the above. The names given are but examples though some were omitted purposely. Let us not forget, however, that all art is, above all, a matter of opinion and taste. Now again I would like to list some recent releases and call them to the reader's attention: RCA Victor has re-issued some of the fine Fritz Reiner recordings of a not too distant past. These were recorded in stereo and the sound is all that it should be. It may further be of interest to the reader to compare some of these performances with the same music recorded by Arturo Toscanini released long ago on RCA's budget label "Victrola." The Victrola recordings were monaural and have been "re-processed for stereo" in some instances. The Reiner re-issues are two works by Franz Joseph Haydn, the "Clock" Symphony No. 101 D Major—a great work done in the manner to which we all should become accustomed, by a great conductor, backed by the Symphony No. 95 in C Minor (AGL 1-1275). Another Reiner re-issue is the orchestral music from the Goetterdaemmerung by Richard Wagner (AGL 1-1278)—though this very dramatic music receives a fine performance, our own personal preference still runs to the earlier Toscanini despite the latter's deficiencies in sound. Here is a typical case of the reader choosing between a very great performance on an older issue and a good performance with more contemporary sound. Another re-issue is the Brahms Concerto No. 2 in B Flat given a definitive reading by Sviatoslav Richter and The Boston Symphony under Erich Leinsdorf (RCA AGL 1-1267). Here is a perfect marriage of sound and performance. A fine value is a Prokofiev record (Turnabout 34599). The Symphony No. 5, which is one of the major works of this fine composer and the "Classical" symphony, which is a delightful work, written early in the composer's life to prove that music can be written in the manner of Mozart even in the twentieth century. Colin Davis and the London Philharmonic are represented by a recording of Dmitri Shostakovich's Symphony No. 10 (Seraphim 60255)—which, like the Turnabout record, is a budget level, and represents a contemporary work beautifully read by one of today's great conductors.

ROCK & POP ALBUMS



DR. JOHN

Hollywood Be Thy Name—United Artists
The gris-gris doctor has an assortment of famous stellar musicians helping out and they turn in a very pleasing performance indeed. Sink your ears into the good sounds of *Reggae Doctor*, *Swanee River*, *Babylon*, *Back By The River* and more.

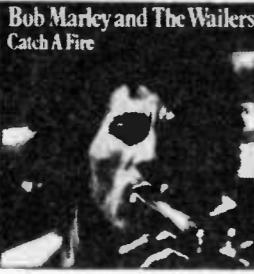


COME TASTE THE BAND

Deep Purple—(Warner Bros. PR 2895)
For those who thought Deep Purple had seen the whiter shade of pale after Ritchie Blackmore exited, wrong. They're probably the same people who blow bubbles in the bathtub and then turn around and bite the bubble. Deep Purple kick up a storm here and Bolin's ascetic guitar keeps things in perspective. Rock on to the sensual sound of *Lady Luck* and *Comin' Home*.

WAILERS

Catch A Fire—(Island ILPS 9241)
The hip cognoscenti seem to agree that disco has seen its day and will start withering after the middle half of this year. The new thing—reggae. The group do a far-out rave-up on *Kinky Reggae* and a tempered job of cooking on *Stir It Up*. Perfect for dancing and draws you into its clutches.



CARLY SIMON

Best Of—(Elektra)
Carly Simon is always good and her best of album, just in time for the Christmas album-buyers, is worth emptying the pockets. *You're So Vain*, *Attitude*, *Dancing* and her whole charming bunch of songs are here. It's the best.

JIMI HENDRIX

Midnight Lightning—(Reprise MS 2229)
Jimi is posthumously accompanied by Bob Babbitt on bass, Alan Schwartzberg on drums and Jeff Mironov on guitar. Produced by Alan Douglas, this album contains more of the genius of Jimi's brilliant guitar playing style. The master of the modern electric guitar holds court and you're invited.



BIRDS

Trace—(Sire SASD-7514)
Moody moog music and heavy metal music combined with electronic gadgetry that you wish would leave.

DAVE EDMUND

Subtle As A Flying Mallet—(RCA LPL 1-5003)
Employing the Phil Spector "wall-to-wall" technique to his advantage, one of the world's greatest guitarists returns with his first album in five years. Run out and buy this album. Edmunds' chops slice through any thickbeat arrangement with stinging ferocity. Do yourself a favor, get this lp. Best cuts are *Baby I Love You* and *Maybe*. No maybes about this album.



MELANIE

Sunset and Other Beginnings—(Neighborhood NL 3001)
Sweet Melanie Safka. (*Candles In The Rain*, etc). Her syrupy voice couldn't offend anyone and although it's not my cup of tea (and I love tea) it should be a welcome sight for Melanie's many fans. She does cheery renditions of *I've Got My Mojo Working*, the Holland-Dozier classic of *You Can't Hurry Love* and Rod Clement's *Dream Seller* (*Meet Me On The Corner*). There are—count 'em—seven Melanie compositions among the 12-tunes of this lp and that's a lot Melanie.

KRAFTWERK

Radio Activity—(Capitol ST-11457)
The group that boosted *Autobahn* across the land keeps chugging on in their distinctive electronic synthesizer manner. It's got a good beat and if I was on the Dick Clark show, I'd give it a 85. The title track is the best showstopper on the lp.

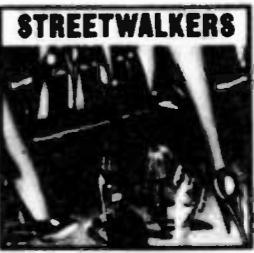


DAVID WERNER

Imagination Quota—(RCA APL1-0922)
It's taken David almost two years to complete his new album and why the rush? What happened to David is another good question. If he was going to take his time, he shoulda done it right instead of releasing this crap. Very artsy and cute but it's just jelly. Dream on about becoming a rock star David. You're nowhere near it.

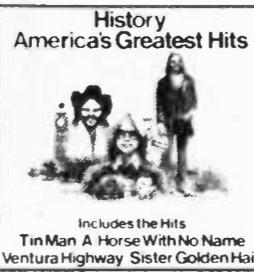
STREETWALKERS

Streetwalkers—(Mercury SRM1-1060)
A new group composed of several members of the defunct group Family, formerly fronted by Roger Chapman. Streetwalkers holds great promise. Bob Tench formerly with the Jeff Beck Group and Hummingbird—also helps on vocals. *Walking on Water* is a good example of how good this group can become—Charlie Whitney builds a crescending fever and Tench slips in on vocals behind Chapman in fine fashion.



CITY LIGHTS

Silent Dancing—(Sire SASD-7152)
City Lights are the most distinctive new group that I've heard in a while. Slightly reminiscent of Looking Glass live, City Lights present driving rock so well on record that you just know that they have got to be a great live rock-n-roll band. This album makes me feel all right and just watch this group, they'll take off like a rocket. Put this record on and hold on for dear life.



AMERICA

Greatest Hits—(Warner Bros. BS 2893)
One of the fastest selling records in the record bins, this is the best album I have ever heard. Better than Sgt. Pepper, better than Boz Scaggs' *Slow Dancer*. There are not enough superlatives at my fingertips to do this album justice. He knows whether or not you buy this album and he'll be laughing if you don't. Now I'm going to go play it for the 188th time in two days—it's that good.



NEIL YOUNG

Zuma—(Warner Bros. MS 2242)
Neil Young sees the chaos and confusion ranking the populace and reaches back to the history pages for relief. The 60's reeked of hopeful sweet dreams and the 70's deal with crushed realities. Young refuses to deal with the situation and instead sings about oh, what a cruel work it is. Young remorses in the thematic *Corez The Killer* that "...they built up with their bare hands what we still can't do today." Contradictions of the counterculture aside, Neil deals with an era and its vacuum. Tough stuff. This pretentious drivell aside, Neil really does get down and rock and roll with *Crazy Horse* in the best manner that he ever has. The group intimidates him or pokes him along and as result, Neil lays down some of his most inspired work. Especially worth note are *Driveback*, *Don't Cry No Tears* and *Barstool Blues*.

WHO LOVES YOU

The Four Seasons—(Warner Bros. BS 2900)
The Four Seasons refuse to go away, year in and year out. Why should they when they keep on putting out great records. The title song is great California music, very casual and laidback with an irresistible beat. The rest of the album flows in the same ilk—laidback but irresistibly delicious.

CARLY SIMON

Beauty In The Making

By Peter Simon



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SOUL SINGLES

DIONNE WARWICK: Once You Hit the Road (Warner Reprise 8154)
Produced, arranged and conducted by Thom Bell. Add the Spinners and you've got a hit song. Something got lost.

BOBBY WOMACK: Where there's A Will There's A Way (UA-XW735-Y)
Nice arrangement, good horns and a tantalizing vocal from Bobby Womack make this song a possible crossover hit into pop circles. Could make a strong entry into the disco field, also.

MAJOR HARRIS: I Got Over Love (Atlantic 45-3303)
This isn't a bad song, but The Major insists on the old fashioned axiom that you follow a hit with the same old song. *Sove Won't Let Me Wait* is far superior.

FREDA PAYNE: You (ABC-12139)
Freda Payne can't sing very well, but her song is syrupy enough to smother the MOR market her company is trying to sell. For real schmaltz with a little more soul, try the *Three Degrees*.

THE DELLS: We Got To Get Our Thing Together (Mercury 73723)
A double lead is always a turn on, and the Dells pull it off well here. Good harmonies, a terrifically smooth and simple guitar make a well-rounded disc that has a good shot at hitdom. barring a new release from the Stylistics who are the masters of this particular idiom.

MFSB: The Zip (Philadelphia International 3578)
This is the track for the promotion of Polaroid's new camera. The Zip. Simultaneous TV & radio airplay leave little room for doubt as to where it's going. However, again the group doesn't equal their classic *Theme from Soul Train*. We'll wait.

RONNIE McNAIR: Sagittarian Fair (Prodigal 10007)
Pretty good record, produced, arranged and written by the artist. Good shot despite small label.

THE TRIBE: Funky Kingston (Grenade 1001)
You have to stack it against the version by Toots and the Maytals and it lays pretty flat.

STYLISTICS: Funky Weekend (Avco 1842)
Thom Bell's production of the group was so far superior to this. Russel Thompkins is one great singer but he needs more to work with than what Hugo and Luigi give him here, even with the arrangements by Van McCoy.

TRAMMPS: Hold Back the Night (Buddah 507)
Nearly everything this group turns out is top drawer. No exception here. A bouncy tune for listening and dancing, (how rare that is) that could have gone longer than the three minutes allotted here.

OHIO PLAYERS: Love Rollercoaster (Mercury 73734)
Self-contained group puts it together again for a swift ride that has its ups and downs. On its way to the top though.

BROOKLYN PEOPLE: Boogie Man (Cheri 504)
In Brooklyn maybe. Or Loch Ness. A monster.

NOTATIONS: It's Alright (This Feeling) (Gemigo 0503)
You ask whatever happened to Chuck Jackson? He's producing the Notations. Abysmal. On the charts with a bullet however.

FREDDIE KING: Boogie Bump (RSO 516)
Prostitution for so classy a musician. Try the flip for the real Freddie and forget this Boogie nonsense.

GRAHAM CENTRAL STATION: It's Alright (Warner Bros. 8148)
Always high energy, they make great disco records naturally. Not forced at all, with good horns and beautiful cut-off ending.

CLARENCE REID: Baptize Me in Your Love (Alston 3717)
Produced and written by Steve Alaimo, who just missed being Tom Jones. Song has a lot going for it, not the least of which is Steve's production. Welcome back. And where've you been?

ERNIE BUSH: Breakaway (Contempo 12414)
This English disco import simply cannot survive when we at home are the experts at disco. This is how the English keep dry.

BUDDY MILES: Nasty Disposition (Casablanca 849)
Everyone takes a shot at this man. But at last he's gotten away from these Booger Bear images and gets down to the good funky music he is capable of. This should be a shot in the arm for Buddy. He sings within the limits he now knows surround him.

GLORIA GAYNOR: How High the Moon (MGM 14838)
Queen of the Discos has another smash single with a great hustle record.

ELEVENTH HOUSE FEATURING LARRY CORYELL: Some Greasy Stuff (Arista 0154)
Fantastic! Disco progressive track without any lyrics some artists find obligatory. This comes from hard work.

TYRONE DAVIS: Don't Let It Be Too Late (Dakar 4550)
Sounds like an R&B hit not going Top 40. Same for the other side, *Turning Point*.

MAIN INGREDIENT: Shame on the World (RCA 10431)
Laid back gospel flavored song works well for them and could be their biggest hit yet.

HAROLD MELVIN AND THE BLUE NOTES: Wake Up Everybody (Philadelphia International 3579)
Anybody not recognizing Teddy Pendergrass as a singer equal to the best is not listening. This group is truly phenomenal, really the class of the label, and have the track record to prove whatever claims anybody wants to make in their behalf. This is another exceptional record, and again they don't fall prey to repeating themselves.

SHIRLEY AND COMPANY FEATURING JESUS ALVAREZ: Disco Shirley (Vibrations 539)
Disco Shirley is going to give it to you in the middle of the dance floor. Your move.

THE VARIATIONS OF LOVE: I'll Always Love You (Gold Plate 1948)
A double lead that works somewhat despite weak material. It's about a love spat.

RAMSEY LEWIS: What's the Name of this Funk (Spider Man) (Columbia 10235)
Keyboard Innovator goes all out in search of disco hit, with some nice electronics. Repetitive lyrics making little sense burden an otherwise fine track.

EARTH, WIND & FIRE: Sing A Song (Columbia 10251)
Dynamic group with a powerful new song. AWB should sound this good.

MARGE THUNDER: Don't You Have Any Love in Your Heart (Capitol 7018)
Whoever she is she sure can sing. Gutsy single has to start out with good R&B success to make it. Good luck with it.

