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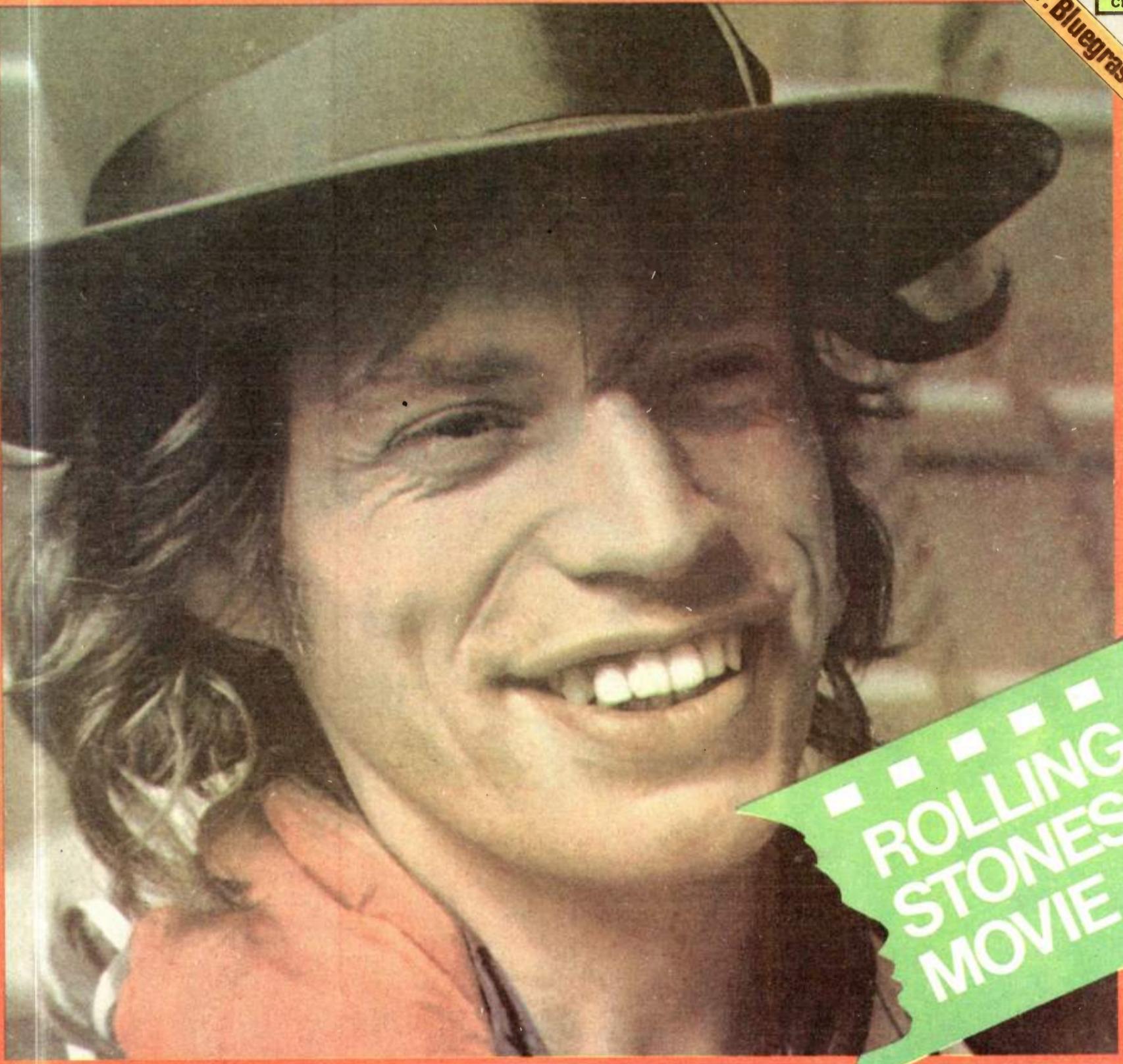
LOCAL SCENES: ROCK'S NEXT TREND

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Ladies & Gentlemen; Mick's 4th Film

RECORD MAGAZINE 8
May '74. Vol. 4

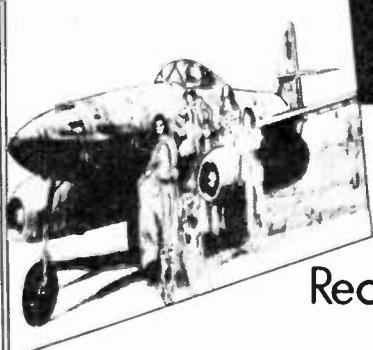
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THIS MONTH

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Rolling Stones have come for your dollars again. But if you think it's just another movie, you're wrong. *By Ron Ross* 10

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The Cover:

Mick Jagger and the Rolling Stones return to America this month, not in the flesh, but on the silver screen, accompanied by banks of speakers and special effects designed to make you forget you're sitting in a Bijou instead of a Coliseum. For the full story behind this new merchandising technique and a probing look at the Rolling Stones mentality as revealed in their films, turn to page 10 for Ron Ross' provocative cover story.

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PERFORMANCES

Ronnie Spector & The Ronettes
The Continental Baths
New York, N.Y.

By ALAN BETROCK

Ever since Ronnie Spector and the Ronettes folded up shop in the late sixties, the music world has been awaiting their return. But despite one shot efforts every couple of years on A&M and Apple, Ronnie never was free enough to go out on the road and bring her music to the public, granting her the opportunity to grow professionally step by step as time went by. Last year, after a long layoff, she went out on her own doing small clubs and various oldies gigs, highlighted by a huge ovation at Madison Square Gardens' Rock and Roll Revival Show. But Ronnie deserves better than that—most of the oldies groups are pale imitations of their hit records, and of themselves, and the audience often loudly rebels at anything new. Forty-year old overweight men in toupees, singing doo-wop is not what rock 'n' roll is all about....

Ronnie's current return to live dates and recording is marred by a lack of direction. Her career choices fall into three basic categories: (1): Pigeonholed as an oldies act appealing to the nostalgia buffs; (2): As a campy nightclub act catering to the more tasteful Vegas and TV variety shows; and (3): As a singer breaking new ground with the current record buyers, and in the Top 40 charts. Her show at the Continental Baths was a clear example of the meandering combination she is currently pursuing.

The management of The Baths adores the Spector sound, and their patrons are devotees of the kind of camp which hurled Bette Midler to the top. Perhaps that's what Ronnie has in mind, for why else choose the Baths for her NY press debut? Certainly she wasn't interested in reaching the new masses, for the \$10 a seat price tag drew only the invited press and Baths regulars. And the intro by Murray the K recalled only painfully out of date nostalgic remembrances of the old Brooklyn Fox days....

But directionless or not, it was Ronnie Spector in the flesh, and that was enough. Dressed in a sheer see-thru gown, she had trouble keeping her top half contained in its place—a bit stolen from one of Bette's old routines perhaps??? She was backed by two new Ronettes (Chip Fields and Denise Edwards) garbed in matching white dresses, and a three piece band who looked about as bored as could be. The group opened with the old Motown favorite "Get Ready," and Ronnie immediately took hold of the crowd. She was nervous, and her vocal phrasing and stage movement suffered, but as time went on things loosened up. "Baby I Love You" followed and the crowd warmed up perceptibly. "The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face" was pure Vegas, and drew a strong response. The group pulled it all together for "Best Part of Breaking Up," and by now Ronnie's nervousness was all gone. She was loose, dancing and slinking across stage, often wandering into the first few rows for admiring kisses. When she sang "Walking in the Rain," it was near perfect, blessed with strong feeling, powerful lead vocals, and full backup harmonies. One sometimes wished that the sound could be fuller and more overpowering—if Ronnie was pursuing a new audience, perhaps a mellotron would be employed. Certainly the bassist and guitarist did little but read their charts—there was



Whatever this lady is selling, there should be no shortage of buyers!

little sincerity or added help from their quarter. Only the drummer applied some creative power and punch.

Throughout the show, there was a *deja-vu* aspect to the performance. It was an act—a well rehearsed, slick set, which I found just a bit too planned. I suppose a scene such as this was enacted hundreds of times in various go-go bars throughout the USA in the late sixties and early seventies. In fact, if it wasn't for Ronnie's outstanding vocals and professional sex appeal, the whole thing could have been lifted from a Friday night bar show in Anytown, USA. Stevie Wonder's "Superstition" reinforced this aspect even more, as each backup Ronette came up front to do some solo dancing in a typically 60's go-go style, with a characteristically "funky" backing.

Ronnie's new Buddah single, "I Wish I Never Saw the Sunshine" drew immediate response, proving that Ronnie can break new ground and still retain her own distinctiveness. The song was polished and together, shining thru with a vitality that most of the others really lacked. "Be My Baby" had the audience on its feet from the outset, and powerful

drumming offered strong incentive to the girls' bump 'n' grind routine. By now it was obvious to all that this was Ronnie Spector's night. "My first love has always been performing and entertaining," she told me before the show, and that charismatic love touched everyone there that night.

"This is the way I really feel about life," declared Ronnie as she closed the set with "Love Train," complete with audience participation onstage for the choruses. Then they were gone, but the audience howled for more. The "act" wasn't prepared with anything more, so they did "Be My Baby" again to riotous cheers.

Ronnie Spector is at the most important crossroads of her illustrious career. It would be a blessing if she could get back into the charts and establish herself as a viable entity. Certainly her voice and stage presence are as outstanding as ever, and her success could do much to give the rest of our female singers a well needed kick in the pants. It's gonna be a hard climb, especially without the benefit of Phil's production or connections, but with some sincere encouragement and strong guidance, she may well be on top again soon.

Joni Mitchell
Ellis Auditorium
Memphis, Tennessee

By STEVE RHEA

Joni Mitchell has finally accepted stardom and all the craziness that goes with it. During her Memphis appearance she still revealed her female submissiveness on the songs that required it, but she also displayed the more aggressive side that has recently emerged in her music.

The first set was uneven and inferior to the music that came later. Looking tan in her green outfit and floppy hat, she quickly ran through "This Flight Tonight" and "You Turn Me On I'm A Radio." She loosened up and put some feeling into "Free Man In Paris," "Same Situation" and "Just Like This Train." But then, abandoning her guitar, she led the band in an upbeat perversion of "Rainy Night House" and a funky "Woodstock." Her aggressive treatment of these old songs just didn't make it; she stood in front of the microphone like a Holiday Inn lounge singer, making nervous attempts at hand gestures. Through the entire set she had not said a word to the audience.

After a 10-minute break Ms. Mitchell returned by herself and treated us to one of the most beautiful performances I have ever seen. She was open and easy with the audience, and they reacted with adoration.

Joni improvised and giggled some on "Big Yellow Taxi" and then spoke to the crowd for the first time, discussing our perceptions of God, and how they affect relationships with others. She could have talked about her laundry and it would have worked. Her sensitivity and personal communication are why people love her, and for the first time all evening she showed that side of herself.

After "People's Parties" it was obvious that she needed no support from any band. She was funny. She was beautiful. By this time she had set aside her hat, and her gold hair was sparkling, almost like a Roman candle.

After a special request from a girl in the audience, Joni turned to her dulcimer and performed "A Case Of You," followed by a stunning version of "All I Want."

Back on guitar, she did "For The Roses" which, she explained, was inspired by a talented friend who had decided not to try to make it as a performer—to race for the roses.

Joni accompanied herself on piano for "Blue," alone and bathed in a blue spotlight. Then Joni picked up her guitar, the L.A. Express moved in behind her, and they began the third portion of the concert, performing material from her new album, *Court and Spark*.

Here's where Joni's aggressiveness worked. "Troubled Child," "Help Me," "Car On A Hill" and "Down To You" were energetic and enjoyable, and the audience was ready for it. "Both Sides Now" was a pleasant surprise, done more in Judy Collins' fashion than the original Mitchell.

All lights went red for "Raised On Robbery," and the volume and energy hit a peak. It seemed a little out of place to be rocking so hard after keeping the lid on all night, but it was fun.

Joni returned for the encore with "The Last Time I Saw Richard," which was perhaps an attempted explanation to fans who might be puzzled by all this rock and roll from such a sensitive hand. Further explanation was provided with her second encore, the old Annie Ross jazz number, "Twisted." "Annie Ross was pretty crazy" she said. "We are all a little crazy. We are made that way by our schools, our churches, our parents."

Joni Mitchell no longer lets her craziness keep her down. There is a time for emotion and a time for assertiveness. And there is no escaping the inherent contradiction. Joni's a romantic, but she's also a strong woman looking out for herself.

Left End
House of Bud
Cleveland, Ohio

By ANASTASIA PANTSOS

If yer gonna be outrageous, outrage us! Emerging from Youngstown, Ohio in the wake of such slogans as "We hate people so much they deserve to hear us" and "The kickass punks are back; leave your weak stomachs at home," Left End arrived upon the Cleveland bar scene and left me disappointed.

I caught the group at the House of Bud one Saturday night and my complaints about the group's relative blandness were met by manager Steve Friedman with "people expect you to be disgusting all the time when you have a reputation like we do, and some nights you just don't feel like it."

Well, kid, this is show biz, and one of the rules of show biz is, you do it whether you feel like it or not. And it's not enough, if you're advertising yourselves as the most obnoxious band in town, that singer Dennis Sesonsky, cutely referred to as "Dennis T. Menass" for stage purposes, struts on in silver sequined tights and spends most of the set lunging around with his hand down the front of his pants.

The rest of the band are straight men for Dennis, much as the Stooges are Iggy's. Dennis cops a couple of Iggy moves like climbing up his guitarist's back, but you know he wouldn't dare hurt himself! "Gimme Danger" is NOT his song. Instead he's "Spoiled Rotten," which brings to mind only a middle-class adolescent.

Besides some of Iggy's less threatening moves, Left End borrows some Alice Cooper tricks like throwing money to the crowd (Manager Friedman protests, all innocence, "We've got a complete scrapbook on Alice Cooper and I don't remember them doing anything like that.") and those hoarse, frantic raps of Black Oak Arkansas's Jim Dandy though Dennis's favourite topic is drunkenness, not horniness.

After an hour's worth of prancing, Dennis left the stage and reentered dressed as a devil, in red tights, leotard and satin cap with horns, a pitchfork stuck through his crotch. Finally, he climaxed the set-long tug-of-war he'd been having with a rope leaded offstage by dragging on a man dressed in a gorilla suit who pretended to beat him up and then hurled a pie in his face. Dennis, enraged, "beat up" the gorilla. End of show. The audience applauded politely and went home.

Left End's album, *Spoiled Rotten* on Polydor, will be out shortly, putting them in direct competition with every other band in the world and not just the Cleveland bar babies. It'll be interesting to see if they can make it big with their blend of waning trends: glitter, punk-rock, violence and heavy metal music. This band doesn't seem to know what to be. They simply try out everything that's been a moneymaker for someone, within the bounds of hard rock. "Ya gotta have a gimmick" is their theme (or five or six gimmicks) and they come up with nonsensical non sequiturs like being punks in silver sequined trousers or delivering blatantly theatrical Alice Cooper style assaults with the earthy Jim Dandy approach. Left End may look a bit outrageous to some people here, but what will they look like in New York City?

"Young Republicans For Nixon Meet The Mad Scientist"

The Rocky Horror Show
The Roxy Theatre
Los Angeles

By SUSANELLA ROGERS

God knows the Roxy Theatre needed something to keep it from drowning in a sweaty quagmire of choreographed soul groups, and salvation has arrived in the form of a totally warped exercise in transvestite-rock raunch 'n' roll.

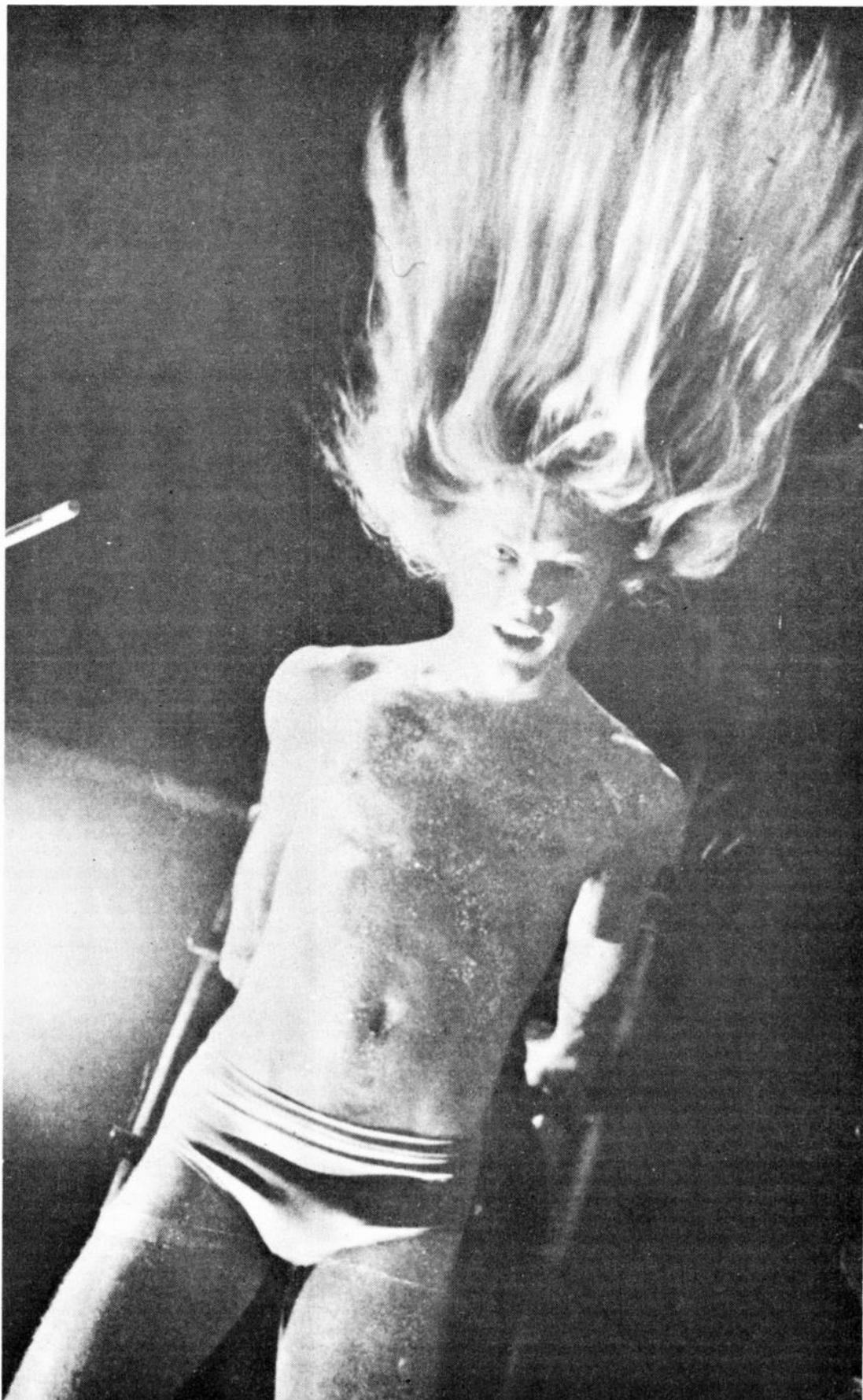
Based on the simple and moldy premise of "Young Republicans for Nixon meet the mad scientist," *The Rocky Horror Show* satirizes old Hollywood horror films, the Bill Haley era of 50s rock 'n' roll, and everybody's sexual mores. The play provides sufficient perversion and finely-honed sarcasm to offend almost everyone, the ennui-producing lapses mercifully sandwiched between energetic production numbers.

The Roxy Theatre has been redone for the run of the London-originated show, with the pseudo-nouveau decor transformed into an under-construction building (the significance of which I've yet to figure out) with decaying crud-encrusted corpses hanging about.

The pre-game warmup includes a bevy of plastic-masked twits in wraparound shades performing silent grotesqueries amid the goggle-eyed audience (many of whom didn't seem to quite know what was going on, but after having driven in all the way from Puente Hills and paying \$6.50 a seat were damn well going to enjoy every insane morsel), a gimmick that, unfortunately, does less than justice to the legitimate insanities to follow.

Taking place on the time-patented moonless, rainy night, the predictable plot involves the young innocent couple, Brad and Janet, little suspecting their imminent plunge to the depths of decadence, seeking help at a nearby castle after being stranded with a flat tire. They are greeted by Riff-Raff, Magenta and Columbia, the mad doctor's freak-show crew, and presented to "the Master," Dr. Frank N. Furter, who proclaims himself just a "sweet transvestite from transsexual Transylvania." Frank takes a fancy to his unwilling host guests, inviting them to join him "in the lab to see what's on the slab." From that point, the madness and the action escalate in a blur of high camp and kinky humor, culminating in a finale orgy.

As resident Miss Thing, star Tim Curry reaches new heights of tackiness playing mad scientist Frank N. Furter, the transsexual transvestite girl-boy-mechanic-toy hedonist. It is his bewitching and bizarre charisma that really gets this melodrama off the ground, and the stage is his from the moment he makes his all-but-show-stopping strutting entrance up the red-lit runway in the grand manner of Tallulah Bankhead playing Bette Davis, riveting the viewer's attention with every coquettish bump and grind. Despite the finer points of the production and the other players' more than adequate abilities, without Curry's outre manner and sixth sense for timing, *RHS* could very well be but one more horror story going splat in the night.



B. Miller and Abigail Haness, as Brad and Janet, are as suitably Ken-and-Barbie-doll colorless as Riff-Raff (played by Bruce Scott), the crazed, wild-eyed Igor/Major Domo, is maniacally depraved. Jamie Donnelly as Magenta excels as the ghost of Elsa Lanchester, a leering electric-haired cadaverette in need of orthodontia, and Boni Enten as Columbia (the character after whom the *RHS* logo is modeled) is a scene stealer, the most charming

hundred-and-one-pounds-of-fun dyke wampyra horror-show harpy since Barbara Steele went down for the count. Kim Milford plays Rocky, the mad doctor's creation, with a wide-eyed athletic grace and all the above the expected quality, but there are so many word-plays and tag lines sex appeal of a Norman Rockwell Breck advert, in a role that many feel better fits the pizzazz of Iggy Pop; Graham Jarvis is the narrator, a tongue-in-cheek balding Greek chorus

of one with an intriguing off-balance flair.

The lyrics are certainly a cut that one would do well to see the show twice just to pick up on all of it. A six-piece band—guitar, bass, sax, drums, keyboards and organ—performs from up in the rafters somewhere, sounding like an over-amplified high-school prom band, which I assume was the intent, given the 50s Alan Freed Show-style of the music.

Overriding the hardly-shattering story line, the play is infused with such a wry sense of the ridiculous that it brings itself off by sheer force; creator Richard O'Brien (book, lyrics and music) and director Jim Sharman have painstakingly expanded on every lascivious detail of the production.

The costuming (designed by Sue Blane) is frankly outrageous, all members of the cast at one time or another fitted out in fishnet stockings, lacy garterbelts and frilly camisoles, a froth of the loon fashion brigade with showering clouds of sparkle poofing about like touches from Tinkerbell's wand.

For a town that has probably the world's highest per capita glitter/decadence ratio, Los Angeles has been extremely receptive to *The Rocky Horror Show*, the run of the play having already been extended.

Although detractors claim it has all the excitement of a Boy Scout jamboree compared to an Alice Cooper extravaganza, the *RHS* is bold and perversely entertaining, with a delightful variety of human and inhuman characters, tacky glitter costumes and deliciously explicit sexual perversions, in an erotic mélange of every cliché of the last forty years. What more could you ask?

Fairport Convention with Sandy Denny
Troubadour
Hollywood, CA.

By KEN BARNES

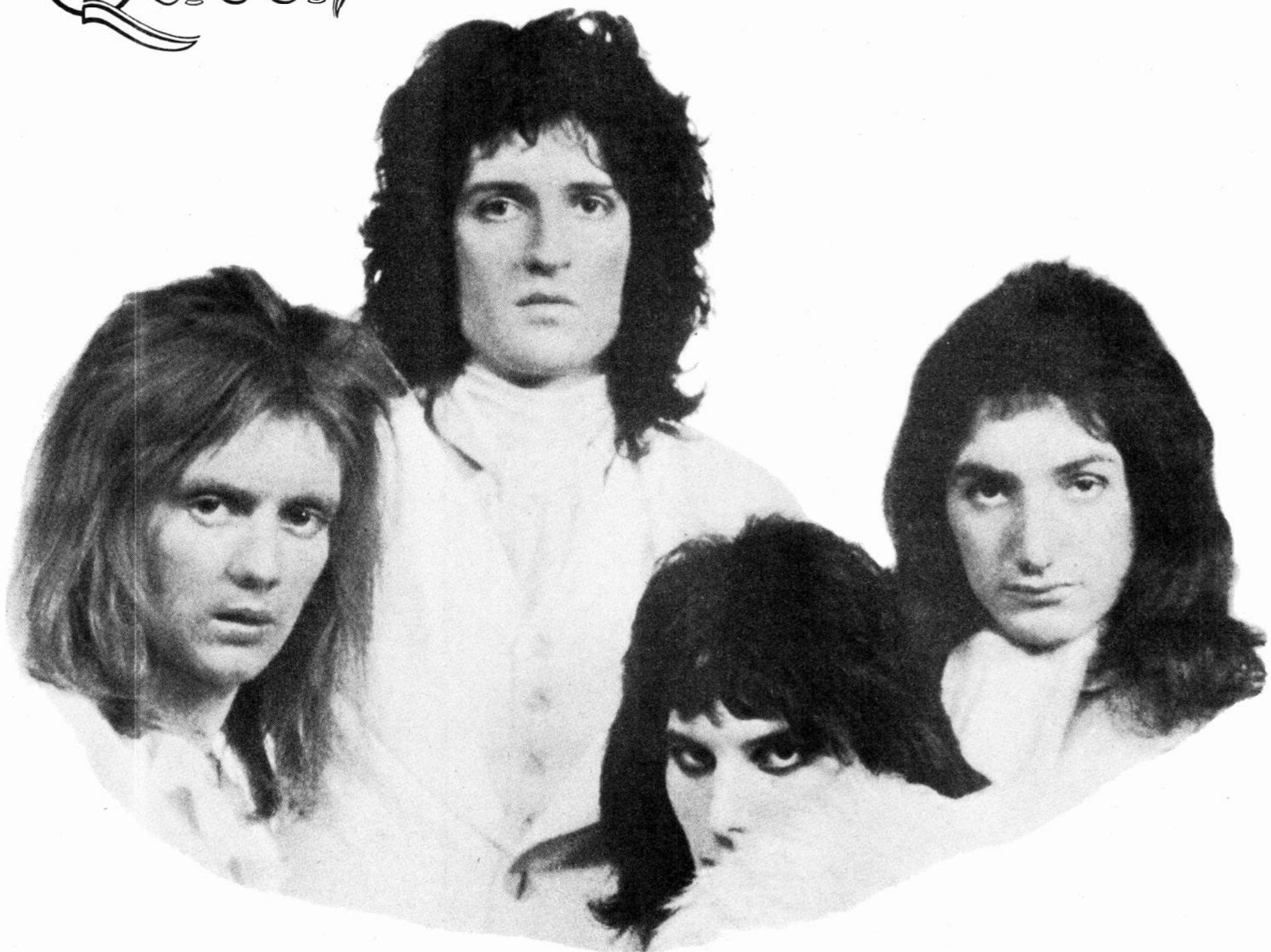
The reuniting of British Traditional folk-rock's premier vocalist, Sandy Denny, and the founding fathers of the genre, Fairport Convention, provokes a reaction among the faithful akin to a reunion of Dion with the Belmonts, Brian Wilson & the Beach Boys, Syd Barrett and the Pink Floyd, possibly even Dylan and the Band.

However, the alliance appeared disappointingly tentative in the first series of engagements together. Instead of a return to Fairport's glory days of 1969, when they were creating a rich, textured rock form from the vast British folk heritage and setting still unsurpassed standards, the gig seemed a combination of the latest all-male Fairport model and Sandy Denny with back-up band. Only "Matty Groves," a staple murder ballad demanded unflaggingly by every American audience for years, harked back to earlier days; and they delivered a suitably extended, reasonably entertaining version which nonetheless seemed to reflect some weariness with the material.

Some strong performances were in evidence, though, notably Sandy's "Knocking On Heaven's Door"; the Dylan tune seemed tailor-made for Fairport, and the vocals were truly elegant. During the group's four-song pre-Denny opening, an oddly-constructed "Polly On The Shore" allowed their superb guitarist, Jerry Donahue, to shine; his playing, as was predecessor Richard Thompson's, is a model of tasteful economy.

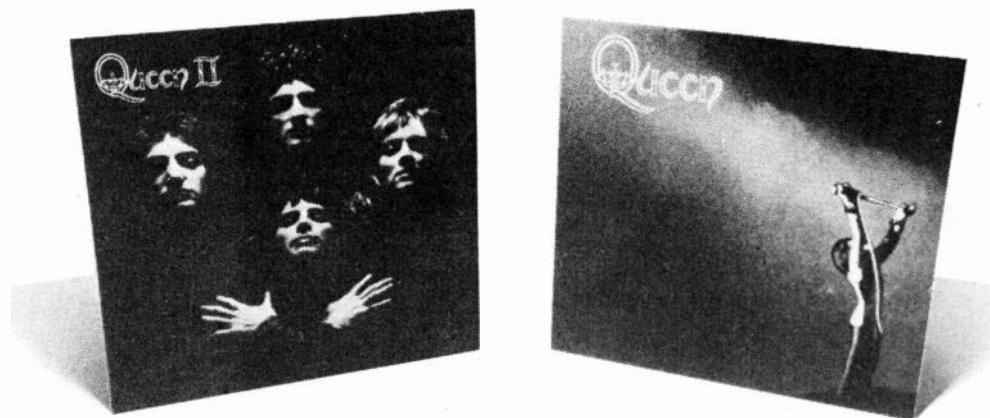
On the debit side, there was an endless rendition of "Days Of '49" (the gold-rush chestnut Dylan tackled on *Self-Portrait*) and rhythm guitarist Trevor Lucas' "Ballad Of Ned Kelly," a heroic saga sounding like a weaker version of the Bee Gees' "Marley Purt Drive." A couple of dance tunes had the audience reeling and rocking, but the overall impact was not as overwhelming as hoped. Given that the reunion was quite recent, however, hopes may be held out for substantially greater integration. At this stage the combination was entertaining, at least; more transcendent triumphs may come later.

