

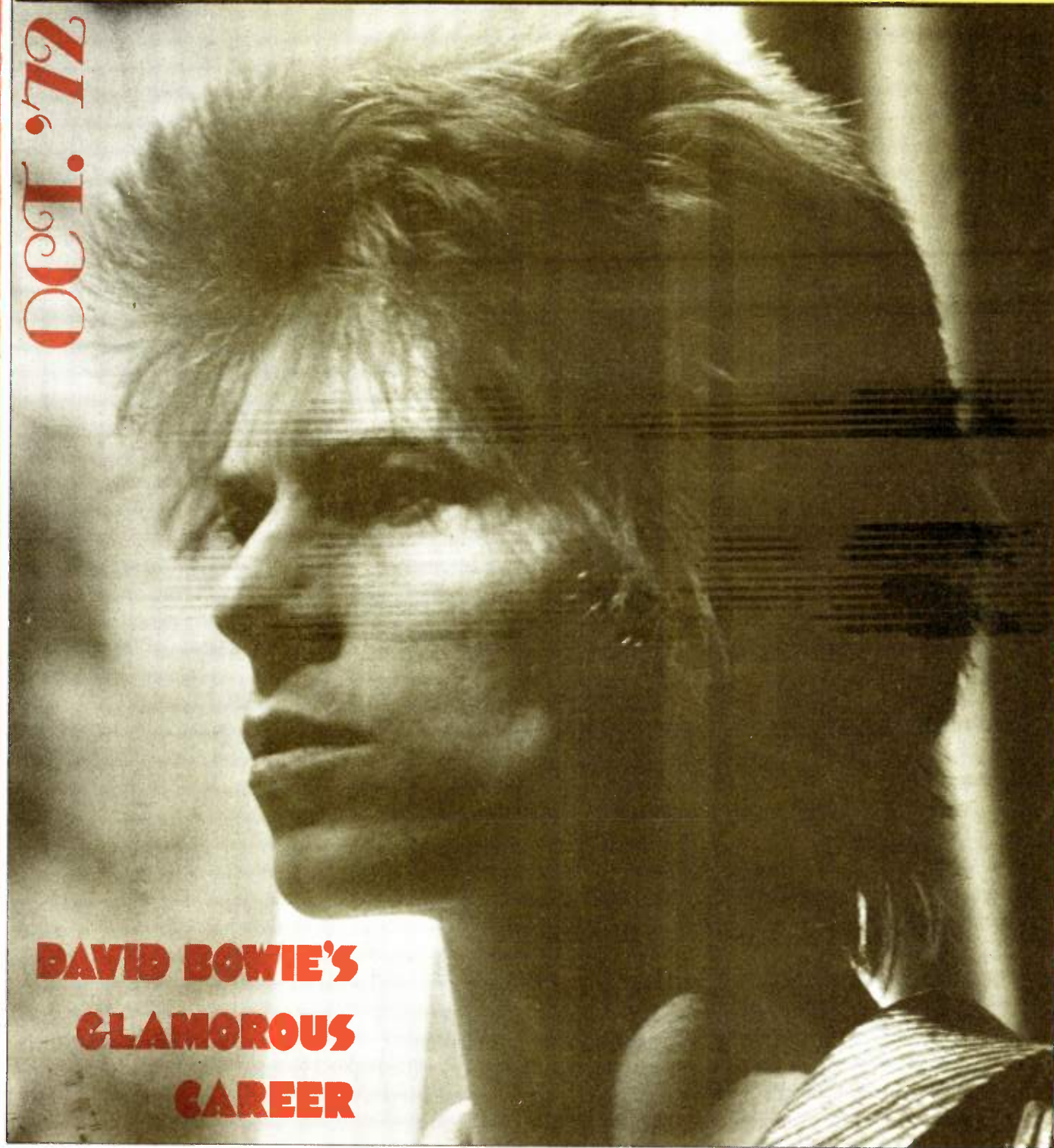


# PHONOGRAPH RECORD MAGAZINE

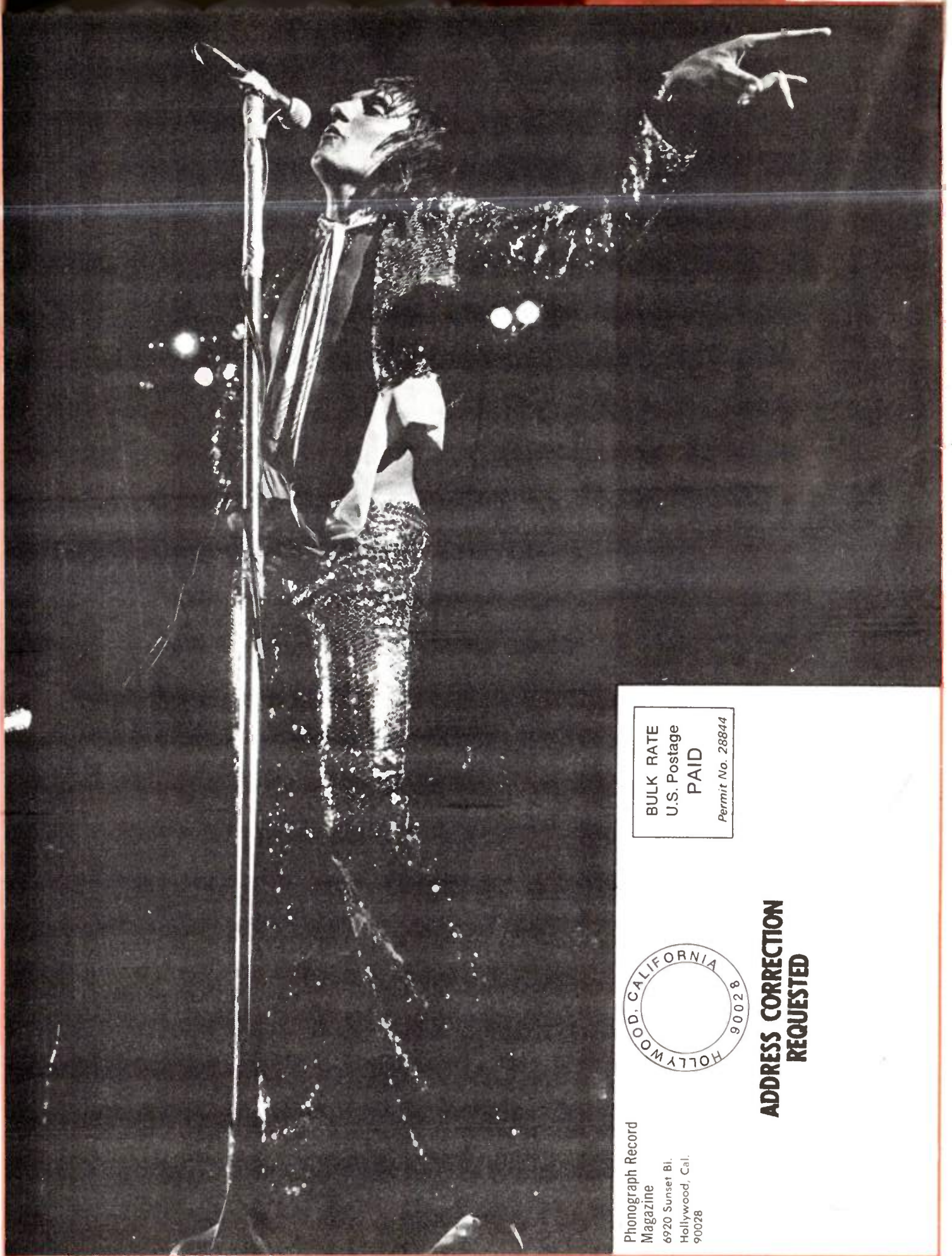
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OCT. '72

**DAVID BOWIE'S  
GLAMOROUS  
CAREER**







Phonograph Record  
Magazine  
6920 Sunset Bl.  
Hollywood, Cal.  
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# OCTOBER 1972