JACKIE MOORE: Puttin' It Down to You (Kayvette 5124)
Strong voice and interesting lyrics make this one to watch. Worth some effort.

BETTY WRIGHT: Slip and Do It (Alston 3718)
Betty gets right to the point. From *Clean Up Woman* to the *Other Woman* in this spunky little number. She'll turn you on.

GENYA RAVAN: Feel the Need In Me (DeLite 1574)
Genya sounds as if she can't wait to finish singing this song. She had promise once. This release clouds her future.

NANETTE WORKMAN: Crying Crying (Atco 7034)
Some fancy guitar work underlines this fine tune in super fashion. A sleeper.

THE RIMSHOTS: Do What You Feel (Stang 5065)
Bounces around the hoop a few times but never drops in for the score. Not bad though.

TOWER OF POWER: Treat Me Like Your Man (Warner Bros. 8151)
A little slow after the sensational *What Is Hip*. Nevertheless a good record with excellent production. Some powerful lips on horns and vocals. Give it a shot, the group is deserving.

THE WHISPERS: In Love Forever (Soul Train 10430)
Don Cornelius and Dick Griffey of Soul Train produced this with the Whispers. Results are surprisingly good. Record to watch. Not what you'd expect.

THE RHINESTONES: Party Music (20th Century 2224)
Great production and a song that has real potential to cross over into every market. A Melissa Manchester tune that does justice to any party scene.

BILL CODAY: A Man Can't Be A Man (Epic 50167)
Both sides have potential, especially the Ralph Graham song / *Don't Want to Play This Game*.

THE ENDEAVORS: Tighter and Tighter (Avco 4662)
Ordinary but has some nice vocals.

EDDIE HARRIS: Get Up and Dance (Atlantic 3288)
Only Sly Stone sounds like Sly Stone.

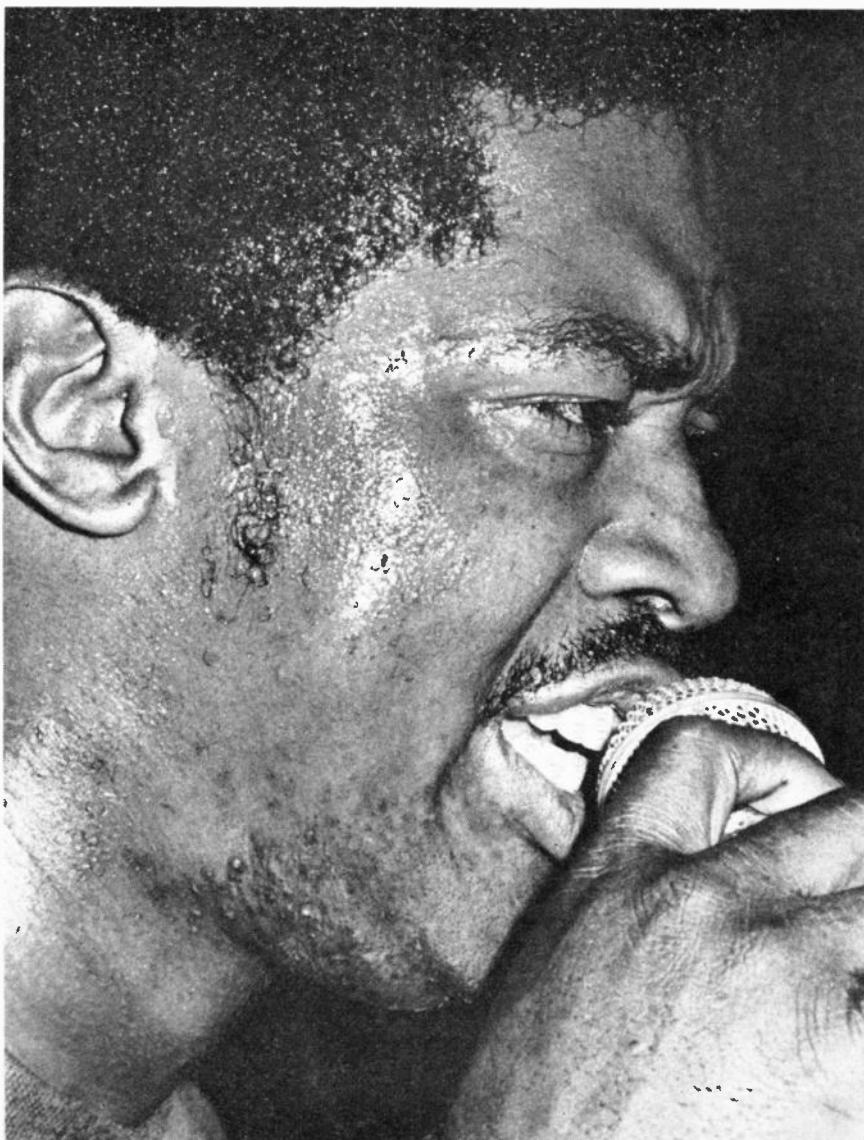
MARGIE JOSEPH AND BLUE MAGIC: What's Come Over Me (Atco 7030)
This partnership works terrifically. A pairing like Sharon Paige and Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes. Margie's voice is crystal.

JOHNNY MATHIS: Stardust (Columbia 10250)
How Johnny can sound awkward singing is amazing but he sounds really uncomfortable here. There is something about that voice though, and this song. It's the memory.

EDWIN STARR

Perseveres A Vicious Cycle

by Cynthia Kirk



"My story is not the story of the 12 kids and the ghetto and the no education and not enough food to eat; none of that. That's not my story. The only suffering I've done is at the hands of other people."

For Edwin Starr, that suffering came in the form of professional anguish, rather than personal turmoil, tied to a recording career that never seemed to recover from the monster turn-of-the-decade hit, *War*. But eight months after joining the tiny Granite Records label, a record company whose previous R&B experience came in the form of a Molly Bee country cover of *She Kept On Talkin'*, Starr has had two back-to-back chart singles. At last Starr feels, in the words of his new Granite LP, "Free to Be Myself."

"I'm not going to write any hokey songs any more; I'm not going to write any dumb stories, because I lived under those dumb stories for too long," says Starr. "I want to be able to write things that say something. It's like life; life is a vicious cycle. A lot of people don't like to face that though. A lot of people may not really want to face how life really, really is in a song."

What Edwin's life "really, really" been is, to put it simply, interesting.

The son of a 22-year Army veteran, Edwin, his mother, his two brothers and one sister lived in the Cleveland housing projects rather than travel with their father from Army base to Army base. The purpose of staying put, in the mind of Edwin's father, was to make sure his children received an uninterrupted education. That Edwin did, but he also developed a keen understanding of life from his years in the projects.

"I was raised around elderly people. I was never around young people. I guess that's how I missed drinkin' wine and all that," says the abstemious Edwin. "We lived in the projects and invariably all the people that lived there had lived there all their lives. I used to sit down on the benches in front of the house and talk to 'em. While all the other kids were out breakin' fences and playin' on the grass, I was sittin', talkin' to the old people."

In addition to giving him a beyond-his-years maturity and outlook, Edwin's project days also turned him on to music, an art form that left him a bit deaf in his left ear.

"When I was very small, I used to sit with my ear on the radio, and the radio used to be going full blast," says Edwin with a rueful smile. That deafness came not from rock and roll, however; the person Edwin has to blame is Nelson Eddy.

"I used to love Nelson Eddy. I used to think Nelson Eddy was the greatest singer in the world, especially when he threw on those mountie outfits. He used to knock me out. And Vaughn Monroe . . . I used to love all those 'cats. I used to love musicals; I guess that probably was the greatest era in music, when they were doing things like that . . . I guess everybody's so interested in the beat today, as opposed to the melody lines and having a real structure to things."

Edwin formed a band and a group, called the Futuretones, in Cleveland as a teenager, and had begun receiving semi-professional bookings when he was drafted. In 1960, he was sent to Ger-

many, and in a town near the French border, Edwin resumed his music career, but in a different direction.

"When I was in the service, I never had any vices. I never drank and I never had any barbituate habits or anything, so consequently, I never did anything with my money except buy clothes," says Edwin.

An acquaintance, who ran one of the 96 bars in the Germany Army post town, however, soon offered him a new outlet for his cash. His bar was not doing very well as a country-western club—much like Granite was not doing very well as a country-western label—and he asked Edwin to take charge, for half of the profits. In a week's time the bar was doing land office business, and he had the start on his first fortune.

"Soldiers don't want to do NOTHIN' but look at girls, drink and fight," says Edwin with a laugh. "That's all there was to do in that town." So he traveled to Berlin, recruited 15 "of the prettiest girls I could find," as waitresses, and began packing the bar with eager GIs, who, because of a 12:30 bed check rule, had little time for after-hours fraternization.

Back from the Army, Starr tried to reform his group, which had gone in various directions since he departed two years before, but fought a losing battle. Eventually, he met up with Bill Doggett, with whom he toured for 2½ years. When the tour reached Detroit, Starr got off and headed for a recording contract with Golden World Records. It was for that company's Rictic label that he recorded the hits which have helped to pay his bills over the years: *Agent Double O Soul*, *Stop Her On Sight*, *Headline News* and *Back Streets*. While he was overseas on a tour, Motown Records bought Golden World—a fact which Edwin didn't discover until he returned to Detroit and called the company; the switchboard operator answered Motown—and Starr began an interesting eight-year experience.

"I've made it a point not to slag them (Motown) in any way whatsoever," says Starr. "I was probably like the multitudes of millions of other people who were introduced to that name that were fascinated by the sentiment, not realizing that unless you were a blood relation you didn't stand a chance."

Although Edwin had written and produced all his hits at Golden World—the

same hits which, according to Starr, Motown bought and re-releases annually in Europe—at Motown he was assigned to legendary producer Norman Whitfield and told to be an artist and nothing else. One of Whitfield's groups, The Temptations, had the original recording of *War*, as a matter of fact, but the company was hesitant to release that cut as a single, at least by the Temptations.

"Motown got about 400 or 500 letters in from college students asking why they didn't release *War* as a single. Well, they were not sure how the public would take that record. It might have been too strong a comment, so it had a so-so chance of being a good record. I didn't have any record at all at that particular time, and hadn't had a record in maybe a year or so, so in actual fact, I guess in the back of their minds they figured, well, he hasn't really got nothing to really lose, so they gave me the record to do."

"Actually, I did have something to lose; if it had gone the wrong way, it could have completely destroyed me. But the record backfired on 'em. It became one

of the biggest records they ever had, and without promotion. If there ever was a chance for me to be a superstar, it was with that record."

Starr never recaptured that success at Motown, however, and in frustration over his feeling that the company was unwilling to give him material he felt was suitable, Starr began to secretly write songs for future use. Finally, after eight years, Starr was released from his contract, signing shortly thereafter with Granite and taking those songs with him. Today, after the successes of two of those songs, *Pain and Stay With Me*, and an album which entered the R&B charts at 60, Starr is finally satisfied. But he's far from idea-less as a result of that sense of satisfaction.

"Coming to Granite was the greatest thing that ever happened to me, I know that for sure," says Edwin. "But it's a fallacy for me to think that one artist can hold up a record company, because it can't happen. And I want a desk job anyway. I'd like to be the president of the Black division of Granite Records."

And, with a little help from Granite's parent company, England's ATV Ltd., headed by Sir Lew Grade, Starr's dream of an expanded Granite R&B division may come true.

"They OWN Europe, lock, stock and barrel," laughs Edwin. "There ain't six buildings in London that don't say ATV somethin' . . . It's all down to dollars and cents now. Once we see that it's a working situation, then we can go with other acts."

"When I first started off, I was with a company where I used to go to the store and get hot dogs for the president; that's how close we were. I went from there to a company where I saw the president of the company twice in eight years. And to come to a company where I can laugh and joke with the president . . . You'd be surprised how many artists in the business would love to be over here for that one fact only. . . ."

STUDIO WHISPER

At RCA's Los Angeles' studio, David Cassidy is climbing higher, laying down tracks for his next project, with Bruce Johnston producing. . . . Doug Sahm is in the studio project, with Huey Meaux, who produced him back in the 60's. . . . Bobby Womack is recording with David Robinson behind the boards. . . . Led Zeppelin are rocking out in Germany for an expected March album. . . . Accomplished producer Richard Perry's long list of artists now has one deletion. Carly Simon has broken her long-lasting collaboration with Perry to seek new horizons with Teddy Templeman, producer of the Doobie Brothers. . . . Al Green is in Memphis working on the new album with producer Willie Mitchell. . . . Hoyt Axton hard at work for his forthcoming A&M lp. . . . Just recovering from an extensive tour, Kool & The Gang are back in the studio and will be for next few months, perfecting a new show and recording a new album. It's all happening at Philadelphia's new Delite Recording Studio. . . . At the Village Recorded in LA, Bloodstone is working with veteran producer Mike Vernon on a soon to be released LP. . . . Other happenings at the studio include new product by Mike Quattro and Les McCann, who's getting a little help from famed producer Bert de Couteaux. . . . Various artists have been recording on location; among them: Harry Chapin, Bob Dylan, Jefferson Starship and Willie Nelson.

JOHNNY RODRIGUEZ

Jailor Key To His Success

by Jerry Flowers

Every day, twenty-four hours a day they pour into Nashville in buses, on airplanes, in clapped-out Fords, or just plain riding thumbs. Often with little more than a couple of pairs of jeans and a beat-up Gibson, intoxicated on the heady spirits of dreaming they flock to Music City, USA, to make the rounds of the publishers and record companies, to pull a few songs on crumpled sheets of dirty paper out of their butt pockets and to be discovered as country music's newest poets and stars. More often than not, these starry-eyed fortune seekers wind up flat busted and heart-broken in some run-down boarding house on the city's east side, across the Cumberland River and a world away from the swank offices of Music Row with their posh carpets and high-gloss, oiled panel walls. But they will continue to come, hundreds a day, thousands a month, to stalk that "big break" simply because people like Johnny Rodriguez have succeeded before them and made it all look so easy.