Queen

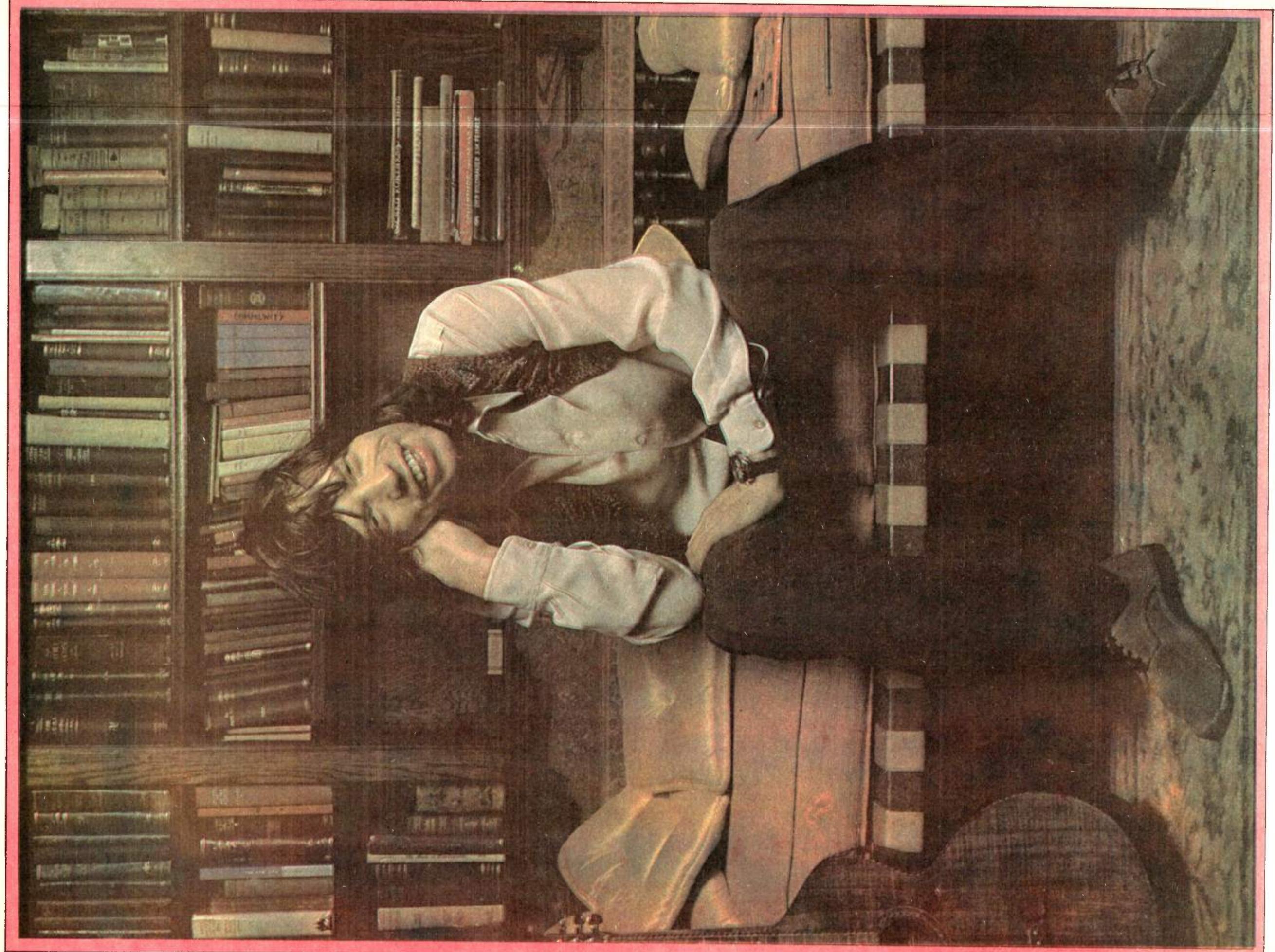


MAY '74: PHONOGRAPH RECORD

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Queen II
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MAY '74: PHONOGRAPH RECORD

"Are They Too Rich to Rock?"

"NO EATING CHICKEN-NO AUDIENCE DANCES-NO PHILOSOPHY-NO SOCIOLOGY!" we are forewarned in a press release. Just about all *Ladies and Gentlemen: The Rolling Stones* has in common, for better or worse, with previous Stones' films are the boys themselves, served straight up, live if you want it, in the form of a "film concert (rather than a concert film)." *Ladies and Gentlemen* is an entire 15 number 90 minute set from the '72 American Stones tour, synthesized from footage meticulously filmed at four shows in Ft. Worth and Houston, and recorded in stunning quadraphonic sound. "While most films of concerts cover an event," the producers tell us, "this film is the event."

The idea being that by recreating the "atmosphere at an actual Stones' concert with sight, sound, and excitement equivalent to front row center," a rock and roll experience unavailable to most of us for love or money when the band was actually on tour has become as freely purchasable as a "licks" logo belt buckle, with a mere two years separating the performance and the replay. It's like discovering a new heavenly body you knew was there through an electronic telescope: you're thrilled that the star you graphed exists after all, but it's composed of a rarified ether you can't analyze, and it's still light years away despite the detail with which you can now observe it. And everybody knows that a star can be dead by the time its light reaches earth.

Completely unpretentious yet almost too many times larger than life, *Ladies and Gentlemen* is at once the most ingenuous and the most cynical of Stones artifacts. The film itself is not at all self-conscious, adds or detracts no more from the Stones than a good telescope or microphone, but the cameras' proximity to the band and the resulting shift in scale lend *Ladies and Gentlemen* some important implications in terms of its marketing, its technological features, its audience, and the changing image and relevance of the Rolling Stones, a rock and roll bottom line if there ever was one. *Ladies and Gentlemen* demands that we take the Stones at face value and, as clean and uncomplicated as is the film's own point of view, it's the group's very value as Faces that's ultimately called into question.

Built in to the '72 tour were plans calling for the taping of some twenty concerts for a possible live album and/or film sound track. The double live album which Atlantic was set to distribute in December, 1972 was held up by legal hassles with Allen "I still got the publishing" Klein and has never been heard from since. Meanwhile, Robert Frank, a sometime film maker and the noted still photographer responsible for the *Exile* covers, was editing his back-stage on the road up the nose footage into a documentary that presumably blends rock and roll with the hard-on lifestyle along similar lines to the Maysles' definitely chicken-eating *Gimme Shelter*. Frank's dedication to the hand held cinema verite approach precluded his filming the in-concert segments, so Bob Freeze and his Butterfly Productions crew were called in to shoot the Ft. Worth/Houston performances that would eventually be edited into Frank's *Cocksucker Blues*.

Credited as both a producer and "director for sound production" for *Ladies and Gentlemen*, Freeze

emerges as the wonder boy of the entire project. Long associated with the Lennon-Onos' Joko film production company, Freeze is an accomplished record producer/engineer as well as an outstanding cinematographer and film editor. He and Butterfly helped Spector and Harrison with the Bangla Desh sound track and Yoko with *Approximately Infinite Universe*, while Freeze contributed sound production for a number of Lennon-Ono television appearances and feature films, among them the "One to One" ABC-TV special and the best Joko release, *Imagine*.

Apparently the fact that *Cocksucker Blues* was marked by more sex and less violence than *Gimme Shelter* was not in its favor, since the final version of Frank's film was so personal that only the Stones failed to be embarrassed by it, and releases had to be obtained from everyone captured by the camera eye. In spite of (or because of) Frank's artistic ambitions, release of his film was postponed indefinitely,

unique idea, you have to follow through and sell it yourself, because no one else will do it right."

Binzer managed to sell the new package to Seaboard American, a "construction materials" company looking to diversify, who so far have paid out nearly \$2,000,000 to purchase the distribution rights and set up the quadraphonic touring units, each of which entails roughly 8,000 pounds of equipment. In so doing, Binzer made a profit for the Stones up front, to be supplemented by a royalty from the "tour," and put himself in business as the actual distributor and marketing director for the film, with a percentage and credit as both director and co-producer. Interestingly, Dragon Aire, Binzer's outfit, is a subsidiary of Seaboard American, but his split comes out of the Stones' share. Robert Frank by all reports is exiled in Nova Scotia, where we may be certain he does not get the *Wall Street Journal*, *Fortune*, or *Creem*.

When Binzer, Freeze, and Freeze's associate Steve Gebhardt presented

back the four discrete magnetic tracks on the film, which are then fed into at least 2400 watts of Crown power, the purest and least distorted amplifier power there is, to produce a sound pressure level over 100 decibels loud. A Dragon Aire staffer then customizes the sound with a mixing board that has its own equalization to account for different sized venues with different kinds of wall surfaces. Dragon Aire is still experimenting with the basic quad p.a. system, which now includes a minimum of 38 wide range JBL speakers. As their personnel become better acquainted with both the sound track and the system, there is every reason to believe that *Ladies and Gentlemen*'s already brilliant sound will get even better.

Ladies and Gentlemen's use of quad is much more than a merchandising gimmick. Avoiding quad's capacity for psychedelic illusions a la Pink Floyd, the movie's sound track is the most convincing demonstration yet that quad, provided the equipment is extensive,

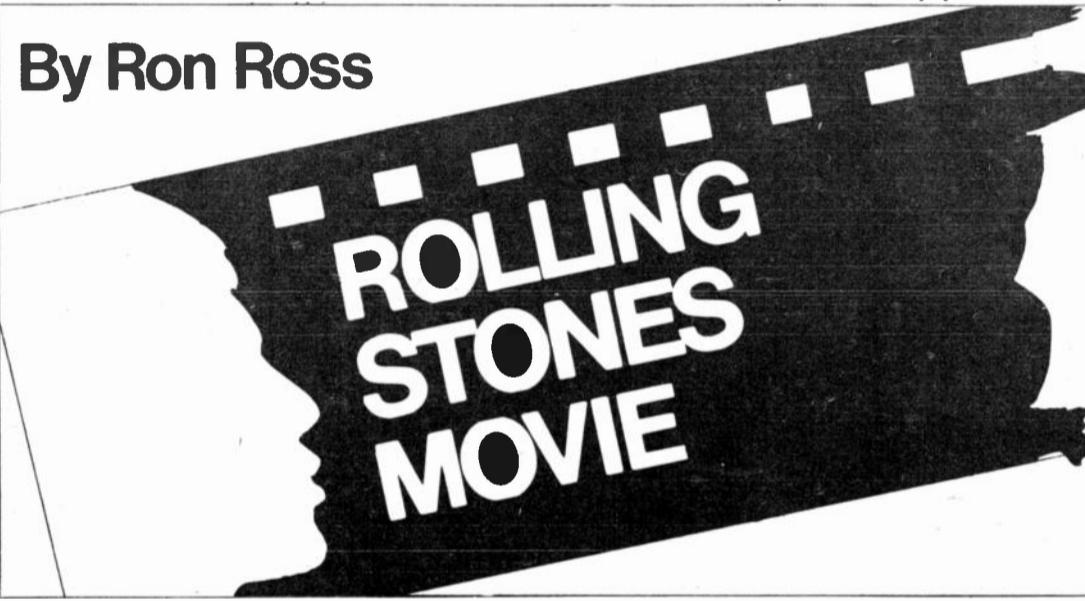
much what you'd hear at a concert but sharper, and the quad more than does its job of helping you to leave your sense of the movie theater behind. Then, in two or three moves, get closer to the screen. Each move will bring you nearer the Stones and farther from the crowd until you might just as well be sitting on Keith's amp, a sensational experience for those with the heart to hear him in less than peak form at times. No matter where you sit, you can't avoid the impression that Keith is in a different zone from you and everybody else, and that flash, more than the ear-splitting volume, is what does the brain damage.

Getting back to business, *Ladies and Gentlemen* premiered in New York at the 1000 seat Ziegfeld Theater on Easter Sunday hampered by less than auspicious pressures. Dragon Aire had been granted a municipal permit to stage in the mid-Manhattan street adjacent to the Ziegfeld what would undoubtedly have been the biggest, strangest youth happening in New York since the Easter Be-In of 1967, characterized by a level of uninhibited spending and elaborate staging more typical of ancient Rome than the Hog Farm. Instead of a thousand slaves dragging Caesar through his arch on a float in the shape of a Sphinx, Jagger was to lead a thirty car celebrity motorcade in a vehicle covered with rubber ducks, followed by a 64-foot long Chinese New Year dragon. A 40-foot high inflatable winged tongue was to crown the Ziegfeld, while in the street below reggae would alternate with New Orleans jazz performed on stages set with 25-foot high satin palm trees and huge dragon faces.

At the climax of this delightfully decadent extravaganza for the people, 2000 white doves were to take off from the Ziegfeld roof to join their sootier pigeon brethren all over the five boroughs. When the city realized that at least 97,000 more people would show up than the street could hold, a judge revoked Dragon Aire's permit and suggested that Central Park, the site of all earlier such fests, might serve as well. Dragon Aire, of course, like to shit, what with a whole army of fire eaters, sword swallowers, and Amazons on call and an estimated \$100,000 down. At the last minute, they decided not to do it at all if they couldn't do it in the road, so the Stones lost the closest thing to an r&b crossover they've ever had in New York. Unfortunately, no one has pictures of Jamaicans pulling the rubber ducks off Mick's car, and the confusion generated by Dragon Aire's abrupt cancellation led many fans to believe that the film itself would not be shown.

What actually did happen was that 400 press and guests along with 600 WNEW-FM listeners chosen to receive tickets from among the 50,000 who requested them were bombarded by innumerable styrofoam Stones frisbees and entertained by some leftover Cockette glitter queens who never found their way back to San Francisco. On a "normal" night, the frisbees and queens remained to give the Ziegfeld a schizophrenic aura somewhere between that of a topless bar in Times Square and a playground during recess. There was a pervasive tackiness, reinforced by recurring cuts to Mick's burlesque crotch, that made one long for some charming Parisian sailors to clash with the predominantly hippy blue denim passivity of the Stones' own

By Ron Ross



and an alternative means by which to recoup the Stones' own investment in shooting and recording themselves seemed to be the next order of business. Marshall Chess, president of Rolling Stones Records and general overseer of Stones' biz, knew Rollin Binzer (now in charge of Dragon Aire Ltd., the firm distributing *Ladies and Gentlemen*) from their Chicago days, when Marshall was heir to the Chess Records name and fame and Binzer was the head of his own multi-million dollar advertising/marketing concern. With a solid background in producing TV commercials for the likes of Wrigley Gum and merchandising such pop commodities as his Screaming Yellow Zonkers, Binzer was asked to rework Frank's extra back-stage footage and Freeze's in-concert material into a TV special that wouldn't ostensibly conflict with the feature film already completed.

Having authored a book called *The Information Environment* to be sold to housewives through supermarket chains, Binzer knew a good media scam when he saw one, and soon enough he originated the present *Ladies and Gentlemen* concept: exclude the Frank footage altogether, promote the newly edited Freeze footage as a "concert" in itself, and invest in the best possible sound reproduction system to compensate for all those insidey insights into image that were thus lost. Binzer is a man of expediency and no small business acumen who explains, "I realized a long time ago that when you come up with a

to the Stones the first four numbers that had been edited according to the concert concept, Keith Richard became enthused enough to spend four months with Freeze mixing the sound track in England while Mick was working on *Goat's Head Soup* elsewhere. Four different studios were used to achieve what is undeniably the best recorded, best reproduced live rock and roll sound you've ever heard. The original recording was engineered by Andy Johns, Glyn's brother, using the 16 track Record Plant West remote truck. Freeze and Keith reduced the 16 tracks to eight at Nova Studios so that two rear channels would contain ambient crowd noise, and Mick and Keith would each get his own track.

"We essentially approached the sound track mix the way we would a record," Freeze commented, "but the final sound is designed to be heard in quad in a concert or theater setting as opposed to at home in stereo. The music comes mainly out of the front p.a. units with the two rear units providing the sense of ambient noise and acoustic resonances lost in stereo. The instruments are all mixed fairly close toward the center, because not only did we have a hard time isolating instruments in the initial recording, but the kind of stereo localisation we're used to wouldn't sound natural under the circumstances."

Movie projectors, most of which were equipped for stereo after the wide-screen "surround sound" craze of the '50s, must be adapted to play

can almost completely eliminate our perception of reproduced music as anything less than totally realistic. The crowd noises pan from front to back to mix indistinguishably with the remarks of roadies working on the darkened "stage" and the rustlings of your neighbors in the theater. The musical sound is so loud and clear that the pre-recorded audience's applause will trigger your own before you remember where you are. Where you sit between the four p.a. units can radically affect your psychological attitude toward the concert. Sitting relatively near the screen, the close-ups of the Stones are so tight, it's like standing next to people you'd probably be a little nervous being that close to ordinarily. The effect is like being on the stage itself listening to the Stones through their own monitors, only imaginably more clearly than they can ever hear themselves. If you can be comfortable getting closer to the Stones than they ever intended anyone who came to see them to be, then *Ladies and Gentlemen* can be the vicarious kick of a lifetime. Your personal Stones mythology may be completely shattered, though, because *Ladies and Gentlemen* confronts one unescapably with what's right and wrong with their act.

An interesting experiment to try if the theater you go to isn't sold out is to sit nearer the rear units where the ambient noise is, so that you start out feeling more like a member of the audience. From this vantage point, the sound in front is pretty

"Where is that hunger for screams?"

silent majority.

Light on print advertising and heavy on radio spots, some of which were donated by WNEW-FM to announce their own giveaway, Dragon Aire's promotional campaign depended largely on word of mouth to sell out the performances. The theater owners were indifferent, having made a "four wall" flat rate deal with Dragon Aire, and only those few tickets that had not been sold through Ticketron were available at the Ziegfeld box office on the night of each performance for the same \$5.00 general admission price. Needless to say, this limited promotional attack excluded street trade and other miscellaneous fun seekers who, falling outside of the FM demographic, are unexposed to or disinterested by "concert news."

All in all, the film's engagement in New York gives only a small indication of its ultimate possibilities. Dragon Aire is anxious to run *Ladies and Gentlemen* in outdoor venues such as drive-ins where the physical setting would compete with or complement the movie's own instant environment in ways that are neutralized in a movie theater. More organic distractions than frisbees and hermaphrodites might well offset some of the disadvantages of having our psychic noses pressed against the Stones' pane for so relentless an hour and a half. By the same token, running *Ladies and Gentlemen* in a concert hall, as Dragon Aire will do at Boston's Music Hall, will give the movie a head start toward the realism it tries to hard to attain. While concerts themselves are more and more often stifled by venues these days, *Ladies and Gentlemen* has the potential to either transcend its location or contrast with it, and once

Dragon Aire is in the black, it can begin to book its film in some highly creative ways.

Despite their problems with the street fair in New York, Dragon Aire seems to have its business pretty together. Ken Greenblatt, vice president of WBCN-FM in Boston, has been working with various representatives of the company for over a month and anticipates only good things for the movie, which his own station will support with a drawing for 500 free pairs of tickets. "Print advertising in the daily and underground papers has stimulated great interest," Greenblatt told us, "and word of mouth has already, two days after our first announcement, brought us more ticket requests than we can handle. Dragon Aire has been completely business-like and straightforward in their dealings with WBCN-FM. From my own experience I'd guess that the difficulties Dragon Aire had in New York were exceptional and perhaps they were even taken advantage of to some extent." "Course we'd know that they'd been in good faith if there were any snaps of Binzer sitting smilingly in a car coated with tar and feathers.

Watching the Stones in *Ladies and Gentlemen* gave me the sinking feeling that they're just too rich to rock. They're tight enough, although Charlie, not Keith or Mick Taylor, is consistently the band's star performer. Jagger doesn't look all that old. In fact, he's in amazing physical condition, very manly boy in his bicep baring tank tops. What hurts is the way the Stones relate (or don't relate) to each other, not to mention their disconcerting distance from their audience, who we never see until the very end of the film

when it becomes painfully obvious that the group is under glaze a good five feet over the head of the nearest fan. They seem to be giving us no more than what they think we want, rather than giving us what they should know we need.

For all his teen angel charm, Mick Taylor looks utterly uninvolved and his playing seems to have less and less to do with the Stones' power drive. There is too much a contrast between Mick's athleticism and Keith's virtual paralysis that is only overcome when they join together on the choruses of "Happy" and "Dead Flowers," two high points in the show. Other times, Jagger seems to be running a treadmill, self-satisfied and not nearly fresh or flash enough. Being the hardest working man in show business is a dubious distinction. I'd much rather he bust a button on his trousers than wear one piece jump suits like a trendsetter at a Long Island lawn party. And the glitter eye make-up that looks corny on Marc Bolan strikes as false a note as Elvis' kung fu routines.

In 1969, the Stones had something to prove: that pop hysteria and nasty habits were still in style. Jagger taunted us 'til we were all so crazy we almost got him killed; even so, he thrived on the chaos like a phoenix rising from its own self-immolation. There were numbers in the act like "Little Queenie" that called for everything Keith had to give and he stole those numbers for himself, while the others cooked the little sweetheart to a crisp. "Come Live With Me" and "Sympathy For the Devil" were an invitation or a threat to every one of us and we rushed that shallow stage with an intensity that brought tears to the eyes of the kids that got close

enough. In *Ladies and Gentlemen* rockers like "Brown Sugar" and "Bitch" are just slack with little punch and less sex appeal, unless track stars and zombies turn you on. "Sweet Virginia," coming as it does smack in the middle of the set, is positively soporific, bogged down in too many unintelligible words, a ridiculously lame hook, and those horns that make me wish Bonnie Bramlett had left a forwarding address. It's a relief to get back to basics with "All Down the Line" and "Midnight Rambler," when the band gets hot for the first time and Mick gets bad enough to be good.

But the calculatedly nowhere s&m business in "Midnight Rambler" is symptomatic of the Stones' whole problem. What the Rolling Stones had to offer to begin with was spontaneity, a hunger for screams dramatized by Mick's spastic twitches, pointing finger, and a tendency to piss on gas stations without notice. Only the other Stones seemed capable of living with that kind of nervous excitement, and on stage in those days, they radiated esteem for each other if not their audience. Just seeing Jagger and Ed Sullivan shake hands was more revolutionary than to watch Mick on his hands and knees beating the stage with a belt when there are third generation monkey men like Iggy Willing to strap themselves to get off.

The Stones' 1972 show formalized and made mundane everything that had ever been special about them, so that they came off like just another rock and roll band, instead of the rock and roll band. Even so contrived and self-conscious a film as *Performance* has more to tell us about rock and roll than *Ladies and Gentlemen*, since in

Turner there is at least a deliberate tension between the way we see Mick and the way he chooses to portray "himself." For the same reasons, the two versions of Angie that Jagger lip-synched on *Rock Concert* have a lot more to do with why I would pay five bucks to see *Ladies and Gentlemen* than anything that's actually in the film. The point being that the Stones can still do it, but not apparently in front of 24,000 fans chosen by random computer to participate in an event that seems to bore the Stones themselves. If touring alienates them from each other as much as it does from us, then who wins? Maybe there just isn't a better way, but as things stand now, *Ladies and Gentlemen*, for all its breakthroughs, has to be seen as part of the problem and not the solution.

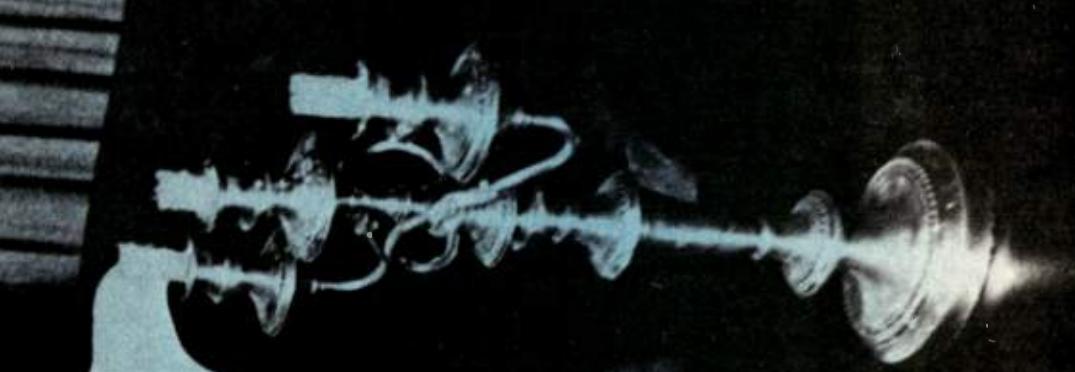
A man with more than his share of the same kind of trouble once said: "With concerts now, you go, you buy time, you watch the 'movie' and in the end—maybe—you get your physical thing out in the encore. I mean nothing really happens. One of our biggest problems now is that the audience can't or won't dance. I'd like to make a rock movie that could take the place of events like Woodstock, so that everybody could appreciate more details and perspectives, because merely attending a concert is not enough. Obviously, with a movie, the audience is going to be very passive, but what difference does it make? We're not real on stage now when we play. I'm like a movie, so I might as well run a movie."

As Pete Townshend knows too well: you can't have your party in the street.

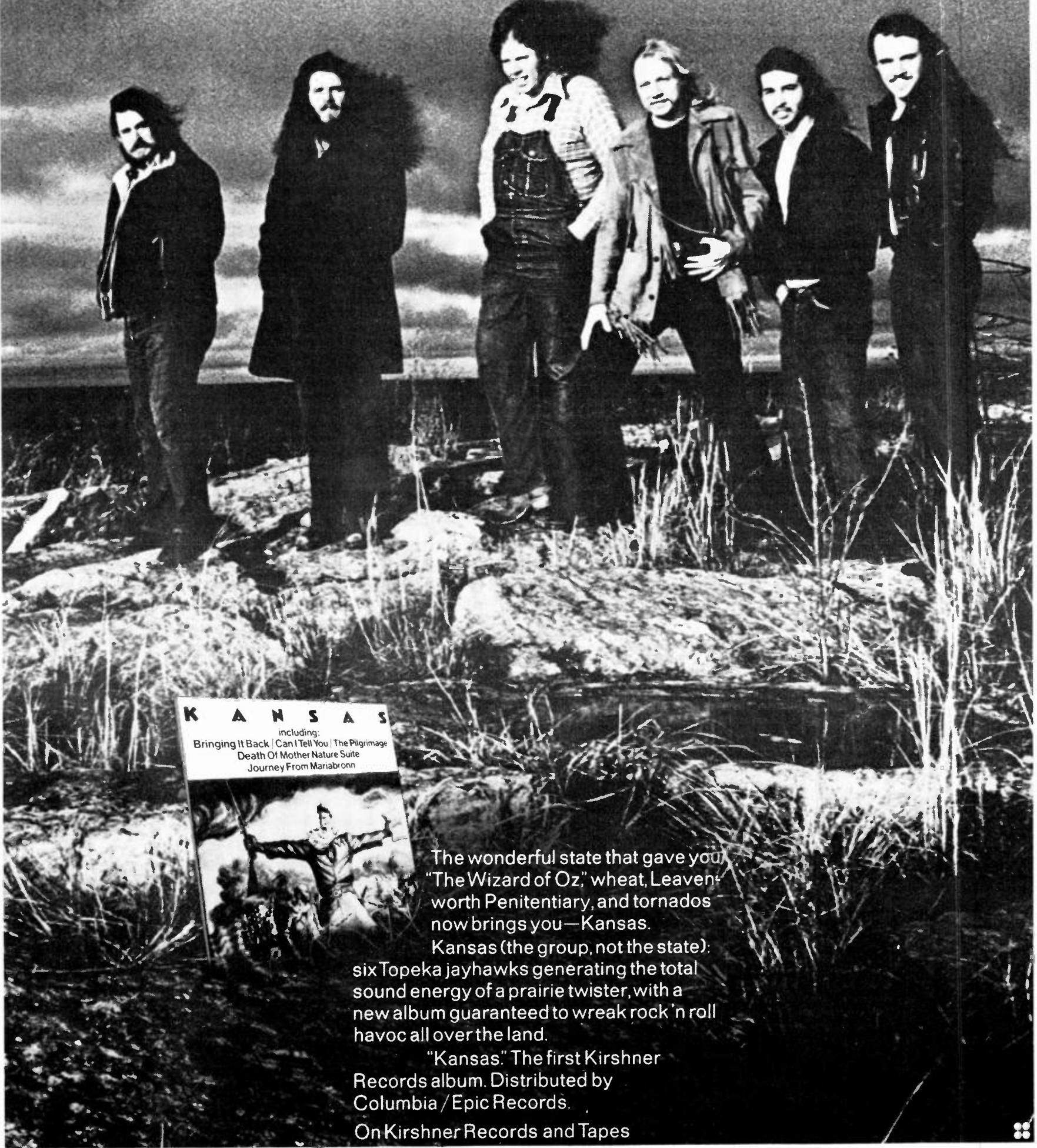
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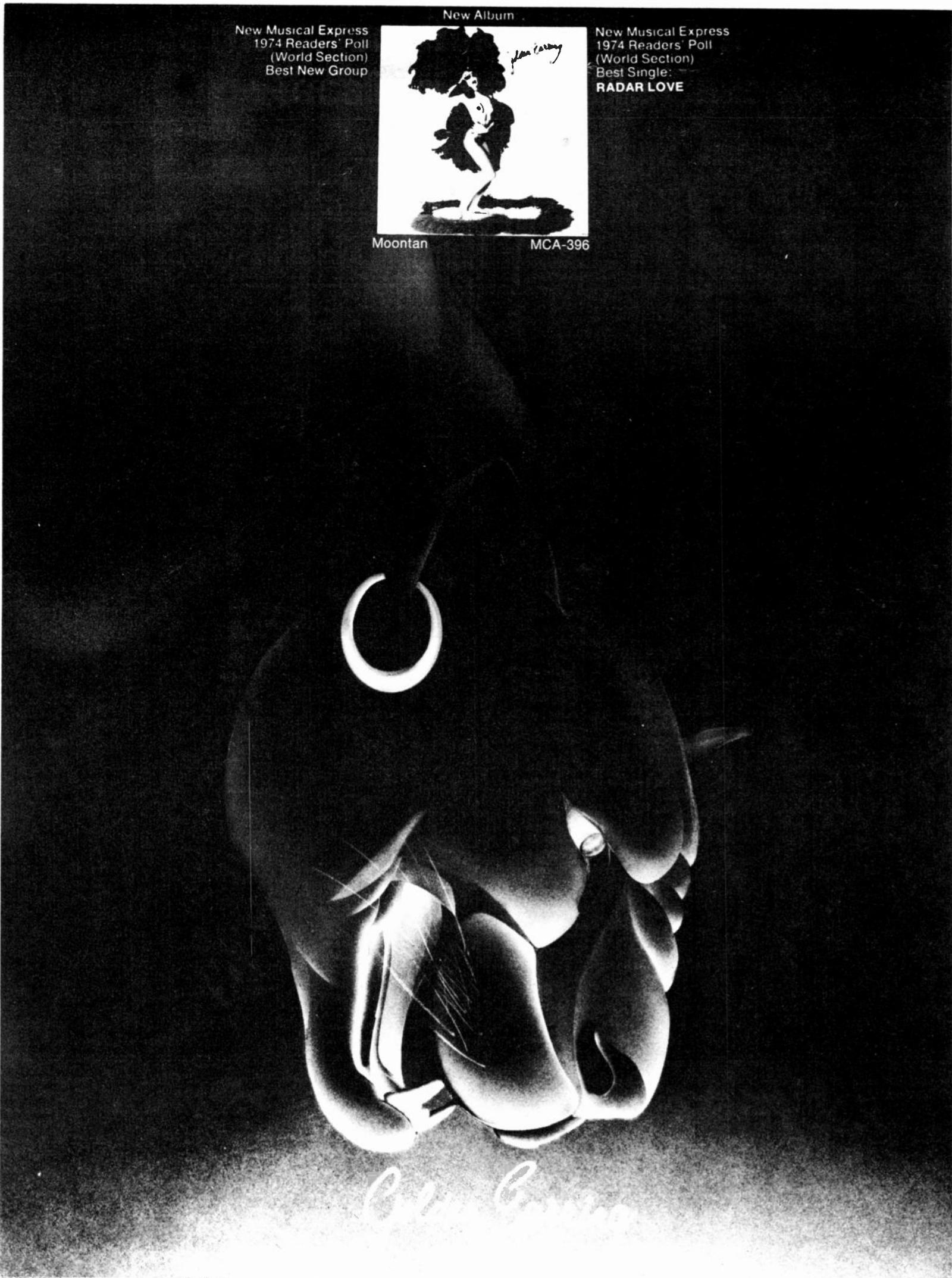
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May 10 Palace Theatre, Providence, R.I.
May 11 Shubert Theatre, Philadelphia, Pa.
May 12 Music Hall, Boston, Mass.
May 14 Robinson Auditorium, Little Rock, Ark.
May 15 Kiel Auditorium, St. Louis, Mo.
May 16 Coliseum, Indianapolis, Ind.
May 17 Ellis Auditorium, Memphis, Tenn.
May 18 E. Temple St. Univ., Johnson City, Tenn.
May 19 Masonic Auditorium, Detroit, Mich.
May 22 Omni, Atlanta, Ga.