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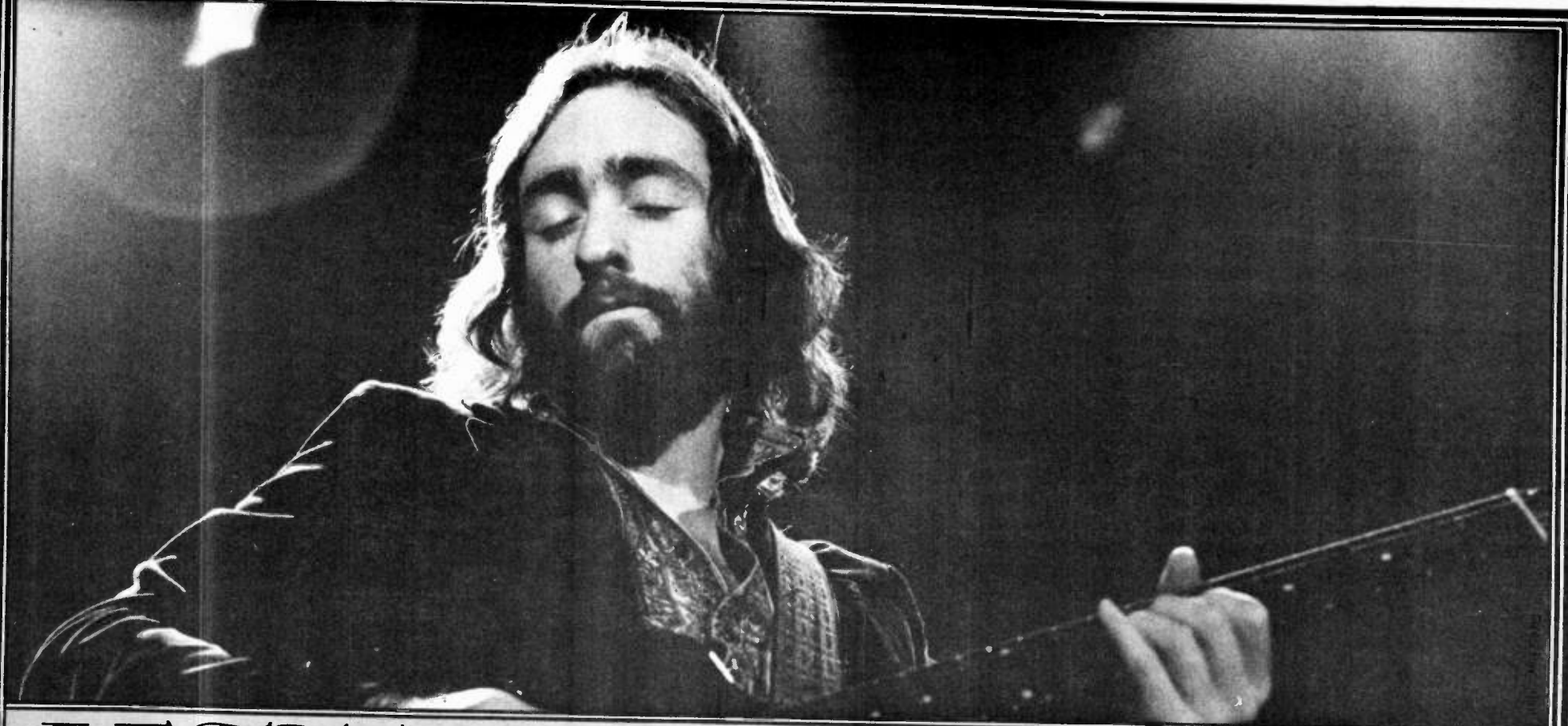
## HUMBLE PIE



## JOE COCKER







# LETTERS

Dear PRM:

Courtesy of the Texas Tornado Mike Saunders, your current issue of PRM arrived here today. I eagerly perused said journal's review of Lou Reed's RCA disc. My thoughts on Bobby Abram's review:

EAT LEAD DEATH, BOBBY ABRAMS, TOADSUCKING OFFAL OF THE CAPITALIST HYPE PRESS! EOGTISTICAL TIMEWARP! LEADEN-EARED FLUNKY OF THE MARKET SPECIALISTS! YOU KNOW NOT WHAT YOU SPEAK!

There is a small group of rock critics here in Madison who are fans of Lou Reed and are on the lookout for you. We come armed with frag grenades, tanks of nerve gas, and Elton John tape loops. If you are found anywhere within Madison, Wisconsin within the next fifteen years, you will be found guilty of treason and force fed warped copies of LEON RUSSELL AND THE SHELTER PEOPLE until you expire of peritonitis.

Viva Wild Child! Viva Ride Into the Sun! Viva Berlin! Bravo Lou Reed! Earwax infested rock critics, beware for your skins!

Chris Morris  
Madison, Wisconsin

Dear PRM:

I greatly enjoyed Patrick Salvo's article on Uriah Heep but either he or your printer goofed. LEEKER SLAKE was from TOEFAT. MARK CLARKE was from Colosseum. John Heisman was Colosseum. Ever heard Daughter of Time? It has to be one of the greatest albums of all time. What is John Heisman doing now? I heard he joined Fripp but then I heard Bill Bruford from Yes joined him. How about a free subscription?