When Johnny Rodriguez stepped off a plane in Nashville in mid-1972, he had less than ten bucks in his boot and a couple of changes of clothes. But within hours of his arrival he was ensconced at Tom T. Hall's house and had himself a job playing guitar in Hall's band. Of such stuff are dreams born, but it might never have happened had Johnny not been jailed for goat rustling.

In Sabinal, Texas, where Johnny grew up in a dirt-poor family of nine kids. There was little excitement to offer rambunctious, teen-aged boys. Johnny and his friends, usually left to their own devices to provide self-entertainment, decided one night to help

themselves to some prize goats for barbecuing. When they were caught, Johnny took the rap to protect his friends.

The jailor liked Johnny's singing and, after Johnny was placed on probation, took him to audition for "Happy" Shahan. Shahan signed on as Johnny's manager and put him to work as an actor and singer in his Alamo Village resort. It was at the resort that Tom T. Hall saw Johnny and told him that he would put him in his band if he ever got to Nashville. "At that time I'd never even played in a band in Sabinal," says Johnny. "I thought he was just being nice to me." But when Johnny got to Nashville with his guitar wrapped in a cellophane bag, Hall did as he had promised and soon had Johnny singing to front his shows.

Ten months later Johnny was signed by Mercury Records, and, in November, 1972, *Pass Me By* was released. "When it was top twenty in the national charts I was still with Tom T.'s band," says Rodriguez, so I didn't want to leave his band. I said, 'I wanna still travel with you and just come out and do my couple of songs.' But he said, 'No, we're not gonna do it that way. You can make a lot more money out on your own.' So he ran me out the door!"

Since leaving Hall, the 23-year old Rodriguez has racked up ten consecutive number one singles (*Riding My Thumb To Mexico*, *You Always Come Back To Hurting Me*, *Just Get Up and Close The Door*, etc.) and five top albums, many of them sung in the half English, half Spanish style Johnny learned from his older brother. A sixth album is due and probably will be named *Love Put A Song In My Heart*, after his latest single.

'Chicks Pulling His Pants'

The Rodriguez appeal is very broad, as country demographics go, including large numbers of young fans. Security has become a problem on Johnny's road shows (also unusual for country artists), making necessary the hiring of an ex-professional football player as a bodyguard at one point. As Johnny describes it, girls "from twelve to fifty" have attempted to climb onto the stage with him, to pull him down into the audience and to sneak into his motel rooms. Articles of underwear are frequently tossed onto the stage at his feet.

"I think it's the funniest damn thing that's ever been written," he says. "The only thing I wanted to do is sing my songs in front of people, and the next thing I knew, there were these chicks pulling at my pants when I was up on stage. The next thing I knew, somebody picks up on it and writes it down, and people say I'm a sex symbol. I don't think I'm a sex symbol. I think I'm a singer. I think I'm a songwriter. Underline that think! But as far as that sex symbol bit, you know, I'd be happy if it was forgotten."

Lady fans are not the only women after Rodriguez. Since establishing himself as a top country artist Johnny

has had offers to do duet albums in the Conway and Loretta, George and Tammy style. Record company politics have probably played a large role in keeping Rodriguez from doing such an album (Mercury does not have a female country artist of Johnny's stature), but he said that he is not particularly fond of duet albums. "I didn't come here as a duet," he says, "and I don't want to turn into one down here. If I'd ever want to do an album with anybody, it'd be with Tom T."



Because Johnny is painfully aware that there is a lot of talent coming to Nashville that eventually calls for bus fare home and leaves the city discouraged (having never gotten past the receptionists' desks), he is working with several new acts, hoping to help them break into the business. "That's where I'm coming from," he says, "cause I know somebody helped me. I'm real lucky, 'cause so many people, you know, would like to have this opportunity. I know there's so many people out there with the same dream that I had. If there's any way that I can help them or help them help themselves, I will."

Johnny Rodriguez has been there. He has walked the streets of Nashville, even if only for a little while, before being given the chance he was seeking. Until recently the help he was offering friends and dream seekers included even giving them money. Now his business manager has had to put him on an allowance of sorts. Said one of the employees in his office: "He'd give it all away. I swear he'd give every dime of it away!"

Reelin In The Years

by Neil Hershberg

Contemporary music has been the subject of considerable debate. The basic complaint of most critics is that today's music is an artless art form, lacking creativity, depth and direction. The critics who defend the current trends in music contend that music lacks a central direction but, rather than remaining stationary, contemporary music is moving in several directions at once to the continued benefit of a largely heterogeneous listening audience.

The popularity of disco music lends strength to the arguments of those critics who feel today's music is superficial—uninspired and one dimensional. On the other hand, the resurgence of interest in music of the thirties and forties, the continued interest in music of the fifties, the projected interest in the music of the sixties and the sudden rise to popularity of folk music all add up to a veritable smorgasbord from which music gourmets are able to pick and choose their own favorite delights.

Musical forms thought to be dead were, in effect, only dormant. What were once weaknesses were now strengths. Like the mythological phoenix rising from its own funeral pyre, musical forms long dead and buried somehow were almost magically transformed into living, viable entities. For many of these musical forms the wheel of Dame Fortune had completed its 360° spin. The circle, for many artists, groups, arrangers and song writers, was not complete.

Not too surprisingly, there has been a

renewed interest in music of the thirties and forties with many contemporary artists re-recording many all time old favorites.

"Good music never dies," explained one critic. "People are getting into anything, including everything everyone thought was dead."

"Music from the thirties and forties is unique because people haven't heard it in thirty years," explained one record company official. "It's easier to cover a record from thirty years ago than a record that was popular a few years ago."

"There have been many songs from that period that have been uncovered for such a long time," added another record industry official. "If anyone investigates songs from that era they'll have themselves a gold mine."

Several artists, with the number constantly increasing, have found the field a profitable one. The Manhattan Transfer is perhaps the best known and certainly the most successful of these groups. They are, in every sense of the term, an audio-visual group, utilizing dazzling audio and visual arrangements in their act. The group attempts to dramatize life from the twenties right on up to the seventies through songs of each era. The songs are not necessarily popular ones, i.e., songs that are instantaneously recognizable. The group's ability to orchestrate with their unorthodox singing style is something that has been absent from the musical scene since the Big Bands themselves were in fashion.

Many night club performers, realizing the untapped potential that exists in music from the thirties and forties, have built their acts around a centralized theme of nostalgia complete with a full array of songs and dance. Peter Allen, a cabaret performer who writes his own material, is an artist heavily into the thirties. Pianist Marvin Hamlisch, one of show business' most successful acts, is deeply influenced by the works of Scott Joplin, the famous ragtime composer. Barbara Cook and the group Gotham, both of whom also base their acts on thirties and forties music, are others in demand on the club circuit.

Music of the thirties and forties have also had its influence on many recording artists as witnessed by a flurry of recent releases. Deodato's most recent album, *First Cuckoo*, has two such cuts, Duke Ellington's *Caravan Watusi Strut* and Kurt Weill's *Speak Low*. Mal Waldron, Billie Holiday's accompanist in her early days, has just finished his latest album, *A Tribute to Billie Holiday*. The title of Ron Carter's newest LP, *Anything Goes*, is a Cole Porter classic. Several of the compositions on Rita Coolidge's newest album, *It's Only Love*, entitled *Am I Blue?* and *Mean To Me* are both representative of jazz' new found influence in contemporary music. Leon Redbone demonstrates the artistic touch of the twenties, thirties and forties in his album, *On the Track*. Papa John Creach, himself a tribute to an earlier era, has two such numbers on his latest album, *I'm a Fiddle Man*, entitled *Stardust* and *Solitude*. Finally, even the Big Band concept itself is making a comeback even if only in a limited form. The Pasadena Roof Orchestra is an authentic big band that hails from England where they have already amassed a cult following. The

group performs music from the thirties and forties and plans to visit our shores sometime in the near future.

What about the original big bands themselves? Where have they been during the recent resurgence of their own unique musical form? Well for one thing, they've been busy, so busy in fact that one promoter complained that he has been unable to put together a show he's been planning featuring the original big bands because many of them are booked so far in advance.

New York promoter Richard Nader has already put two such revivals together. In 1971, a year prior to the national Big Band revival, Nader produced a show featuring the late Duke Ellington, the Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra, the Glenn Miller Orchestra, Helen Forrest, Woody Herman, Billy Eckstine, Stan Kenton and Rosemary Clooney. The success of these shows has prompted Nader to want to produce a third show but because many of the performers are booked so far in advance, Nader may now produce a series of such revivals for Sunday afternoons.

"Life is moving very quickly for people over 50," says Nader. "It's difficult for them to adjust to changes. They hold on to music of the thirties which represented a time where they were more in control of their lives."

But the Big Band revival is certainly not limited to people over 50. "What surprised me was the number of young people who came to the show," said Nader. "They all seemed to be enjoying it."

It shouldn't come as a surprise to Richard Nader or to anyone else for that matter. After all, good music never dies. It also knows no age limit. In the next issue we examine the revival of interest in music from the fifties and sixties. □

SILVER CONVENTION

Taking Off On New Wings

by Cynthia Spector



by Ingrid Roswitha

MUNICH, Germany—Facing each other across the width of a booth in the new spot, CITTA 2000, Ramona Wulf and Penny McLean confer instant perspective on this visitor.

"To tell you the truth," Ramona confides, "the group that actually sang 'Save Me' consisted mostly of studio musicians."

Ramona and Penny sat comfortably in a chic Drugstore cum restaurant discotheque, waiting for latecomer Linda Uebelherr. The three are not household names but they will be, the three have formed Germany's hottest new group: Silver Convention.

Why were they chosen to be Silver Convention?

"We sound good together and I guess we look right too," Ramona says matter-of-factly. "An image had to be created to go with the name, since the original band of musicians was rather anonymous."

Silver Convention first appeared with a hit on the British charts late last spring with *Save Me*. Then, it was not so much the song or the musicians that everybody talked about, but rather controversial cover: a girl in handcuffs, barely but strategically covering the most important spots of her anatomy.

Linda comes rushing in and apologizes for being tardy. "Sorry I'm late," she says winded. "I had to see someone about my new single (*Ooh What A Night*). All three performers are accomplished solo troupers and can look back upon separate careers.

Ramona, a dark "warbaby"—her father was an American soldier—was born in Hanau 20 years ago. She has been a regular on German Television since she was eight and three short years ago, she was still "Mama's Darling" of the tube. A very sweet, innocent little girl with big eyes and pigtails, one has to look twice to recognize little Ramona: she grew up, almost over night. No more pigtails and fresh little girl look. Now it's sexy silver eye make-up, tiny halter tops, intriguingly cut flare pants and lots of bare skin. That goes for Linda and Penny too.

But the change was not so dramatic for them. Both are 26 years old and Linda used to sing with the highly successful Lee Humphries Singers and Love Generation. The girls are miffed at the back-hand treatment usually accorded to German-American singers and groups.

"There are an awful lot of American actors, singers, even opera singers in Germany," says Penny. "Like me. We come to Germany like it, and stay. Many of us form our own groups, or we just do our acts as solo performers in nightclubs and bars. You don't hear or read about us in America, because our sound is just not commercial enough for the USA; it's strictly continental. It is sad but gold records earned here go unnoticed in America. "A good example of that is

Donna Summer," says Ramona, "She's a good friend of mine who had a gold record in Holland, *Lady Of The Night*, and is only starting to enjoy success now with *Love To Love You Baby*."

Penny is also breaking out as a solo performer and her single, *Lady Bump* has just been released. "People keep asking me why this song is called 'Lazy Bum,'" Penny laughs. "I didn't realize that the title could be so misinterpreted."

"I'd like some hot chocolate," Penny says to the waitress. "I shouldn't really, but it's so cold outside," Ramona joins her and Linda orders some Irish Coffee. None of the girls could have a weight problem, they seem to be in terrific shape.

On stage, the blond, red and black hair contrast beautifully. They also know how to move, as old pros in the business. "We've all had acting and dancing which is coming back into fashion." Linda says between sips of her coffee.

'Hottest Property Anywhere'

Michael Kunze, who has arranged the original *Save Me*, is convinced that he has the hottest property today on the German Market — "or anywhere". "I'm not taking a risk" Linda quotes him as saying, "these girls are faa-bu-lous and each one has proven that they are successful on their own. What can go wrong?" Linda, who had been imitating Mr. Kunze to the other girls' delight, is laughing happily.

After Mr. Kunze received letters from England, France, Spain, Holland and Sweden, asking for dates to have Silver Convention appear, he had to act very fast. He spread the word that girls were needed who could reproduce the sound. "I immediately went to audition" Ramona says, "I'm so tired of singing German songs!"

In the span of a few weeks the act was put together. "I've never moved like this before, and I love it!" Ramona beams. "Our first appearance before an audience was in England, on Top of The Pops. We were very nervous, but we won them over." English writers called them the "absolutely hottest act to ever come out of Germany".

Fly Robin Fly, proves that Mr. Kunze was right about Silver Convention. It is bound to be their biggest hit so far. With more to come. "We are planning a promotional tour through the States," Linda says. "I've never been there, so I'm very much looking forward to it. It should also be nice to travel together for a while, so we can really get to know each other more than just superficially as has been the case till now."

"Wouldn't it be fun, if they flew us in on a silver Robin?" Ramona laughs. Don't worry, Ramona. If it is at all feasible, an American public relations firm will think of it!

What They're Saying



PHOTO BY DAGMAR

It was a luscious feast of musicians who showed up at David Ruffin's house one night for dinner in Detroit. The guests? Rod Stewart, Mick Jagger, Bobby Womack and Ron Wood. The host had this to say: "It seems everytime Rod comes into town we end up on stage together. He and Mick were over for supper and we got some incredible music going. Later Bobby and Ron showed up. Ron's amazing. Everyone knows him as a rock musician but he can turn around with some R&B licks that could blow your head off!"