May 24 & 25 Winterland, San Francisco, Ca.
May 30 J.J.'s, San Diego, Ca.
May 31 Civic Center, Santa Monica, Ca.
June 1 Phoenix, Arizona
June 3 I.M.A. Auditorium, Flint, Mich.
June 4 Sports Arena, Toledo, Ohio
June 6 Auditorium, Charleston, South Carolina
June 7 Coliseum, Greensboro, North Carolina
June 8 Civic Center, Roanoke, Va.
June 9 Civic Center, Charleston, W.Va.
June 10 Madison Square Garden, New York City, New York
June 14 Fairgrounds Arena, Oklahoma City, Okla.
June 15 Convention Center, Dallas, Tx.
June 16 Coliseum, Denver, Colo.
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Cleveland, Seattle and New York City.

GOLDEN GATE BLUEGRASS

Just across the man-made lake is the courthouse where Jonathan Jackson met his death in a police shootout while trying to take a judge and a D.A. as hostages he could exchange for the freedom of the Soledad Brothers, including his blood brother George. The courthouse where Angela Davis later stood trial, and was acquitted, on charges of masterminding the kidnap. It's a Frank Lloyd Wright design that locals sometimes call "the pickle building."

Bean Blossom, Indiana, this ain't—but there are worse places than Marin County for a bluegrass festival.

Most of the great San Francisco rock bands were made up of folkies who discovered acid and electricity around the same time. They started out on acoustic guitars and moved on to the harder stuff. To a great extent, the same is true of the audiences that used to pack the Family Dog and the old Fillmore. So it's no surprise that as the musicians left the City for Marin, their music reflected the move; the proverbial laid back, acoustic music that wafts out of Mill Valley and into your local record store is a half-hearted return to the roots for a Jesse Colin Young or a Jerry Garcia. These people are in their mid-30's, now, and in a sense they feel that they've outgrown rock, though it remains very much a part of them.

They're not the only ones. The urban folk music revival going on right now is easily as big as the urban folk boom of the early 60's. For the most part, it's being revived by the same people who made it boom more than a decade ago; Doc Watson and Ralph Stanley are ten years older now, and so are the urban audiences that flock to see them. But they are fairly familiar to each other, and you do not see many Slade fans at these events.

Now I'm a Slade fan who also happens to like Doc Watson and Ralph Stanley, as well as some of the urban folkies. And this here folk revival is just fine with me; I missed it entirely the first time around. As did, I suspect, most people in their mid-20's who weren't living in New York City or Boston/Cambridge or Berkeley.

To this day, I haven't heard a Phil Ochs album except his rock LP. The same goes for Dave Van Ronk. I had heard of Bob Dylan when he was the bard of the Civil Rights movement, but I'd never heard his music. Nope, that happened one night when I was parked out behind the San Bernardino Public Library. I was waiting for this honey blonde to show up in her daddy's car (c.f., the Beach Boys' "Fun Fun Fun," speaking of folk music) so that we could finish falling in love, a project we'd commenced that very afternoon. "Subterranean Homesick Blues" spat out of the car radio and I passed the time waiting by trying to decipher the lyrics. So it was a great night all around; she showed up right on time, everything went according to plan, and I drove home that night at curfew an older and wiser young man in two respects. It came as a great shock to learn a couple years later that Dylan had actually alienated some of his fans by recording that song. By then I was a student at Berkeley, where people were still debating acoustic-vs.-electric. But electric won hands down, and with the exception of the Keweenaw Jug Band and Mimi and Richard Farina, very little of the urban folk music my friends knew all

about ever caught my ear. Blues I already knew, but as for the white folk that the folkies so idolized, that came much later . . .

About three years ago, to be precise. It was the Stanley Brothers' version of "Man of Constant Sorrow" that did it, a performance that still sends chills down my spine every time I play it. Dark and brooding, it conjures up an ancient feeling of helplessness. This has got to be the real stuff, I thought to myself; as it happens, the Stanleys probably are the best of the bluegrass groups available on record, but there are others well worth checking out: Moore and Napier, Reno and Smiley, Jimmy Martin, early sides by Bill Monroe and by Flatt and Scruggs.

white music that retains its roots: mountain music, itself rooted in 19th Century English ballads.

None of this is to say that bluegrass is on the threshold of great commercial success. Except for a relatively brief period, it never has been, and never will be: too hillbilly. The first Golden State Country Bluegrass Festival at the Marin County Civic Center in San Rafael bore this out. The traditional bluegrass performers were received with the utmost respect—especially from the other musicians—but it was the more pop-oriented acts that whipped up the most enthusiasm.

Jim and Jesse McReynolds and the Virginia Mountain Boys were one of the few traditional acts to suss

one that weekend superfluous. Nearly every act on the bill played at least one song associated with the Stanleys, and those who didn't invariably dropped into their stage raps an awed reference to Ralph and his clawhammer banjo.

But Jimmy Martin and the Sunny Mountain Boys got the biggest applause of any traditional act. Martin, who started out in Bill Monroe's pioneering band, is one of the few who still has significant success in Nashville with bluegrass. He played a set of his greatest hits Sunday afternoon, and got a greater reception when he walked on the stage than most acts got when they were finished. He was the star, and he had the outdoor audience in the palm

Mississippi John Hurt's "Richland Woman Blues." She was up again a couple times that evening, once with Doc and Merle, once with the Great American String Band.

The latter consisted of urban folkie favorites David Grisman (mandolin), Richard Greene (fiddle), David Niedern (guitar), and Taj Mahal (bass). They were another star attraction, especially when Jerry Garcia joined them on banjo. (Garcia can get a standing ovation in Marin for blowing his nose.) For this gig, the G.A.S.B. was also joined by fiddler Vassar Clements, to whom the festival was dedicated. Clements was all over the place all weekend, fitting in with the popish groups as easily as with the traditional ones.

Garcia also sat in Sunday afternoon with two-thirds of the Greenbriar Boys, re-united for this gig. Once considered the finest of the urban bluegrass groups, they feature the legendary Johnny Herald on guitar and vocals and the virtuoso mandolin player Frank Wakefield, who also copped best-dressed honors for the weekend. Wakefield wore white bellbottoms with red pockets, a white coat with red velvet trim, and a paisley tie. He has bleached blonde hair held in place by spray, and unless you can get close enough to see his rough-hewn Tennessee face, you could easily mistake him for a hip Beverly Hills shrink. The Greenbriar Boys almost brought a New York folkie friend of mine to tears that afternoon when they did "That's Alright Mama" and "Heartbreak Hotel." But the crowd loved it.

Emmy Lou Harris and the Angel Band got a fine reception Saturday afternoon with the weekend's only set of modern country and western. From the wolf whistles and whoops that followed each song, it seemed to be her bare midriff more than her music that turned the crowd on. Ramblin' Jack Elliot—and what is a festival like this without him?—was as energetic as I've ever seen him Sunday night, and was of course well applauded for his efforts. The same could not be said for Bobby Neuwirth, who appeared as one of the special surprise guests. Neuwirth, a former Dylan roadie who seldom performs live, is considered a brilliant songwriter. But his reputation is that of a professional hanger-out: with Dylan, with Janis Joplin, etc. Good work, if you can get it. His set was one of the most uptempo of the weekend, and, surprisingly, got only tepid applause.

Since the festival got more and more pop as the weekend progressed, it was fitting that the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band close the show. They did their usual facile set, got their usual ovation, and were joined at the end by some of the participants on their historic *Will The Circle Be Unbroken* album.

Conclusion: bluegrass is alive and well, again. In California, at least, its audience prefers it as a side order to the main dish of pop or country rock. Still, this was the first bluegrass festival ever in California, and that fact alone says something important. And Jewell Productions put a lot of money into keeping the audience comfortable. There was spring water around the periphery of the grounds, the toilets were bearable, and the show ran right on schedule.

And giving it official festival status was the rumor sweeping the grounds Sunday that Bob Dylan was there.

Kentucky Comes to California



Vassar Clements, legendary bluegrass fiddler, performed his famous Jack Benny impersonation at the Golden Gate Bluegrass Festival, held recently in his honor.

by John Morthland

Among urban folkies, bluegrass is the most hallowed form in the white tradition, and for good reason. The sound of a guitar, banjo, fiddle, mandolin and bass playing at a breakneck speed carries with it an exciting thrust you just don't get from a guitar-strumming balladeer. The vocals can be the most breath-taking this side of black gospel music: usually a high, pinched lead voice and harmonies of two or three parts. It is intensely localized music, seldom played outside of Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia, and North Carolina. And now that Nashville has become Cashville, as they say, bluegrass is about the only form of

this audience out and give it what it wanted. Their Friday night set was almost all old ballads. By Sunday, they were playing Chuck Berry songs and they had hundreds up and dancing at the foot of the stage.

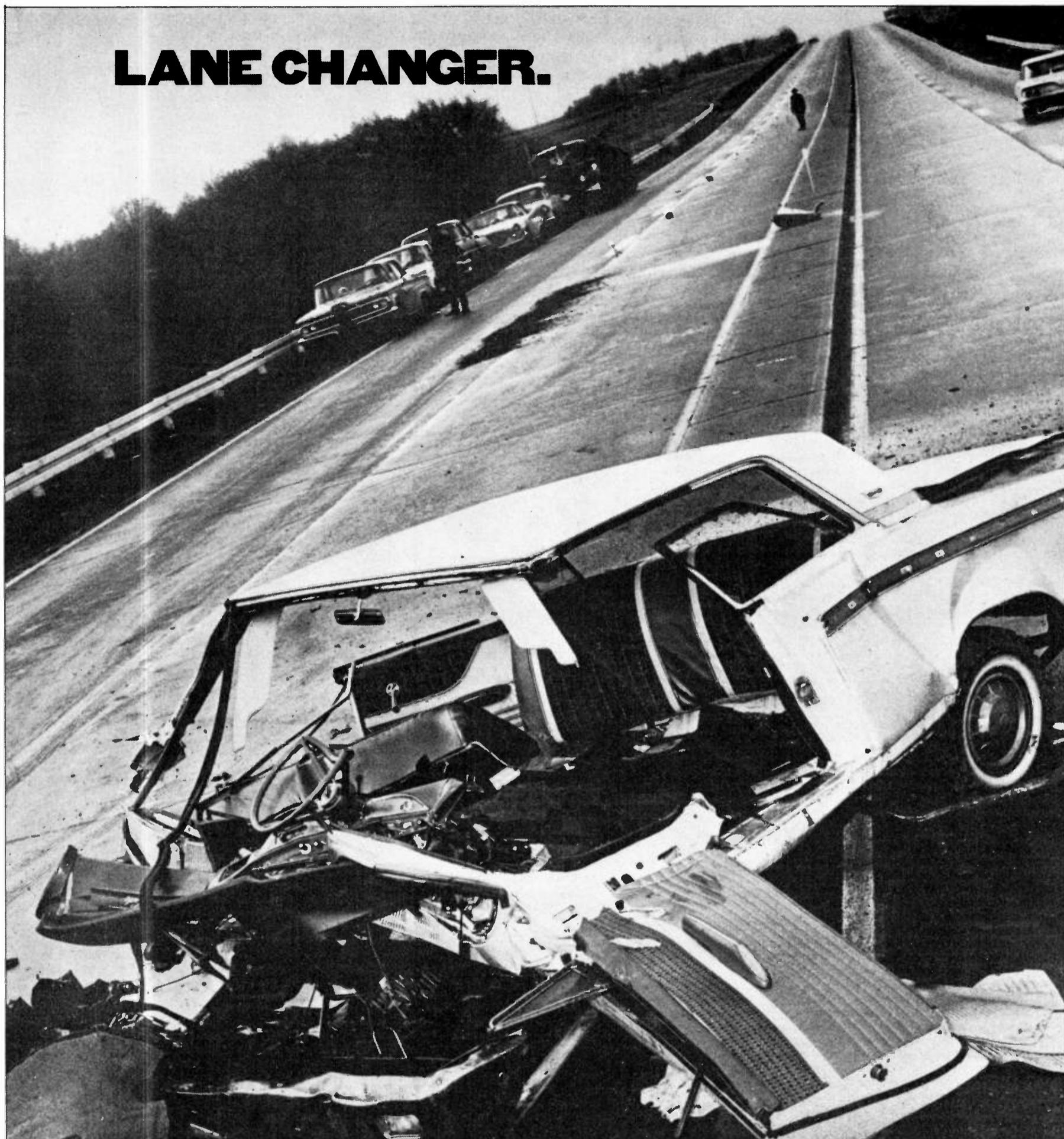
Carter Stanley died in 1966, but Ralph Stanley and the Clinch Mountain Boys are still going strong. They played all three days, strictly traditional stuff, and always received a good, if not overwhelming, hand. Fiddler Curly Ray Cline answered for me the question, "How many times can you stand to hear 'Orange Blossom Special?'" by playing an arrangement that made every other

of his hand.

Merle Travis, whose three-finger picking inspired a whole generation, and then some, of guitar players, had to cancel due to illness. But Doc Watson, one of his biggest admirers, did play all three days, showing both Travis-picking and some smart flat-picking of his own. One of the high points of the festival occurred Sunday afternoon when Maria Muldaur joined Doc and his son Merle to do "Honey Babe Blues."

Maria almost wasn't let off the stage after she finished her set Friday night. She threw out "Midnight at the Oasis" as a sop to the crowd, but stuck mostly to traditional stuff like

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Fennelly, Michael.
Male. Caucasian.
Age--24. Eyes--blue. 6'2".
Achieved prominence as lead singer with
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Recently back from London where he recorded
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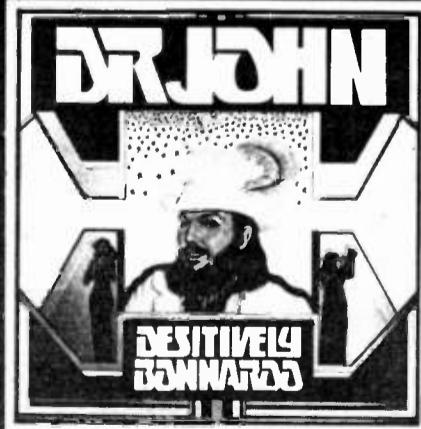
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CLUB SCENES OF AMERICA

MAY '74: PHONOGRAPH RECORD

With all the talk about trends in music, it's funny no one talks about trends in venues. The type of places that thrive at any given time are merely a reflection of people's desire for a certain kind of atmosphere, and there are definite styles in context. Ten years ago, when you went out on a Friday night, you went to a discotheque, which was probably called something-a-go-go. Or you went to a teen club that might've been named *Batman's Cave*. These places were designed to spotlight the music of the time, records or imitations of records from the Top Thirty. Then everything changed; to be in, you had to go to a *ballroom* — an old '40s dance emporium where mirror balls rotated on the ceiling, light shows bathed

the walls and everybody sat on the floor and gobbled acid or played with day-glo paint.

All through this, you were most likely seeing local bands. The biggies, when they came to town, played the baseball stadium. Then the locals became biggies, the biggies came to the ballrooms, the locals went on the road, and things very quickly became homogenized. For two or three years everybody went to the ballrooms out of rote, until a backlash set in and small clubs came into vogue.

By no coincidence, this was also about the time acoustic music was coming back into fashion and people were beginning to prefer a more intimate setting. This was the late '60s, when rock was in its most polar-

ized state ever. While *Troubadour*-style clubs flourished, you could also take your pick of gigantic rock festivals, three days and forty-two bands and 300,000 patrons. It got rather extreme before festivals were outlawed in most places, and meanwhile the ballrooms had closed down and we were left with clubs, of all sizes and shapes, with their folkies and would-be rockers, and the ever-popular baseball stadiums and hockey arenas.

Which brings us about up to date, except for one thing. For the first time in a few years, things seem to be changing. People are getting bored with the way things have been. They want more excitement, something different. Rock music it-

self has been searching for a new approach, and the same process can be seen at work on both levels, if one does a little digging.

So we did some digging. We talked to people all over the country, and got some real surprises. Within the last year, old clubs have been closing and new ones opening. While nothing as extreme as Rodney Bingenheimer's English Disco has appeared anywhere outside of Hollywood, or New York, it seems discotheques themselves are in the midst of a huge renaissance. In 1974, people would rather dance to records than listen to folk singers, which some see as a healthy sign.

An even healthier sign is the return of local music scenes. The new clubs have spawned new

groups with strong local followings, along with locally-released records and even a trace of local airplay. And as we all know from our rock history, regional scenes and styles have been the birthplace, both in the '50s and the '60s, of all that was new and innovative and ultimately exciting in rock.

We've covered some of these emerging scenes in issues past: New York, Austin, Hollywood... but there are more, many more, and therefore we've called on our correspondents from all over the nation for close-up reports on what's really happening from city to city. It may be too early to spot any patterns, but there's no denying that something, indeed, is happening.

America, it won't dent the live entertainment structure. The Whisky, then, remains the rock club, and is generally a required stop on a band's initial tours. Local units often play second on the bill, and might, with perseverance, move up to headliner status (a locally hot item like the Hollywood Stars can virtually make the Whisky its home for weeks on end). Yes, Mott the Hoople, Slade, the Doors, the Byrds, Alice Cooper, Led Zeppelin (the latter two on the same bill, Alice headlining) and many more have begun their climb at the Whisky, and it shows every sign of continuing its role as bottomless musical wellspring.

The Whisky is kind of perversely loved in spite of its tacky decor, the barely tolerable sound, the inadequate lights and the notorious, watered-down drinks. That's what can happen when you become an institution.

The Troubadour parallels the Whisky in a more sedate musical realm (with a proportionately more staid atmosphere). Bette Midler made her L.A. splash here (after an unnoticed gig at the short-lived Paradise Ballroom), Loggins & Messina debuted on its stage, and Elton John found it a handy launching pad. Now and then owner Doug Weston pulls in someone like Joni Mitchell or Van Morrison for a four-night stand after they've gone on to bigger things but still owe him an option on their original Troubadour contract. In the early sixties the Troub was a classier alternative to the funky Ash Grove for the post-coffee house folk and jazz audience (featuring artists like Brownie McGhee & Sonny Terry, Hoyt Axton, The Clancy Bros., the Rooftop Singers), but the music that emerged late in the decade was perfect for the club and it quickly became the place to play for everyone from Fairport Convention to Anne Murray, Tiny Tim to Jackson Browne.

The national press coverage devoted to the club has concentrated on the surface-shocking the middle classes with descriptions of the bizarre styles and unseemly decadence of Hollywood's glitter babes (like an article on Beatniks in *Life Magazine* in the fifties). On a less obvious level, though, Rodney's has stepped in and filled a gap created by the demise of free-form radio: It's presently about the only place where one can hear the latest and unestablished (in the States) British artists. Because of L.A.'s overall importance in the scheme of things, the effect has a tremendous snowball potential; if the Sweet make it in America it'll be because of Rodney's, not Bell Records.

Rodney's is a discotheque, though, and while its styles and manners will certainly ripple across

the less monied traditionalists, local, scraping blues bands, political artists and some occasional rock 'n' roll. But the Ash Grove finally closed up after its third major fire last year, and now a back room at McCabe's guitar shop in Santa Monica is the only decent place for authentic and/or non-commercial folk music. But that's another story.

You can hear rock 'n' roll from local, usually non-union, bands at Gazzari's, a holdover from the Sunset Strip sixties boom. It's definitely a low-class affair, with a frantic atmosphere, beehive hairdo orientation and catchy events like dance contests and a Miss Gazzari's competition. Dancing is the main attraction, and it looks as if Gazzari's will continue to thrive on that alone.

Starwood took over P.J.'s, a black club on Santa Monica Blvd.'s porn section. It's as seedy as its locale, but has just come through its first year with its head above water. Again, it's mostly local bands (usually those with a growing following, and it's just hosted Manticore's Stray Dog) and occasional rock stage shows. Amenities like sound and lighting are woefully sub-par, but it too seems to have a regular crowd that's at least large enough to keep it going.

The Roxy, just up the street from the Whisky, was supposed to jostle the rooted pattern a bit, what with its attractive, costly decor and its high-powered team of owners (since realigned)—Lou Adler, Bill Graham, David Geffen, Whisky owner Elmer Valentine. Neil Young was the opening-night act, but from there it floundered, getting only a couple of out-of-the ordinary attractions (Genesis, most notably) before it began booking soul groups almost exclusively—and so offering no threat to the established rock and folk venues. It's now the home of the successful "Rocky Horror Show," and the idea of a youth-oriented cabaret theatre (be it for rock shows or otherwise) is nearly as exciting in its own way as that of a truly new rock music club.

The L.A. situation is comfortable

for the entertainment barons; any safe and saleable music has its outlet at the Whisky or the Troubadour, and so there seems to be an unspoken aversion to even the thought of rocking the boat too hard. They don't need to, and the people who might want to are without the means. It's not very good for struggling local bands (and works against the creation of a tight new scene), it doesn't offer much in the way of alternatives when you're looking for someplace to spend an evening, and it's not very exciting. It's a good thing we have as many television channels as we do in Hollywood.

—Richard Cromelin

The Bay Area

In one sense, the decline of the ballroom scene in San Francisco did the town's music a world of good. Ballrooms tend to make people sit on hard floors while musicians build music of epic proportions. The size of the hall dwarfs a human, and an unhealthy stage/audience division, where what's on the stage seems much bigger, sets in. Now that all the big halls are—for white entertainment, at least—totally in the hands of Bill Graham, the area's young, aspiring, or re-formed bands must depend on the club circuit for a good deal of their initial exposure.

There aren't that many clubs in San Francisco proper, for some reason, and the few that there are seem to prefer "name" entertainment. The Boarding House, formerly Doug Weston's ill-fated San Francisco Troubadour, features almost exclusively out-of-towners, possibly because the kind of soft-rock, troubadour style music they feature isn't an important part of the local scene. Aside from the various

bars which have dance bands, the Orphanage, a pretentious and unpleasant place with some "name" entertainment, is where to see the best local bands. Unfortunately, what one has to put up with in order to see it has been enough to keep me away nearly all the time. Once, I was greeted by a punch in the head—the management's subtle way of enforcing the silly "hat rule" (no hats—I've since been told that it's a way of keeping "pimps"—i.e., black people—out of the club). Drinks are prohibitively expensive, and will usually be removed by the surly waitress before you're half through. Still, such local favorites as Graham Central Station, Spelbound with Peter Spelman, Copperhead, and the New Stoneround all play there regularly.

Recently, a new club has been added to the scene. The Great American Music Hall has seen duty as a whorehouse, a French restaurant, and the setting for the orgy scene in *Behind The Green Door*, which plays at the Mitchell Brother's theatre next door. All the French Baroque architecture does screw up the sound, but there's a big dance floor and the management and clientele seem friendly—something desperately needed in this town.

San Francisco's huge, thriving Latin music scene finds a showcase at Cesar's Latin Club in North Beach, and the after-hours jam sessions have been the starting place for a number of San Francisco's Latino-rock bands.

The real action around the San Francisco area is in Berkeley. The clubs in Berkeley not only generate a lot of their own talent, but they also serve as showcases for San Francisco talent not classy or suitable enough for the Orphanage. The largest club in town is the Keystone Berkeley (whose sister club, the Keystone Korner, is San Francisco's only remaining name jazz club), known to many as the place where Jerry Garcia and Merle Saunders recorded that album. The Saunders/Garcia combo plays the Keystone often, as does Commander Cody, the New Stone-

"You couldn't give away Bowie tickets in Kansas City..."

ground, John Lee Hooker, and just about every local band of any note. The place is usually open five days a week, with something happening every night. It's roomy, close to campus, and serves the same bad beer and wine as any decent Berkeley club at relatively reasonable prices.

The other major club in Berkeley is the Longbranch, which more than any other epitomizes what Berkeley clubs are all about. Dark, dingy, with plumbing that is nearly always out of repair, it stinks of stale beer and piss, and provides some of the best, most high-energy entertainment in the whole of Northern California. Tuesday night used to be the magic night, with Asleep At The Wheel holding down the position of top band and filling the bill with other lesser-known country-rock and country bands. When the abdicated the spot, Knee Deep took over. Knee Deep was a fabulous dance band in the great Berkeley tradition, with a little bit of everything in their music. A dope bust and gathering disillusionment (they'd been together nine years) finally split the band, but not before some good times had been had. Today, the big attraction is Earthquake, a band that's been around for a while, but which has just started to click with the addition of former Copperhead guitarist Gary Phillippe. Earthquake has been putting out singles on their own label, Beserkley, and is shaping up to be the Bay Area's next big hard-rock group.

Other notable Berkeley clubs include Mandrake's, which is falling on hard times due to its small size, and the New Orleans House, which seems to feature bands none of the other clubs hire, for some reason.

In Marin County, way up north, a couple of notable clubs exist. The Lion's Share in San Anselmo is the very picture of the laid-back Marin club. It's one of Van Morrison's favorite haunts, and he has dropped in more than once to jam with local musicians or play a set of his own. Other local faves include the Sons of Champlin, Peter Spelman and Spelbound, Terry and the Pirates (featuring John Cipollina and Dan Hicks fiddler Sid Page) and on audition nights new combos stalk out of the Marin hills and play for an enthusiastic audience.

The other major club isn't actually in Marin, but up in Cotati in Sonoma County. The Inn Of The Beginning, for all its horrible name, is a real neat place to see bands. The audience is very much into the cosmic cowboy trip, and bluegrass and country-rock bands play there a lot. Also popular at the Inn is Norman Greenbaum and Crossfire, a superb up-and-coming young band from Petaluma.

San Francisco's days as a major music capital seem to be over, but there's more music than ever being made here. Explain that if you can.

—Ed Ward

where they auction off steers," in the words of Randy Morrison of KBPI, Denver's most respected progressive radio station.

While warning that he doesn't keep up with the scene on any regular basis, Morrison points out that, with the exception of these two locations, there really isn't much going on in Denver. For all the attention that's been focused on Colorado by outside musicians, local kids seem apathetic about creating music of their own. There are a couple of groups, like the jazzy Fly & the Zippers out of Boulder, causing local talk, but nothing like what the Astroanuts stirred up ten years ago.

Still, it isn't all that bad. The Auditorium Theatre fills its 2300 seats every week with fans of Leo Kottke, Kris Kristofferson, and others of the more "tasteful" rock set. Regis College presents many second echelon rock groups as well as some top attractions; ELO, Mott the Hoople and the Beach Boys have appeared there recently.

Boulder, a large college community, is served by Tulagi's, which is pretty much the equivalent of Ebbitt's Field. Other than that, while there are always new clubs opening, none ever seem to make it. What the area really needs, according to Morrison, is a really good theatre for the presentation of rock bands. And even if one came into being, which doesn't appear likely, it would be visiting bands that played there. A local music scene, as such, is the real missing factor.

ment. Contrary to what you might expect, they won't settle for just anything—they'll take only the heaviest of the heavy.

On the other hand, Kansas City is perhaps the best market in the country for groups like the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band or, the local favorites, the Ozark Mountain Daredevils and Brewer & Shipley. The kids won't accept just any folk act, though; there's gotta be that strict, traditional approach and no frills or hint of pretense.

It's a rare week that brings more than one concert to Kansas City. Sometimes you'll find a group like the Allman Brothers playing Royal Stadium or Arrowhead Stadium, but as a rule it all takes place at the Cowtown Ballroom, a drafty old dance hall much like the old Fillmore West.

The future holds new things for this city, however. Recently the Cowtown people have made arrangements to begin leasing the Midland Theatre for regular concerts, which will be broadcast over KUDL just as the Cowtown shows are. The Midland, built in 1927 at a cost of over four million dollars, is a beautifully preserved, classic structure, with a magnificent four or five story ceiling, gorgeous paintings and stained glass everywhere, a true showplace. It will be used to present more "tasteful" acts that have previously been out of place in any of the city's other halls. Its opening on May 18, for instance, features Harry Chapin.

Whether Kansas City will ever fall into step with the rest of the nation's pop fads is not easy to forecast. This is a very conservative area, in the heart of the Bible Belt, and old values die hard. The local kids have a style, a taste, and an attitude that suits them, and it's a valid one for who and where they are. One thing I would predict is a more highly developed local scene, the emergence of clubs where local groups can get a start, and perhaps the eventual recognition of a "Kansas City Sound." If traditional music continues its growth in popularity, that doesn't seem too unlikely. With the present absence of clubs and musical orientation, though, it doesn't seem to be in the immediate offing.