Vic Stanley  
Gurnee, Illinois

Dear PRM People:

I was completely enthralled by Ken Barnes' accurate and comprehensive article on The Hollies! I've been working in radio since 1967, college and part-time commercial Top-40 and I share his frustration over good groups (like The Hollies, Beach Boys and Kinks) losing out on the pop charts to less creative ones (like The Osmonds and The Jackson 5).

One minor point of information: Ken Barnes guessed The Hollies took their name from Buddy Holly. Good guess, but wrong, according to Allan Clarke. I interviewed him in the spring of 1970 at a local concert and he gave me the real origin of the group's name. Back in the early days of playing local British clubs,

they were thinking of a name change, but couldn't decide on a good one. Finally, as they were getting ready to take the stage during the Christmas holidays, they announced themselves as *The Hollies*, after the Christmas decorations in the club. (Of course, he could've been jerking me around, but he seemed sincere.)

Steve (Gary Stevens) Abramson  
WMBG Radio  
Williamsburg, Virginia

Dear PRM:

What is this with Ziggy Stardust aka David Bowie aka David Jones? Bowie's been a "rock 'n rollin' bitch" for me for some time now. God, he made that "transformation" long ago. All of a sudden, he's getting his just desserts — and consequently we're getting our's too (thank you, David). Has he gone commercial? Well, a U.S. tour in September and October, a "*David Bowie/Ziggy Stardust*" doll at Christmas (yum yum) and "*Ziggy Stardust*" decals and God, what else? Who cares though, 'cause Bowie is rock 'n roll and Lester Bangs can take all his sawed-off Jagers and fit them quite smartly into David's left boot (cork-soled at that). And who cares about his "*sexual sincerity*?" He could be an ambidextrous chimpanzee or even Richard Nixon for all that I care, just as long as he kept his "hot rocks" on. (And Does He Ever!) Fortunately PRM's Timmies talked music and not sex (it pays to have a clean mind). What about Creem though? Is he — oh heaven and God and whatever save my krotch — gay? A homosexual faggot queer? A limp-wristed "*Larry the Fairy*?" Oh By Jingo!!! And all kinds of kind words for the *Stardust* album and in-concert chores at that. And that crunchy-delicious Bowie eating Mick Ronson pic (or something) is already on the wall. And a Fanny story and Greg Shaw's "*cynical*," but, well, perfect Tower of Power review. Good issue. Happily,

Mike Harper  
Provo, Utah

P.S. Greg, your review's on the wall too.

Dear PRM:

Look, I don't expect a rock reviewer to know everything. But if you don't know something, shut up; don't just assume something and write it and hope for the best.

What has raised all this ire on my part is the fact that Ken Barnes, in his Hollies review, appears to be the only person in rockdom who doesn't know that the Bobby Russell who wrote *He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother* was not the same

Bobby Russell who wrote *Honey* and *Little Green Apples*.

The Heavy Bobby Russell has since died, as most people reading this letter probably know. If Ken Barnes knew something about music, it probably would have occurred to him that the other Bobby Russell, to judge from his recorded music, would never be able to create such a melody as that in *Heavy*.

Maybe this is all rather too esoteric. Maybe I'm the only one who cares which Bobby Russell is which. But for God's sake, don't just assume. If you don't know, keep it to yourself.

Sincerely,  
Danny Odess  
Radio Naples  
Naples, Florida

P. S. I agree with a reader's evaluation of *July's Best, Ho-Hums & Worst*, or whatever month it happens to be. Not necessarily that I always disagree, but it seems doubtful that your *Nationwide survey* is very representative. I mean, a couple of issues back we were expected to believe that most of the rock reviewers in the country actually listened to a Steve & Eydie album and then pronounced it lousy. Why would they listen to it in the first place with 8,000 other albums a year released? It seems rather obvious that someone at PRM heard it and put it on the list, which is a far cry from a nationwide consensus.

(Ed. Note: Actually, more than 70% of the nation's registered rock critics cast their votes against that album — it was, after all, quite a letdown. Readers are welcome to join the polling, incidentally. All nominations for November's issue must be received by October 20.)