At least half of Jeff Beck's dream came true. In a recent radio interview Beck expressed his desire to play with Stanley Clarke and Billy Cobham. Part of the fantasy came to life when he appeared on Clarke's new LP *Journey To Love*. As for the rest of the reverie, Beck said: "If only Billy would slow down a bit, I might be able to get it together with him." Cobham, Beck and Clarke? Whynot?



Even the most dedicated men need a balance of work and play. Such was the case with country producer/composer Billy Sherrill the night of the CMA telecast. Rather than watch his protege, Charlie Rich, make an utter fool of himself, he chose the greener pastures of athletics. Says Sherrill: "I didn't watch the award show that night. I was watching a pro football game on another channel." Thank God for the kick-off. It may have saved Charlie from a kick in the head!

Speaking of old Billy, he was the man responsible for putting the Wynette in Tammy. "Billy cringed when he heard my last name was 'Pugh' and said it had to be changed," Tammy remembers. "He came up with Wynette and I went along with it. After all, Billy's always right."



Although child prodigy Janis Ian never received a highschool diploma, she's compensating for her deficiencies now by pursuing the finer arts of music and foreign language. Janis hopes that violin lessons will give her an upper-hand in scoring her original compositions. As for foreign language, she plans to release the hit single "At Seventeen" in French, as soon as she becomes fluent. Says Janis: "All those years of listening to Piaf; it's the best language for singing."

Some parents have real nerve. Sterling Whipple, the composer of Kenny Starr's hit *Blind Man In The Bleachers* insists he was born with the absurd appellation. As if it wasn't bad enough, Sterling commented: "When I first came to Nashville I gave consideration to changing it to something like 'Crash Riprock!'"



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TONY WILLIAMS

Jazz Rock Syndrome

by Barney Lane



PHOTO BY JACK BESHEARS

When you are a young jazz musician and you already a veteran of the Miles Davis band by the age of 23, where do you go and what do you do? If you are drummer Tony Williams, the answers are: everywhere and everything.

Perched on a drummer's stool in the livingroom of his uptown Harlem brownstone, Tony talked about his musical career. A yellow trap set stood prominently on the floor opposite a wall accented by three Turkish gongs. Tillie, a calico kitten, participated enthusiastically in the conversation.

Chicago-born Tony Williams grew up in Boston where he played with Jackie McLean. At 16, he arrived in New York with McLean. At 17, he joined Miles Davis and played in a band that included such heavyweights as Herbie Hancock, Ron Carter, George Coleman, and Wayne Shorter. Tony said that it was a dream to be able to play with Miles, but that the richness of the experience was not that he sat at the feet of the master nor that he learned any particular techniques from Miles. The richness of it came from a whole atmosphere of superb musicianship to be found in that band. Nevertheless, Tony left Miles at the age of 23 to go out on his own. Why did he leave the dream? Tony explains that six years is a long time and adds: "I wanted to make all the mistakes that I was going to make early while I still had time."

At 30, Tony still seeks his dreams, but with some caution, because dreams are often better than the realities. Asked if there were any musicians whom he dreamed of playing with today, Tony said: "There's one person, Ahmad Jamal. But, I don't want to play with him for that reason, because I feel I'd spoil my dream." The result of a similar dream was a date he played with Bill Evans wherein they each waited to see what the other would do and the session never took off because of their deference to each other.

So, Tony has his own group, a very good one, and he works on his own style and that style is very special. Tony's style is most recently represented on a Columbia album called *Believe It* with The New Tony Williams Lifetime, featuring Allen Holdsworth on guitar, Alan Pasqua at keyboards, and Tony Newton on bass guitar. One of the outstanding characteristics of that style is strength combined with an unselfish approach. As a leader, he doesn't need to be out front, because he is a backbone for the group. "You have to play with people, that's the main thing . . . not against them. The other thing is . . . one of the things I learned first . . . it's up to the drummer, above all members of the band, to make the music sound and feel good. There's no sense in playing a lot of things if it doesn't sound and feel good." The manifestation of this concept is an incredible tightness among the group. It's really a synthesis in the rhythm. There is none of the insular feeling of a drummer leading, with a layer of bass over the drums, and a layer of guitar over both. The sound is that of kindred spirits moving in the same directions, yet there is no sacrifice of the individual. Tony says that a lot of musicians become autonomous and are not able to overlap and blend. What he finds special about his group is that the members are able to play through their instruments, not just with their instruments and that this allows the special synthesis to

happen. About his individual contribution to this synthesis, Tony says: "I'm mostly interested in getting the drums to appear in a context in which people may not have heard them before."

Freedom and Discipline

The style of Tony's music has certainly changed over the past decade, but Tony never rejects his past. Instead he profits from his past and lets it expand his future. "I've always been able to play in different styles and to play in them comfortably. When I began playing, I wasn't playing what I'm playing now, but I've retained what I was playing when I first started." This versatility allows Tony to play the very modern electrified sound heard on *Believe It* and also allows him to be deeply satisfied playing in a straight-ahead trio with Ron Carter and Hank Jones, which he did recently.

Tony's versatility extends to his listening habits as well as his playing style. He listens to new albums out of interest in the current music scene and goes back to listen to his old sides in order to recapture feelings and to bring new insights to old music.

What might seem paradoxical becomes very logical. There is in the music of Tony Williams a great feeling of freedom and yet, Tony places great emphasis upon discipline. The fundamental disciplines allow the creative freedom to take place and open avenues that might otherwise remain closed.

"When you write music for yourself, you confine yourself and put limits on yourself. That's the craft of writing music. There are reasons; there are motives." Tony stresses that musical composition is a craft, not simply a boundless outpouring of creative inspiration. "Without it (discipline) you have chaos, you have anarchy in any kind of art form. Because those disciplines make you do things that you yourself would not normally do . . . I think those forces are necessary." The artistic unselfishness of Tony Williams comes into play again. It is interesting to note that most of the music on his new album was written by members of his group and not by himself. It is freedom and discipline working together. Tony says: "I have a clear picture of what I can do and what I want to do. If I wrote all of the music or tried to calculate everything that would mean I'd be thinking up the bass lines and consequently I'd be playing the bass. But I don't want to do that. I want to be able to be surprised. Which will make for better music."

This effort of The New Tony Williams Lifetime is marked by virtuosity without presumption. It is a fascinating study in rhythmic textures. Tony's drums and Newton's bass are both strong and driving, but never flashy nor self-indulgent. Holdsworth on guitar and Pasqua on keyboards are sometimes part of that driving rhythm and, at other times, soloists weaving melodic textures in and around the rhythm.

This harmony of contrasts is at its most subtle on a tune called *Fred*, where the guitar and keyboards play light melodic strains over a foundation of relentless bass and drums. *Red Alert* pulls all the stops and maintains a level of tension throughout, worthy of its name. *Wildlife*, in contrast, is an open, airy sound filled with a mood of

celebration. Some of the tunes on the album are funky and dance-able enough to have potential in the disco market. Tony expressed satisfaction if one of the tunes becomes a disco hit and, if not, he will still be happy. He is pleased with the album, whatever happens.

Tony is not coy about what his music is, but he doesn't want to be pigeon-holed. When asked how he would classify *Believe It*, he said: "I wouldn't classify it. I leave that up to people who classify."

Rock: A Good Influence

Tony Williams is a jazz musician. Many of his contemporaries are rejecting the "jazz" label because they do not wish to be stuck in a category and because there is a great deal of confusion among people today, musicians included, about what jazz is and is not. Tony is not beset with any problems in this area: "With what I've been through, I don't think that I could ever reject the term or the name of 'jazz'. I'm a lot of other kinds of musician, too. I have an affinity for a lot of different types of music." When Tony was coming up in Boston, rock 'n roll was the music on the block. He listened to it and enjoyed it. It is part of the music that he plays today and he has a very healthy, open attitude about it. "I think it's a good influence. It broadens the audience." "A lot of music certain people don't want to listen to, so what are you supposed to do? There's nothing wrong with that. Music is a certain thing. A lot of people aren't going to listen to Art Tatum, as much of a genius as he was, certain people are not going to enjoy that. And if you are of the mind that music should also be enjoyed by people; it's not just an elitist sort of thing that you look down from a mountaintop and say 'You people are the lowest, because you can't enjoy what I enjoy', that's wrong. I can definitely say that and I don't want to live like that."

Believe me, rock and roll would not be what it is without jazz. You can't tell me that the Beatles didn't listen to Duke Ellington, Dave Brubeck or Ahmad Jamal or Horace Silver and weren't influenced by them. When you have a desire in you to reach people. . . . See, I don't just play the way I play because I like it. I play the way I play because I know it's going to affect people. I know that people are going to enjoy it. So I can't feel good unless I'm playing for people . . . It's basic, it's academic. It's not trying to make hits or for commercial reasons.

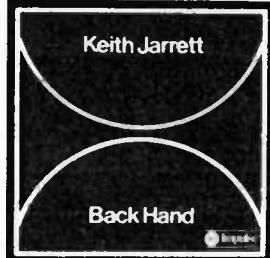
Tony Williams is not just going with the trends but he wants his music to get an audience and he does not want music to become a political football: "When politics get into it, that's what's wrong. People want to politicize music. They want to hold music up as some third party. You have to be faithful to this whole thing." And that's the wrong way of looking at music. You defeat the purpose . . . I don't like music being used like that. It's degrading to the music to use it on those political terms."

Tony ended his treatise by adding his conviction that if John Coltrane and Charlie Parker, two of the strongest trend-setters in jazz history, were still alive, that they would be playing the new music. Miles Davis, another trend-setter, is doing just that. The meaning of "The New Tony Williams Lifetime" becomes clear.

JAZZ ALBUMS



SPOTLIGHT



KEITH JARRETT

Back Hand—(ABC-Impulse ASH 9305)
Jarrett's solo and quartet work with the ECM label has always been superior to his ABC work, not because of a deficiency in his sidemen, but because of the vigilance of his ECM producer Manfred Eicher. The ABC records, like this one either suffer from a lack of direction, or to much direction that doesn't let his ideas fully develop. Guitarist Sam Brown, last seen on Jarrett's ABC release *Treasure Island* is sorely needed here. But still it is Jarrett and Jarrett is a master.

Keith Jarrett has done it again. His *Solo Concerts* of 1973 amazed everyone by selling well; an unheard of task for a solo piano album. Then came the flood, everyone was releasing solo piano concerts. Jarrett is the original. He connects through his mind, out through his fingers all traditions of American jazz that otherwise would be in disarray today. But he is not a traditionalist, far from it. He is taking jazz further, not through space, but through human lineage, allowing us to

discover more about where we came from. It would have been easy for Jarrett to go into a studio or back to another concert and improvise another two hours as heard on his *Solo Concerts*. But not Jarrett. Commercial success means little to him. Although superficially this album might sound like the last (because they are both solo piano), Jarrett has progressed more than anyone would have thought. He ought to be named a national treasure.

JULIE TIPPETS

Sunset Glow—(RCA—BULI-1248)
Julie Tippets, the former Julie Driscoll of Brian Auger's Trinity has combined here with her husband Brian, known for his group, Centipede. These albums are all a definitely British form of jazz and an acquired taste for most Americans. But the effort is worth it. Julie's vocals, previously heard on Carla Bley's 'Tropical Appetites', is given more vocal and conceptual room. It is impossible to classify.

BILLY COBHAM

A Funky Thide of Things
(Atlantic SD 18149)

Athletic is the only accurate way to describe Billy Cobham's drumming. Some of his effects are merely displays of his physical stamina and prowess, but others are so exciting that you are carried away by his enthusiasm alone. He suffers, like most drummers who lead a group, by a dearth of lyrical ideas. But Cobham has captured enough of Mahavishnu and pop appeal to make him one of the most respected and popular jazz-rock performers.

BOBBY HUTCHERSON

Montara—(Blue Note LA551-G)

Blue Note has definitely staked out a territory here and their recent releases hit their audience, but ultimately fail to crack the larger nut. If lounge music is the end of all end, then they are being successful. But Hutcherson just doesn't rise to do anything beyond that limited scope.

MAINSTREAM

Quiet Sun—(Antilles AN-7008)

From far leftfield (England to be exact) comes this latest entry into the jazz sweepstakes. Featuring Roxy Music's Phil Manzanera and Eno, this album is attempting to bridge the ever-widening gap between progressive rock and jazz. The bridge they have constructed, while it may not be commercially successful, is startling, maddening and beautiful.



BOBBY HUMPHREY

Fancy Dancer—(Blue Note LA 550-G)
Humphrey has been the most successful jazz artist to effectively translate jazz material into pop success. Her lifting, full-bodied flute presides over the tunes and holds together what otherwise would be only pleasant muzak. Trombonist Julian Priester and Chuck Rainey are notable sidemen.

JAN HAMMER

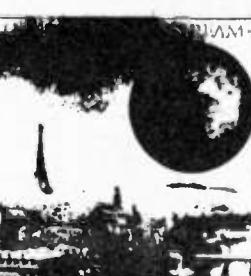
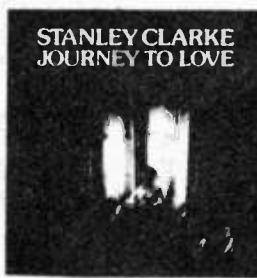
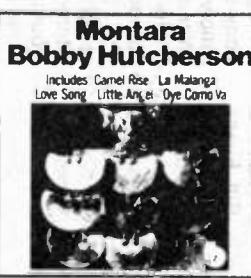
The First Seven Days—(Nemperor NE 432)
Hammer is one of the few really restrained synthesizer players around in the manner of Beaver and Krause. No spacey effects or sonic booms, just pleasant music. Hammer has taken the softer, soaring side of the Mahavishnu Orchestra with him. He notes appropriately in the album notes, "For those concerned: There is no guitar on this album." Indeed.