—Larry Miller

(Larry Miller is Program Director of KUDL-FM, Kansas City's most popular progressive radio station.)

sure of national fame, but no group has ever really emerged from Minneapolis on a large scale.

But the upper midwest has always sustained itself as a regional music scene, with touring bands like the Fabulous Flippers and the Unbelievable Uglies, based out of the Twin Cities, hanging on for years and years as intensely popular local heroes. Many of Minneapolis' mid-sixties bands are in fact still active, like the Del Counts and Danny's Reasons, having changed personnel over the years but maintaining their followings.

Minneapolis today probably has as many working bands as ever, although recording activity has died down since Amos Heilicher and George Garrett, who were responsible for most of the records cut here in the '60s, pulled out of that end of the business. Records do come out, though; one company called Mill City Records has done well in the past year, and others put out releases every now and then.

Mostly, though, the groups survive playing high school dances, suburban teen clubs, concerts and other gigs around the region. Places like Duff's, F. David's, the Triangle Bar, and C.C. Tap book local acts every night; most of them are more or less beer bars, with pinball, dancing, and lots of people who come out to have fun.

The biggest local club is the Depot, located in an old bus depot, where Danny's Reasons hold down a residency already eight years old—the club is owned by their manager, Danny Stevens. When the Depot opened, they brought in top acts like Joe Cocker, but after losing a fortune they switched to a disco/local band format.

Along with all this rock activity, there is still a strong folk movement in the Twin Cities. The same scene that produced Dylan in 1961 still thrives, centered around the Riverside Cafe, located in the University district in a condemned building. Dave Ray and Tony Glover hang out there, Leo Kottke drops in off the street, Willie & the Bumblebees play there, and folk purists keep the place packed.

The city doesn't attract many out-of-town bands to its clubs; when they appear, it's usually because they've got a layover between Chicago and Denver. A group like the Allman Brothers would appear at Metropolitan Stadium or Minneapolis Auditorium. Many groups also play at St. Paul Civic Center. For the most part, visiting groups of less than top stature will play the 2000-seat Orpheum Theatre, whose "Monday nights at the Orpheum" series has recently presented such acts as ELO and John Mayall, or The Guthrie.

The Guthrie Auditorium is probably the most acoustically perfect hall in the world, which is one reason why almost every artist who appears there tapes the concert for future use. The place is managed and booked by some very aware people; Alice Cooper was there 1½ years before "I'm Eighteen," John Prine was booked 6 months before his first album came out, T. Rex was there three years ago. Bonnie Raitt, John Denver, and Gordon Lightfoot all appear regularly at the Guthrie and are well received.

Of all the local bands who ply the region, a few seem likely to garner some form of national attention before long. Blackwood offer a Northern alternative to the Southern boogie sound; Cassidy, Atomic Junkyard, and Cain are among the top groups. Cassidy is still very big

around the area too. As the Underbeats, in 1965, their version of "Route 66" was at least as good as the Stones'. And their fans, fans of all these groups, thousands and thousands of them all over the upper midwest, don't forget. For that reason alone, there'll always be something happening in Minneapolis.

—Dave Hill

(Dave Hill writes for *The Insider*, the Twin Cities' regional music magazine, and is considered an authority on the area's musical history.)



Chicago has been unlike other major regional music centers of the past decade, in that the local scene has remained heavily traditional and slow to accept new trends in music. The blues clubs of the South Side have carried on since the '40s with little change—for the most part, in fact, presenting the same musicians. The folk scene, which gained a campus foothold in the early '60s, is stronger today than ever. But rock & roll, strangely enough, has never found a secure home in Chicago.

Chicago's golden era as a rock & roll town dates from 1965-67, when local labels like Dunwich, Destination, USA, IRC (and of course the Mercury/Philips/Fontana group) recorded such local groups as the Shadows of Knight, the Ides of March, the Cryan Shames and H.P. Lovecraft. Locally, these bands subsisted on the suburban teenclub circuit.

Today, Chicago has few local groups. Wooden Nickel Records, the descendant of Dunwich, has Styx and the Siegal-Schwal Blues Band, although the latter have just broken up after a nine-year history. The Ides of March have also disbanded recently, although their lead singer has a new group, the Chi-Town Hustlers. Other local bands include Kracker (who toured Europe with the Rolling Stones), Heartsfield, and Wildflower.

These groups still play the suburbs, at places like the Wild Goose. Sometimes they play at some of the many nearby colleges and universities, occasionally they even get on at the bottom of the hill at the Aragon, or one of the other big auditoriums. There are also a few clubs that cater mostly to folk fans, but occasionally book local and out-of-town rock acts.

The main concentration of these clubs is on the North Side, where Minstrel's, Orphans, Rato's, and the Wise Fools are clustered around Lincoln Ave. These places present a wide variety of music, with the emphasis on folk, but including jazz, semi-acoustic rock, and even some hard rock. A new club called Somebody Else's Troubles, owned by a local folk artist of many years standing, has become the focal point of the folk scene and it's not unusual for such artists as John Prine or Steve Goodman to drop by for an informal jam. The Earl of Old Town is another popular folk haven, as are the Blue Gargoyle (located inside a Unitarian church) and the Sanctuary, both near the University of Chicago.

The tenacity of the folk scene can only be attributed to Chicago's established sympathy for traditional music, due in large part to the continuing growth of the area's student population. But while Chicago may not be as dedicated to kicking



There is no night life in Kansas City. Zilch. The drinking age is 21, the whole town closes down at 1:00 a.m., and there just isn't that much to do most nights. Which is why kids will drive in from halfway across Kansas for a concert; there's little alternative.

But while we don't have clubs or discotheques (with the exception of Harlow's downtown, which caters almost exclusively to swingers), the scene we do have is very well defined. There is no folk music here, no glitter rock (or "fag music" as a lot of people refer to David Bowie and his ilk), no fashion consciousness and not even any groupies! The look is denim, boots, workshirts, a very basic mentality (as opposed to any awareness of the changing trends that occupy pop society in L.A. or New York) and a musical preference to match.

Suzi Quatro and ELO played the Cowtown recently and died. Lou Reed stiffed. When Bowie was in town, they couldn't give the tickets away. But let Ten Years After come to town, or Blue Oyster Cult, or Led Zeppelin or Bachman-Turner Overdrive or ZZ Top or Black Oak Arkansas, and you'll see one of the most dedicated boogie crowds this nation can boast.

This part of the country, Kansas City and St. Louis and surrounding regions, seems to have inherited a lot of the spirit that Detroit was known for back in 1969. Heavy metal is king in Kansas City. The Amboy Dukes might as well be a local band for the kind of reception they provoke. There's a strange intensity in the audience, come from out of the cornfields for a rare taste of excite-



As far as local music scenes are concerned, Minneapolis presents one of the nation's oddest enigmas. Virtually unknown to the rest of the world, the Twin Cities boasts an incredible array of local bands, recordings and clubs, with rock & roll, blues, folk, country, jazz and even polka music. Because of the nearby concentration of electronics industries (Honeywell, Univac, etc. are headquartered there) the area is overrun with engineers and technicians, and studios such as Sound 80 rank with the best in the country.

Local recording reached a peak in 1964-67, with over 300 bands playing constantly and recording on over 50 local labels, some (such as the Trashmen, Castaways, Gestures) scoring national hits. In the late '60s, bands like Crow, Gypsy, the Litter, and T.C. Atlantic gained some mea-



Denver's music community is small and centralized. Almost all the action takes place at Ebbitt's Field, a long-established club somewhat akin to the Quiet Knight in Chicago, holding 400 and presenting almost every act of value that comes to town, save the real biggies, who appear at the Coliseum—"a place

"The 'Detroit Sound' has moved to Missouri..."

out the jams as Detroit or some other cities, there are plenty of opportunities for the rock fan to pursue his interests.

There are three large venues that book top out-of-town groups: the Auditorium, the Arie Crown Ballroom and the Aragon Ballroom. In addition, top ranking softer rock acts often headline the Opera House. The second and third echelons of rock stardom, the groups with maybe one album and a small following, appear at the bottom of the bill on these shows, or frequently on one of the nearby campuses.

While Chicago has little or no glitter consciousness or discotheque scene, there has been a more frequent meeting of the rock and folk crowds at a club called the Quiet Knight, which can best be compared to a place like the Troubadour in Los Angeles. It's a large club, and currently in the midst of a remodeling effort that will add another 400 seats, enabling the management to book even bigger name talent. Of all the local venues, the Quiet Knight provides the best atmosphere for enjoying rock music, and perhaps the future will bring more clubs of its type.

-Al Rudis

(Al Rudis is music critic for the Chicago Sun-Times.)



For an area that was once among the nation's most prolific, the Detroit/Ann Arbor region is currently among the least. What was a strong, vital scene four years ago has dried up to practically nothing. Gone are the days of the Grande and East Town ballrooms, the MCS, Bob Seger, the Stooges, the Rationals, Mitch Ryder, John Sinclair and all the rest.

What happened? According to some insiders, the scene was exploited by outside interests before it had a chance to fully develop. For whatever reason, 1971 saw an exodus of musicians and trendsetters from Detroit, and the city has never recovered its confidence in local music.

When the bands left, the two leading ballrooms and the big folk club, the Poison Apple, also closed down. Nowadays you don't find much of a club scene, save for the usual copy bands and strip clubs that every city has. There are local bands—the Rockets, for instance, or Fred Smith and Scott Morgan's as-yet-unnamed new group—and they sometimes appear at the Blind Pig in Ann Arbor, as do some visiting acts such as Tim Buckley.

Detroit is not a local music scene, and it's not a club scene, but at least there are plenty of concerts. Chrysler Arena (in Ann Arbor, near the Univ. of Mich.) and Cobo Hall are the largest arenas, packing in 10-15,000 apiece, while Masonic Auditorium at 4,000 and Ford Auditorium at 2500 are also the setting for weekly concerts.

The only thing resembling the ballrooms of yesteryear is the Michigan Palace, a converted theatre that hosts concerts once a week, but the quaalude crowd has turned it into a less than inspiring place to hang out. About the only other thing happening is Pine Nob, an outdoor theatre that's only open in the

summer, booking "softer" rock acts like the Beach Boys or Seals & Crofts. There are a couple of small folk clubs—Detroit's folk scene is small but well-entrenched—and at least one excellent jazz club, Baker's Keyboard Lounge, where Roland Kirk and Pharoah Sanders appear frequently.

But Detroit, sad to say, is no longer a rock & roll city. Detroit bands like the Amboy Dukes and Bob Seger still kick out the jams, but find a more receptive audience in Missouri and Kansas than in their home town. It's hard to predict these things, but it seems a safe assumption that it'll be a long time before anyone talks about a "Detroit Sound" again.

The Austin scene has been much celebrated of late, although as yet no truly big national stars have emerged from the city, and none of the elaborate plans tossed around by monied outsiders for the development of the city's music resources have yet been actualized.

A lot of people have been coming to Austin, and a lot have stayed, joining the locals in their low-key enjoyment of a scene consisting of peaceful, unpressured days and evenings spent listening to boozy country & western music.

The "Cosmic Cowboy" myths has spread like wildfire all over the state of Texas, making overnight legends of Michael Murphy, B. W. Stevenson, Frieda & the Firedogs, and the rest of Austin's music community, particularly Doug Sahm.

All these musicians, and whoever else happens to be in town, hold forth at either the Armadillo, Austin's fortress-like dance and concert hall, or at the Soap Creek Saloon, a smaller club with a more intimate atmosphere. At both facilities, Lone Star Beer is consumed in prodigious quantities, which fits in well with the style of traditional Western Swing combined with Texas folk-rock most of the local talent seems to be playing lately.

It's a very local, comfortable scene, not interested in proselytizing or promoting any 'Austin Sound.' And it doesn't look too immediately likely that anybody will be significantly influenced by Austin around the country. The scene here is too much a product of the history, culture, locality and the peculiar nature of the local populace to hold much universal potential.

But it doesn't need to leave Austin, really. At the rate people are coming here to track it down, it looks like everyone who wants it has decided to simply come and get it. The hard part, as so many have found, is leaving . . .

The Dallas/Ft. Worth area is currently searching for a new, cosmopolitan image to bring it into step with the '70s, and this civic goal is reflected in the music scene. Not

many years ago, virtually nothing was available between the extremes of hole-in-the-wall joints and the concert circuit. A few clubs managed to get by with acoustic acts, but good rock clubs were notably absent.

Those were the days before the State Fair Music Hall got its interior face lift, when Blood Sweat & Tears and Spirit at their peak filled the aging auditorium. The Majestic Theatre thrived briefly as a rock hall, presenting acts like Jeff Beck, Gentle Giant and Procol Harum, but it didn't last long. The Dallas and Ft. Worth Cellars enjoyed their heyday then too. The focal points for a small but solid music community, nearly every performer from these parts—people like Nitzinger and the Winter brothers—have paid at least some of their dues there. But the Cellars are both gone, victims of progress and renovation.

But as I said, things are changing. The newly-opened Aragon Ballroom bills itself as "the largest dance floor in the Southwest." Medium-rising national acts and local boogie bands fill the place regularly. Dr. John and Texas headlined the grand opening in April. A weekly hour of live music is broadcast from the Aragon Thursday evenings over KZEW-FM.

The concert scene centers around four or five large auditoriums. Tarrant County Convention Center holds 15,000 and is a regular stop on the national tour circuit. Likewise the 10,000 seat Dallas County Convention Center hosts big-game touring acts. The Rolling Stones, Dylan, Joni Mitchell, and ELP have all appeared at these facilities.

On rare occasions when the Convention Centers are not available, the slightly smaller Moody Coliseum hosts a concert. It's located in Dallas on the campus of Southern Methodist University. Also at SMU is McFarlin Auditorium, a frequent stop for groups just below superstar status. It has a close-up feeling reminiscent of the old Majestic.

That leaves only Texas Hall at the University of Texas at Arlington, midway between Dallas and Ft. Worth. It's a nice concert hall, but the security is somewhat overbearing at times.

The first clubs to bring in national name acts, Gertie's and Mother Blues form the backbone of the new club movement in Dallas, Brian Auger recently played Gertie's, as did Bruce Springsteen, Mother Blues has had Tim Weisberg. The two clubs are owned in common by the same team (Bill Simonson and Larry Bradford) that opened the Aragon.

The Rubaiyat is the oldest continually operating folk club in the U.S. It has changed locations over the years, but remains a folk club in the coffeehouse tradition. The Western Place is Dallas' leading country club, including many of Austin's "progressive country" acts, such as Jerry Jeff Walker.

Ft. Worth has a small but growing night life scene. Nothing to match Gertie's, Ma Blues or the Aragon, but smaller clubs are on the rise. The Hop has food, drinks and local bands, I Gotcha is Ft. Worth's best boogie bar, presenting popular area dance bands—and people do dance, since I Gotcha is one of the few places in town where they can do so.

Paul Mayo's Westworld (formerly Omar's) serves the country rock set, with acts like Willie Nelson and Waylon Jennings. Other clubs offering live entertainment include Beef 'n' Boogie, Daddio's, Experience, Fat Albert's, New Bluebird Nite Club, the Nutcracker,

and the 13th National Bank. It's mostly copy-rock, local groups that will never amount to anything, but when a decent local group comes along at least they've got plenty of opportunities to play.

Meanwhile the City Fathers, in their effort to make Dallas into a sophisticated city, are planning to transform the old downtown warehouse district into an entertainment complex. Simonson and Bradford, who have already played such a large role in the local scene, are reportedly scouting around for an all-night restaurant they can turn into a youth hot spot. It'll take awhile, but it looks like big changes are in store for Dallas.

—Kim Martin
(Kim Martin is a staff writer for Buddy, a fresh, well-written new music publication in Dallas).



Houston is best known these days as the home of Z.Z. Top and Texas boogie blues music. Formerly it was known as the home of Duke Records and the big band blues of Bobby 'Blue' Bland. Bland still appears regularly at the Continental Showcase, run by the former owner of Duke, and Z.Z. Top headlines local concerts all the time, but surprisingly there's little interest among area musicians in emulating either successful sound. In fact local musicians, if anything, pay homage to the "Cosmic Cowboy" sound of Austin and San Antonio.

Sir Douglas, Michael Murphy, B.W. Stevenson, et. al., are local heroes, and their style of country-rock predominates Liberty Hall, the main (and basically the only) club in the area, much like the Armadillo World Headquarters in Austin. Holding 400, Liberty Hall presents two shows a night, is known for booking acts like Loggins & Messina and the Burrito Bros. before they ever became famous, and is really quite a good club. Everybody plays there—even the Dolls, although the place was practically empty on their night.

The Coliseum and Hofheinz Pavilion are the two largest arenas in Houston, with 12,000 seats apiece, and it's there that acts like the Stones, Dylan, ELP, Chicago, and Black Oak Arkansas have held forth. The Astrodome occasionally presents Elvis, Sonny & Cher, and a yearly jazz festival, and the Music Hall has hosted many good shows, including King Crimson and Bobby Womack, although rock is currently forbidden there due to the installation of new carpets. Carpets! The hiatus is not expected to last much longer, however.

Strangely enough, jazz is very big in Houston. La Bastille is the leading club, bringing in Larry Coryell, Pharoah Sanders, the Crusaders and other top jazz attractions on a regular basis. Country too, of course, chiefly at Gilley's, owned by Mickey Gilley, Jerry Lee Lewis' cousin, who still plays his rockabilly hits to full houses every weekend.

Local music, though, is conspicuously absent. The Conqueroo, one of the oldest surviving Texas rock bands, still works the area. They're excellent, too. Rocky Hill and his band are the

only ones that have come along in the Z.Z. Top/Johnny Winter mold, and Hill is a fine guitarist who'll probably go a long way. The only other local musician who comes to mind is Don Sanders, a likeable, humorous guy who has issued two albums on his own label, Mean 'n Low Records, one of which has a topographical map of Texas etched onto the B-side! That's the spirit of local music and local recording, but Sanders seems to be the only one that's got it. And if he follows the pattern, he'll soon be snatched up by some major company and Houston will be back where it started again.

—Bob Claypool

(Bob Claypool is a music critic for The Houston Post.)



Since the closing of The Image four years ago, the Miami scene has never been the same. The Image, located in North Miami, was a great club, presenting the top acts of their time (the Lovin' Spoonful, the Mothers, Led Zeppelin). It was the kind of scene where if Led Zeppelin were appearing, Jeff Beck might well come down and jam with them. According to Beck, in fact, "The Image was one of the best clubs I ever played in." It was closed down when the city fathers grew fearful of drug traffic and other potential offenses.

Until recently, the closing of The Image (which in its time gave birth to its own record label and its own group, Blues Image) left Miami with little except singles bars and expensive night clubs. Big name rock acts could be seen at the Convention Hall or the Sportatorium, a converted aircraft hangar holding 14,000. Neither is much liked by the local kids, who prefer to hang out at one of the many clubs in the Big Daddy's chain, where watered drinks and local bands can be taken in.

Lately, however, things have perked up a bit with the opening of St. Peter's Gate, which books well-known, national talent almost exclusively. Between St. Peter's, and Big Daddy's, and the smaller clubs such as the Oasis in Hollywood or the Grove Pub in Coconut Grove, and the many soul clubs that dot Miami's beach scene, there are many places to go, but (according to most local fans) not enough variety.

For that, a lot of people choose to make the drive up to Ft. Lauderdale, where clubs like the Button, the Ocean Mist and She present local talent and the Flying Machine and the Playpen frequently bring in out-of-town acts that are on the verge of making it big nationally. Ft. Lauderdale has a heavy youth population, so there's always something happening almost any night of the week.

Other parts of Florida tend to be dominated by Big Daddy's, who apply their formula of bar bands, drinks, and a heavily advertised image, all over the state, from Orlando to Tampa. Tampa, which has produced many outstanding groups in its time, and was the home in the late '60s of a very active local recording scene, seems to have been dormant for awhile, but the next big group to emerge from there, or anywhere else in Florida for that matter, will almost certainly be a veteran of many nights at one Big Daddy's or

"Foosball and air hockey are very big..."

another.

For an area with this large a percentage of young people (Miami is the home of Dade Junior College, with over 50,000 students—the largest junior college in the country—as well as the University of Miami and many other large institutions) the scene is notably lacking in the kind of venues the young people themselves would prefer to patronize, and the scene is ripe for somebody to come in with another hall like The Image and really stir up some action.



Atlanta's club scene was aptly characterized during a recent conversation which included WIIN Radio's Brent Alberts and Steve Wise from the *Great Speckled Bird* gathered for a live interview with ELO's Jeff Lynne. "It's incredible, man," Brent, music director of the city's only progressive AM station, noted, "—there's big-name rock acts every week at Richards', and now Cooley's Ballroom. The Music Hall has folk-rock type talent, then the Southernaire with hot country and Fifties lineups, it goes on and on. This town's blown wide open."

Rock in Atlanta clubs up until 1971 was "virtually nonexistent," according to Mike Bone, a Southern music *au courant* if there is one, since he was involved in various positions around the city and saw it all happen since 1970. "At that time, Bone remembered, "the only clubs going were the small folk places; occasionally, you'd see a rock band like Kudzu playing in one of the gay bars. The Head Rest (a large and ephemeral building downtown) and shortly thereafter, Funochio's (a now-historic, and empty, site near the old Strip on Peachtree) got downtown rock 'n rollers into the idea of going to a 'club' to hear rock music. This wasn't the 'North Atlanta' crowd, but the gut-level rockers in the community. Funochio's wasn't 'rough' so much, but it was loose and funky."

"They said Richards' was crazy when they opened early in '73 bringing in *name* national and international acts—too big for Funochio's but not quite ready for concerts. It took about four months, but it *worked* and they're still going. That brought the consciousness of the entire South up. A lot of musicians came into Richards' and said it was the finest hall they'd seen—in the world. You might say Funochio's broke the ice and Richards' came along and *melted* it. Now you have more places like Alex Cooley's Ballroom, it's big, new and has plenty of potential. I'd even look for a third giant rock hall to open here inside the year."

After the posh 800-seat facility opened at 10th and Monroe sixteen months ago, such names as King Crimson, Spooky Tooth, Lou Reed, and Robin Trower have performed at Richards' (their return date for Trower was his only club date on the recent tour). A good indicator of the height to which the place has risen is the network of some 30 stations in the Southeast and as far west as KGB-FM in San Diego featuring broadcasts of performances taped at the club, usually in conjunction with Atlanta University outlets WREK-FM and WRAS-FM.

"Radio people from places like Oregon and others are calling us now," Sims Hinds, promotion director for the club, added. "Also one of the things we're most proud of is our ability to make a good solid market in the area for a group. A three-to-six day stay at Richards' is much more meaningful than an opening slot at a concert. A good example is Manfred Mann; few people were that aware of him last summer when we brought him in. Now Atlanta leads the sales of *Get Your Rocks Off*."

Alex Cooley, a promoter who's received diverse publicity since the Atlanta Pop Festival days of 1969-70, opened his Electric Ballroom into this context recently. Although appropriately furnished, the giant 1,200-capacity hall in the Georgian Terrace Hotel experienced audio problems stemming from an uncomfortably high "apparent d.b. level" and they closed one week for extensive sound improvements, reopening with Electric Light Orchestra. A healthy sense of competition seems to be the consensus from spokesmen for both entities. One recurrent comment is that the two big-scale clubs operating simultaneously will keep "everyone on their toes" and make even more music available in the city. At this point, it's quite credible that both will prosper, with Richards' established seniority countered by the Ballroom's boast of a quad P.A. system and an impressive roster.

Until last fall, the appearance of blues acts in Atlanta was a scarcity. At that time Richards' brought Muddy Waters to town and the reception was so positive that the club owners instituted a calendar of "at least one week of blues per month," which has included Roosevelt Sykes, Robert Lockwood, Willie Dixon, and John Lee Hooker. The Ballroom's response with James Cotton and Freddie King heralds plenty of exposure here for that long-ignored music form.

Outside of rock, there are two other locations in Atlanta on the same plane of sophistication: the Great Southeast Music Hall, offering top folk, folk-rock, and esoteric entertainment while just a few yards away (both are in Broadview Shopping Center, Northeast). The Southernaire does the same with mainstream country music.

The Music Hall, a comfortably-attuned 500-seat "listening room," opened in late 1972 and the list of performers there looks like a who's who in the softer and tastier genres—Harry Chapin, Leo Kottke, Doc Watson, Roger McGuinn, Earl Scruggs, Linda Ronstadt, etc. "I had no idea what to expect when I was booked in here," Chapin once remarked, "but, damn, this is by far the finest hall of its type in the country."

"We don't want the stigma of a 'country-western' club here," Tom Beckwith said in the Southernaire office as Jeannie C. Riley prepared to go onstage, "This is a 'country music club' and there's lots of difference, more sophistication, but not *too* much." The recently-opened 900-capacity location is perhaps the most plush of the Atlanta club scene, with carpet all the way to the parking lot. Prominent city judges, sports people, and other officials rub elbows there with longhairs and rednecks alike—to acts like Ferlin Husky, Buck Owens, Ray Charles, and Jerry Lee Lewis.

From this crux, Atlanta clubs fan out into places like Uncle Sam's, a

smaller location catering to the more conservative top 40 crowds from Georgia State, Ga. Tech, and the north Atlanta singles apartments.

Underground Atlanta, restored and opened in 1969 as a tourist attraction, hosts a maze of almost twenty clubs in two city blocks which are truly *underground*, beneath the Courtland Street/Ga. State University area immediately downtown. You're exposed there to rock 'n roll at a half-dozen places like the Mad Hatter and the Front Page, uptown r&b at the Mine Shaft, Dixieland at the Big Horn, Las Vegas-type stuff at Scarlett O'Hara's and Ruby Red's. More than a few rock superstars have visited Muhlenbrinks in Underground to see Piano Red, the famous blues/rocker who does nightly sets there.

The Bistro, a tiny and intimate site offering acoustic folk, is the last of the long-time Atlanta spots still going, now that the legendary 12th Gate has closed and Paschal's, once a focal point for jazz greats, is in a state of limbo. Even though rumors persist about jazz clubs to open in the city, oddly enough none have appeared, save for the Marquis Lounge in the Atlanta International Hotel, the only place here where jazz is heard—Saturday nights only.

Atlanta may not be the "Liverpool of the '70's," as Al Kooper pompously announced last year, but the domain is going hot 'n heavy and in the area on any night now—even the excruciatingly dry Sundays—you can fill your head with a hell of a lot of good music.

—Jim Pettigrew



Don't come to Nashville if you crave "live" music every night. Despite a plethora of pickers, the city lacks the vital club scene found in spots such as Austin, San Francisco, or even Columbus.

"Music City U.S.A." is the home of over 40 recording studios in addition to ten times that many publishing companies. Most of the music is confined to the studios because the artists who come to Nashville come either to record or to rest from the rigors of the road.

Nashville is also known as "The Athens of the South" due to its fourteen colleges and an actual full-scale replica of the Parthenon. Eight of the colleges are religious institutions whose students are rarely found engaging in pub crawls. It might also be noted that the woods around here are full of Methodist, Baptist, Church of Christ, and Pentecost devotees. Indeed, Nashville is also known as "The Buckle of the Bible Belt."

Still willin'? OK, then hop in mah ol' dented blue Duster and we'll make the tour. Let's pretend it is now Friday night for the sake of a more active evening.

Our first stop will be at T.G.I. Friday's, one link in the infamous Friday's chain. There's no music tonight but we do find a crowd of business yokels and college kids. The hamburgers are tasty and the bar contains enough hooch to get you through a nuclear attack. Music on Sunday when the "Woody's" (a folk-country trio) perform. California legend Bobby Jameson is currently organizing a Monday jam session

around a rotating group of musicians like Jim Rooney (author of *Boss Men*), Karl Himmel (ex-Mother Earth), and Bucky Meadows.

Across the street we'll wander into Nashville's only "listening room"—Exit/In. The club seats a mere twelve dozen but boasts excellent talent and a small but active bar. In recent months B. J. Thomas, Roland Kirk, Michael Murphy, Barefoot Jerry, Weather Report, Alex Harvey, the Dillards and Waylon Jennings performed here. Artists do two sets per night, generally from Wednesday to Saturday.

The Grand Ole Opry has now moved to sumptuous quarters in Opryland. The Opry puts on two shows every Friday and Saturday in addition to the Grand Ole Gospel shows on Sunday. We'll bypass it tonight since it is about 8 miles out Briley Parkway.

Instead, we'll take in some funkier spots. A quick jaunt down West End brings us to Bishop's American Pub, a cozy spot featuring writers and pickers with high hopes of making it. Management screens out the clunkers; if you don't dig one of the acts, then duck into the backroom for pool, foosball, pinball, or electronic ping-pong. Some of the amateurs are quite good, the beer is reasonable, and the atmosphere relaxed. Until the performers pass the hat, that is.

From here our intrepid group would possibly venture to Jock's, once the college hangout, pickup spot, and quaalude center. Jock's got itself mentioned on TV as a prime local dope distribution beehive. As a result, the cops started coming around; the crowds once three-deep at the bar soon dwindled. Four nights a week of music can still be found, however. No cover, but the band performs from a stage about 12 feet above the bathrooms. Despite this drawback, Kossi Gardner, Danny Flowers (ace harmonica), and John Hiatt (debut album on Epic), often perform.

Three blocks northwest we'll stroll into the Bluegrass Inn. No cover, beer only, and almost non-stop bluegrass performed by an unknown but competent bunch. The patrons are usually young and raucous, shouting for "Rocky Top," "Orange Blossom Special," or "Foggy Mountain Breakdown" over and over regardless of what the band just played.

For authentic bluegrass we'll head over to The Old Time Picking Parlor. They don't play *no* rock and roll; if Norman Blake is onstage you won't care. He makes Johnny Winter seem arthritic and plays the purest bluegrass you're likely to hear. Vasser Clements drops in occasionally. Beer and pizza available. The club tends to attract the serious bluegrass fanatic, a few stray tourists, and out-of-town musicians who come to hear Blake, Clements, and Buck White, a mandolin virtuoso who heads up his family band.

We've just time for the last set at The Roof, the lounge atop Roger Miller's King of the Road Hotel. The Roof is basically another hotel clip joint but every so often Ronnie Milsap or Jim Mundy does a couple of weeks. Talent here is mainly club-country type shows featuring minor country "names."

After hours, the only spot open is Doug Green's Dusty Roads, a beer joint where performers go to unwind. Entertainment there is on a spontaneous basis however, so we'll opt for a few hours in the rack. Tomorrow we'll go get us some rock and roll.