Dear PRM:

Thought I might give you some additional info on Amon Duul II and correct some of Mr. Fischer's statements in his review of their latest LP in your August issue. Amon Duul released one record in the U.S. on Prophecy, titled *Amon Duul*. After this they broke into several groups, out of which came Amon Duul II. They had an American release also on Prophecy. This album can be obtained as an English import on Sunset JLS 50257, a product of UA/Liberty England. It is titled *Phallus Dei*. Amon Duul II's third album *Yeti* (a 2 LP set) while not as good as or better than *Lemmings*. A must for Amon Duul II fans. Mr. Fischer should have mentioned *Yeti*, because of its innovativeness, the development of "their" sound and because it is a *DAMN GOOD ALBUM*. Much more in the line of *Lemmings* rather than *Carnival*. Also it is available only as an import on English

Liberty LSP101.

Mr. Fischer made a mistake when he stated Renate Knaup was a newcomer singer. On *Phallus Dei* and *Yeti* she is noted as Henriette Kroetenschwanz and on *Carnival* she is noted as Renate-Knaup Kroetenschwanz. I believe she is all one in the same, and her pictures in *Yeti* and *Carnival* are the same. Good to see them finally getting some well deserved publicity.

Robert Willens  
Discount Records  
Atlanta, Georgia

Dear PRM:

So Jon Tiven is only 17½ and graduated from high school this year? Huh! I graduated from high school *before* I was 17½ (a whole week) and I was only in college (progressive of course) for two weeks before I quit plus which I still owe them \$39. And besides that, even though I too love the David Bowie album, anything that my mother could even *listen* to without telling me to turn down, I burn. Plus which I come from Detroit and am devoted to *CREEM* magazine all of which makes we well qualified to wear the badge of "Punk." So if ol Tiv wants to be like me and Adny Shernoff and honorary teenagers Alan Niester and Lester Bangs and maybe Toby Maxis (although he's a high school dropout and never knew the joy of being *let* out of school. Which by the by reminds me to give Mike Saunders a kick in the butt for making that uncomplimentary crack about "Alma Mater" by Alice, not Chicago. Well that tune happens to be just fine besides which Ringo Starr is probably the only other person capable of telling it like it is about school. Right on Brother Starkey) and fight the forces of evil on the side of the counter-counter culture against all them old fogey rock critics with wives and everything, he'd better stop cleaning up his room, take off that Geronimo Black headband, put on a copy of *BACK IN THE USA*, *FUN HOUSE*, *KICK OUT THE JAMS*, *THE STOOGES*, or even *DETROIT* will do in case of famine and get his *shit* together. In other words, walk it like you talk it.

Right on,  
Free John Now  
Richard Allen Pinkston IV  
Minister of Defense C.C.C.  
Detroit, Michigan

To Mike Saunders  
(aka The Alaskan King Crab):

We realize that being at one point from Arkansas, and resultingly not a native of the Lone Star State, you have,

(con't on pg. 26)



# Performances

**MURRAY ROMAN**  
Samuel Goldwyn Studios  
Los Angeles

This party, of course, was the party for BUSTED and Murray Roman. The invitation implied that the decor would at least be that of a prison, but it did not even hint at what was to come. As I entered the sound stage at Goldwyn Studios (itself a sort of prison-like environment) I was assaulted by ushers who pasted a "number" on me. 456989 or something like that. "You do not have a name any more," I was told. And there were brown shirt guards standing around swinging billy clubs. *Real ones.*

The sound stage was furnished with long mess tables and a banquet table on one side, bedecked with food. Assuming that it was just another press party I grabbed a cookie, but was told that the "line would be forming in a few minutes." (Hah!)

A guard standing on the stage ordered us all to sit down. A hushed silence fell over the guests as they realized that he wasn't kidding. The other guards propelled us into our seats by waving their clubs as if to hit us, and shouting typical prison guard orders. We sat at tables for the next half hour.

It's true that at this point nobody was complaining. There was wine on the tables, a band called the Winos entertained us very amusingly, and there were orders from the "warden," one Wolfman Jack. And of course everyone played the role of prisoner to the hilt, yelling obscenities at the guards (who would occasionally walk around the room pretending to beat up on prisoners), and admiring the cleverness with which the whole affair had been put together. But that guard on the stage — he stood there rigid, military and humorless like a Federal fuzz at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. And none of the other guards were smiling either.

I began to wonder how far this "prison" gimmick was going to be carried. I thought of a movie called *Hi Mom* in which there was a sequence involving a "participatory" theatre group called "Be Black Baby."