STANLEY CLARKE

Journey to Love—(Nemperor NE 433)
Wunderkind bassist with the fingers of a guitarist, meets the master guitarist, John McLaughlin here and it energizes Clarke to new heights. On *Song to John (Coltrane)*, McLaughlin, Clarke and Chick Corea combine to perform the most memorable thing coming from either of those musicians in two years. The rest of the tunes are enjoyable, although they fall back into a comfortable Corea-RTF bag a little too often.

MORNING GLORY

Antilles—(AN-7004)
This is a group featuring two of Europe's less exposed musicians in this country. John Surman can be heard on several early McLaughlin sessions and on a couple of his own dates. Both his soprano sax and bass clarinet are refreshing. Terje Rypdal has two albums on ECM, but here he plays guitar less in his ECM-minimal style and closer to Surman's English jazz roots.



MIKE OLDFIELD

Ommadawn—(Virgin PZ 33913)
If this is a taste of things to come, we are in line for a whole slew of Virgin (the record company, not the condition) Record material from that British roster that includes many Soft Machine alumni. This release here, is from Oldfield of *Tubular Bells* and *Exorcist* fame and belongs to a genre known as trance music. It is stimulating music without ever really drawing you out of your body and also, incredibly beautiful.

CHUCK MANGIONE

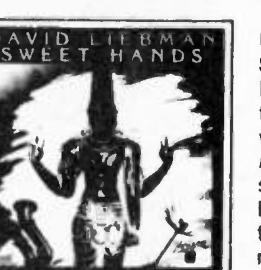
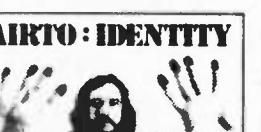
Bellavia—(A&M SP 4557)
Some of Mangione's compositions sound vaguely familiar, as if they were borrowed from a medley of similar but unidentified songs. Perhaps that is Mangione's genius in his role as the pop perveyor of the modern big band sounds. Gary Niewood on reeds and Mangione on trumpet and keyboards stand out in these delicate renditions of Mangione's tunes.

CREATIVE CONSTRUCTION COMPANY

(Muse MR 5071)
This is the difficult album of the month for all the hard-working fans of difficult music. But that shouldn't scare off the more adventuresome listeners who want to widen their horizons. This is the product of saxophonist Anthony Braxton and Muhal Richard Abrams, both products of AACM in Chicago and Leroy Jenkins of the Revolutionary Ensemble. Recorded in 1970, it reflects that time and therefore is a little more wild than might be expected today.

TONY WILLIAMS

Believe It—(Columbia PC 33836)
Williams is the original jazz-rock drummer and Billy Cobham could take a lesson or two in restraint. We haven't heard from Tony in a while and it is a pity. With Alan Holdsworth on guitar and Alan Pasqua on keyboards giving very tasteful support, this should give Williams the attention he has been lacking.



AZAR LAWRENCE

Solstice—(Prestige P10097)
Lawrence is the closest thing we have today to John Coltrane, the problem being that he is so close that he is more an imitator than the innovator that Coltrane was. Regardless, it is still a pleasure to listen to his alternatively sweet and bitter saxophone playing—just close your eyes and pretend it is a new Coltrane. Al Dailey is heard instead of Azar's main man McCoy Tyner and for once we can hear Azar clearly.

AIRTO

Identity—(Arista 4068)
A persistent and clever percussionist, Airto has performed admirably in countless sessions of other musicians, but has never put it all together on his own. This album shows the influence of his long-time associate Chick Corea and present producer Herbie Hancock. He has drawn away from his errie percussive effects of his earlier albums, bor a more persistent Latin beat.

DAVE LIEBMAN

Sweet Hands—(Horizon Records—A&M)
Leibman is one of the most brilliant of the post-Coltrane soprano players. His work with Miles, Elvin Jones and his own *Lookout Farm* is uniformly inspired. His soprano has the sweetness of Joe Farrell, but also a harder, more substantial edge to it. His keyboardist, Richie Beirach, is a major artist and will, no doubt, front his own group soon.

MC COY TYNER

Trident Milestone M9063
Tyner is playing with a smaller group here, consisting of bassist Ron Carter, drummer Elvin Jones and Tyner on keyboards. We get to hear more of Tyner without the din of Azar Lawrence competing for air space and we hear more of Tyner's beautiful compositions. In this album, Tyner is closer to his trio work of ten years ago, although he has matured ten-fold.

JOHN COLTRANE

The Gentle Side of John Coltrane—(ABC-Impulse ASH 9306-2)
Coltrane recorded numerous ballads, sometimes with singer Johnny Hartman, and some thought he was back-tracking or selling out to his critics (who were many). But Coltrane always had an interest in the mellower sounds that his saxophone could produce. In fact, everything he touched he was a master at, and this two-record set is a prime example. His usual quartet plus Duke Ellington and Eric Dolphy can be heard on this record.

Elvis: In Retrospect

A white electrician sat out front at the Apollo Theater in New York's Harlem district intently studying the blatant sexual gyrations of the black performers onstage. A rough beast was slouching toward America, waiting to be born.

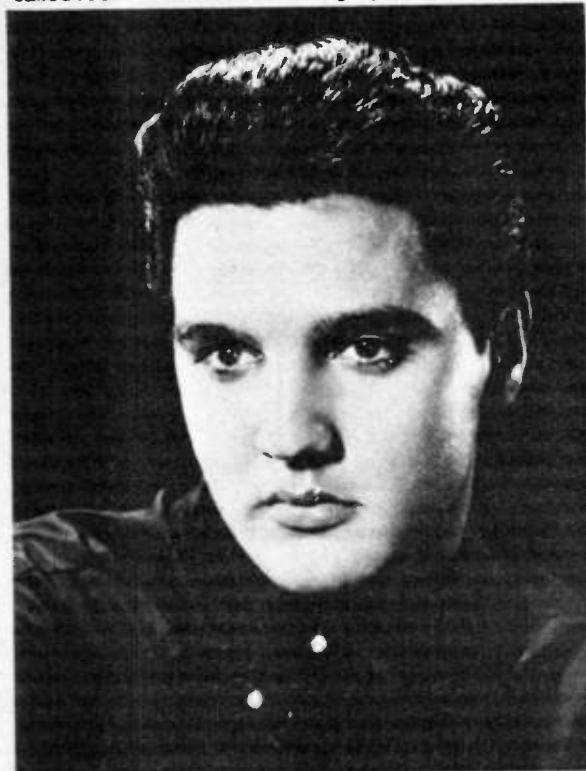
By 1956, the beat was fully grown. His name was Elvis Presley, erstwhile electrician and now king of rock 'n' roll. He was, that same year, just old enough to vote. He endorsed Adlai Stevenson and the Democrats were less than overjoyed. What wicked whiplash would result when the average voters—middle class, law-abiding, God-fearing, respectable citizens all—learned that Stevenson had in his corner the diabolical corrupter of their children?

How did this creature of chaos (for that was how the majority of Americans viewed Presley in the slumberous '50s) evolve? Born in Tupelo, Mississippi, Presley received his musical education by listening to the radio and singing with his parents at camp meetings, revivals, and the Assembly of God church. In high school (in Memphis), he inevitably favored gospel blues and country music.

Presley's professional progress is well known, and needs no documentation here. From Sam Phillips' Sun Records, he went to RCA Victor where he became one of the all time best selling artists. From country-western show singer to international skyrocket—the story is simple and spectacular.

What is fascinating is the hysterical response—positive and negative—that Presley provoked. The self-appointed guardians of public morality were outraged by the pelvic rhythms that Presley directed at his wildly ecstatic young fans. It didn't require much diagnosis to determine what was going on onstage. And the uptight, upright censors didn't like it one bit.

Recalled Jerry Hopkins in "The Rock Story," "In Boston, Roman Catholic leaders urged the music be banned. Several cities did just that, among them San Antonio, where rock 'n' roll was banished from city swimming-pool jukeboxes because, according to the city council, the music 'attracted undesirable elements given to practicing their spastic gyrations in abbreviated bathing suits.' In New York, an associate professor of psychiatry at Columbia University said, 'If we cannot stem the tide of rock 'n' roll with its waves of rhythmic arcosis and of future waves of vicarious craze, we are preparing our own downfall in the midst of pandemic dances.' Even *The Encyclopedia Britannica's* yearbook called rock 'n' roll 'insistent savagery.'



A quiet kind of criticism, informed by wry humor, was leveled at Presley by Steve Allen, then the host of the "Tonight Show." Standing behind a lectern, and illuminated by a single spotlight, Allen gave an unaccompanied reading of *You Ain't Nothin' But A Hound Dog*, in order to focus on the "poetic" quality of the lyrics. The bit was a comic masterpiece.

Intoned Allen intensely, with the high dramatic seriousness reserved for a recitation of Dylan Thomas' verse:

You ain't nothin' but a hound dog,
Cryin' all the time.
You ain't nothin' but a hound dog,
Cryin' all the time.
Well, you never caught a rabbit,
And you ain't no friend of mine.

The uproar is removed, and appears amusing in retrospect. Presley, however, was more than a burr on the saddle of the American middle class. He was a major figure in the maturation of rock. What Hemingway was to the world of American letters, Presley was to American

pop music. And just as Hemingway influenced other writers, Presley affected other singers.

Presley's prodigious success brought forth a flood of country-based stars, who not only capitalized on his fame, but also made contributions of their own. Now it was the country singer turned rock 'n' roller who was capturing the coin in the marketplace—Jerry Lee Lewis, Johnny Cash, the Everly Brothers, Buddy Holly.

Presley's last New York concert, in 1972, had the sense of a summation. On that night, Presley, bump and grindless, was cool, assured, and professional. There was not a meaningless motion, nor artificial gesture. He hustled onstage at Madison Square Garden, sang one

song after another with no Vegas patter, and sped out like a winning athlete escaping the grasping hands of an adoring crowd.

Through the years, Presley has remained faithful to his country-gospel roots. An unending stream of albums has issued from him, many of which are unabashedly and sincerely religious.

When he posed a psychic threat to the quietly desperate America of the '50s, Presley remained unflappable. "They all think I'm a sex maniac," he said at the time. "They're just frustrated old types anyhow. I'm just natural."

A natural gas.

Dan Bottstein

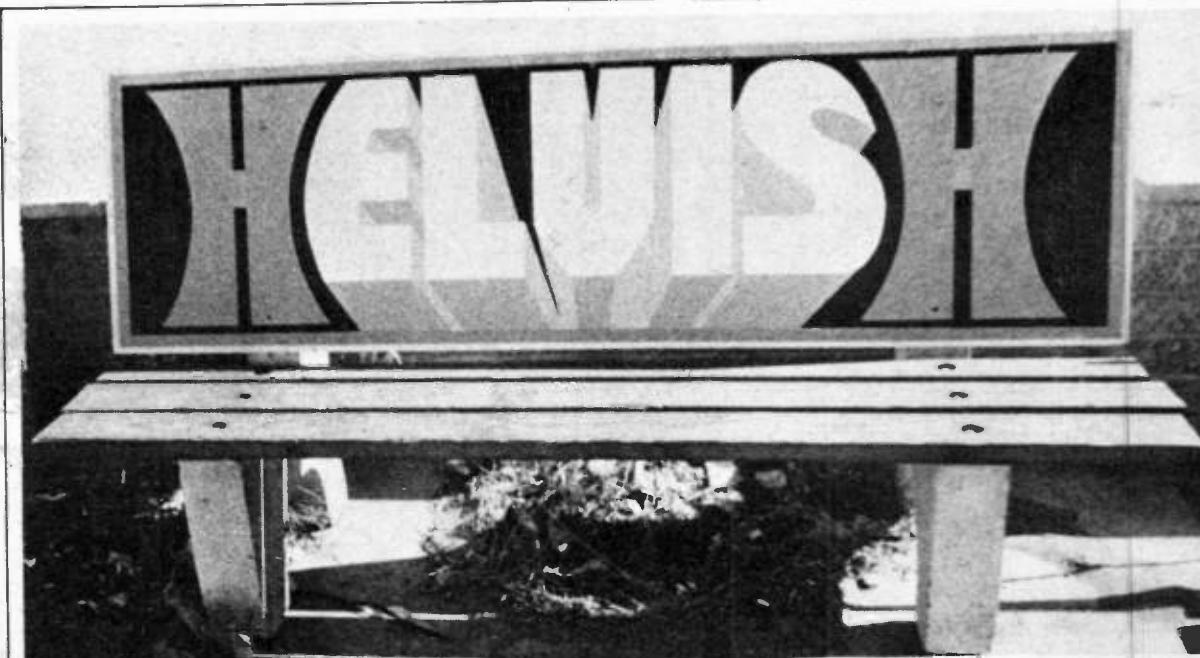


PHOTO BY TONY DEONONNO

There are no Heartbreak Hotels when the big "E" is in Las Vegas. The King of Rock's presence not only sells out the 1,519 room International Hilton, but practically the entire town's hotel space.

As one RCA Records executive put it: "No one sells out more hotel space or gets paid more than Elvis."