Beaver's is a good place to do just that, since they inherited most of the refugees from Jock's, with an active game room, a little live music, and a reputation as *the* place for the young to hang out. This week, anyway.

When Beaver's loses its charm the dedicated dog heads for Mickey Finn's, out the Gallatin Road almost to Madison. Local rock groups churn it out 5 nights a week here for a modest cover. Air hockey occupies a back corner and the bar would satisfy all but the most pretentious. Mickey's had the only regular rock music until our next stop opened early this year.

Muther's Music Emporium is a large, bare room seating about 800. They rock every night to good regional bands with frequent major league acts like Hawkwind, Electric Light Orchestra, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Charlie Daniels, and Kidd. They serve beer and food next to a game room bulging with over 25 various ways to invest or throw away your quarters. The clientele is almost exclusively under 23, and highly receptive to loud rock.

That's about the size of the circuit save for infrequent shows at the City Coliseum, capacity 9000. Vanderbilt, Belmont, and Fisk colleges promote occasional shows; three respective recent examples being Jerry Lee Lewis, Charlie Rich, and Herbie Hancock.

The new 4,400 seat Opry House presented Tom Scott and Joni Mitchell in March; they plan to bring in James Taylor next if they can awaken him.

Beyond these hotspots there are a fair number of motel bands, country combos, dance bars, and a "strip" of clip clubs and burlesque bars in Printer's Alley.

Looking back, the picture doesn't seem all that gloomy. The key factors for hearing good music here are diligence, planning, and openness to different styles and degrees of professionalism. Until there is a consistent, medium-sized club offering several kinds of music regularly, you'll have to dig out your entertainment, make friends with some pickers, and hope to get into the private party circuit.

—John M. Lomax



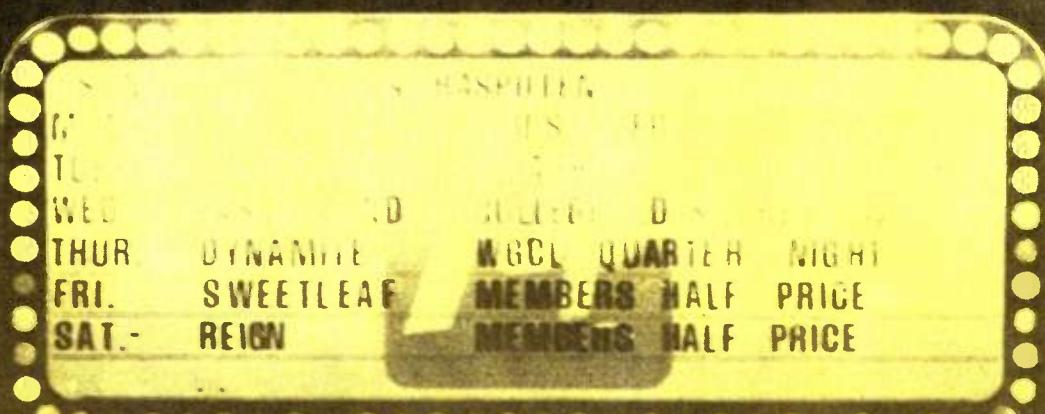
Memphis was a red-hot river town before the depression. Profits from the sale of the year's cotton crop could easily be lost in one evening at the bars, card games and whorehouses on Beale Street, the center of Memphis nightlife at the time. The history of Memphis music is traced back to the blues of W.C. Handy, Furry Lewis and other black musicians who played the Beale Street clubs.

Although the "Memphis Sound" has been pouring from our recording studios since the Fifties, the city never really had an active rock club scene. Rock stars rarely came to town, even for concerts, and there were certainly no nightclubs with the facilities or the audience to attract them. Musical entertainment was confined to the hack bar and lounge groups, C&W and soul clubs. Local artists were forced to imitate the

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"They'll look back on this era like Liverpool kids recalling Beatle nights at the Cavern."

music on the radio in order to make a living.

But in 1969 Memphis legalized liquor-by-the-drink, and later the legal age in the state was lowered to 18, precipitating a new era of nightlife in the city.

The sparkplug for the action is Overton Square, Memphis' modern day Beale Street. It is made up of nightclubs, bars, restaurants and specialty shops that draw people of all ages and backgrounds.

Three nightclubs are located in the active mid-town area that has grown up around the Square. Two of them, High Cotton and Eli's, are a couple of blocks away from the main action but draw faithful clientele. They each hold about 150 people, serve food and drinks at tables or drinks at the bar, and feature bands on most nights.

High Cotton used to be pretty wild. Don Nix or Larry Raspberry and the Highsteppers could cause near riots. Cripples threw away their crutches and danced on the tables, and girls took their clothes off. It was good fun but shortlived. New management made new rules, and it has been only recently that local groups like the Hot Dogs have begun rockin' the place again.

High Cotton is strictly a local club. It has neither the facilities or the crowd to feature name acts.

Eli's started out with a big build-up but has never really rocked. It draws a slightly more refined crowd than High Cotton and features local artists only. Eli's has one of those cute little stage arrangements about eight feet off the floor behind the bar.

The only club with regular excitement and name acts is Lafayette's Music Room smack in the middle of the Overton Square action. Depending on who's playing, it can be full of drunk Memphis State University students or the quahauded glitter set.

Unlike many clubs with big reputations and small seating areas, Lafayette's is quite spacious and has class. They can pack in 300 people on a good night at the upstairs and downstairs tables and the bar. Performers are visible from just about anywhere in the club, and no seat is more than a hundred feet from the stage.

Performances are usually good because the artists are treated royally by the management and the audience. Lafayette's is part of a four-club Southern circuit, including Richard's and Great Southeast Music Hall in Atlanta and the Exit Inn in Nashville, that can keep an act working for weeks. The sound system is clean, and usually one set during an engagement is broadcast over WMC-FM or WLYX-FM.

Local artists frequently play Lafayette's either as the second act or the headliner when no out-of-town groups are booked. Big Star, Target, The Hot Dogs, Yankee Dime and other locals all get their turns regularly. When Larry Raspberry and the Highsteppers are in town there is a carnival atmosphere at the club and things begin to pop. Their late sets often become jam sessions with Don Nix, Duck Dunn of the MG's and visiting artists who might be in town for the evening.

Overton Square will probably never get as wild as Beale Street was, but it sure has loosened up the city since 1970. There is finally more to do in Memphis than see a movie. And there are too many good musicians around not to have more local heroes

soon.

—Steve Rhea



The character of the Cleveland club scene is determined by the fact that people here go out to dance, and since discos aren't popular, bands become living jukeboxes. In the summer of 1972 when "Go All the Way" was storming up the national charts, the Raspberries were playing "Get Back" and "Brown Sugar" at CYO dances. The musical demands of crowds and club owners are a source of constant complaint for the bands, but more than a dozen bands are making a living as fulltime musicians.

Cleveland and the Youngstown area, including Warren, are talent-nurturing grounds for an axis that includes Akron, Kent and Toledo, and to a lesser degree, Pittsburgh, which boasts a few popular bands of its own. The area has given birth to the Outsiders, the Human Beinz, the Choir, the James Gang, Baskerville Hounds, Glass Harp and the Raspberries—and Maureen McGovern.

Biggest drawing Cleveland acts are almost all top 40 or progressive (Bowie, Uriah Heep, Deep Purple, Edgar Winter) cover bands, performing a stock repertoire that almost always includes "All Right Now," "Long Train Running" and "Johnny B. Goode." These include Frenz and Sweetleaf with their crisp top 40 dance sound, the heavier Fully Assembled, Magic, East Wind and Bluestone, and Rainbow Canyon, known for their irresistible high energy performances. The class bar bands are the sleek, attractive Circus who waste an awful lot of musical ability on "Johnny B. Goode," and Dynamite, formed by maverick Raspberries Dave Smalley and Jim Bonfanti, who play a unique selection of material ranging from old Hollies to recent Lynyrd Skynyrd and some driving rock 'n' roll originals.

The only long-lived all-original band is a classical-rock duo called Atlantic Philharmonic. A couple of others have developed a more personal style, such as Dragonwyck who play an unsettling mixture of lame Moody Blues and marvelous boogie; Reign, half original hard rock and half Yes-Moodies-Rundgren; and Jimmy Ley's Coosa River Band and the Case of E.T. Hooley, both leaning towards r&b.

Youngstown area bands tend to be more individualistic. Among them are the Lawrence Brothers, a ten man horn band, the ultra-hard rock Left End, soul-boogie LAW (now relocated in Columbus), the jazzy-funy Coconut with its virtuoso guitar and keyboards, the anachronistic Mersey-beat Blue Ash and the erratic I don't Care who can play dance sets or improvised jazz and have a Moog player who studied with Keith Emerson.

The main cluster of clubs is in Cleveland, while the outlying cities tend to have one main club at a given time with a scattering of others. The top bands circulate among these, playing one nighters, as few clubs in this area book a band for more than a night at a time. Roadies lead a hard life.

The clubs themselves change, but the number of clubs in the area has

remained about the same in the past couple of years. The amount of music played has increased as clubs book live bands more nights, up to six and seven in some Cleveland clubs.

Cleveland's granddaddy club is the Agora, downtown near Cleveland State University, providing music seven nights a week for a crowd that is more sophisticated than that of any other rock club. Monday night concerts feature acts like Peter Frampton and Rory Gallagher. These concerts often fill the club to its 1300 person capacity, and local music biz celebrities turn out. Other nights are held by bands like Fully Assembled, Magic, Circus and Rainbow, who play the same night each week for an extended period.

A tradition associated with the Agora is that the band holding its Sunday night slot goes on to bigger things. Terry Knight and the Pack became Grand Funk, Charade had a hit record and an Epic recording contract prior to their break-up, the Raspberries followed Charade and now Rainbow Canyon will shortly relinquish the spot to go on tour following the recent release of their first album.

Nearby is the newly-opened House of Bud, featuring top local bands and some touring acts (Les Variations, Caravan) seven nights a week in a collegiate atmosphere. Fat Glenn's, on the campus proper, presents a rotation of the most popular local acts on Fridays and Saturdays, and draws a younger college crowd to drink and dance in surroundings suggestive of a cafeteria. Also downtown is the Roundtable, formerly an over-21 singles bar. It attracts a more mature crowd and plays less strictly commercial bands, like Reign, Dragonwyck and I Don't Care, three nights a week.

Out in the suburbs, a number of clubs bring top local draws to crowds made up primarily of working kids 18 and up, including greasers, still very much in evidence in Cleveland. Most of these clubs are small and funky and have poor lighting and sound systems, if any, but the bands are polished and professional. On the west side are the Corral, Donny's, the Karma; on the east side, the Utopia and the Stables and on the south side, deep in the heart of greaserland, Maple Heights, is the Longhorn. To the far east the resort town of Geneva-on-the-Lake has the Castaways and the Kove which book bands up to seven nights a week in the summer but stay open all year around with major Cleveland groups. Most of these outlying clubs feature bands three and four nights a week, while some, like the Karma and the Longhorn go up to six.

Besides the 18 and over clubs, two strictly teen clubs remain, the Cyrus Erie West and the Chesterland Hullabaloo, playing dance bands like Magic, Circus and Dynamite on Fridays and Saturdays. Any given weekend night, in addition to more than two dozen clubs, there are a countless number of high school, college and church hall dances.

A very few tiny clubs, the downtown Viking Saloon and the recently opened Cellar Door on the east side, continually present bands that play off-beat styles—blues/rock, country/rock, jazz/rock and so forth. These clubs even attract a few listeners along with the drinkers and dancers.

Moving south to Akron, the big club at the moment is the Wildlife where a primarily 18-22 crowd gathers four nights a week to dance to bands like Circus, Fully Assembled

and LAW. In Warren, the Zebra with its dated op art decor and in Youngstown, the tin-foil decorated Apartment, both located in true middle America fashion in shopping centers, play the big Youngstown and Cleveland names and attract tough crowds representative of this metal-and-grease area of steel mills and auto plants.

In Kent, everything centers around the university. The biggest club, the 1000 capacity Rathskellar, is right on campus. It rotates top area bands—Circus, Sweetleaf, Frenz—three nights a week. Down the street Friar Tuck's is packed four nights a week with students enjoying the area's better dance bands. J.B.s downtown plays less experienced bands now, but is worth mentioning because it was once the incubator for the James Gang, Glass Harp and the Raspberries.

Toledo's 1800 capacity Agora and the smaller Garage down the street cater to University of Toledo students. The Agora draws its bands from Cleveland with live music six nights a week including a Tuesday night concert series like the Cleveland Agora's Monday nights. The Garage plays local bands on weekends.

Pittsburgh, an hour from Youngstown, has a different character partly dictated by the 21 drinking age which limits the size of rock crowds. Main club is the Zodiac, large (over 2000 people) and glittery, which plays live bands on weekends. The smaller clubs, like the Grove, the Staircase, the Lodge and the Love Inn have bands one or two nights a week. A couple of local names are certified draws, like the Jaggerz of "Rapper" fame, Wild Cherry from Wheeling, West Virginia, and Dark Horse. Cleveland and Youngstown bands like Coconut, Fully Assembled and Sweetleaf also play Pittsburgh. Nearby in Wheeling, West Virginia, the Alamo books in similar top area acts.

On the whole, there are more bands, more clubs, and more local excitement here than ever before. The time is right for another batch of Ohio bands to storm the nation, and chances are it'll be those who've spent the most time working their way through the local grind. These groups are topnotch professionals, and the day will come when local kids will look back on these days like Liverpool kids recalling Beatle nights at the Cavern.

—Anastasia Pantisios

(Anastasia Pantisios is a contributing music journalist to Zeppelin, one of Cleveland's local entertainment papers.)



Within the Southern Ohio/Tristate area Cincinnati has developed into the current focus for regional rock energy. The bands may get their starts elsewhere (Columbus has had an incredible volume of bands in past years) but they filter into Cincinnati to get solid support and establish some homeward strength for working the entire Midwest. Of course, being the home for A-Jaye Agency, the regional booking agency, doesn't hurt either.

Following the trends in the Midwest over the past years, the

basin caught the psychedelic breeze just as it rushed from its coastal peaks. As the last discotheque (The Mug Club) closed in '67, new clubs with popular local bands catered to clientele with a strobe-light gleam and ultraviolet hype.

The Black Dome opened its doors to the acid bands as Jelly Pudding, the first underground FM programming, influenced the city. The Sacred Mushroom became the real underground band with a hippie/band/hangout house, and, finally, an album which showed regional success but never caught on nationally. The Lemon Pipers had their national hit, "Green Tambourine." Soon the Ludlow Garage opened and both the Garage and the Dome mixed local talents with national acts in a concert setting. The whole scene culminated in the notorious Cincinnati Rock Festival where such popular local groups as Balderdash and East Orange Express played along with Grand Funk and Mountain.

When the acid scene subsided into the '70s, most of the bands disintegrated. The Black Dome closed (later to be replaced by a parking lot) and the Garage's demise followed in '71, closing out the concert scene. Fortunately for local talent, Reflections had opened the year before to keep live entertainment in town. Dilly's in Mt. Adams also offered live shows, as did the newly opened Agora in Columbus.

Reflections is the strongest club in Cincinnati, maintaining a popularity through size (capacity over 600), improved facilities and acoustics, and sheer duration. The management has intently exploited national trends in terms of local acceptance to present an amazing variety of sounds to suit the interests of its audience. Still, the club often leads the rest of the scene in trends and recently has been drawing an audience bearing the closest Midwest resemblance to the glitter scene this side of Cleveland. The club has been drawing acts from a large radius—some from as far away as California. A new management agency, Daemon Limited, has grown out of Reflection, looking for unique show bands with Punk as its most successful to date.

The other clubs drawing sizeable crowds are Crow's and Alexander's. Crow's is the smallest (capacity 180) and is usually packed with a generally male crowd looking to be pleased by the best in local talent. Mushroom Jones, Starstruck (with former Lemon Pipers) and Magic Dog are the finest. Here is definitely an extension of the "sounds of the south." Alexander's carries many of the same bands as Reflections or Crow's, usually following the trends safely by having the interest in the bands built up elsewhere. The Bear's Den is one other club whose success in the past indicates a strong interest in its country-based bands; Heather, Flat Gap and Hoot Owl. The clientele returns weeks after week to catch their favorite band.

Most of these clubs in Cincinnati lie within reach of the college. High Street and the Agora both lie across from OSU in Columbus, and the crowd lingers there. The Agora replicates Cincinnati, but more erratically with concerts of national acts in between. Throughout the rest of the region, the college-town clubs draw on the talents from the Cincy-based A-Jaye Agency.

The demands of the present audiences dictate the bands on the

market. There are three distinct musical divisions: the boogie/blues-based sound; the progressive-AM, commercial dance bands playing popular, already recorded material (the Pastime Saloon epitomizes this music); and finally there's acoustic, folk, bluegrass country rock with a smaller but dedicated crowd. The heaviest demand is placed on tight commercial bands playing the current pop hits which presents limitations few local bands transcend. Law and Blue Ash from Youngstown, the Elders from Dayton and Exile are the few who blend original material with interestingly conceived arrangements to give more in their shows. Most of the clubs in the area rely on these kind of bands for their audience.

Though there has been a sparseness in fresh material and powerhouse organization, great possibilities lie ahead. "This area has more going for it than anywhere around here east of the Rockies. It isn't until you reach Youngstown or Detroit that anything is going on," explained a representative of A-Jaye. More identity is needed, but there is a current search to find that identity.

Witness the recent growth in small coffeehouses presenting consistently good live entertainment, acoustic or electric. Just across the river in Highland Heights, Kentucky at Northern Kentucky State is the Pearl Harbor Coffeehouse with constant exposure of folk, country-rock, bluegrass and jazz. Also growing is the Queen City Balladeers, a local folk-oriented club for musicians, and the Leo Coffeehouse. The Owl and several other places can be included as providing an audience for a number of groups following this circuit. And Lexington, Ky., has some of the finest talent there too. In addition, a blue-grass committee at University of Cincinnati has promoted several concerts with an independent bluegrass festival coming at the end of May. The resurgence of Pure Prairie League at the recent Poco concert is a further sign of the revived interest in what this area is best suited for; a strong Appalachian sound. And new young bands like Melange combines the best of the country with the boogie influence.

Several clubs both here and in Dayton support a growing interest in jazz. On the other side of innovation is the new attention on Bitter Blood and a brand new band, Queen City.

Ultimately the responsibility for the power of local music lies in the relationship between the performers and the audience. If the crowd will support a band in its efforts to give them its best, original material, then a truly meaningful, regional music scene can be achieved.

—Brad Balfour

(Brad Balfour is music editor of The Queen's Jester, a local entertainment weekly serving the Cincinnati area.)

guitar and a solo vocalist at the Main Point stage. Its success has largely stemmed from wise and adventurous choices of acts by Bill Scarborough, who generally manages to stay ahead of developing audience likes and dislikes. Its location in a peaceful suburb holding several colleges as well as an aware local population has helped but it's really the dedication to perfection that has made The Point survive while other clubs of its type, like The Second Fret, have long since passed away.

But there's plenty to go around, and other clubs cover other areas fairly effectively. The Bijou Cafe operates very much as a nightclub, though with a well-rounded entertainment fare. They lean a bit towards pop performance and slicker acts, with a dash of occasional glitter, though it's balanced with jazz of the highest calibre and the recurring follies. The Bijou appeals to a more mature audience, and is located right in Center City Philadelphia.

These two clubs handle virtually all the local acts and fringe talent, with groups of greater prominence playing The Shubert Theatre, The Tower Theatre or the inevitable Spectrum. The Shubert as well as The Bijou are run by long-time promoters Larry Magid and Allen Spivack, who first brought national rock to Philly at The Electric Factory, a now-closed converted warehouse in the manufacturing district. And though they have the edge on major talent, The Tower Theatre, operated by Pete Wertimer and Rick Green, has made notable contributions to the scene.

The clubs operate nearly seven nights a week and The Spectrum boasts the most rock concerts per year of any hall in the country. Newer spots like Duck Soup and Grendel's Lair occasionally have major acts, but they stick chiefly to local talent, which abounds in Philly. Most of it is folk oriented and just about any place where people can gather is fair game for a concert. All the colleges and many high schools regularly present locals that draw a loyal audience. Generally the artist get paid little or nothing and the atmosphere is pretty casual, though the music is usually excellent. Some of these, such as Forest Green, Essra Mohawk and Whole Oats, have gained sufficient following and attracted enough attention to receive recording contracts and achieve some fame outside the area. But most of the music is authentic folk and not in commercial vogue these days, keeping the available audience rather constant.

But while folk is only holding steady, other musical forms are advancing. Several of the larger bars have acts that classify as rock shows much more than as simply backups to singles interaction, and these groups do at times give concerts. And the recent revival of interest in jazz has opened up a new club that deals exclusively with jazz on the site of the Trauma, Philly's first psychedelic music hall.

In a populous area like Philadelphia, it seems that virtually any kind of entertainment is available. Little can shock or surprise people in a big city, so musical trends come and go gradually. They are absorbed and levelled, so major experiences become ripples on the scene instead of the waves that are created in other places—it's all been done before. Folk music is here to stay, both carrying on the traditional, like the Folksong Society, and producing new songwriters to relate today's problems. Rock is also here to stay—R&B, glitter or whatever—Philly has had its black population and un closeted gays for years. And jazz? Well, even big bands are back—but were they ever really gone? Seems like the more things change the more they stay the same. At least in Philadelphia.

—Fred Trietsch

The Philadelphia music scene has historically revolved around late '50s urban jazz and the country folk of the early '60s. But while folk music gradually drew an expanding audience, both by aesthetic appeal and unbreakable ties to political movements, jazz clubs waned and all but disappeared by the mid-'60s.

Over the years, The Main Point (now recently expanded but still quite intimate) has remained the major showcase for folk acts. While the superstar rock groups battle with crowds and acoustics at The Spectrum, there is still room for a quiet



Boston's musical environment has never been healthier. There is so much going on here, in every realm, that I wouldn't be at all surprised if Boston became the nation's next big trendsetting market.

Local music takes three main directions: jazz, blues-rock and glitter. Many people around the country don't realize what a fantastic jazz scene Boston has. Most of the clubs feature jazz acts at least one night a week, and many are devoted exclusively to it—chiefly the Jazz Workshop and the adjacent Paul's Mall, although the latter also books artists like Taj Mahal. Another fine place to hear jazz is Sandy's, located in a suburb north of Boston. It's a popular club with musicians, and most bands that are playing elsewhere in town will come out to Sandy's for a night. Some indication of the popularity jazz enjoys among local kids can be seen in the fact that a band called Roomfull of Blues, which plays strictly traditional '40s Count Basic music, is currently one of the city's biggest attractions.

Like jazz, and for about the same reasons, blues has always held a loyal following in Boston. There's always some blues artist appearing in town—John Lee Hooker, B.B. King, Buddy Guy, and Junior Wells all make frequent appearances at clubs like Joe's Place (in Cambridge), The Box, Sandy's, and most of the other top clubs. Blues-inspired rock bands such as J. Geils and the James Montgomery Band are naturally much in demand, and many newer groups have formed in their image—notably Duke & the Jivers, fast becoming a local legend.

Then there's Boston's glitter scene, small but intense. Aerosmith is the favored group, replacing the Modern Lovers, who lost most of their momentum in the course of their recent stay in California. Coming up fast are the Sidewinder's with an exciting Beach Boys-derived sound, Reddy Teddy, and a couple of others. Another extremely good group that exhibits remarkable musicianship is Orchestra Luna, with their combination of "spacy" rock, jazz, and avant-garde music. They record for Epic, and should go far. One other group that combines many influences for a strong impact is Skyhook, including former members of such local bands as Swallow and Far Cry.

Of the clubs that regularly present these groups, the Performance Center is the largest (with two rooms, holding 350 and 700 respectively) and most successful. Somewhat comparable to the Bottom Line in New York, the Center features headlining out-of-town bands (recently: Captain Beefheart, 10cc, Ann Peebles, and local girl Bonnie Raitt). It's a fairly new club, having opened in January, but already it's captured the market. The Box is even newer, only a month old, opened on the former site of the Psychedelic Supermarket—a legendary name from an older era.

That leaves only the folk scene, which thrives out of Passim, a bookstore by day that presents acts such as Eric Anderson and Dave Van Ronk by night in its Harvard Square location, and the soul scene, based around the Sugar Shack, one of the country's foremost venues for black entertainment, presenting top artists such as Wilson Pickett, Al Green and Eddie Kendricks, who appear for a week at a time.

With that big a club scene, it's

almost an afterthought to add that there are several large halls also featuring top rock and contemporary musicians on a weekly basis. The Music Hall and the Orpheum each hold between 3 and 4 thousand, while the Boston Garden packs in a full 15,000. Then there's Sanders Theatre, with about 1200, and various other halls owned by the many universities in the area. In addition to all that, there are many, many other clubs also presenting high-caliber entertainment on a smaller scale. Charlie's Place, just opened in Cambridge, has already brought in Richie Havens and Bruce Springsteen, and could become a major venue. Joe's Place, also in Cambridge, burned down recently but is being rebuilt. The All Saints Bar has an all-woman band called Witch that's quite good.

All that considered, there's no escaping the fact that more is going on in Boston today than at any time since the celebrated "Boss-town" fiasco of 1968. It's inevitable that the rest of the country will become aware of what's happening here soon, but hopefully this time without the benefit of such idiotic PR schemes. Boston has become one of America's most exciting music scenes, but not because of any mysterious "sound." It's just that people here appreciate good music. Always have and, I hope, always will.

—Norm Winer

(Norm Winer is program director of WBCN-FM, Boston's leading progressive radio station.)



A few years ago, a group called Raven played at a Buffalo club called the Inferno. At that time, their lead guitarist was 17-year-old J.R. Weitz. Because Weitz hadn't reached the legal drinking age, he wasn't allowed to play inside the club, so he played outside—using a 50-foot cord that stretched from his amplifier to an area just outside the back door.

While the legend of J.R. Weitz may be apocryphal, the story typifies the upstate-New York rock scene. Rock bands will do almost anything to find a decent club for their music.

The best of these clubs is located in the basement of a dormitory at Syracuse University. In addition to bringing in national acts for weekend stands, Jabberwocky opens its thick, wooden doors and offers its excellent acoustics to local bands.

Currently, the Cross Creek Band and Baskin, Hoffman, Lee and Friends rank as Syracuse's best bands. Cross Creek features the light, bouncy country-rock sound of the Eagles, the Flying Burrito Brothers and Poco, as well as material by Merle Haggard and Buck Owens.

The music of Baskin, Hoffman, Lee and Friends reflects their diverse, yet sympathetic, backgrounds. Lloyd Baskin helped form Seatrail. Sandra Lee sang backup for Patti LaBelle as one of the original Blbelles and Mark Hoffman belonged to Jam Factory, a Syracuse band that garnered a regional following in the East.

These two groups occupy the progressive, artistic end of Syracuse's musical spectrum. Besides Jabberwocky, the clubs that support this kind of music include Brookside, a roomy bar that has evolved from country-western music to rock, the Orange and Cap'n Mac's. The Orange, located in the heart of the university area, caters to a diverse clientele—jocks, hangers-on, graduate students, the remnants of a freak community

and neighborhood people. Cap'n Mac's, the original haven for hippies and fellow travellers, recently returned to the Syracuse scene after a four-year absence.

Syracuse also offers a variety of AM-oriented bands, the best of which is Dub. These bands can best be seen at the Yellow Balloon or Uncle Sam's.

About an hour's drive away sits Ithaca. Although a small city, the presence of Cornell University and Ithaca College provides an ample audience for a viable rock scene. Orleans, whose recent ABC album brought them wide exposure, played many of their early jobs at Ithaca's two best clubs—the Salty Dog and the North 40. And while Ithaca has hard rock and blues bands like Albatross and the Goin' Home Blues Band, McKendree Spring (who live in nearby Trumansburg) and Country Cookin' lend a peacefulness that matches the calm waters of nearby Cayuga Lake.

If you head north on Route 81 and connect with the New York State Thruway moving west along what used to be the Erie Canal, you'll arrive in Rochester, home of the Brownie camera and the prestigious Eastman school of music.

While the school has not been a direct pipeline to rock groups, it has provided a nurturing atmosphere for musicians, the most famous being Chuck Mangione.

The Red Creek Inn, presently showcasing Boston-based bands, also features some of Rochester's best groups, including Black Sheep, Old Salt and Joshua's Son.

Black Sheep, whose music fits comfortably in the heavy-metal mold, recently signed a contract with Chrsalis Records. In addition, their "Stick Around" flirts with the possibility of being a regional hit.

Given the current popularity of heavy-metal music and the commercialism of Rochester's clubs, it's not surprising that Black Sheep should be the first group since Bat McGrath and Don Potter to threaten a break into the national scene. Although Black Sheep may become Rochester's most famous band, many believe that Old Salt, a country-rock group, or Joshua's Son, a boogie and blues band, may be the city's finest.

Farther down the Thruway, on the shores of Lake Erie, amid the smoke of Bethlehem Steel, is Buffalo. It's a hard town, big enough to provide a talent pool that produced Garry Malabar, once a member of Van Morrison's band, Sandy Konikoff, one of Joe Cocker's Mad Dogs, and Richard Kermode, who played on the recent Santana album. But it's also small enough to present the ubiquitous problem for local bands—where to play.

In fact, the best place to play in Buffalo is actually outside Buffalo, about 45 minutes away in Corden, New York. There, the Belle Star provides a pastoral setting for the area's best music. One of the Belle Star's current favorites is Cocoa Morgan, a Louisville, Kentucky band led by former Blues Project drummer, Roy Blumenfeld.

Within Buffalo's city limits, the Bona Vista and the One-Eyed Cat offer the best possibilities. The Bona Vista emphasizes variety, from folk music through rock and blues to jazz. The One-Eyed Cat, long the home base for the now-defunct Houserockers (Buffalo's best recent band) may be as famous for its clientele as for its music. Aging hippies, slick blacks and swinging singles, among others, peacefully co-exist in the club's environs.