The white audience members were led through a dark maze by black "actors" who smeared the whites' faces with black paint, taunted them and pretended to beat them up — to give them a taste of the "black experience." Was this party U.A.'s and Murray Roman's idea of a theatre of cruelty? "Be A Prisoner, Baby?" If so, they were succeeding. I was beginning to feel claustrophobic. I've never been in prison, thank God, but I went to a high school where you had to get passes (made out of wood) when you wanted to leave the room, where you had to go to the wrong home room if you went upstairs on the wrong side of the building, and you had to sign a sign-out sheet to go to the bathroom from the lunchroom. I went there by law, I was at this party by choice. What was keeping all these people from rebel-

ling — even in fun?

Well, they thought it was fun. They were keeping paranoia out of the picture by admiring the cleverness of the gimmick and waiting for that free meal. But they were beginning to stamp their feet and bang on the tables that they were HUNGRY.

So the brown-shirt up there on the stage announced that all those who had even numbers at the end of their number tags could get in line to eat. Of course, it was all arbitrary, but somehow, I found myself with an odd number. We were made to sit and wait. If we tried to get up, the guards pushed us back in our seats.

An announcement came that "odds" could get in line too. We got up and joined the line to talk to our friends, but still another announcement came that we had to sit down again. At this point, I began to look around incredulously at the people who were

Thank heavens they let me get out. Some moustached dude followed me though. He wanted to know why I was leaving.

"Because it's no joke!" I replied. "What do you think people who have been in prison would think of this?"

"Murray Roman was in prison," he said.

"Then he should know better. Prison isn't a party! This is too real to be funny. Anyone who thinks this is funny is sick. Well, there's one radical in the music industry who isn't going for this."

I don't know what happened later. Maybe at the end of it, Murray came out to tell the people that it was planned to give them a taste of prison existence. Maybe the crowd did get to eat. But I didn't care about a free meal any more. I cared about the prisoners who are going through all this bullshit for real, who do get wasted

tioners? Or a Mental Hospital Party with shock treatments and straight jackets for all? Or an Auschwitz Anniversary Party — "Springtime For Hitler?" I lost a few relatives at Auschwitz and similar camps. Maybe that's why I don't like mock-ups of prisons and authoritarianism for real or for fake. Many of us L.A. radicals were disgusted with the party. I'll have you know that Chris Van Ness also walked out — at the same time I did.

—Lynne Bronstein

**JEFF BECK GROUP/  
ARGENT/FLASH/  
BLUE OYSTER CULT**  
Gaelic Park  
New York, New York

Blue Oyster Cult had a real bad time at the big park and oh boy did they know it...one of the guys backstage connected wit Da Cult said "They blew the drum solo" and they may have caused a near-riot in Oswego, Wis. and a full-blown craze in Virginia, but in their own home they blew it. Heavy metal is their cause, and they got chains and flash guitar and when it's good it's great, but like in Providence last December it didn't go so good. Sandy Pearlman was

Many members of the crowd seemed to enjoy themselves, and rumor has it that some people were spreading rumors that the band was Yes and they changed their name so to encourage members of the audience to 'get it on.'

Argent were a whole different story. Russ Ballard's guitar playing is enough to support any band, but coupled with Rod Argent (a wizard on the keys and a fine songwriter as well), Jim Rodford, and Bob Henrit, they were dynamite! They played a lot of solos, most of them short and tasty, but Argent did a lot of songs in the short amount of time they were before the appreciative audience. They performed a few numbers off each of their three albums, and for an encore did the energetic *Round And Round*. This band is a band that *deserves* to headline.

The Beck Band, unfortunately, was headlining this particular night and they stunk! Arriving an hour or so late, the new group launched into I'm going down down down and they went nowhere else but, Kim Milford (ex-Superstar's abominable vocals killing the otherwise mediocre band. Beck played a great guitar, but was frequently interrupted by the rumblings of one Tim Bogert (bass), who, like his buddy on drums Mr. Carmine Appice, felt entitled to a ten minute solo on his respective instrument (during which Beck proceeded to pick his nostrils and ears — cute!!!). Most of the audience was horrified with the new band, and gave the band what is known as a glass encore, i.e., a ten minute pelting with empty bottles of soda and liquor. I believe that a lot of damage was done.

—Jon Tiven

**CONWAY TWITTY/  
LORETTA LYNN**  
Sports Arena  
Toledo, Ohio

This has to be one of the strangest concerts a rock fan can attend. The age old confrontation of rock and country music. I thought the argument was resolved, but it's not.