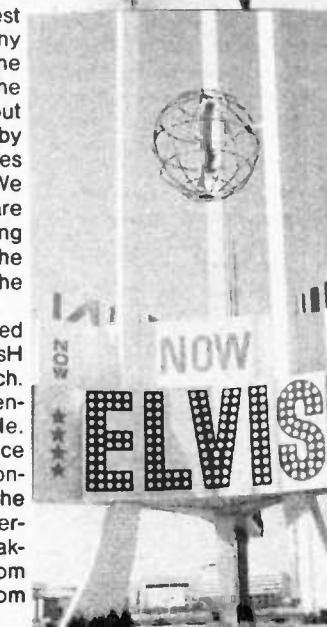
The Neon Jungle is a phallic town and Elvis is probably its greatest phallic symbol. Bigness, impression, spectacle are the name of the game. I immediately went to "The Strip"—the heart of Las Vegas. It was like a ghost town. A Vegasite said, "Just wait till tomorrow." A giant "superstar" coming to town. "If you think these neons are bright, just wait and see how Middle-Aged-Blue-Eyes lights up this town." Hmm, I thought to myself, what an interesting and amusing comment this Vegasite played homage to Ol' Blue Eyes (Mr. Sinatra is probably the only person who could challenge Mr. P's domination of this entertainment capital) and punned at Elvis' aging.

Although I was staying on the other side of town I immediately searched for evidence of Elvis' upcoming appearance. It was one day before his grand opening and a sign of his arrival was already visible. It read HelvisH. (The H's were for the Hilton Hotel). It was a huge, luminescent pink, orange and blue billboard, the type that usually adorns a highway. It stood out because it somehow wasn't in keeping with the rest of the signs in town. It had a cheap-flashy look, lacking the divine gaudiness of the rest of the town. As a kind member of the Hilton's public relations department put it, "We accommodated the Colonel by having all of our 2500 visible employees wear something that reads 'Elvis'. We also put up banners and posters; ours are the nice ones. Those shlocky looking signs you see around town are the Colonel's—he does it so he won't lose the 'common touch'."

Before I arrived at the hotel, I noticed a miniature version of the same HelvisH sign on the back of a bus stop bench. When I finally arrived, the Hilton entrance was swarming with people. Nothing about the Presley appearance was evident, although builders were constructing a huge booth right beyond the entrance. A friend put the town in perspective for me: "As far as money making is concerned, the money made from entertainment are less than those from gambling, prostitution and booze."

That explained the Colonel's game

ELVIS SOUVENIRS ELVIS
HOME OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD



plan. His client's competition wasn't other performers but other forms of human indulgence. I could envision the ecstatic Colonel dreaming about having his client's name revolving around and around within a slot machine or a roulette wheel. When the Colonel brings Elvis to town, he turns the big "E" into a neon-sign or a slot machine.

A day later, the word and picture of Elvis inundated the place. Like a stationary carousel, the dome in the dining hall was ringed with Elvis stickers. The now completed booth teemed with Elvis memorabilia peddled by nuns who somehow seemed incongruous selling Elvis teddy bears at the foot of an infamous gambling casino. All the Hiltons male employees were wearing Elvis buttons while their female counterparts were not only wearing buttons but scarves with the name "Elvis" emblazoned across their backs. I asked a friendly waitress if she minded wearing the Elvis button and scarf. She said, "No not really, but I wish they'd realize how warm it is wearing these damn things."

Elvis' opening audience had just broke so I rushed up to a couple to get their reaction. One man said, "He looked pudgy." His wife added, "Yeah, he didn't look as charming as I imagined, though he was wearing a sexy-sparkling white jump suit." I thought to myself—the glittering white suit matched the neon sign image.

Suddenly, I felt queasy; my hands were shaking and my knees were weak. My symptoms meant only one thing, I was suffering from acute Presleyitis. Longing for some fresh air, I jettisoned into the early morning. The sun had just announced daybreak and immediately I felt relieved by this gift from nature. I regained composure, but then was visibly shaken again—for like the monolith in 2001, a huge monument of Elvis stood before me. It was a tremendous neon of Elvis flanked by two identical 26-ft. high posters of the Presley. Overcome by the immensity of it all, I settled for the lesser of the two evils and returned to the Hilton for a drink. I sought solace and noticing a lovely-eyed young girl. I asked her to join me. She was compassionate, charming and also "a lady of the evening." Her eyes shone with sincerity and radiated without any traces of neon. So feeling comfortable, I asked her how her weekend had been with Elvis in town. She said resignedly, "With Presley in town no one was interested in having a good time."



UP AND COMING LP'S

ROCK & POP

Chick Corea—Polydor
 Donnie Osmond—Kolob/MGM
 Fatback Band—Raisin' Hell—Polydor
 Roy Ayers—Mystic Voyage—Polydor
 John Lee & Jerry Brown—Mango Sunrise—United Artists BNLA 541
 Mariah—United Artists UALA 493
 Jerry Garcia—United Artists RXLA 565
 Johnny Rivers—Wild Night—United Artists UALA 486
 Mandrill—United Artists
 Paul Anka—United Artists
 Don McLean—United Artists
 John Mayall—Notice To Appear—ABC ABCD 926
 Mighty Clouds Of Joy—Kickin'—ABC ABCD 927
 Nectar—Recycled—ABC PPSSD 98011
 Pointer Sisters—ABC
 Melissa Manchester—Arista 4067
 Outlaws—Arista
 Loudon Wainright—Arista
 Headhunters—Arista
 Batdorf & Rodney—Arista
 Eric Anderson—Arista
 Fool's Gold—Arista
 David Pomeranz—Arista
 Chris Squire—Atlantic
 Wally—Atlantic
 Spiders From Mars—Pye
 Monty Python—Arista
 McKendrie Spring—ATV
 Skyhooks—Mercury
 10cc—How Dare You—Mercury
 B.T.O.—Mercury
 American Tears—CBS PC 33847
 Andy Fraser—CBS PC 33941
 Janis Ian—CBS PC 33919
 Legacy Of Robert Johnson—CBS G3X 33178
 Journey—CBS PC 33904
 Loggins & Messina—CBS PC 33576
 Mahavishnu Orchestra—CBS PC 33907
 Tom Rush—The Best Of Tom Rush—CBS PC 33907
 Phoebe Snow—CBS PC 33952
 Stu Daye—CBS PC 33936
 Barbara Streisand—Classical Barbara—CBS M 33452
 Kokomo—CBS
 Boz Scaggs—CBS PC 33920
 Telly Savalas—Who Loves Ya' Baby—MCA 2160
 K.G.B. —MCA 2166
 American Graffiti Vol. III—MCA 2 8008
 Stephen Sinclair—MCA 2171
 Lynyrd Skynyrd—MCA 2170
 Roger Williams—MCA 2175
 Eno—Another Green World—Island ILPS 9351
 Richard & Linda Thompson—Pour Down Like Silver—
 Island ILPS 9348
 Bob Marley & The Wailers—Island
 John Cale—Island
 Michael Polnareff—Atlantic
 Black Oak Arkansas—Atlantic
 Finch—Atlantic
 Pretty Things—Atlantic
 Rolling Stones—Atlantic
 Detective—Swan Song
 Trammps—Atlantic

Mahoney's Last Stand—Soundtrack—Atlantic
 Consumer Rapport—Atlantic
 Bad Company—Atlantic
 King Crimson—Best Of King Crimson—Atlantic
 Emerson, Lake & Palmer—Atlantic
 Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young—Live—Atlantic
 Nanette Workman—Atlantic
 Wishbone Ash—Atlantic
 Margie Joseph—Atlantic
 Bill Wyman—Atlantic
 Hidden Strength—United Artists UALA 555
 Kingfish—United Artists RXLA 564
 Brass Construction—United Artists UALA 545
 Dave Courtney—Dave Courtney's First Day—United Artists UALA 553
 Jimmy Witherspoon—Spoonful—United Artists BNLA 534
 Jose Feliciano—RCA APLI 1298
 David Cassidy—RCA APLI 1209
 Roger Whittaker—20th Anniversary Of Rock & Roll—RCA APLI 1247
 Pure Prairie League—If The Shoe Fits Wear It—RCA APLI 1247
 National Lampoon—Goodbye Pop—Epic PE 33956
 Dave Loggins—Country Suite—Epic PE 33946
 Jeff Beck—Epic PE 33849
 Poco—Epic
 Starcastle—Epic PE 33914
 Argent—Anthology—Epic
 Michael Stanley Band—Lady's Choice—Epic PE 33917
 Johnny Winter—Epic PZ 33944
 Richard Kerr—Epic PE 33850
 Van Morrison—Warner Brothers BS 2854
 Ashford & Simpson—Warner Brothers BS 2858
 Kate & Anna McGarrigle—Warner Brothers BS 2862
 Best Of Faces—Snakes & Ladders—Warner Brothers BS 2897
 B.W. Stevenson—We Be Sailin'—Warner Brothers BS 2901
 Jeremiah Johnson—Soundtrack—Warner Brothers BS 2902
 George Calderone—City Music—Warner Brothers BS 2904
 Rod McKuen—The Essential Rod McKuen—Warner Brothers 3BS 2906
 Michael Franks—The Art Of Tea—Reprise MS 2230
 Phil Cody—Reprise MS 2232
 Bob Carpenter—Silent Passage—Reprise MS 2233
 Maria Muldair—Reprise MS 2235
 Peter Pringle—Reprise MS 2243
 Dianne Brooks—Backstairs Of My Life—Reprise MS 2244
 Jethro Tull—The Best Of Jethro Tull M.U.—Chrysalis CHR 1078
 Mandalaband—Chrysalis CHR 1095
 Elvin Bishop—Struttin' My Stuff—Capricorn CPO 165
 Doby Gray—New Ray Of Sunshine—Capricorn CPO 166
 Cy Coleman—The Party's On Me—RCA APLI 1252
 Lou Reed—Coney Island Baby—RCA APLI 0915
 Scorpions—Fly To The Rainbow—RCA APLI 4025
 David Bowie—Station To Station—RCA APLI 1327
 The Smoothies—Easy Does It—RCA AX2 5524
 Jefferson Airplane Family—The First Ten Years—Grunt CTL2 1255
 Tom Pacheco—Swallowed Up—RCA APLI 1254
 Kelly Garrett—RCA
 Elliott Murphy—RCA
 Brian Auger's Oblivion Express—Live—RCA CPL2 1230
 Annie McLoone—Fast Annie—RCA APLI 1362
 Jack Jones—RCA
 The Guess Who—RCA APLI 0260
 Rockin' Horse—Kickin'—RCA APLI 1304

JAZZ

Jennifer Warnes—Arista
 Herman Szobel—Arista
 Gloria Lynn—ABC
 John Handy—ABC
 Jimmy Ponder—ABC
 John Blair—CBS PC 33950
 Stan Getz—CBS PC 33703
 John Kirby—Boss Of The Bass—CBS CG 33557
 Miroslav Vitous—Magical Shepard—CBS PC 33921
 World Of Duke Ellington—CBS
 Maynard Ferguson—Primal Scream—CBS PC 33953
 George Benson—Benson Burner—CBS CG 33569
 Esther Phillips—Atlantic
 Rashaan Roland Kirk—Atlantic
 Eddie Harris—Atlantic
 Dave Brubeck—Atlantic
 Freddy Hubbard—Atlantic
 Lee Ritenour—Epic PE 33947
 Alice Coltrane—Reprise MS 2245
 Pat Martino—Reprise MS 2246
 George Benson—Reprise MS 2247
 Bootsie Williams—Reprise MS 2248
 David Fathead Newman—Reprise MS 2249
 Rashaan Roland Kirk—Reprise MS 2250
 Ed Townsend—Now—Curtom CU 5006
 Gil Evans—There Comes A Time—RCA APLI 1057
 Tommy Dorsey—Volume I—RCA AXM2 5521
 Nelson/Holmes/Manne—Summit Jam—RCA
 World's Greatest Jazz Band—In Concert—RCA BDLI 1371
 Teresa Brewer—In Concert—RCA BSLI 1377
 Woody Herman—King Cobra—Fantasy 9499
 One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest—Soundtrack—Fantasy 9500
 The Bill Evans' Trio—Fantasy 9501
 Cal Tjader—Amazones—Fantasy 9502

Charlie Rich—The World Of Charlie Rich—RCA APLI 1242
 Jim Reeves—RCA APLI 1224
 Charley Pride—(Religious)—RCA APLI 1359
 Elvis Presley—RCA APLI 1349
 Dotsy—Dotsy—RCA APLI 1358
 Ronnie Milsap—RCA
 Hank Snow—RCA
 Floyd Cramer—RCA
 Steve Young—RCA
 Country Boy & Country Girl—RCA
 Billy Walker—RCA
 Waylon Jennings—RCA
 Dottie West—RCA
 Waylon Jennings—Greatest Hits—RCA APLI 0480

SOUL

War—Soundtrack From The River Niger—United Artists
 Ohio Players—Mercury
 Percy Faith—Summer Place '76—CBS CG 33815
 Joe Simon—Spring
 James Brown—Polydor
 Ike & Tina Turner—United Artists
 Byron Lee & The Dragoners—Disco Reggae—Mercury
 Isaac Hayes—ABC
 Carl Carlton—ABC
 Third World—Island ILPS 9369
 Junior Walker—Motown
 Germaine Jackson—Motown M6 842S1
 Jerry Butler—Nice—Motown M6 850S1
 Stevie Wonder—Songs In The Key Of Life—Motown T340
 Major Harris—Jealousy—Atlantic SD 18160
 Dee-Dee Bridgewater—Atlantic
 Wing & A Prayer Pif & Drum Choir—Atlantic
 Isley Brothers—Epic PZ 33809
 Soul Children—Epic PE 33902
 Notations—Gemigo GM 5501
 Paul Butterfield—Put It In Your Ear—Bearsville BR 6960
 The Tymes—Tymes Up—RCA APLI 1072
 Shawne Jackson—RCA APLI 1320
 Faith, Hope & Charity—RCA
 Hues Corporation—RCA
 Chocolate Milk—RCA
 Nell Carter—RCA
 White Heat—RCA
 The Choice Four—RCA
 The Brothers—RCA
 Bill Harris—RCA
 Weldon Irvine—RCA
 The Shirelles—Let's Give Each Other Love—RCA APLI 0104
 Mother's Finest—RCA APLI 0373
 C. Franklin—From The Bottom Of My Heart—RCA APLI 0420
 Lola Falana—RCA APLI 1022
 Doris Duke—Woman—Scepter SPS 5124
 Southshore Commission—Wand WPS 6100
 Disco Gold Vol. III—Various Artists—Scepter SPS 5125
 Syl Johnson—Total Explosion—London
 Marvin Gaye—I Want You—Motown T6 342S1
 Kathe Green—Motown M6 856S1
 G.C. Cameron—Me & My Life—Motown M6 855S1
 Smokey Robinson—Motown T6 341S1

COUNTRY

Eddie Arnold—MGM
 Tompall—MGM
 Hank Williams Jr.—MGM
 Ed Bruce—United Artists
 Dell Reeves—United Artists
 Ray Price—Say I Do—ABC
 David Allen Coe—Long Haired Red Neck—CBS KC 33916
 Connie Smith—Song We Fell In Love To—CBS KC 33918
 Johnny Taylor—CBS PC 33951
 Tanya Tucker—MCA 2167
 Cal Smith—MCA 2172
 Bill Monroe—MCA 2173
 Jerry Jordan—MCA 2174
 Dwight Twilley Band—MCA
 Loretta Lynn—MCA
 Steve Gibbons—MCA
 Johnny Paycheck—Epic
 Bob Luman—Epic
 David Houston—Epic
 Jody Miller—Epic
 Charlie Rich—Epic
 Emmylou Harris—Reprise MS 2235
 Gary Stewart—RCA APLI 1225

BANJOMAN

Rediscovering American Music

by Lynn Kellermann

I went to a party the other night in Washington, D.C., and the gang was all there. Champagne brimmed over a lavishly laid out table of luscious food in the green and white striped heated tent set up across from the Kennedy Center in celebration of the film debut of *Banjoman* and its star, Mr. Earl Scruggs, reeked of prestige.