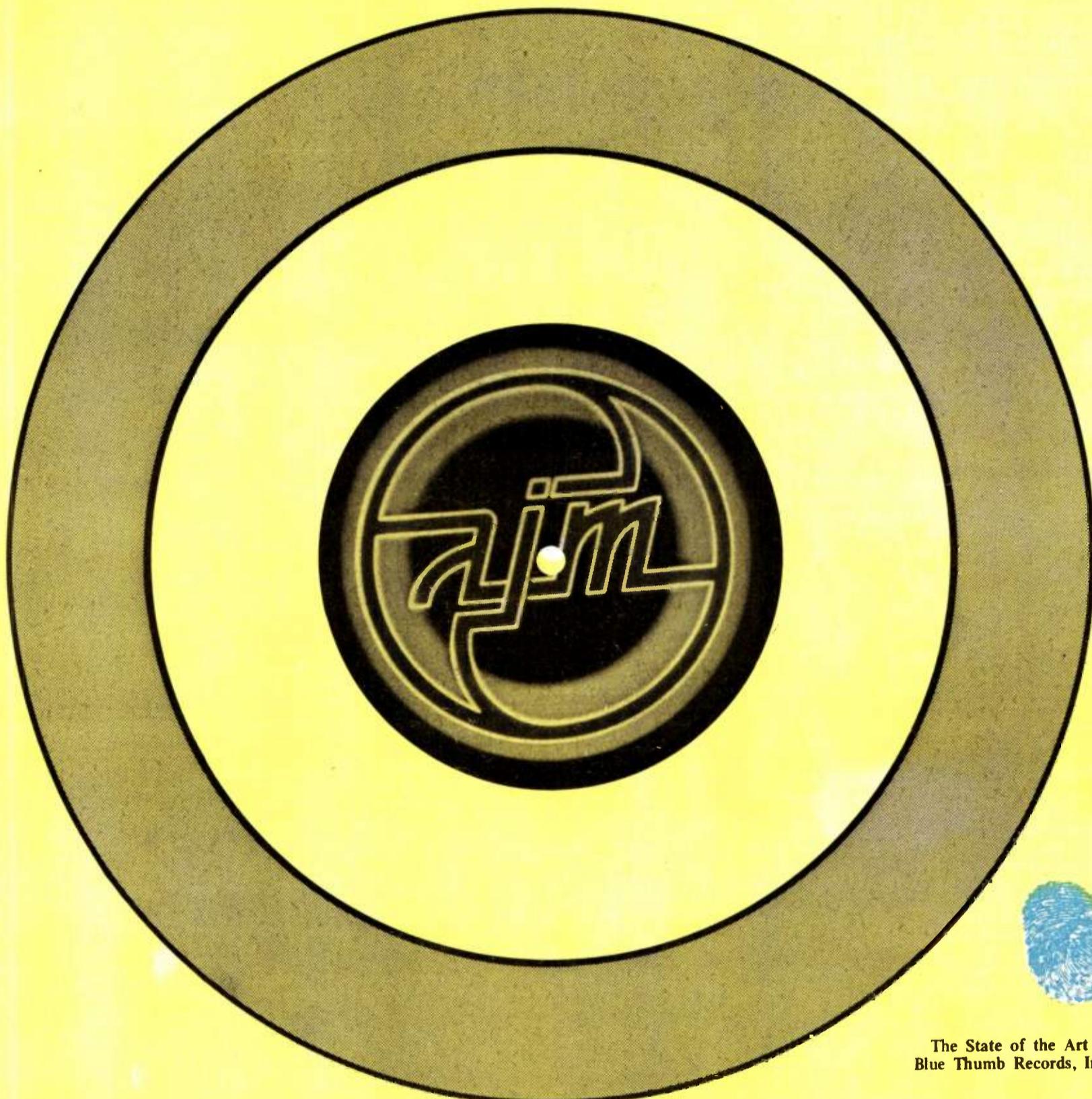
Now that the Houserockers have splintered into two groups (Sweetball and This Band Has No Name) the ranking position in Buffalo's progressive music scene is up for grabs. Blue Ox, an eclectic band with two lead guitarists, may move into contention



The Philadelphia music scene has historically revolved around late '50s urban jazz and the country folk of the early '60s. But while folk music gradually drew an expanding audience, both by aesthetic appeal and unbreakable ties to political movements, jazz clubs waned and all but disappeared by the mid-'60s.

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take aim



Michael Overly

lead guitar, vocalist, songwriter, plays piano and flute • grew up in Ohio, played in Chicago with The Flock, Chicago, Illinois Speed Press and others • worked in LA with Tommy Boyce & Bobby Hart, founded Christopher Cloud

Warren "Bugs" Pemberton

plays drums • born in Liverpool, played with Jackie Lomax in The Undertakers • worked many years in Hamburg along with the Beatles and other tops acts • met Michael Overly in LA and joined Christopher Cloud

Patrick O'Connor

plays bass • born in London, moved to NY in 1965 • played with the Chad Mitchell Trio, Steve Goodman, John & Yoko, Carly Simon and others • came to California in 1971, met "Bugs" and joined Christopher Cloud

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Loren Newkirk

plays keyboards, clarinet, sax, bass • taught music in LA, played and recorded with Donovan, John Stewart, Doug Dillard, Hoyt Axton and many others • met Michael, "Bugs" and Patrick after the breakup of Christopher Cloud • decided to join them in a new band called AIM

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for the top spot.

Ironically, given that Buffalo is reputed to be a hard, beer-drinking industrial town, the local group that may make the biggest national splash is a two-man duo called Gold. They used to line people up on the sidewalks outside of a club called the In Between. Then, after a brief stint in California, they returned to Buffalo and signed a contract with A&M.

Buffalo also has its share of hard, rock 'n' roll, pop bands. Many, like Road or Big Wheelie and the Hub Caps (Buffalo's answer to Sha Na Na) play clubs dominated by younger crowds. The scene in these places shifts rapidly, depending on the whims of their clientele, but the current favorites are McVan's, Keystone 90's, the Crossbow and the Poorhouse. The music at these places is as monolithic as the crowds. resembles the rest of the country's in many ways. Musicians continue to try to expand their audience until it is large enough to propel them into a record contract. Tom Corradino of Bad Medicine, a neglected Syracuse group that finally called it quits after five years, summed up the frustration of the local bands' struggle when he said, "I would move to the moon if there was an audience there." In the meantime, the upstate New York scene continues to give these bands, and their audience plenty of opportunities to play and hear music. It could be worse....

—John Kokot

(John Kokot is music editor of the Buffalo New Times.)



The New York club scene had its heyday during the mid-sixties. On Long Island, the Action House ruled over the suburban scene featuring house bands like the Vagrants, Rascals, and Vanilla Fudge, as well as a slew of second-line backup groups like the Hassles and Rich Kids. The rest of the Island was dotted with numerous clubs of repute like the Oak Beach Inn, Samanthal's, and Zero's, where dozens of up-and-coming groups paid their dues.

In Manhattan, it was the Village clubs where the action could be found. When New York had a scene of its own, groups like the Lovin' Spoonful, Magicians, Flying Machine, King Bees, Velvet Underground, Fugs, Blues Project, Silver Apples, and Lothar and the Hand People packed 'em in. Later on, it was the national stars, both groups and solo artists, who drew the crowds. But the late sixties saw the Fillmore East booking up most of the "name" talent, and other, bigger draws graduated to venues like Carnegie Hall, Philharmonic Hall, and ultimately Madison Square Garden. Through it all though, Steve Paul's Scene was clearly the spot for both name and fast rising talent to perform, jam, or just mingle. If an act was going to happen, you knew they were going to be at The Scene first. It's impossible to list the varied firsts for The Scene, but some of their more memorable nights included dream dates with Jimi Hendrix, Tiny Tim, The Nice, The Psychedelic Stooges, Pink Floyd, P.F. Sloan, and Led Zeppelin.

But all good things end, and the passing of the Fillmore, the closing of The Scene, the demise of the Electric Circus, and the boarding up of the Action House (all coming at about the same time), were the most shocking reminders of a scene gone dead. Even the sturdy Village nightspots like the Au-Go-Go and Bitter End faced hard times, and many of them ceased to exist.

Early 1971 marked the first signs of a change. People were sick of huge echo chambers like the Garden, and genuine new talent was emerging ripe for club exposure. Max's Kansas City, a longtime in-spot for dining and gawking, opened an upstairs room exclusively for live music. The Bitter End was reopened and rejuvenated. A new multi-media showplace, the Mercer Arts Center, began to gain a loyal following. And Howard Stein's Academy of Music began picking up the pieces of the old Fillmore tradition.

These beginnings sparked the biggest resurgence in N.Y. Club attendance since the early folk-coffeehouse days a decade earlier. This time however, the clubs didn't lead their audiences, they followed. In a sense they looked at the charts and said, "Wow, acoustic music is in, let's open an acoustic showcase...." Viola, the West Village Metro was born (joining nearby Folk City), catering exclusively to folk, blues, and traditional music. The Mercer centered upon the newly developing theatre and glitter rock scenarios, becoming in the process the most successful scene of all. As alcohol came back into favor, additional spots emerged. Kenny's Castaways captured the upper East Side, and numerous clubs opened catering

spots cater exclusively to a particular sexual persuasion, whether it be gay, straight, or bi-sexual in nature. Uptown, the Blue Angel has gone one step further, moving towards the art deco decadence-glamour of the Copacabana, et. al. The Blue Angel, by virtue of their hit show *Zou*, draws in the ritzy, upper class devotees of camp and circumstance.

The biggest opening of the year was The Bottom Line which opened recently in the West Village, near the crumbled ruins of the Mercer Arts Center. The Bottom Line is a 500-seat showcase for name acts in a variety of styles. The talent booking has been strong, though erratic, and the sound and atmosphere are worked over carefully. After a shaky financial start the club seems to be gaining a foothold, providing an important showcase for those who desire a place bigger than cramped spots like Max's, yet more intimate than big halls like the Academy of Music. A recent one night stand featuring the Dolls and Suzi Quatro packed the place full and hundreds had to be turned away at the door.

As of this writing, the boom is still on. On the Bowery at Bleecker C.B.G.B.'s has opened and luckily latched onto two excellent house bands. Leather Secrets is a cross

ter spot for both groups and audience alike. It's sleazy, and the management packs the people in like sardines, but it still retains a certain charm. Keith Ambrose, lead singer of the Brats says: "We like the Coventry. The drinks may be watered down, but the audience comes to listen and really enjoy what we're doing. There are very few clubs like this where the audience and performers are on the same wavelength. The people aren't as jaded as the Manhattan crowds—they come to enjoy themselves...." Coventry, in fact, is the place where you can see just about every New York group (and there are a lot), both those that ultimately will make it, and the ones that will disband in two weeks. Often, the lineup includes three or four acts and by the time it's all over, the morning sun seeps into Coventry and everyone retreats home like fearful vampires. The rest of Queens is sprinkled with bar bands and oldies clubs, none of which offer much to the creative musician or audience.

This scene is mirrored on Long Island, where most of the old stomping grounds have folded up. Mark Pollot, a veteran performer on the LI circuit for over half a decade has seen it all: "Long Island has really dried up. There used to be so many places

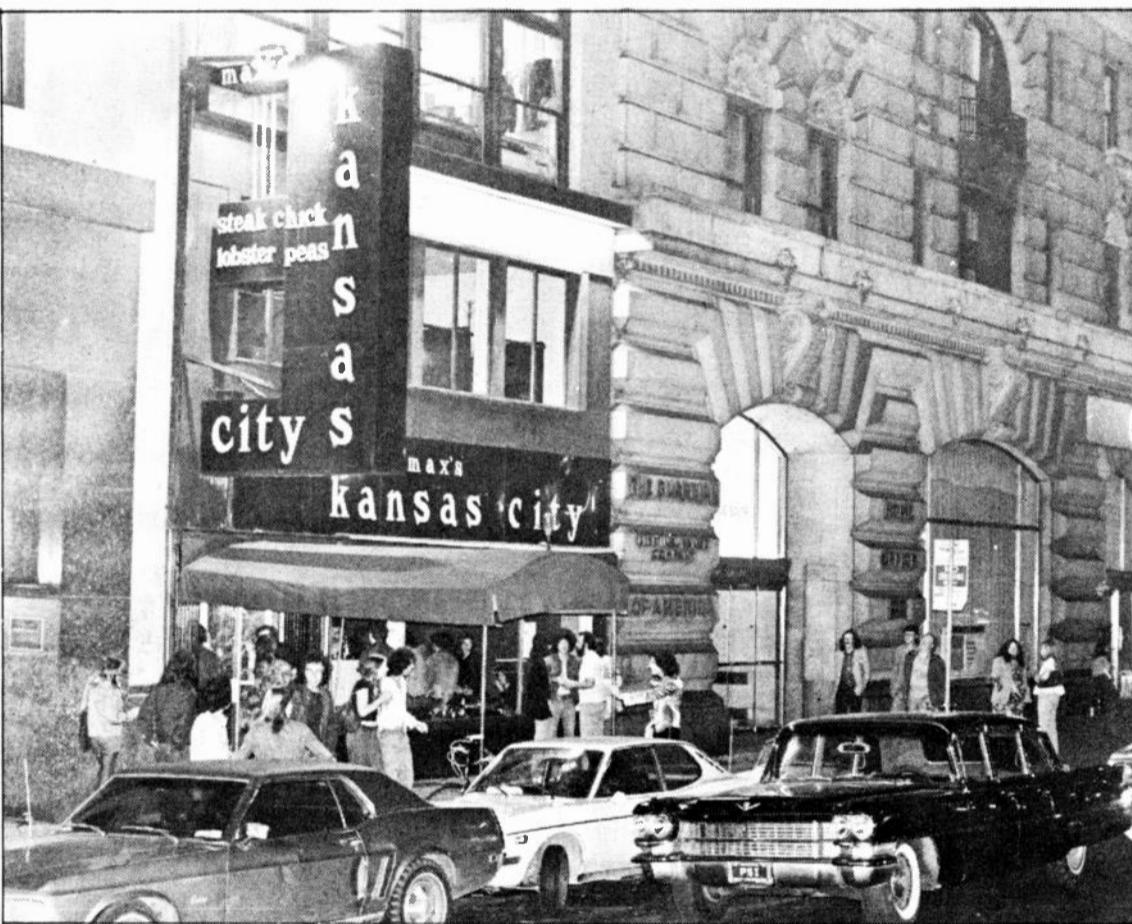
costumes will be hastily discarded by other groups, in their attempt to latch onto a new commercial bonanza.

The only bastion of professionalism on Long Island comes via My Father's Place in Roslyn, a club which manages to get both name talent and strong newcomers week after week. Five bucks gets you in with a drink, and you can enjoy the music in comfortable surroundings. My Father's Place maintains a varied booking policy, choosing liberally from rock, blues, jazz & folk. In recent weeks, the club has been host to Roy Buchanan, Stories, Eric Anderson, Herbie Hancock, Billy Joel, the Stooges, Renaissance, Roger McGuinn, and the NY Dolls. Talk about variety! My Father's Place often manages to book big names by virtue of their tie-up with Long Island progressive FM station WLIR, which broadcasts an on location live concert about once a week.

The rest of the boro's are nearly devoid of merit. Brooklyn's Sheephead Bay can boast Popeye's a decent, low priced club catering to young singles. Recently, Jupiter's on Long Island has become the mecca for fine soul and dancing music, booking the Spinners and Eddie Kendricks over the last few weeks. New Jersey's lone claim to fame is the Joint in the Woods, a nice looking place similar to the old Hullabaloo clubs. The Joint in the Woods draws a young, often apathetic audience, and groups like the Strawbs and Raspberries have drawn little response from people who alternately boogie or want to hear something laid back. Still, the club continues to book excellent attractions like 10cc, Blue Ash, and the crazed Amboy Dukes, in recent weeks, but some of the musicians will not return. A recent performer, preferring to remain unnamed, said: "They just don't listen to what you're playing. It's a very inattentive audience to say the least...."

So clubs are definitely in now, but as Andy Shernoff of the Dictators says: "It's hard to get a decent booking if you're not a name. And if you don't have a record out, it's really impossible...." Still, the variety of music around is immense, the prices are usually high but not out of line by today's standards, and the potential for improvement is clear. Most of the complaints are universal: "The place was too crowded," "the group went on too late," "the drinks tasted like water," and so on. In one case, the gripe of the performer and audience is the same: "We don't get any respect."

—Alan Betrock



expressly to one segment of the audience. In short order there emerged new jazz clubs, country clubs, latin clubs, oldies clubs, piano clubs, dancing clubs, and guitar clubs. Recent NYC spots moving towards an all-glitter lineup include Mushroom and Brandy's. In short, the current NYC club scene mirrors the melting pot image of New York—a bit of something for everyone....

In the last few months, the club boom has continued with even newer changes. A group of at least a half-dozen showbiz spots have opened.

These clubs cater frequently to the 21-30 age group, who have grown tired of the plasticity of the Second Ave. singles scene. These clubs, like the Grand Finale, Brown Sugar, Summer Stock, and Reno Sweeny have to some extent picked up where the Mercer Cabaret Room left off. They feature smooth, professional, lively entertainment, and many have revived the policy of having a house performer week after week—similar in purpose and effect to a group residency at the Marquee Club in the mid-sixties. Some of the new showbiz

between early Big Brother and protest music, forging a lively set for working class rockers. But the real treat comes with Television, a new quartet that is the most exciting thing to emerge from NY since the Dolls—and more original too. What the Velvets never were, and what Dylan never could be, all this and more is Television. In short order they will undoubtedly develop a huge cult following, and if given the right exposure, the sky's the limit.

The East Village is finally seeing its first signs of life with the 82 Club rocketing to popularity among the more adventurous of the Max's set (just be sure that the girl you pick up isn't a wolf in sheep's clothing, so to speak....). Most nights the 82 Club is strictly for mingling and dancing to records but recently the club has started booking live music one night a week, a policy that will expand if demand continues.

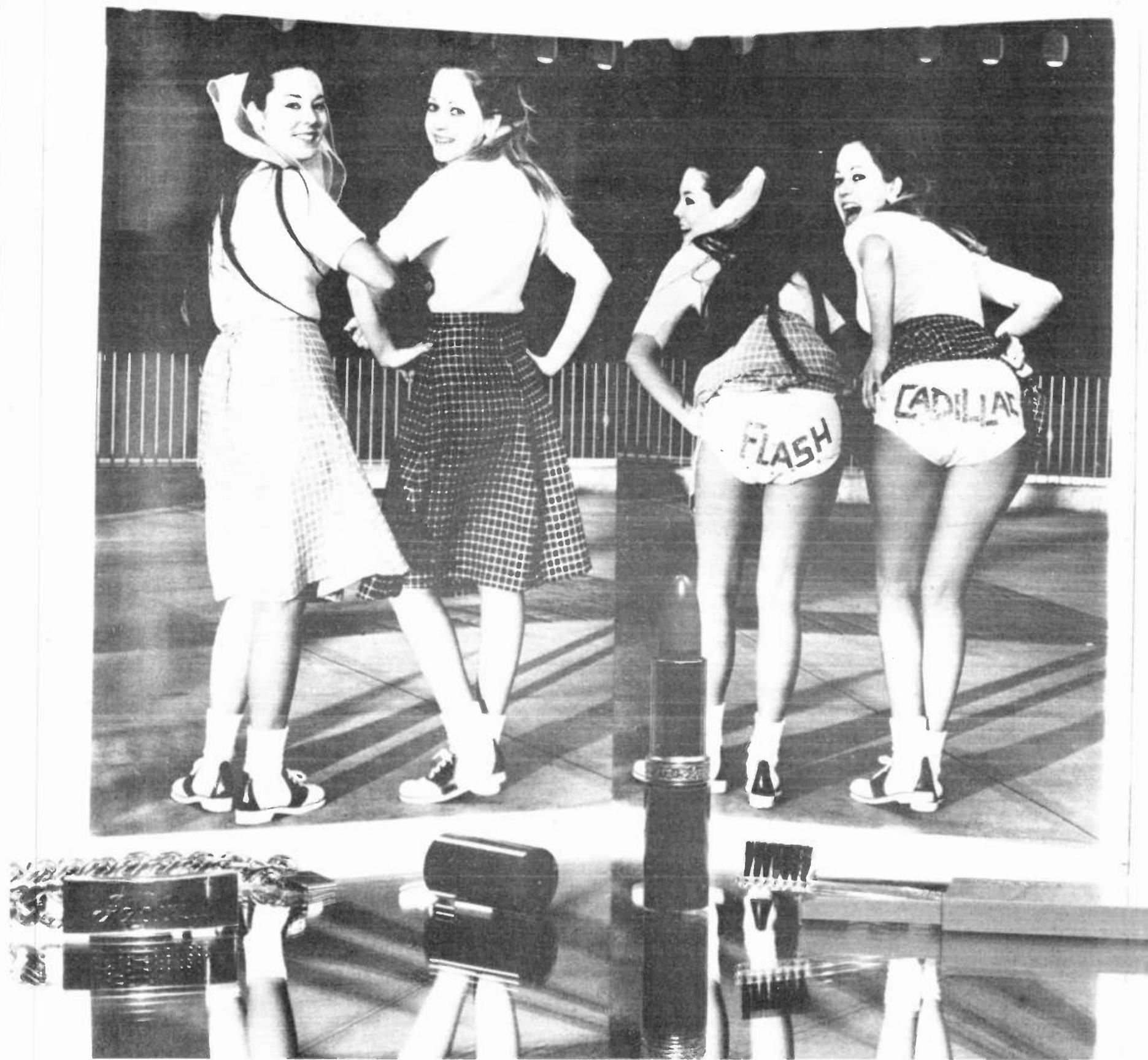
The borough of Queens has come into prominence lately thanks to Coventry on Queens Blvd's gaudy strip. After booking all styles of music, Coventry has become the glit-

to play, it was incredible. Now there are just a few. A decent band has to get a minimum of \$200 a night, and most places can't afford that much now. The neighborhood clubs have all gone downhill and become dives, and the rest are all acoustic wind and cheese joints. Popeye's in Brooklyn is a decent place, and Mickey's in Queens is a good oldies room, but that's about it....

Pollot has kept Haystacks Balboa going by playing colleges, or backing up name solo artists. Now the group has joined forces with ex-Vagrants lead singer Peter Sabbatino, and become simply Haystacks. Haystacks is the first of the Long Island groups to penetrate the glittery NY scene. In their recent debut at the Diplomat Hotel's St. Patricks Day bash, Haystacks mesmerized the audience with a tight powerful set of originals. They aren't a glitter group, their music is raw and funky, and they are as tight as can be. The emergence of Haystacks on the NYC scene might be the first indication of a significant change-in-direction of this city's musical preferences. If so, a lot of sparkles and

While the foregoing glimpses into the night life of twenty or more major cities may not lead us to any ready conclusions, it's easy to see that most parts of the country are either in the midst of some upheaval or desperately in need of same. More importantly, we know that most of these cities have a localized identity around which to focus their musical interests, a sure sign that local music, when it arises, will at least be able to gain a foothold.

From what we've seen in cities like Boston, Cleveland, Atlanta, Austin and New York, it's entirely possible for local scenes with the right combination of factors to become as significant today as they were at the height of the Sixties. As Georgia and Texas have particularly proven in the last couple of years, the musical heritage of this country is far from depleted, and has in fact an always-needed vitality to offer the mainstream of rock, now as much as ever. There's a lot happening around the country, and we haven't heard the last of it.



PHONOGRAM RECORD REVIEWS

There's No Face Like Chrome
Flash Cadillac
Epic KE 32488

By GREG SHAW

Of all the groups to come out of the Fifties, Flash Cadillac has always shown the greatest promise, and that promise is fulfilled in this, their second album. From the first time I saw them, some three years ago, I knew this band had something special, some extra degree of originality, and a lot more of the spirit that made '50s rock great than any of their contemporaries. Yet I could never have predicted that they would be able to advance so far, in so short a time. I am, in a word, astonished.

Beginning their career as one of the roughest and toughest of rock & roll dance bands, Flash Cadillac rose to fame a couple of years ago during

the era when Sha Na Na, the Wild Angels, and all the other great Fifties bands were making their mark. But where these others have faded away or gone stale trying to keep a dying sound alive, Flash Cadillac has accepted the fact that times change and, after all, one can't remain mired in the past forever.

Painful as it is to say goodbye, we've all got to realize the Fifties are gone. The Sixties are here, and there's no telling what they might bring. New ballad sounds from artists such as Neil Sedaka, Carole King, Tony Orlando and Rick Nelson are replacing the wild rockers of yesteryear, while savage, rocking raunch music seems to have had its day.

This transition is reflected dramatically in Flash Cadillac's new album. Although they began recording it with Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller (producers of many fine hits by the Coasters, Drifters and

others), they changed producers in midstream, leaving the remainder to Toxey French, whose initial efforts with the group leave little doubt that the boys are headed for the harmonies, ballads and mushy pop that other '50s rockers have proven unable to adapt to.

The Lieber/Stoller portion of the album is as rude and delightful as anything Flash Cadillac has ever done, including such knockouts as "Young Blood," the raunchy "Dirty Movies" (with a surprise ending), and "Message From Garcia," a song originally written for the Coasters but then rejected as too offensive.

More stimulating, however, are the Toxey French sides. In the place of their former raw, sloppy teenage looniness, the group exhibits a smooth, polished chromatic pop sound, songs with real structure, and chords they never knew before. It's a cleanly textured sound, reeking of California—next thing you know,

they'll be singing about surfing! Who could have imagined Flash Cadillac would ever come to this?

But as it turns out, this is no recent development. The album's best songs were in fact salvaged from the group's unrecorded rock opera, *Tommy Who?*, written in 1971 and then scrapped. Flash Cadillac has been ahead of their time in more ways than will ever be recognized. Including "She's So Fine" (which they performed in *American Graffiti*), these songs are the most developed of all, and would easily be confused with any top pop smash on the charts if one didn't know who was responsible.

"The Way I Feel Tonight" is full of harmonies and hooks, choruses and bridges; a far cry from "Rock Around the Clock," but commercial beyond the shadow of a doubt, and a surefire hit single, although it's on the flip of their current release, "Dancin' On a Saturday Night," a

number equally deserving of Top Ten honors. A vast improvement on the original (as performed by Barry Blue, an obscure British popster), it has that fully-produced Sixties sound Flash Cadillac has assimilated so well.

"Standing On the Corner" and "Heartbeat" add further support to the group's new style, while "Rock and Roll Heaven" (a recent non-hit by Climax) combines nostalgia for the Fifties with a sure feel for what rock & roll in the Sixties must inevitably become. And for Flash Cadillac, it might also serve as a final wave backwards.

While their more rabidly traditional fans may be disappointed by this new direction, there can be no denying Flash Cadillac's tremendous improvement as musicians and songwriters. They are, and always will be, a product of the '50s. But if this album is any indication, they'll be with us long after the '50s are forgotten.

Dream Kid
Sutherland Brothers & Quiver
Island SW 9341

By BUD SCOPPA

When Quiver and the Sutherland Brothers—two groups then practically unknown in the U.S.—joined forces last year to accentuate the positive and eliminate the negative aspects of each group, the most the six musicians could have reasonably hoped for was some occasional curiosity about the length and oddness of their hybrid name. But good fortune struck: out of their initial sessions as a combined unit came a promising first album with an irresistible track, "You Got Me Anyway." That track was released as a single, and it quickly and justly became a major American hit. An opening slot on the '73 Elton John tour gave the new band added exposure.

Their hit single and successful tour didn't make the Sutherland Brothers & Quiver a supergroup, but they did make the group's chances for pop prominence look good, provided they could come back with a strong second album. They have. The two segments of the band seem to have fully bonded their identities, because *Dream Kid* has an entire sideful of music of "You Got Me Anyway" calibre, and it fully introduces the group style that was suggested on the hit single.

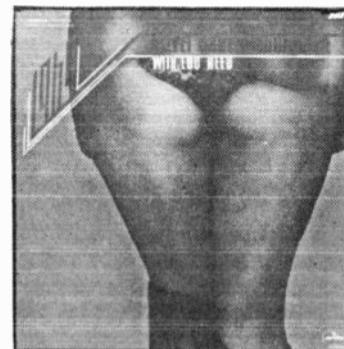
The components of that style as manifested on *Dream Kid* consist of a full but clean guitar-based sound roaring under the natural-sounding two-part vocals of Iain and Gavin Sutherland. The duo's singing is the aural trademark of Sutherland-Quiver: although there are strong suggestions of Roger McGuinn and Ian Matthews at some points, the vocal sound is reminiscent in general of those of classic pop duos such as the Everly Brothers, Lennon-McCartney, even early Sonny & Cher. Iain and Gavin resemble all of these pairs in their ability to simultaneously suggest both humor and pathos, the well matched timbres of their two voices, and the seeming ease and spontaneity with which they attack their music. Quiver's sympathetic playing further increases the accessibility of the vocal sound by surrounding it with bright, ringing instrumental detail. They have it all worked out.

Side one of *Dream Kid* is a total delight: charming, high powered, dynamically sequenced, and overflowing with ribbons of lovely melody. Although it never seeks to be profound, the music consistently and vividly evokes the fundamental emotions of romantic love. "Flying Down to Rio" is given a quietly passionate performance that brings together Dylan's "She Belongs to Me" and the Byrds' "Get to You." "I Hear Thunder" is a rock & roll song built around a weather report; the imminent storm it describes makes a dramatic but unstrained metaphor for a relationship in crisis. The side-closer, "Champion the Underdog," is as oblique a love song as "Thunder," arguing quite literally the case of the underdog ("...Forget all the giants—champion the underdog..."). Fingers up to the big man—give yourself a better break..."), and championing by implication the singer in his efforts to convince the woman he loves that he's her best bet despite the apparently better qualifications of the competition. The ingenuousness of Iain's vocal pitched against the all-out intensity of the band's playing makes the track tremendously convincing.

Although the second side contains a few lapses—notably in terms of lyric writing—the band still manages to come through with exciting performances. The title song is

strong, although it requires more repetition to get its hook in than do several of side one's tracks. And the album closes with a bang on a medley of three song fragments that culminate with the band quoting enthusiastically from the Syndicate of Sound's "Little Girl."

With *Dream Kid*, the Sutherland Brothers & Quiver seem to have found their level, making handsome, unpretentious, and often ingeniously simple rock & roll that sounds like it was as much fun to make as it is to listen to.



1969—The Velvet Underground Live
Velvet Underground
Mercury SRM-2-7504

By KEN BARNES

The last year has seen sufficient scholarly exegeses on the subject of Lou Reed to see us through the decade; and the release of 1969, two records of live Velvet Underground performances from that year, will certainly spawn countless others. I don't intend, however, to analyze any lurid Lou Reed lyrics with regard to their cosmodynamic deco-significance in light of his post-Bowie Berlin Transformation; the exciting thing about 1969 for me is its once-and-for-all demonstration that the Velvet Underground was a truly great rock 'n' roll band.