Several years ago, following a Jerry Lee Lewis story in *Rolling Stone*, an appreciate reader asked, "Why not Conway Twitty?" As a long-time fan of Harold Jenkins aka Conway Twitty, I always thought that was a splendid idea. But nobody really ever did it. So when I discovered that Conway and Loretta were appearing in Toledo I immediately contacted the Chief Gatekeepers (editors) of several rock journals who enthusiastically said, *yeah, maybe* or "go ahead, but..." MCA, realizing that *Superstar* and *Tommy* could not go on forever, happily consented and invited me to visit with Conway in Toledo. With lightning efficiency that put the Warners Mafia to shame, all was arranged. "You're kidding!" I told the people in charge of dealing with the insane institution called the "rock press." No, "it was all taken care of," so they told me. Only problem was, nobody told Conway.

All that studying, listening, etc. I had a list of questions from here to Toledo. Why the name "Conway Twitty" or the switch to country after nine years of rock-a-billy? Man!!! I



At top comedian Murray Roman is shown playing 'mouth' during recital of a segment from his current BUSTED LP. Below, in the spirit of prison tradition, an L.A. county jailguard poses in a re-play of an actual occurrence during Roman's internment for the promiscuous but noseey PRM camera

obeying these absurd rules and at the fact that even the "evens" weren't exactly moving along on that food line. It was a shuck-the-Greek hell where pleasures were out of reach. I began shouting rebellion — for real. "Shut up" said a rock critic near me. "If you don't like it, leave." "I will leave!" I said, and I got up and left.

As I was making for the exit, the loudspeaker blared "We have an escapee!" For a few seconds, I wondered, terrified, if the guards were going to stop me and put me back in my seat.

when they try to escape or rebel. I thought of Soledad and Attica. And I wouldn't eat any food placed before me that I was buying for the price of my personal freedom in a social situation, and the serious problem of correctional institutions treated like a joke. I went to one of my favorite restaurants where people can get up from the table and have the right to ask questions.

Why didn't U.A. throw a speed party complete with paranoia environment and actors disguised as Do It Now Founda-

spotted moaning at the side of the stage, being comforted by Murray S. Krugman and R. Meltzer.

Flash came onstage looking like British pop dressers, lead singer with a face like Roger Daltry put through the wringer dressed in white satin pants. As lead guitarist Peter Banks said, "The purpose of Flash is to imitate Yes, plain and simple," and they did exactly that for a long period of time. Guitar riff's straight off THE YES ALBUM, lead singer had a voice so high and whiny it was embarrassing.



was ready! Lookout John Gris-som. Instead, all I got to do was talk to him about busing. Not the political kind, but the coun-try star on 'the road kind. The Twitty Birds, another unan-swered question — where did that name come from — bus had burned up somewhere and the troupe was left with Conway's old bus. Conway's relatives in the "glass capital" and a date in Virginia the next day zapped any profound questions, but the evening was not a total loss. Pull-ing out my clipping of Lester Bangs' rave review of Conway and Loretta I settled back for a hot — as in humid — mid-western evening of country bal-ladry. Remember now, Conway is a country singer, and Loretta is the first lady of that idiom. In my research I found that a C&W encyclopedia stated that Con-way's rock "popularity had waned and he suddenly found himself a has-been. This led him to turn back to the music of which he had been raised..." Hell, I even looked at an old MCA promo blurb: "As Faron Young put it nicely a few years back 'Conway left rock 'n' roll and moved up to country.'" And then, and then...everything went wrong...but slowly.