There were Senators Howard Baker and William Brock from Tennessee, who sponsored the event; Senator Gary Hart of Colorado and his wife; President Ford's son, Jack, surrounded protectively by Secret Service men; Ethel Kennedy; and a host of other politicos.

Members of Bob Dylan's famous Rolling Thunder Revue tour, many of whom appeared in the film, were scheduled to be there, but to no avail. Familiar musical faces did pop up among the star-studded cast of celebrities; among them, Tracey Nelson of Mother Earth and David Bromberg, both featured in *Banjoman*.

The film, produced by two young ex-army buddies, Michael Varhol and Richard Abramson, documented a concert at Kansas State University in 1972. The performers included the Earl Scruggs Revue, Joan Baez, David Bromberg, The Byrds, Tracy Nelson, The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band and Doc and Merle Watson. Aside from recording a stunning concert, the producers attempted to leave the audience with a sense of American musical history, the cohesion of traditional and contemporary forms but they failed abysmally.

The party, however was the real movie, with a theme quite similar to *Banjoman*; a gathering of people deeply rooted in American tradition juxtaposed with all who were current, progressive, modern.

Amid all the glitter and humorously misplaced ostentation sat the unassuming, down-home banjoman himself, his arm and leg in a cast, sitting hunched over in a wheel chair, the remnants of an accident he'd suffered a month before while traveling in his private jet. Scruggs looked fatigued, 20 years beyond his age of 00 but the softness of his expressive face still lingered as he sat, surrounded by blinding camera lights and enthusiastic reporters. It was a strange dichotomy.

Outcast in Nashville

Just hours before I'd had the pleasure of speaking with Scruggs in his Watergate hotel suite. It seemed ironic that he should be staying there; a man who back in 1968 denounced Nixon for his foreign policy; participating conscientiously in anti-war rallies, an action which not only cost him his partnership with Lester Flatt, but made him a pariah in his beloved Nashville, forcing him to move down new musical paths alone.

Greeting me at the door to the Scruggs suite was Sue Barton, a woman I recognized immediately from the film *Nashville*. In it, she played herself, a public relations woman, who had the unenviable task of escorting Elliot Gould and Julie Christie around town, introducing them graciously to the Nashville celebrities, none of whom had the faintest idea where these Eastern freaks came from.

When I asked her about the film she shook her head back and forth nervously. "Shhhh . . .", she answered whispering nervously. "These are real country people, I don't think they'd appreciate knowing that. They didn't think much of the film."

So I kept my mouth shut. "Wow, she's really doing this schtick," I thought. "What a gas."

One's immediate impression of Scruggs is of disappointment. Yet beyond the scruffy, meek surface is a brilliant artist and innovator. Many speculate that bluegrass music, a form that gave birth to all other American genres of music, would never had been nationally popularized had it not been for Earl. Growing up in North Carolina, Earl learned to pick at the age of 4. After working at Nashville's WSM and with Bill Monroe's "Blue Grass Boys", he formed a partnership that lasted for 20 years with Lester Flatt. While playing with Monroe, Scruggs brought the banjo, America's only truly native instrument, out in the open once more. The onslaught of electrical instrumentation in the 40's put the banjo to rest for quite awhile.

Scruggs resurrected the instrument with a technique he learned unconsciously as a child.

It was the 3-finger picking style, an idea which rejuvenated the banjo, taking it out of the hum-drum rhythm section by emphasizing the melody line, and giving inspiration to hundreds of guitar pickers, yearning for new forms of expression. Just as important, the style was versatile enough to extend beyond bluegrass into the up and coming areas of blues, rock and folk music.

Scruggs kept the banjo and what it symbolized alive for three decades. From Monroe to Flatt to his present involvement with his three sons who make up the Scruggs Revue, Earl has never stagnated musically. In his own way he is now passing the torch to his sons, implementing new forms into the Revue, electrifying it, intensifying rhythms yet maintaining its authenticity with the provincial tones of the banjo.

Unlike many musical trends that fade into oblivion when days of glory pass, bluegrass roots are still prevalent. Although they've changed complexion, they have only evolved into something more all-encompassing. Bluegrass has simply imbedded itself in the styles of music that has unfolded since. Unlike rock, a borrowed mode which cathartically exploded over us and died, still an orphan, bluegrass music is both the father and the child to what's happening today.

David Bromberg remembers: "When I first came to Greenwich Village in the 60's, all the biggies were doing the coffee house circuit. Bob Dylan, Tom Paxton, Joan Baez. For every guitarist there were 10 banjos. It was a most challenging instrument to tackle. I'd sit at home, and try to emulate Scruggs on my guitar. It came to me after awhile and I realized I'd discovered a new outlet."

Joan Baez remembers the first time she met Scruggs at the Newport Folk Festival. "Earl was very shy, and I guess I was too. The only tune we knew how to play together was *Wildwood Flower*. So he picked and I sang, and when we finished we had nothing to say. So we kept doing the tune over and over, at least 9 times!"

In the film, Roger McGuinn, leader of the defunct Byrds, recalls an occasion he had jamming with Scruggs and the boys in the Appalachian hills. "I asked him, what's it like, Earl, to know you've had such an influence on young pickers?" "I wasn't really aware of that," he answered.

The early 60's were days of self-identity for many Americans. The non-descript 50's were over, the doo-wop music faded. It was a decade jammed between 2 wars, two tremendous transformations. People were provoked once more with the fervor of Vietnam and civil rights, reaching back into time for some sense of heritage and unity.

The roots of American music offered something. Dylan's engrossing *Let Me Die In My Footsteps* exemplified the confusion of the time, the love for country yet the protestations against the cold war politics that threatened a bomb shelter mentality. "Go out in your country where the land meets the sun. See the craters and the canyons where the waterfalls run. Nevada, New Mexico, Arizona, Idaho. Let every state in this union seep down deep in your soul. And you'll die in your footsteps before you go down under the ground."

With the British rock invasion in the mid 60's the old-time music was somewhat forfeited for a more electric sound. Homegrown patriotism dead, the fight for cause was translated into a youth oriented socio-spiritual revolution enhanced by the hardness of rock & roll.

But country music was not totally lost. Many followed the rock cult, immersing themselves in the Woodstockian fashion of Jefferson Airplane and The Stones. Yet others adhered to the call hesitantly, still grabbing back into pockets of the past, re-creating traditional forms with rock, as it burst upon our shores from across the ocean: The Byrds, The Dirt Band, Nelson and Mother Earth, Bromberg. They all brought an immensely new feeling to American music, but simultaneously captured what was old and irreplaceable. The music Scruggs matured with in the South became borderless, ingrained in the hands and voices of musicians without region, under the guise of "country rock."

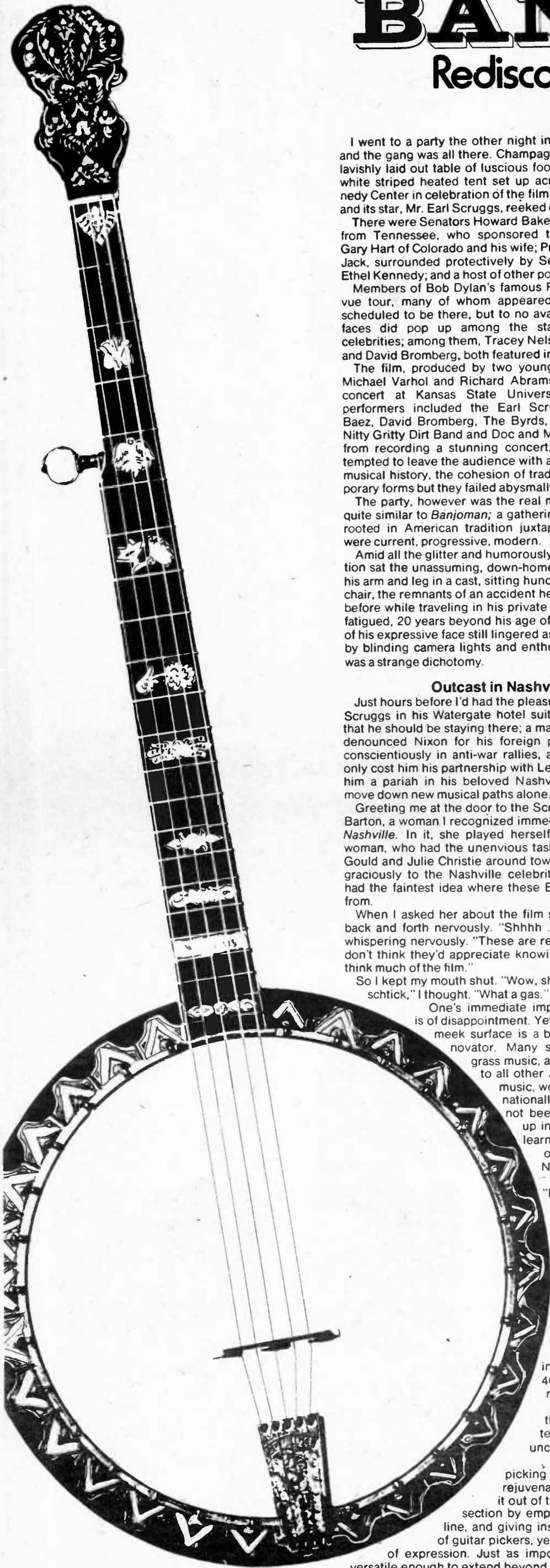
In the 70's again, a musical digression has taken place. Drowned out and over-dosed by rock, other forms have been sought and found in black music. Yet once more the form is only a coloration of the past. Black music after all, began during the Civil War when slaves on American plantations played banjo and sang to alleviate the drudgery of manual labor. Later, "blackfaced" entertainment by white men became popular in urban centers, emulations of black dialect, songs and dance. Evolving into the blues of the 1930's and 40's, the rudiments of electric and reed music gained prominence and added spice to the black ballad; Billie Holiday, Besse Smith, Cab Calloway. Now, 30 years later, it's been refound, never really lost in the gospel and spiritual voices of Aretha Franklin, Al Green, Tracy Nelson.

In a sense we've come full circle today in a quest for an everlasting musical definition. Listening to Dylan's ardent *Hurricane Carter* we're reminded of the fermented days of the 60's, the search for the American dream, revisited, and manifested in melodious and lyrical ballad.

And watching Scruggs at the end of the film, moving his fingers skillfully and spryly over the fragile body of the banjo on *Foggy Mountain Breakdown*, it's difficult not to jump up and clap in response to its rural innocence, and in observance of its incredible longevity.

Although *Banjoman* itself is deficient in many ways, it manages to project a certain evolutionary flavor. Opening with the rustic yet contemporary feeling of The Dirt Band energetically rolling through *The Battle Of New Orleans* and culminating with The Scruggs Revue, as the young sons let loose with a Muddy Watersish electrified blues progression, for a moment an entire expanse of perhaps 50 years materializes on stage, while the wiz. I's greatest banjoman, Earl Scruggs, stands back and watches it all unfold.

The saints of American music have been resuscitated; and now, even the politicians may be seeking an answer to their prayers.



COUNTRY ALBUMS



DOLLY PARTON

Dolly—(RCA APL 11211)

Hey, "Boom Boom" Parton has got 'em rocking and it sounds sure sweet. Start moving and clapping your hands to the pretty ballads like *We Used To, I'll Remember You As Mine, Only The Memory Remains and Hold Me*.



MARGO SMITH

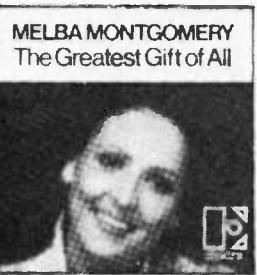
Margo Smith—(20th Century T490)

Margo sounds like a slightly older Marie Osmond. Her squeaky, adolescent nasal tone is a delight to listen to and Margo shakes some of the old jellyfat loose on *Tennessee Yodelers, Baby's Hurtin', Go To Your Room and Play*.