Many people, of course, have long been convinced; but the holdouts can be pardoned for doubting it on previous recorded evidence. *Loaded* and the third album deserve accusations of under-recording and lack of immediate impact. *White Light White Heat* was too murky, the first album suffused with distracting kinkiness and Nico (fascinating as she is in her own right), and the Max's live set is quite inadequately preserved. This package, however, captures the band's monumental rocking power live, and its 100-plus minutes qualify it as an unparalleled introduction to all facets of the Velvet Underground.

It's highly exhilarating rock, held together by metronomically steady drumming and brilliant rhythm guitar, constantly shifting texture, driving the songs onward and assuring that even the longest tracks mesmerize instead of catatonic. In fact, two of the best tracks are "What Goes On" and "White Light White Heat," both absolutely simplistic three-chord constructions lasting over eight minutes apiece. "What Goes On" features magnificently storming rhythm guitar which along with a few elementary organ riffs sustain extended instrumental passages at a high excitement level with absolutely no lead guitar. "White Light" has one of those incredible Reed guitar breaks (cf. "I Heard Her Call My Name" on the *White Light* album) which sound unlike anything ever heard before or, regrettably, since. This one starts off in raga territory and soon moves on to unknown regions; it seems less a typical lead guitar showcase than the ultimate mutation of rhythm guitar.

Other musical highlights include an early, slowed-down "Sweet Jane," which opens exactly like Tommy James' classic "Crimson and Clover" and has a lot of lyric changes; an excellent though not quite definitive "Rock and Roll" (that one's still unrecorded); and a tremendous

"Beginning To See The Light," with Reed in peak vocal form.

There's also four previously unrecorded songs, of which "Over You" is fairly trivial and the rest are top-class. "We're Gonna Have A Real Good Time Together" is a simple rocker lyrically dominated by repeated "Na Na Na Na Na's." Both "Sweet Bonnie Brown" and "It's Just Too Much" are likewise simple, straightforward, power-packed rockers, the latter reminding of "I'm Movin' On" and full of delightful rock 'n' roll clichés—not too far removed from the spirit of Reed's great "Cycle Annie," recorded as the Beachnuts on an old budget album.

As a wrap-up, I'd like to again assert that 1969 is premier rock 'n' roll by a band deserving of its legendary status. And mention in passing that not only is 1969 far superior to the *Cotillion* live record, but that it totally eclipses *Rock N Roll Animal* as well, virtually rendering it pointless. It's a shame that Lou Reed is condemned to be haunted by a more illustrious past, but he's not alone in that. It happens to the best of them, and 1969 proves that Reed and the Velvet Underground unquestionably belong in that class.



Bridge of Sighs
Robin Trower
Chrysalis CHT 1057

Exotic Birds and Fruit
Procol Harum
Chrysalis CHT 1058

By ED LEIMBACHER

We've all got our blind spots—I confess to a certain bewilderment when up against the work of my fellow Seattleite, Jimi Hendrix. The innovation is recognizable, and the technical dexterity, but when it comes down to actually listening to his records, I don't much. He's musical history, he's a training ground for other guitarists; beyond that, to me at least he's bloody boring.

When Hendrix died, Robin Trower paid his respects via the strange "Song For a Dreamer" on Procol Harum's guitar-braced *Broken Barricades*. But that wasn't enough for Trower—newly confident, he split from Procol and set out to become the reborn spirit of Jimi, a peculiar if not ridiculous goal indeed. Now, Trower's no slouch on guitar—it was he in fact who kept me listening to Procol after Matthew Fisher's departure—and Trower's own escape finally left Procol and set out to become the reborn spirit of Jimi, a peculiar if not ridiculous goal indeed. Now, Trower's no slouch on guitar—it was he in fact who kept me listening to Procol after Matthew Fisher's departure—and Trower's own escape

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Anne Murray she ain't.



Whatever you're thinking, buster, fergit it. This ain't Surf City . . . All right now Colette, time to try Position Number Two.

Weren't Born A Man
Dana Gillespie
RCA APL 1-0354

By DAN NOOGER

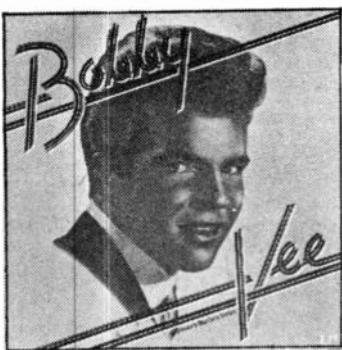
When you get right down to it, Dana Gillespie and Mott the Hoople's Ian Hunter are toffees from the same tea tray, preoccupied with those tired old "Lordy Lord it's so awful bein' a star" blues. Dana's album, although it fails at conveying its perpetuator's intentions, has a certain honesty. *The Hoople* misses through its pretense at being a rock 'n' roll record. If life for Hunter has the texture of a bad night at Max's, Dana's world must look more like something out of "Cabaret."

"Stardom Road" is the only successful song on the album, taking a more direct approach to its subject

than usual with lines like: "You sure ain't no fairy/with sweet poufy eyes/and all the hanger-ons and juicers/are all strung out on speed." But there's nothing else that manages to sustain that intensity, and the rest of the album quickly degenerates into mush. Dana's old mate David the Zig makes a cameo appearance on his own "Andy Warhol" and lends his pet Spiders to "Mother Don't Be Frightened," but the results are nothing special. The few attempts to get down are ludicrous at best and the Brecht-Weill move of "What Memories We Make" is merely bland sentimentality.

Somehow the impression this album leaves in its wake is nothing more than the nagging feeling that its author has spent so long leering her fantasies into mirrors that she's no longer sure where one ends and the other begins.

(Continued on page 33)



Legendary Masters
Bobby Vee
United Artists (U.K.)

By MARTIN CERF

The Legendary Masters Series began many years ago (in the hands of Bob Hite, of Canned Heat fame) as a very esoteric, meaningful line of classic rhythm & blues anthologies. After six or seven releases, Liberty Records phased out the concept and the series was dormant for over two years. Then in 1971 Liberty became United Artists, and a revived Legendary Masters Series was born.

The second incarnation of the LMS featured a more commercial and attractive approach, both in design and editorial concept. The nation's most respected music journalists were enlisted to compile and annotate the albums, starting with Ed Ward (Ricky Nelson), Greg Shaw and Mike Ochs (Fats Domino), Dave Marsh (Jan & Dean) and Lenny Kaye (Eddie Cochran), joined subsequently by Ben Edmonds and John McEuen (of the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band) with a deluxe Bob Wills repackage.

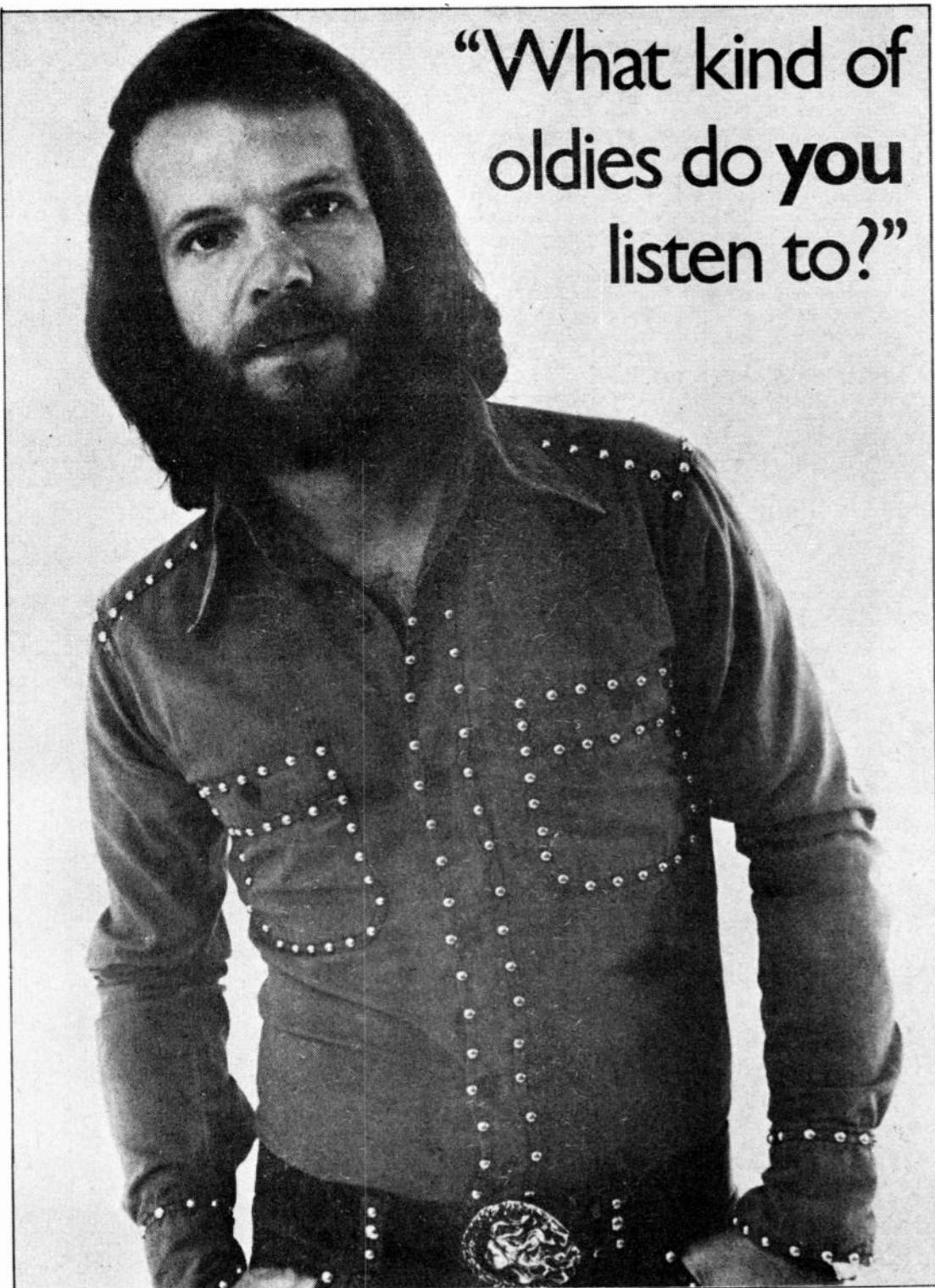
This lineup was universally acclaimed as the most aggressive and respectable reissue concept to date, and the sales of each were exceptional. It took almost two years to complete the next three releases. Little Anthony & the Imperials (compiled by Greg Shaw), Shirley & Lee (Langdon Winner) and Bobby Vee (Greil Marcus) were set to come out last October, then fell victim to the vinyl shortage. And somehow, when the shortage passed, they were not reinstated on the release schedule.

Now the Legendary Masters Series has been revived for a third time, in the capable hands of Alan Warner and Andrew Lauder of British UA. So far they've issued a fine Ventures package of their own and this Vee set, using art and liner notes prepared last year in America. There are no plans currently for Shirley & Lee or Little Anthony, but this one will do for starters.

Like previous LMS albums, the Vee cover art is flawless. And the liners by Greil Marcus tell the Vee story with supreme accuracy. Marcus approached the project as a Buddy Holly fan, regarding Vee as just a mirror image, as so many others have over the years. But upon closer examination of the Bobby Vee product, he came to a number of frank realizations and his liners establish for both the reader and himself the true legendary validity of Bobby Vee and his recorded legacy.

Aside from the surprising discovery that tunes like "Rubber Ball," "The Night Has a Thousand Eyes" and "Run To Him" are oldies that more than hold their own in 1974, you learn quickly that there was a specific difference between Bobby Vee and the Frankie Avalons of the early sixties. The principal difference is what separates adequate from great originality and musical expertise.

Bobby Vee almost always recorded original tunes. Many of Carole King's earliest hits were Vee A-sides ("Walkin' With My Angel," "Take Good Care of My Baby," "Run to Him," etc.). Other hits came from the pens of John D. Loudermilk ("Stayin' In"), Jerry Goldstein ("A



"What kind of oldies do you listen to?"

Alice Cooper. It happened in 1969 in Toronto, Canada at the "Rock Revival." Gene didn't ask. The boys in Alice Cooper and Alice himself volunteered.

—Gene Vincent was the first white rock star ever to wear black leather. Years before there was a Jim Morrison, Steppenwolf and Suzi Quatro slithering in their erotic togs across the world's sound pits.

—Gene Vincent was the brother-in-law of British record producer Mickie Most. Mickie may have made offers to help Gene in his later years but Gene said "no." Gene had pride.

—Gene Vincent was a soldier of fortune. He fought in the Congo and even made movies of this grand adventure. Gene operated his own camera under fire in actual battle conditions. How many of today's rock pansies would risk their lives hanging out in Israel, Nam, or Cambodia for a weekend, let alone for several months as Gene did? Gene didn't do it for publicity. He did it for the same reasons as Audie Murphy and Sgt. Alvin York and Ira Hayes. Men who Gene admired.

—Gene Vincent knew a million obscure rhythm and blues songs. A musicologist, he also had a love and affection for his beloved country music.

—Gene Vincent to my knowledge never received any royalty statements for his album *I'm Back And I'm Proud*. Jackie Vincent, his widow, didn't receive anything either.

—Gene Vincent appeared at the Merle Haggard concert in Oakland, California. He sang on stage with Commander Cody. Why wasn't the tape made of this performance ever released?

—Gene Vincent once went to the Capitol Records office in Hollywood in 1969. He had sold millions of records for them by that date. None of the secretaries recognized him. None of the secretaries knew his name. Nick Venet, an employee of Capitol at the time, suggested he record "Hey Joe."

—Gene Vincent's sister was recorded by Bones Howe. Her record didn't sell.

—Gene Vincent and Gram Parsons lived and died under similar conditions. Both men were pure Southern spirits, who though they lived for a time in England, died in California where they never quite fit in. On second thought, Duane Allman was never fond of L.A. either.

—Speaking of L.A., Gene Vincent's friend Rodney Bingenheimer has a club there. Gene let Rodney crash in his room during the over-crowded weekend at the "Rock Revival" in Toronto when it was impossible for anyone to get any kind of accommodations.

—Gene Vincent's last producer is a business associate of Rodney's. His name is Tom Ayres. He was the only business associate of Gene to ever look in on Gene's parents, immediately after and during the days following Gene's untimely death. Where were all the scores of record and show business creeps who profited from Gene during his prime?

—Gene Vincent's picture hangs on the wall at Rodney Bingenheimer's English Disco. It's in a good spot, a vantage point where Gene's eyes can watch the kids pose, dance and carry on. Sometimes the kids there dance to "Be-Bop-A-Lula." Sometimes they dance to recent British number one records by a Gene Vincent imitator called Alvin Stardust. The record is called "My Coo Coo Ca Choo." The record employs the type of echo, chord progression and vocal delivery made famous by Gene Vincent.

—If Alvin Stardust, who has the "real" name prior to this record of Shane Fenton, ever comes to Hollywood, he is in trouble. The ghost of Gene Vincent will most certainly jump from the wall of Rodney's and kick Alvin Stardust's ass!

Letter From Betty"), Kenny O'Dell ("Beautiful People") and himself. Vee's first hit, "Suzie Baby" was in fact his own composition. Further, Vee almost always played rhythm on his records and never recorded any song he wasn't comfortable with artistically.

Where the careers of Paul Peterson and Tommy Sands were contrived, Vee's was based on musical skill and pop awareness. Which is the reason his top hits ran five years longer than most other early sixties pop acts. In 1967, the heyday of Haight-Ashbury, he came up with "Come Back When You Grow Up." Indeed, Bobby Vee was like few other acts of his era; only Del Shannon, Dion and Rick Nelson have demonstrated such sustaining power.

There are a total of thirty sides on this 2-record set, at least six more than you'll find on other reissues. And there's not one that even resembles filler. On the contrary, it was a painful decision to leave out some of Vee's many fine unreleased numbers, including some Carole King originals with sure Top Ten sound. Vee had so many smash hits, there was little room for the type of obscure material other LMS albums have been noted for. The few odd LP tracks and minor hits, including "Maybe Just Today," "More Than I Can Say" and "I'll Make You Mine" leave one with an unslaked thirst for more. The latter song in particular, recorded in 1963 while Vee was touring England

and discovered the Beatles/Liverpool revolution, was one of the first interpretations of that style by an American artist. Vee wrote the song himself, and if it doesn't parallel the excitement of "Please Please Me" then Peter Asher never met Paul McCartney. It's an amazing song which no collector of any consequence could dare miss, and how it escaped the Top Ten remains to this day a mystery.

Bobby Vee unfortunately fell prey to the images which surrounded him rather than those he projected. His neglect by the myth-makers of rock history can only be attributed to a matter of timing. If Bobby Vee had come along in 1958 he might have been Buddy Holly. If he'd arrived in 1967, he'd be Colin Blunstone. And if he'd come to Tin Pan Alley in 1967, Bobby Vee might be John Denver now. In 1972, he'd have been Kenny Loggins or Elton John.

But 1960, 61, 62 and most of 63 were not good years for male vocalists, in terms of survival at least. So Bobby Vee is considered a product of his time rather than his talent, and not remembered by many. Those who do remember tend to underestimate or demean his contribution. Meanwhile the same people don't think twice about David Essex or Don McLean or the other "oldies" they routinely accept.

Robert Thomas Velline is an artist of superior stature who continued to record, though at a declining rate.

There've been just two LPs in the last five years. It's fifteen years in the business for Bobby Vee now, and he's just 30 years of age (a year younger than Dylan, McCartney and Jagger). He's currently contemplating a new LP, free of any label affiliation for the first time in his life. It will be most interesting to see where the man goes from here.

But while few devotees look forward to the next one, the Bobby Vee Legendary Masters album is a good place to start for those who are not yet loyalists. There's great pop music here, and more important, one of the most fascinating stories in the annals of rock, told in words, pictures and music. Perhaps someday it will be issued here and achieve its rightful position; meanwhile you'll have to search the import bins or purchase a ticket to the UK to find this record. But whatever it takes, it'll be worth every bit.

The Bop That Just Won't Stop (1956)
Gene Vincent
Capitol ST-11287

By KIM FOWLEY

—Gene Vincent was the first white rock star ever to be arrested for suspicion of murder. It happened years ago in Minnesota. A case of mistaken identity.

—Gene Vincent was the only artist ever to be backed in concert by



The original Move, 1966: Ace Kefford, Roy Wood, Trevor Burton, Bev Bevan. Not pictured: Carl Wayne.



Procol Harum and Robin Trower
(Continued from page 31)

and brought in Mick Graham to try, belatedly, to fill Robin's shoes.

Side Two of *Exotic Birds and Fruit* is good enough, with a great variety reminiscent of Procol's hallowed days of yore. Side One, however, is absolutely great! "Nothing But the Truth" crackles, crunches, and booms, a power cut that sets the tone for the whole album. "Beyond the Pale" has a kind of gypsy-caravan feeling, couched in an equally manic-percussive arrangement.

In contrast, the anti-psychiatry song, "As Strong As Samson," surges with the stately pomp-and-circumstance of Procol past, keyboards triumphant. Ditto "The Idol," but where those earlier numbers leave you wanting more, "The Idol" finally drags on by about two minutes too much. A minor fault in a major album.

Bridge of Sighs falters a bit too, though not till the last two cuts, which rock and roar with the kind of feedback noise and empty excitement Hendrix fell into often. Trower's moved beyond that for the

most part, and the half dozen preceding tunes establish his permanent niche in the rock-group annals. "Day of the Eagle," for example, lifts into effortless flight, a soaring, power-trio pulsation of protracted pyrotechnics; even the overdubbing and slowed-down escape only enhance the arrangement.

The doom-laden title tune follows, filled with feedback, exotic percussion, and echoing effects. Bassist James Dewar (if that's indeed him on all vocals) is developing a solid r&b vocal style. A sonic wind ends the piece and bridges into "In This Place," another brooding ballad. "The Fool and Me" closes Side One explosively, with Trower-power feedback and Reg Isidore hitting on all cylinders and with all four limbs.

"Too Rolling Stoned" is a staccato shaker & mover, a steady blast that settles midway into a long, loping, stoned rolling; Isidore and Dewar hold fast while Trower pulses and probes, twists and stings. "About to Begin" offers the musing of a musician on stage, it's plaintive and eerie and perfectly rounds out my version of *Bridge of Sighs*.

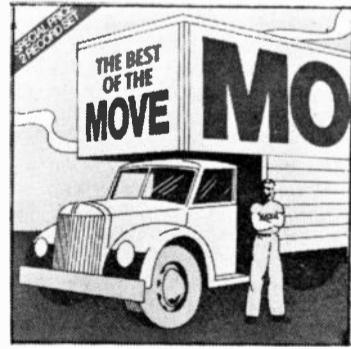
The Best of The Move The Move A&M SP-3625

By GREG SHAW

If there is one band whose legendary attributes and entangled history need no longer be catalogued, that band is the Move. True, of all the British bands whose American breakthrough has been stifled by unfortunate circumstance, the Move were among the most deserving of greater fame. That recognition, however, has at least come their way

posthumously, by means of increasingly fervent fan activity for both splinter groups (Wizzard and The Electric Light Orchestra) and two fine anthology albums.

The 1973 collection *Split Ends* (UA 5556) brought together selections from their short-lived Capitol album *Message From the Country*, and the several dazzling singles that had appeared subsequently, including "Do Ya," "Chinatown," and "Tonight." A good start, but it remained for the people at A&M to fill the remaining gaps. This album, in the works for over a year, does just that.



Sides one and two comprise in its entirety the Move's first album, never issued in America. It's brash, youthful, aggressive, lacking in direction but full of drive. Written entirely by Roy Wood, with the exception of two oldies (Eddie Cochran's "Weekend" and The Coasters' "Zing Went the Strings Of My Heart") and an energetic version of Moby Grape's "Hey Grandma," the album catches young Wood in 1967 as a songwriter of brilliant promise but without the sure discipline evident in his later work. "Fire Brigade," "Cherry Blossom

Clinic" and "Useless Information" stand out, along with "Yellow Rainbow" and "Lemon Tree," while "Flowers in the Rain," "Walk Upon the Water" and "The Girl Outside" are also of some note, for what they are and what they tried to be.

It's revealing to note how early Wood's interest in oboes and classical strings (which he waited until 1971 to develop into the ELO concept) came out. On their first single, in fact, "Night of Fear" (1966) leads off side three. "Night of Fear" was solid pop, with the added touch of sitars playing Tchaikovsky. "I Can Hear the Gross Grow," their second single, is another remarkably fine pop tune, with a flip side whose inspiration, according to Bev Bevan's marvelous liner notes, was none other than the Monkees.

This album includes many classics that came out only in England, notably "Wild Tiger Woman," along with some delightful songs that have never made it onto LP before. Of these, "Blackberry Way" and the lumbering "Brontosaurus" are the most impressive.

On the whole this album, while not literally the best of the Move, does an admirable job of tying up the loose ends of their pre-1971 career. The only thing missing is the live *Something Else* EP, an unfortunate gap since its illumination of that side of the group would have been a vital adjunct to any historical project this ambitions, and a real service to Move fans, with the original pressing going for upwards of \$50 these days. Logistically, though, it would have meant leaving off five other songs, or including the thing as a separate EP—a nice idea, but very expensive. Why it hasn't been reissued in England is the *real* mystery.

In essence, though, *The Best of The Move* does about as much as can

be expected from an album of this type. It has all the relevant recording data, lots of pictures Bev Bevan's fascinating liners, plus a critical summary by Jim Bickhart, and above all a fully satisfying dose of some of the finest pop music produced in the last eight years, a generous 25 songs documenting the earlier years of musicians who have gone on to greater fame or, in some cases, greater obscurity.

Between this album and *Split Ends*, it's nearly all available at last; both compilations are sterling examples of how reissues of important material can be intelligently and sensitively repackaged. Kudos and plaudits are unequivocally due, and needless to add, there is now doubly no excuse for anyone with a few dollars to spend not to become thoroughly acquainted with the Move's glorious legacy, without another moment's delay.



Cockney Rebel
Cockney Rebel
EMI ST-11294

By ALAN NIESTER

There are things about this whole package that bother me: the initial hype, the blatant egotism of the lead vocalist, the assembly line taint to the sparkle stage show, and the can't-miss tag that's come from everyone but the unbiased. It all seems too calculated, too self-assured, almost as if the whole shebang is backed by some mysterious, clandestine syndicate that hired a psychologist to study the music world and report back on exactly what would sell.

Look at the crap this clown Steve Harley is quoted as saying for example—

"We are the leaders of third generation rock because we are the originators...."

"My advantage is that I've never been influenced... I have no roots...."

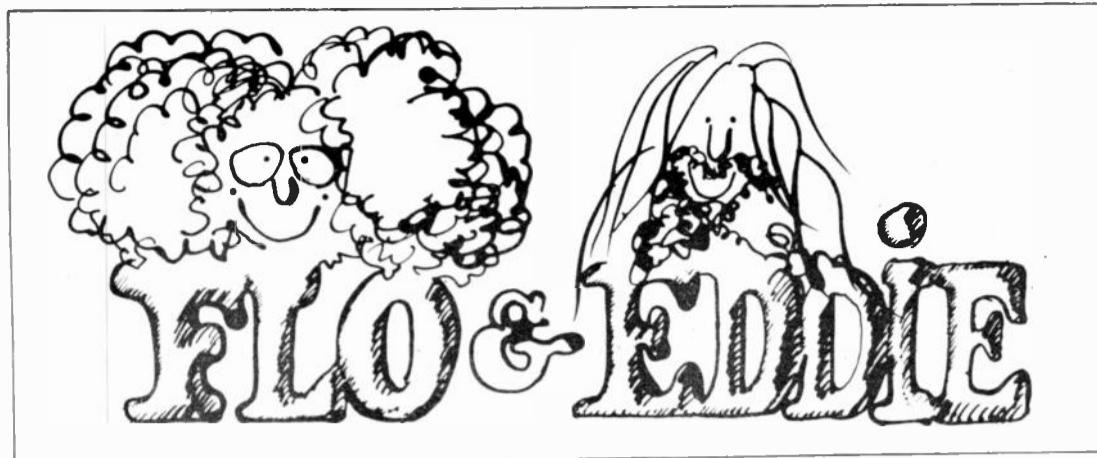
"Cockney Rebel is a bastard band, a group that has no influence, no roots...."

What absolute garbage this is. And what makes it all so ridiculous is that the band is nothing more than an unconsummated marriage of the sweetest traits of Roxy Music and David Bowie. Vocalist "Cassius" Harley has his Bryan Ferry and D. Bowie inflections and warbles letter perfect. And despite the fact that the vocals are homogenized, the songs themselves exhibit none of the crass or stirring energy that either of the two previously mentioned originals display. These songs are light, fluffy, a little melodic, and very, very dull.

"Sebastien" has already been a number one hit in Holland and Belgium (it says here) and it's just innocuous enough to repeat that success elsewhere.

It's all soooooo damn calculated—even the name *Cockney Rebel* seems to invite that "oooh, it's English, therefore it must be good" response. And since the package seems to be aimed squarely for the American gut and the masses of record buyers who never really did get into Bowie and Roxy, then it all might work.

I, for one, hope to hell it doesn't.



Each month Flo & Eddie (Mark Volman & Howard Kaylan) submit to a blindfold test in which they're required to identify and respond to selections from several new albums, sight unseen.

Lynyrd Skynyrd:
"Sweet Home Alabama" and others from *Second Helping* (Sounds Of The South)

All right, so far so good. You got us on a bad day, 'cause we're really up. "Neil Young will remember?" Uh-oh, home in Alabama Don't tell me this is Al Kooper. This is a tight record. They have good musicianship. Wait, that guy just belched, and you're talking about musicianship? I wouldn't sit through this one. I hate guitars! It's not REO, is it? Mike Quattro Jam Band! No, they're louder yet, not to be confused with Loudon Wainwright or the Lounds, for that matter. They come from the South . . . Mose Jones. Wet Willie. Skipper Frank. Lynyrd Skynyrd! A name that's been in our circles for years and now that we know, we hate it. See, Al, it's not you we don't like, it's your production. Just kidding, let's lay off Al. That had moments of . . . mediocrity. They do play good together.

Ricky Wilde: "Teen Wave" (UK)
Alvin Stardust! British! Suzi! Fanny, right? This is a RAK record. Is it those two guys Chinn and Chong, or whoever they are? It's a guy! Lulu! His father wrote and produced it? Must be Cliff Richard's kid. Matt Monro, Jr. Tommy Steele's kid. Jimmy Savile, Jr. The suspense is killing me. Ricky Wilde—Marty Wilde! He was also the Shannon of "Abergavenny!" Ricky's got more of a chance than Little Jimmy Osmond. But Little Jimmy is going to be a big star—if he gets a mile commercial . . .

John Denver with the Mitchell Trio: "That's The Way It's Gonna Be," "Let's Get Together" (Mercury)

A repackaging? The Alan Price group. Another John Kay reissue of Sparrow's Greatest Non-Hits. The Seeds, Pre-Sky. Lee Mallory, right? It's his song. OK, resorting to Phil Ochs songs means . . . it's a reunion of the Kingston Trio. It's not the Limeliters It's not another Duane Allman anthology. Uh oh, get that off! Now! Right this minute! First of all no one performs anything written by Dino Valenti in this house. It's ruined my whole day. Whoever it is, if he's a star now he shouldn't be. Don McLean? Sounds like Peter Sarstedt. I know who it is—Marty Balin. John Denver! I was right! Get him out of my house! He wears Pendletons and he doesn't bathe. He plunges into ice-cold streams and thinks he's cool. He likes sheep. Personally, I think he's a real bummer. It's our Colorado hatred syndrome.

Blue Oyster Cult: "Cagey Cretins" and others, from *Secret Treaties* (Columbia)

Mud! Boogie! Can The Can!

Canned Heat! American—Bob Seger. J. Geils. James Gang. Z.Z. Top. Brownsville Station. Sweetwater. Swampwater. The Peanut Butter Conspiracy. Chocolate Watchband. So far, no good. The Castaways. That whole remedial style is terrible. I think the guy should turn down his pacemaker immediately. I can't listen to this. No hit as far as I'm concerned. I can't get myself to like the Blue Oyster Cult. I just don't think they've ripped up enough hotel rooms to know what it's like. For their fans it's a treat. The only cool thing they ever did was have two drummers. That's because their name was so long. Do you suppose one drum said "Blue Oy" and the other "Ster Cult?"

Queen: "Father and Son," others, from *Queen II* (Elektra)

Synthesizer. Mellotrons. Ah, but it's not ELO. This is great so far. If it's another Rick Wakeman you can take it off right now. Overture to the Rest of Concept Album. I can't tell from his words whether he's serious or not. If he wasn't serious this might be OK. They're really serious? That worries me. It's not Genesis' new album, is it? I don't like this. That cut either. It's Queen? I never got past the first cut on their album. It's gotten a lot of hype. A lot of people are yelling about it. I never could understand it. Hate it. Maybe if I did a tour with 'em I'd like it. Room with 'em. I don't want to room with them! Put in a wake-up call for me, would you, Queen? That says it.



Hudson-Ford: "Pick Up The Pieces," others, from *Nickelodeon* (A&M)

Like it! One guy from Marmalade, one guy who used to play with Mike McGear, and two former Savoy Brown cutouts. Three roadies from Gentle Giant. This must be Vulva! They're recorded excellently. Tasteful. British? So it's not Bjorn & Benny, we know that. Two guys! Simon & Shipley. Brewer & Van Winkle. Teegarten & Krause. Oh, they're givin down where with their money in their what's? Quick, take this off. Nobody givin anywhere in this house. They're a little Seals & the other guy with the hat. Can we rule out the Incredible String Band? Well, we know it's not Cowboy. Hudson & Ford! I never heard of those people. OK, this is good. This is a nice record. Take it off before we don't like something.

Various Artists: Excerpts from *Guitar Anthology* (Polydor)
Concept album, eh? Country

music! Sex! Euthanasia! OK, harmonicas! Pre-fab houses! It's about a child burning down a house. It's about two brothers, one of whom goes astray and molests his cat. This isn't "Timothy" by the Buoys, the long version? Buddy Miles, right? Mayall's 95th album. Baby Huey. Enough blues, huh? Get it off, I don't even want to hear the next guy sing. It's a blues anthology, 1942 Festival at Ann Arbor. Greatest Outtakes! There is no concept! Boredom! Pain and pleasure! Leather and vinyl! Is it all done in an insane asylum? It's definitely not done in a recording studio. Abominable! It's just a bunch of guitar players! I would say that if you were into the rudiments of the blues and just buying your first Kawasaki guitar, try to learn the three chords on this album in four hours, but don't ever play it around me.

New York Dolls: "Stranded In The Jungle," "Who Are The Mystery Girls," (Mercury)

Gotta be Dr. John. "Stranded In The Jungle?" They shouldn't have tried that. This must be Sha Na Na. Sounds like it could be a hit, but I'd turn it off all the time. Is it Jim Stafford? The Dolls? It's terrible. This stuff I can't believe. It's not as punky as the last album. I think Shadow Morton lost some of the garage appeal. I think "96 Tears" had a lot more credibility. I think the Dolls' days are over. \$6.98 is a lot to ask for this junk. Or any junk. They should've scrapped it and put out another Buddy Miles album. Isn't it terrible when you want to like something and you can't?

Flash Cadillac & Continental Kids: "The Way You Look Tonight," "Dancin' On A Saturday Night," "Message To Garcia," from *No Face Like Chrome* (Epic)

American group. What was that guy in the Buckinghams? Gepetto and—Tommy James, right? Bob Seger? Country Gazette. That one sounded like bubblegum. "La-la-ow-oo?" That's the first intelligent thing they've said. Brownsville Station. I want to hear the end of the first song. It sounded like "Yummy Yummy Yummy." Why don't I know this? It's a Vanity Fair rip-off. Mariachis, that shows some class. They sound really versatile. Flash Cadillac! Wow! All right! I think that sounds real good. They've always been a good band, and it's great to hear them sounding like this.

Argent: "The Coming Of Kohoutek," "Music Of The Spheres," from *Nexus* (Epic)

Mellotron! English! I hate it, hate it. This is a soundtrack for some French naughty movie. Naughty? Some good sounds there. It's not Roy Wood, though. Sounds like the kind of thing in five years you look back to and say, "Wow, there's some real mediocre stuff on this album!" Argent! Oh no, I love Argent. One of my favorite groups. I must hear it all the way through, I know if I give it a break... I want to go on record as saying I am an Argent fan and I hope the album's better than the cuts we heard.

Time Of The Zombies
The Zombies
Epic KEG 32861

By KEN BARNES

Thanks to the success of Argent, Colin Blunstone, and the "Monster Mash," the long-neglected Zombies are again coming to light. London's fluke smash with the resuscitated Bobby 'Boris' Pickett record last year prompted the reissue of "She's Not There" and the first Zombies album. Argent and Blunstone have both had hits in England, and so *Time Of The Zombies*, expertly and entertainingly assembled by leading archivist Pete frame, came out over there a few months ago. Now, most commendably, Epic has brought it out here.

Half the two-record set is comprised of the deleted *Odyssey And Oracle*, recorded as a farewell LP just prior to the Zombies' '68 breakup. It's a lovely, intricately-textured album, with the group's patented gorgeous harmonies and fascinating songwriting abilities on prominent display. Anyone not already possessing it should take immediate advantage of this low-price offer.

Even if you have everything the Zombies issued, however, you'll still want this package. The other record consists of 16 tracks covering both their Decca (Parrot in the U.S.) and CBS careers (one side to each), including some obscure and unreleased material.

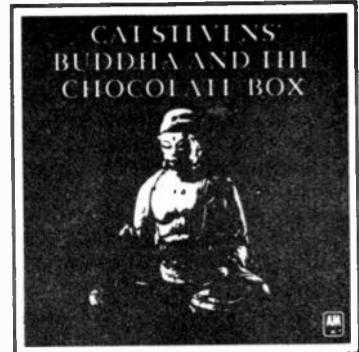
From a narrow collectors' standpoint the song choices aren't ideal; the hits "She's Not There" and "Tell Her No," making their fourth LP appearances, had to be there for commercial reasons; and the group itself oversaw the final selections, resulting in the inclusion (at Argent's insistence) of the rather ordinary "Summertime," and a few repeats from London's 1969 *Early Days* LP. Still, the Decca side is rendered priceless by the first LP appearances of two of the group's relatively raving singles, "Is This The Dream" and "She's Coming Home," both terrific. The side plays through exquisitely.

Nothing on the CBS side, however, has ever appeared on an album before. "She Loves The Way They Love Her," a pleasant rocker, and "Smokey Day," a fragile, pretty tune, are performed by an early incarnation of Argent (the group) to fill the demand for Zombies tracks after "Time Of The Season" posthumously hit. Both cuts, especially "Smokey Day," are even better than the fine renditions appearing on Colin Blunstone's first solo album. "Imagine The Swan," a later single, is an odd, classical-sounding number also performed by the early Argent. Its flip side, a nondescript instrumental called "Conversation Of Floral Street," appeared on the British compilation but was happily replaced here by the very rare original flip of "Time Of The Season," "I'll Call You Mine." Despite a disconcertingly beefy Blunstone vocal, it's a fine song.

"I Know She Will" and "Walking In The Sun" are both sterling unreleased tracks, the former being particularly striking. "If It Don't Work Out," the last Zombies single, was originally a demo for Dusty Springfield's fine version on her *You Don't Have To Say You Love Me* LP, and makes a superbly lively Zombies track. The flip, "Don't Cry For Me," is even better, one of their best rockers.

Time Of The Zombies is one for the archive, all right; but more importantly it's a thrilling, magical record full of undiscovered gems and familiar classics. The Zombies had little in common with the other

British bands of the mid-sixties; they blazed their own paths, and this album is an admirable testament to their uniqueness and musical brilliance. It's also one of the most delightful, infinitely playable albums



Buddha And The Chocolate Box
Cat Stevens
A&M

By TOM NOLAN

On the cover of Cat Stevens' new album is a Japanese buddha of the Heian Period. On the back is a koan or parable depicted in Cat's own illustrations. The artwork, easily the album's best feature, implies a transcendent experience is in store for the listener. The trip never takes place!

Cat Stevens has abandoned his proven strengths to pursue some rather wispy goals. Leaving past formulas behind, he is caught on a not very sturdy ladder which I doubt can carry him to any crowd that may be waiting up above.

When we were all younger, Cat showed he could write and sing very accessible songs that fit easily into the hit parade of that period and even seemed a cut above the competition, given that Cat was as commercially-oriented as any of his competitors: "Here Comes My Baby," "I Love My Dog," "I'm Gonna Get Me a Gun," best of all, "Matthew and Son." How long ago that all seems now that Cat Stevens has achieved much greater popularity with what is in effect a second separate career.

The albums responsible for his real success have been full of a sort of sentiment that susceptible listeners of a wide age spectrum could respond to: lots of laments on the pain of growth, love and loss. Giving sage advice while saying farewell to a girl set on finding her own place in the world, charting the sadness in the gulf between generations or musing on the fate of tomorrow's children, Cat stepped a thin line between maudlin and pathetic but put his stuff across with authority, and his melodies and arrangements had an identifiable, infectious drive.

Cat Stevens' *Buddha And The Chocolate Box* is much different from anything he has done before, and although this new direction represents an ambitious departure, its very ambitiousness is overweening and the most unappealing aspect about the album.

This is a concept record of sorts but not nearly the unified work the cover art and title imply. It encloses formless, rambling songs "about" reincarnation, the spiritualism linking the human family and other trendy "ideas" that for the most part ask their significance to be taken on faith. At face value, there's nothing there. Only "Sun/C79," a callous but perhaps remorseful singer's remembrance of his illegitimate child, has any kind of roots in the specific, which has always been Cat Stevens' nourishing source. The rest is platitudes whose heaviness could not balance a thimbleful of feather.

There's a song about how we are only dancing on this earth a very short time.

There's one about Jesus and Buddha, how men misunderstood them in their lifetimes and are misunderstanding them still.

It's About Time!
The Blazing Debut
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JIKE BOX JURY

POP SINGLES FOR THE '70s

By GREG SHAW

The month of May brings a fine early summer pop crop; whatever your taste, there are new hitbound 45s to rejoice over. Particularly in the realm of '70s pop, where several old favorites have made respectable showings. The Sutherland Bros. & Quiver follow their magnificent debut single with one not as immediately socko, but possessing a strange, growing fascination. "Dream Kid" (Island 1220) is less intense than "You Got Me Anyway" (Island 1217) but with the power to keep you coming back for more. My pick hit of the month. The Hollies also seem to have a shot at the top with "The Air That I Breathe" (Epic 11100), written by Albert Hammond and Lee Hazelwood. Like its title, it's an airy, essential and deeply satisfying piece of wax. Lobo is another who's done wonders with solid rhythms and light vocals, and his latest is another faultless, catchy production. "Standing at the End of the Line" (Big Tree 15001) is also his first with Atlantic, the third parent label for Big Tree so far.

Perhaps you recall Marmalade, who had three splendid albums and a fair-sized hit "Reflections Of My Life" (London 20058) a few years back. They disappeared for awhile, but now they're back, minus the Bee Gees harmonies, with a solid rocker called "Engine Driver" (EMI 3676). Of course that's the B-side. Plug side is more like the old Marmalade, save for a long, monotonous start building to a Lobo-like finish that isn't quite enough to save the record. But welcome back, anyway. Another name from the past is the Cats, part of 1969's almost-happened Belgian Invasion. "The Love In Your Eyes" (Fantasy 722) is a clean, listenable pop production, and a fine song as well, thanks mainly to Al Capps. This should be a hit.

A name from the past you never heard is Shane Fenton. He had hits in England twelve years ago just like Troy Shondell did here. His celebrated return as Alvin Stardust has provided the U.K. with no little diversion. "My Coo Ca Choo" (Bell 454) should go over well with the Suzi/Sweet crowd, though it's a bit too heavily based on "Spirit in the Sky" if you ask me. "Orbit" by Thundermug (Epic 11082) doesn't sound like much except maybe the Move; it's a great followup to "Africa" (Big Tree 154) by this hot, hot Canadian group. Another hot group is 10cc, and America will get a second chance to accept them with "Headline Hustler" (UK 49019). Come on, let's get with it this time.

At the bottom of the pop pile are three records with remote chances of success. "Something's Happening" by Peter Frampton (A&M 1506) is a great song, first thing by him I've really liked. "I Miss You" by Badfinger (WB 7801) is another sappy ballad by this band on the run, sad to say. One guy I seem to be alone in my support of is Daniel Boone of "Beautiful Sunday" fame (otherwise known as Peter Lee

Stirling, author of many fine Hermans Hermits hits). While not up to "Annabelle" (Mercury 73339), "Love Spell" (Mercury 73461) is good enough for me, and the flip is even better. Request it today!

Ready for some oldies? Good, cause we've got some killers this time. The Ronettes (reverent pause ...) are back with their second Buddah release, a Spector-Greenwich-Barry song called "I Wish I Never Saw the Sunshine" (Buddah 408). Allowing for inevitable production deficiencies, it's a fantastic record. Buy it. "I've Had It" by Fanny (Casablanca 009) is another must-buy. Get this: Patti Quattro (Suzi's sis) has joined the group, Vini Poncia (of early '60s songwriting brilliance) has joined Richard Perry at the production helm, and on top of all that they're reviving the old Bell Notes hit, one of my alltime fave forgotten oldies. How can you pass that by?

The great thing about oldies these days is that the category has transcended itself; *anything* can be an oldie! Even a 4-month old song that's still on the charts at Rodney's, a '70s raver like "Dancing On a Saturday Night" that never made it by Barry Blue (Bell 391) but just might in this 1965 Beach Boys arrangement by a bunch of '50s greasers known as Flash Cadillac & the Continental Kids (Epic 11102). So is it '50s, '60s or '70s? And is it an oldie at all? Ask the New York Dolls, who've often had the disconcerting experience of being credited with oldies by the Shangri Las and others. A lot of their fans probably think they wrote "Stranded in the Jungle" (Mercury 73478), a not unnatural assumption since the song could have been made for them, they do it so well. If "Loco-motion" can be a hit, this can too.

Hard rockers take note, there's plenty of that around too. "Radar Love" by Golden Earring (MCA 40202) could be this group's first hit after untold years. Check out the flip too: "Just Like Vince Taylor," a nice tribute to a '50s English leather boy. You might expect "Long Legged Woman Dressed in Black" (Bell 451) by Mungo Jerry to be a Hollies ripoff, but in fact it's more like Slade, and quite effective. Slade themselves are back with "When the Lights are Out" (WB 7808), possibly their most toned-down single to date. Extremely commercial, this song would even be good for Elton John. Unfortunately, it's probably too late for Slade to make it, no matter what they do.

Rick Derringer's latest is less frenzied than "Rock & Roll Hoochie Coo" (Blue Sky 2751), in fact "Teenage Love Affair" (Blue Sky 2752) is almost melodic, though typically fast-paced. Another fine, heavy record is "Stick Around" by Black Sheep (Chrysalis 2038), which should appeal to Free fans. This is a group to watch. Another to watch is Ray Manzarek, whose solo debut is "Solar Boat," which reeks of the old Doors but with plenty of new stuff thrown in.

Every year seems to bring a new novelty craze; last year it was

Watergate, now it's streaking. Every company has a couple of streaking records out, and I wish I could get hold of them all. The few I've heard are pretty dire, although Ray Stevens' "The Streak" (Barnaby 600) has proven good enough to get him into the charts. Strangest one I've heard is "Streakin' and Freakin'" by Hot Ice (Atlantic 3023), an R&B streaking record. Ones I'd most like to get are "Streakin' USA," a Beach Boys takeoff, and the one done by oldies DJ Jim Pewter over the original track of "Short Shorts." Who likes streaking? We like streaking! Unfortunately most of the others lack this amount of necessary humor.

Some local records worth mentioning this month. "Leather" by Smokey is No. 1 at Rodney's, it comes on green wax on a label with no name. It's got all the right pervo lyrics, and a sort of acid rock backing. It was cut in a little studio in an alley around the corner from our office by some guys off the street. Ain't that fabulous? Also neat is "Desert Heat" by Gollum (Kiderian 45120), a homemade heavy metal record you can find in some parts of the midwest. "Rouge Plant Blues" by Styx and Stoned was a local hit in Michigan over a year ago. Now for some reason it's out on a national label (Capitol 3865) and the name of the group has been changed to Stix and Stones. It's still a good, funky working man's protest song, worth a listen.

Capitol Records seems intent on capturing the market for Canadian and Swedish music. Latest from up north is Anne Murray's delightful "You Won't See Me" (3867), Edward Bear's "You, Me and Mexico" (3869), a fair pop number, and a nice Stampeder side, "Me and My Stone" (3868). As for Sweden, you'll forget about Blue Swede when you hear "Friday's My Day" by Landslaget (3866). It may not be Marcus Hook, but it's one of the most startlingly good records by a new group I've heard all year.

Actually no one can predict the future of rock, but if anything's sure it's that new kids will always be coming up the years. The kids who made millionaires of Grand Funk were the same kids who made stars of the Archies, lest we forget. Today's pubes are tomorrow's punks, and what they're buying now is stuff like Jimmy Osmond's "Give Me a Good Ole Mammy Song" (Kolob 14687), backed by a remake of Eddie Hodges' 1960 hit "I'm Gonna Knock On Your Door" (just think, all these Osmond/Partridge remakes may someday be remembered as early seventies oldies!) or Ricky Segall's "Sooner or Later" (Bell 429), both of which might be hard for most of us to get into. But there should be no problem and no worries about the future if "Teen Wave" by Ricky Wilde (UK 49021) is any indication. His dad wrote this song for him, and I swear it sounds exactly like Suzi Quattro! It's got lyrics like, "Mommy don't like it, daddy don't like it, all the kids want is loud fast rock & roll!" And this kid is only nine years old!! What do you suppose he'll be doing in 1980?

There's one that begins with thoroughly inappropriate "spacey" sound effects (quickly replaced by homey pedal steel) about the home in the sky where Chico and Harpo, Houdini and Disney and other culture heroes have gone to reside. That's the home Cat's yearning for.

It goes on.

At its worst it's either embarrassing or maddening, depending on how charitable you want to be concerning Cat's intentions, which strike me as pretentious and frivolous. At best there's barely a memorable tune. You have to wade through the Moog trumpets all on your own, and without Cat's familiar melodies and star-crossed characters even his most fervent fans may feel the reward does not match the effort.

Beware the Ides of Complacency, Cat! Look to your career! Becoming a poor man's Neil Diamond is not an enviable fate.



Seven
Bob Seger
Palladium/Reprise MS 2184

By GREG SHAW

This album has a subtitle, *Contrasts*, and it's a good word for Bob Seger. At times one of the most no-nonsense rockers the country has to offer, at others he can be unbearably pretentious and virtually unlistenable. A legend for years in his home state of Michigan, Seger is still, after nine years and seven albums, hardly known anywhere else. *Contrasts*, indeed.

Contrasts is a particularly apt description of *Seven*. As if by conscious decision, one side of the album presents Seger at his best, the other at his absolute worst. Put on side one, and by the time it ends you'll be a convert to his heavy metal Chuck Berry style of fast, good rocking music. If you've heard them before, you'll be reminded of previous Seger classics from "Rosalie" (1973) to "Heavy Music" and "East Side Story" (1966). He gets a little bluesy on "School Teacher," but "Need Ya" sounds as great as it did on the single and "Get Out Of Denver" has some fine moments.

At this point, you'll be all right if you can resist playing the other side. Do so, and you're hit first with Bob pretending he's Mose Allison, singing about how square the white upper middle class is. That trails into a funk-bucket blues about too many floors or some such boring complaint, followed by a slow, pointlessly meandering tune and closing with "All Your Love," which moves almost fast enough to hold interest, but fails to generate any energy.

Throughout this side, Seger exhibits the same "I can sing soul just as good as any Wilson Pickett, cause I'm from Dee-troit, buddy, and don't you forget it!" affectations that other Detroit singers from Mitch Ryder to Mark Farner have fallen prey to and eventually had to come to terms with. Seger seems to be obsessed with trying to tell everybody he knows that he's got some rock & roll soul, little realizing that he's got the rock & roll, and that's enough.

Someday, Bob Seger will make a

great rock & roll album. The best from *Smokin' O.P.s* and *Back in '72*, his last two albums, would fill the bill if combined. So would a collection of his early *Hideout* and *Cameo* recordings, none of which have ever been on albums. But unlike many artists whose best lies irretrievably behind them, Seger has the potential to do greater things, any time he puts his mind to it. C'mon, Bob, which would you rather be, the John Fogerty of the Midwest, or the Chris Farlowe of America? It's up to you.



Loving And Free
Kiki Dee
Rocket Records MCA-395

By SUSANELLA ROGERS

The last thing the industry needs is another mediocre chick singer to glop up the ranks, so it is with great relief that I report the arrival of Kiki Dee. Her latest release on Rocket Records should be required listening for hopeful ladies aspiring to un-gimmicky stardom. Ms. Dee does not scream and groan or emit daemonic guttural sounds; neither does she sport a unisex hairdo, glitter couture nor a black comedy image. She simply sings and writes songs, in that order of excellence and with a great deal of class.

Loving And Free is graced with four Kiki Dee compositions, most notably the floaty, laid-back title track, an impressive example of her ability to deliver, vocally and lyrically, and "Sugar On the Floor," a quietly forceful number with a strong soulful chorus that I wish she'd expanded into a song. Kiki's songwriting shows a great potential not quite yet fulfilled; her lyrics convey a woman's search for the elusive without the nervous urgency so dangerously inherent in the genre, and it will hopefully be only a matter of time until she acquires the necessary conviction.

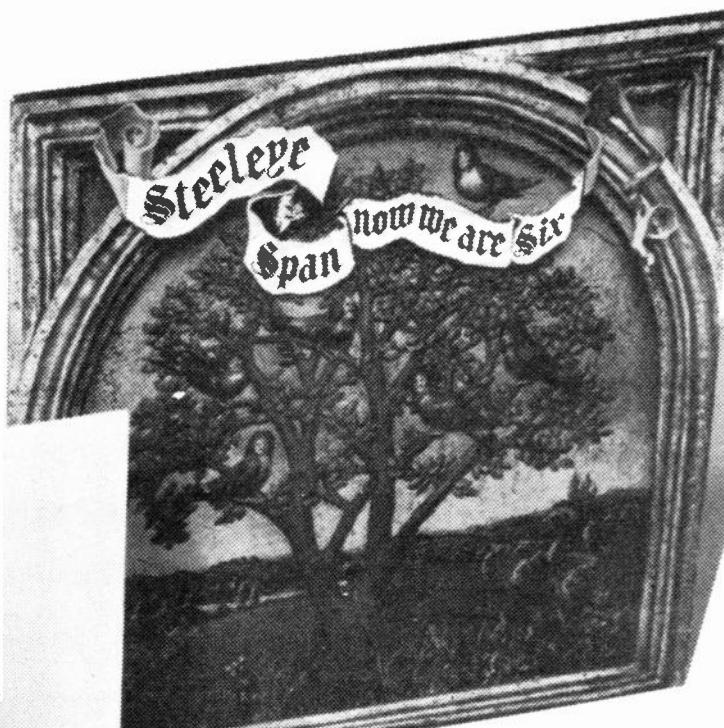
Elton John and Bernie Taupin have contributed two songs, one of which, "Supercool," is so very Elton that after the pounding opening bars I really expected to hear his impish chuckle (and had visions of EJ leaping across a line-up of Steinways like a near-sighted Evel Knievel on a souped-up piano bench). Kiki brings off Jackson Browne's "Song for Adam" well, delicately wistful and very much in control. "Amoureuse" and "Travellin' in Style"—one a subtly erotic lovesong and the other bouncy and saxyed-up—are the single hits, the former already a chart-buster in Britain.

The album was recorded almost a year ago with a varied and somewhat impressive line-up of musicians, aided and abetted by Nigel, Dee, Davey and Elton. The whole mess was produced by Elton John and Clive Franks, and I'm going to kick anybody who starts whining that Kiki will make it just because of Elton. His influence is immediately apparent in the texture of the production, particularly, of course, on "Supercool," but Kiki's style is far from derivative and very much her own.

Despite a few rough edges, *Loving And Free* is quite a good album and is, above all, pleasant; no work to listening and suitable for frontal lobe participation rather than just background music.

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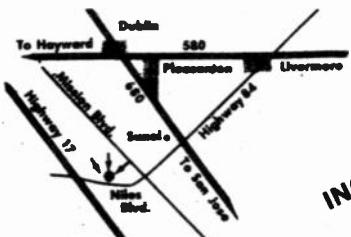
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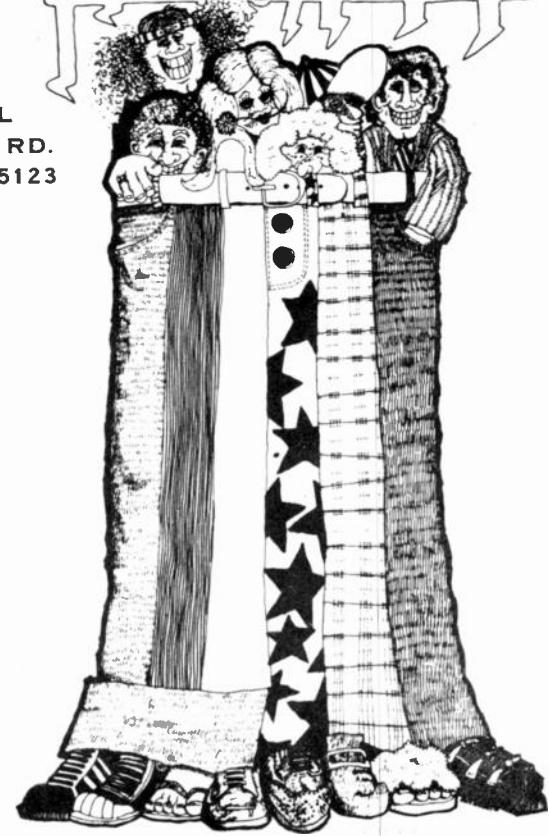
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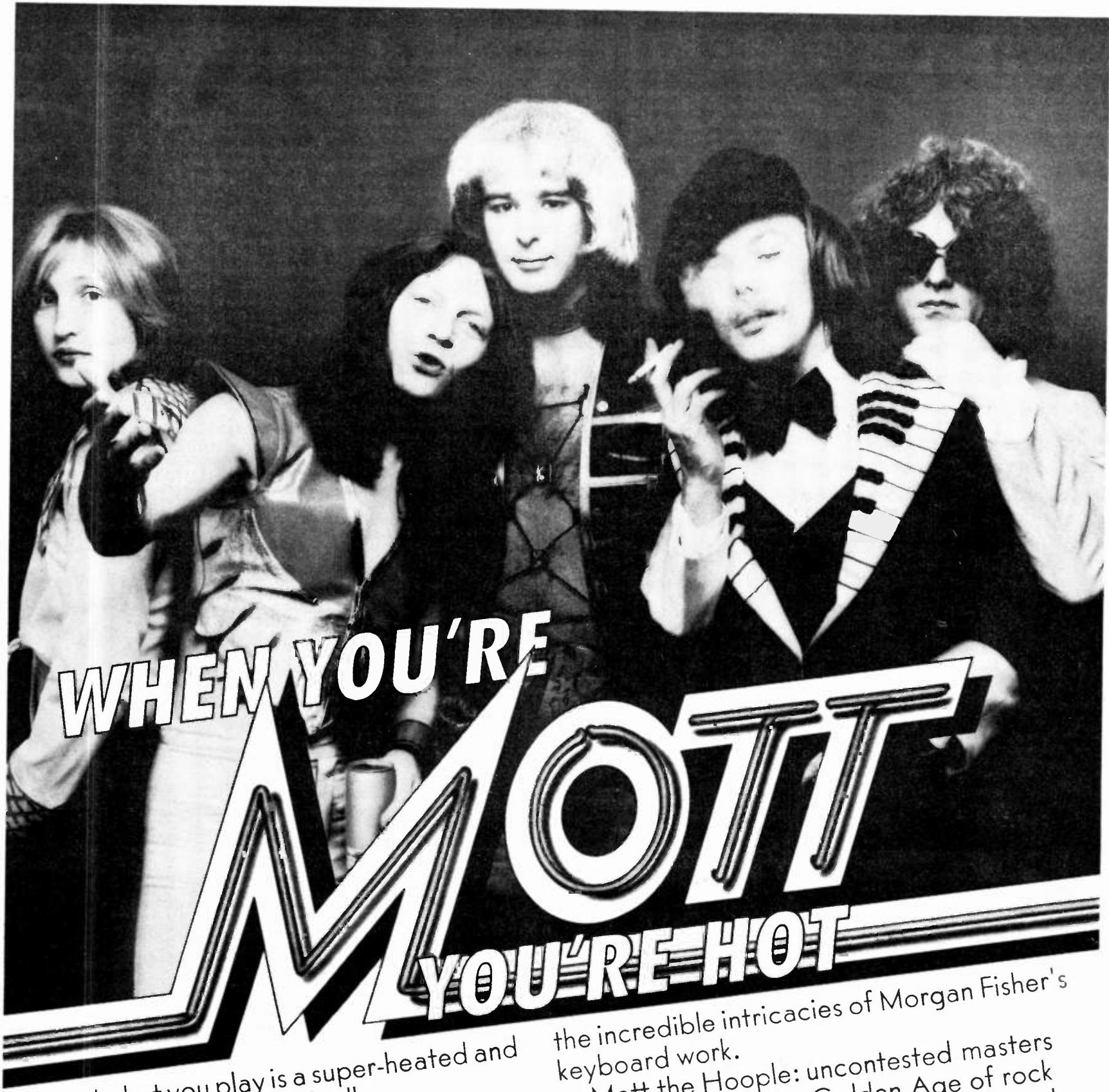
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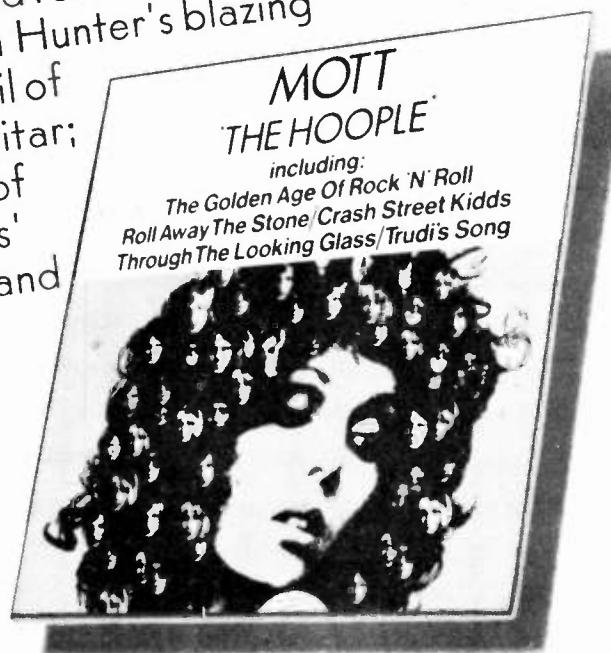
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