MELBA MONTGOMERY

The Greatest Gift Of All—(Elektra/Asylum CM6)

Melba grows on you like a melting ice cream cone on a very hot day. But instead of wiping her away, you eat her up. Melba has a magical singing voice and her persuasive talents steal the week with her renditions of *He Loved You Right Out Of My Mind, Aw Flitter (aw), He'll Be Worth Every Tear I've Shed, Buy this as a gift for someone else and keep it for yourself*.



BILLIE JO SPEARS

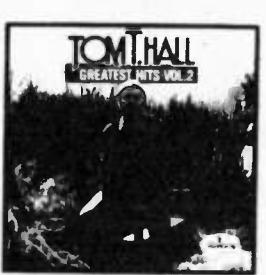
Billie Jo—(United Artists 508-G)

Produced by Larry Butler, Billie's gotten off the ground with a new lp that smokes as powerfully as a barbecue on a dusky night with lots of wine and just as tantalizingly. Big fat rinky-dink piano and polished steel guitar playing on her new single *Silver Wings* and *Golden Rings* and the other cuts. Relax to the soothing sounds of *Lizzie And The Rain Man* and *We Love Each Other*.

WILLIE NELSON

What Can You Do To Me Now—(RCA APL 11234)

One of the country music greats is allowed to shine on this oldie but goodie collection of previously released records. Co-produced by Chet Atkins and Felton Jarvis a few years ago, this record jumps out of the gate a good length ahead of all the other releases. Check out the wonderful sounds of *I Gotta Get Drunk, What Can You Do To Me Now and Permanently Lonely*.



TOM T. HALL

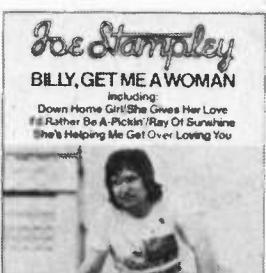
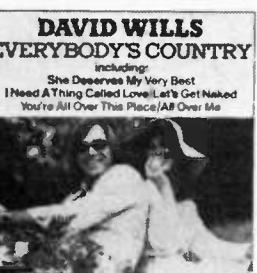
Greatest Hits Vol. II—(Mercury SRN 11044)

The storyteller compacts some of his many greatest hits into a neat little lp which reads like a delectable description of life's greater problems and joys. Listen up and enjoy the slicing of life on *Old Dogs—Children and Watermelon Wine, Country, Who's Gonna Feed Them Hogs*.

DAVID WILLS

Everybody's Country—(Epic KE 33548)

Charlie Rich has gotten out of the recording studio and into the engineering booth for this one. The Silver Fox and Sy Rosenberg own the production eartag on this Goliath of a record. David Wills is impregnable against buttresses of criticism with his solid talents quite evident on *Everybody's Country, I Need A Thing Called Love* (different from Graham Central Station's version) and the dusky *Let's Make Love*.



JOE STAMPLEY

Billy Get Me A Woman—(Epic KE 33546)

You see, Joe had this operation a while back and... ug, couldn't... uh you know what I'm saying. That's the reason why he's asking his friend Billy to do him a favor and plays laid back on *I'd Rather Be A Pickin', She's Helping Me Get Over You and Down Home Girl*.

SPANKY & OUR GANG

Change—(Epic PE 33580)

I like change too, but for the better, not the worse and this record unfortunately moves in the latter direction. The reunion idea usually sounds fine on paper but the trouble is translating the music onto paper without the music sounding forced and not because the group needs the money. The Sphinxes look relaxed compared to some of the frosty vocals on this record.

SPANKY & OUR GANG

Change

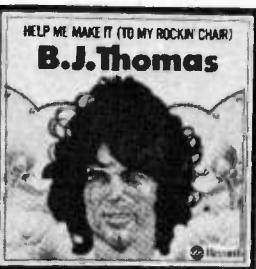
Includes: I Won't Brand You, L.A. Freeway, San Diego Serenade, National Stardom, Space Cowboys Forever, Standing Room Only



B.J. THOMAS

Help Me Make It (To My Rockin' Chair)—ABCDP-912

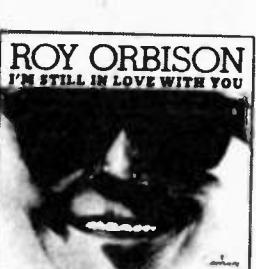
Whew, get a load of that title will ya. You could age ten years just reading the darned thing. B.J. knows how to make hits though and he's following up his number one country hit *Another Somebody Done Somebody Wrong Song* with the title tune which is good jokin' music. Listen up to *Ballyhoo Days* and *Lyin' Again*. You could do worse.



AMAZING RHYTHM ACES

Stacked Deck—(ABCD 913)

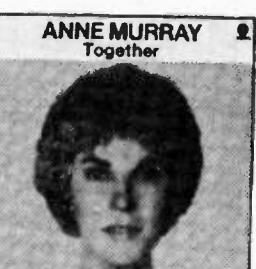
The group has a basic sound of rhythm and blues and country music and a helluva lead singer in Byrd Burton. Russell Smith helps out on vocals for one helluva winning combination. These guys are all aces and it shows on the rootin-tootin' good sounds of the hit *Third Rate Romance, Who Will The Next Fool Be, Why Can't I Be Satisfied?*



ROY ORBISON

I'm Still In Love With You—(Mercury SRM-1-1045)

With rockabilly making it back to the charts with Billy Swan et al, there's Roy, sulking in the background. The music lacks punch and the vocals sound weak and tired. There's no rock'n'roll to be seen and it's all so sad—a long ways since such epic singles as *Only The Lonely* and *Crying, Tsk-tsk*.



ANNE MURRAY

Together—(Capitol ST-11433)

I tell ya, this album's got it together. Finally produced by Tom Catalano, Anne has gotten some of the best songwriters tunes together and does a solid job. Choosing tunes from David Gates, Peter Allen, Mark James and Bobby Russell, Anne sings her tail off on *Sunday Sunrise, Part Time Love and Player In The Band*.



NEW RIDERS OF THE PURPLE SAGE
Oh, What A Mighty Time—(Columbia PC 33688)

Country rock has been a good working hybrid on occasion but it took true genius to make it work. The NRPS are trying to destroy whatever vehicle they're trying to work within, this may be one of the worst albums of the year. Uninspired renditions of the country standards *Up Against The Wall, Redneck* and *I Heard You Been Laying' My Old Lady* with female backup vocalists leaves the listener limp and tired. Oh, What A Terrible Time.

MICHAEL MURPHY
Swans Against The Sun—(Epic PE 33851)

Middle of the road country-rock from the Cosmic Cownboy served with several of his cowguy friends—Charlie Daniels, John Denver, Willie Nelson, Steve Weisberg, James Guercio, John McKuen, Earl Palmer and others. Sounds impressive. Yeah it does, but not on record.

How To Go Shopping For A Stereo

by Robert Greene

We left you last month with the suggestion that you check with friends on their impressions of various audio dealers. Let's carry on from there.

If you've heard negative comments on any stores, obviously they get crossed off your list. You can now do some scouting around to draw your own conclusions about the remaining candidates. Of course, the general rules of sensible shopping apply to audio equipment as well as any other commodity. One tends, however, to be slightly intimidated when shopping for something of which one's knowledge is shaky; these articles are our attempt to help put you on slightly firmer ground.

In this discussion of shopping we're assuming that you're in an area with available stores. If not, and you have to shop by mail, the same basic principles apply, plus the usual caveats about mail order purchasing.

Most dealers offer discounts, sometimes quite sizeable, from list prices. This can be very attractive and economical, but be a little wary of the discount that seems too good. You could find yourself buying merchandise that dealer or manufacturer is having trouble unloading. Also, remember that the very large discount may not leave the dealer a large enough profit margin for him to provide good service.

Cosmetic Changes

On the other hand, if a very low price is clearly based on an item being discontinued, it could well be a good thing. Audio equipment doesn't usually undergo radical improvements in short periods of time, the process instead be-

ing evolutionary in nature. Even so, some makers bring out new models about the same way Detroit does, with 'improvements' being largely cosmetic, so a last year's model could prove an excellent buy.

As we indicated last month, not all salesmen are entirely motivated by your best interest. Most of them will really try to help you pick out the right equipment for your situation. However if you feel that you're getting a very hard sell in one particular direction, especially if it's away from units highly recommended by other sources, be cautious. This is a field that leads to strong personal prejudices that may or may not be valid and the salesman may be leading you honestly but incorrectly in what he considers the right direction. But you also may have run into one of the few dealers whose ethics aren't of the highest; as in all fields, there are those more concerned with the commercial than the quality aspects of your purchase.

You'll probably find equipment 'packages' being offered. Some of these are well planned and a good buy, but not always. The package price may be low because one component isn't up to the others in quality. A system is no better than its poorest component, so check out the actual list prices of all the pieces.

In looking at pricing you'll notice that a given level of equipment from one maker will cost about the same as that from the others. As a general rule, the pricing in this field is competitive and constitutes a fairly good guide to what you're getting. A \$250 amplifier from one company, for example, will not be

wildly different from similarly priced units of other brands.

You Can Raise Hell

If there should be a small dealer right in your neighborhood, consider doing business with him. The little store might not have the demonstration facilities or the selection of the bigger place but may be more anxious to please you and get your return business. The small neighborhood place relies on local trade and word-of-mouth advertising whereas the bigger 'downtown' dealer may not need to.

If the small dealer doesn't stock a particular item he can probably get it for you. He'll probably have to charge you more than the big discount outfit but you could find that money well invested. If you live right nearby, the small dealer knows you'll dash in and raise hell if there's anything wrong—and that you'll tell your neighbors. Of course not all small dealers will think this way but it's worth looking into. If there is such a place nearby, try talking with them; you should be able to get a line on their attitude rather quickly.

Let's get back to the equipment itself and the assignment for listening we gave you last month. Assuming you've been able to carry it out, while you've been listening to systems, you've been hearing loudspeakers. Were this article a 'whodunit' that sentence would be the big clue. In this case, however, it wasn't the butler who done it, it was the speakers. This, then, leads to the primary step in selecting a system: choose the speakers first.

We hope that the seeds we tried to plant last month about speaker selection have borne fruit; you've heard some audio systems and by now your ear, while not yet 'golden' is somewhat better educated than it was, and you have a fair idea of the kind of speakers you want. The next step, then, is what you need to drive them. The power amplifier is the device that produces electrical signals powerful enough to get the speakers pumping air (most unglamorous sounding, but that's really all they do). But that's only an intermediate step; the power amp needs a moderately high level signal to drive it—the signal from the record player won't make it. Also, it's a kind of dim witted creature limited to making little signals into big ones—it doesn't incorporate the controls needed to tailor those signals. Back one more step, then, to the *preamplifier*. This is the unit with the knobs and switches—the brains of the mob, so to speak. Put the power amp and preamp together and you have the so called 'integrated' amplifier. One more piece of electronics and you can put radio signals into the amplifier—this piece is the *tuner*; it takes the broadcast signals, chooses among them, and transforms them into something acceptable to the amplifier.

Now all that sounds like a lot, but in fact it's really nothing more than what's inside every tiny pocket radio—the difference is in refinement of performance. It's that refinement that makes the difference between high and no fidelity and between a large or small price tag. If you can handle the cost you can go out and buy those three separate chassis, as do many audiophiles. But it's not necessary. If you want, you can get them all combined on one relatively inexpensive unit—the receiver. This item was originally designed for the person needing the most economical, simple way of producing good sound. The receiver was evolved, along with solid state circuitry (transistors, etc.), into a high quality sophisticated device, and it doesn't cost nearly as much as the three separate pieces.

To pick out the right one you again start with the amplifier section. Every speaker requires a certain power level to drive it properly, a figure usually indicated by the manufacturer. It's a question, then, of matching that requirement with the receiver's power output. The more powerful units cost more, and vice-versa. If you can get by with low power (and remember this is the reason for trying to love the more efficient speaker) there are quite a number available in the \$200-300 range.

Another idea that may appeal to your pocketbook is not to buy the speakers now but to get a set of stereo headphones instead. You still have to know what speakers you'll want ultimately to guide you in choosing the receiver. Once you have the receiver, though, you can just plug in the headphones and you're in business—and they sound good. Even if you do buy speakers now you may want the phones, say for late night listening, or if you want to crank up the volume and your neighbors don't appreciate the free concert.

In choosing headphones remember they must fit, so nobody can tell you which is just right for you—only you can judge what's comfortable for you so be sure to try on a number of different units. If the phones are even a little uncomfortable at first, they'll probably be impossible after a few hours. Also, they have to couple with your own ears so be sure to pick the ones that comfortably deliver optimum sound to each ear.

As we said at the outset, our intent here hasn't been to turn you into an instant expert but to make your first trip to an audio store a little less formidable. We've only skimmed the surface, and you can help yourself further by reading one of the books available that provide clarification without being too technical. And reading equipment reviews will help give you a feel as to what's available for how much. You don't have to bother with the charts and figures; a comment is usually included in perfectly clear language.

And don't set out with the idea that you must have the absolute BEST. Even within a given price category you'll find differing ideas on what 'best' is, and end up going in circles. What you have to determine is what constitutes best for you; once you do that you should have happy listening for years to come. □



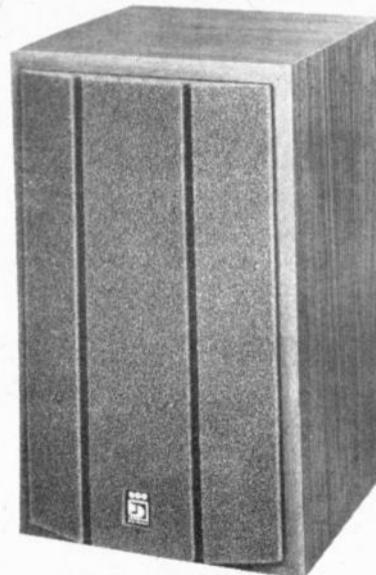
amplifications



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