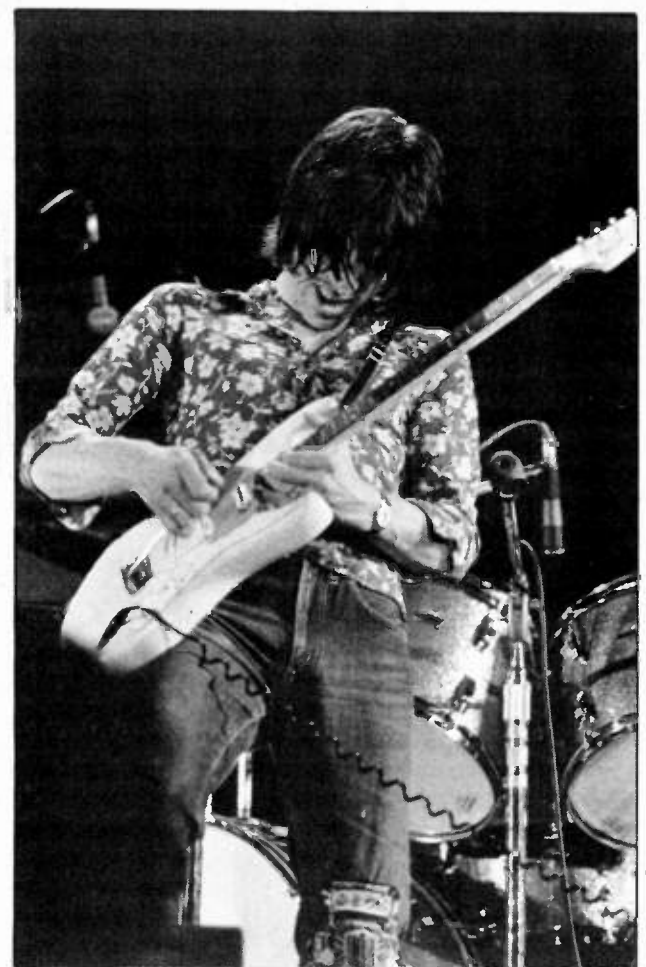
At first the script was well re-hearsed and consistent. Howard Jenkins, Conway's brother, supervised an intense campaign of record, book, and picture sell-ing which would compete nicely with Colonel Parker or Ralph Williams. Singers, musicians — all but the stars — made announce-ments "have you heard" and then informing the anxious audi-ence that "it" was available at the card table set up to hawk mom-entos. The hucksterism of these events offends only out-siders, since it is endemic of country fairs, revivals, and other gatherings in the Heartland. The audience is the typical country one. The short hair, 1950's dress, the penchant for beer, and applause for literally anything. They have fun. No wonder coun-try singers love the people. "They know what they like, and like what they know" says a major deejay in Toledo, and he is right. Country folks are con-sistent. Everything is fine and dandy until the opening.

On Comes Ray Griff whose only claim to fame is doing Jerry Lee Lewis bits yelling "Look out Jerry Lee." I find him comical. Some of the audience doesn't. One girl says, "I came to hear country music not rock and roll." With that comment it all became clear. It was an instant replay of Nashville meets Memphis. The Opry confronts rock-a-billy. I glanced at my watch and sure enough it was 1972. But the issue was clear. Griff jumped off stage, over the piano, sat on it, all of the Lewis gambits. It worked — the kids, of which there were many, dug it. After several supporting cast characters — those that sing backup for the stars — the show got down to Loretta who did her medley of hits as only the "first lady of country" can and all was good. She really does deserve that title. A crowd begins to form before the stage. No group-ies. The snow queens were all in the rear seats waiting for Con-way. Loretta did her thing and was fantastic but it wasn't totally Grand Ole Opry either. Looking at her lead guitar play-er, she asks in the most re-

"Most of the audience was horrified with the new band and gave them what is known as a glass encore"—Jon Tiven on the Jeff Beck concert at Gaelic Park, New York. Beck is shown right. Mad pixie Marc Bolan of T-Rex is below.



Neil Preston



Greg Papazian

hearsed manner possible, "What's the matter?" He replies, "The pill's wearing off." "God Bless America Again" puts the entire show back into the country perspective. Total dark-ness. Single spotlight. Flashbulbs blaze away as she sings. Small child basked in light emerges carrying a flag. It's like July Fourth. The hucksterism during the intermission reaches a peak. Still, it all fits. It's just like going to the county fair, no more Jerry Lee nonsense. You want a souvenir and Howard Jenkins will be damned glad to sell you one.

Conway Twitty is what makes this more than the typical country show. He does not fit the image. In fact, he is rock 'n' roll as we knew it in 1958 when *It's Only Make Believe* jumped on the charts. Green silk suit, white shoes, rhinestone guitar strap, and that perfectly combed hair. Twitty is the image of Elvis — wish I could have asked him about that! — and the reality of those golden days. *Proud Mary*, *What Am I Living For*, *Memphis*, *I Can't Stop Loving You* (which just hit number one on the nation's country charts), *Last Date* and *Make Believe* dominate the evening. Loretta comes out and does, disappointingly, two duets and splits. It's hot, but... The remaining songs are Sun products of Johnny Cash — *Folsom*, *Walk The Line*, *Yuma* — with Pork Chop, the drummer, adding the humor. I would say something about him, but he scares me to death. The show ends, expectedly, with Twitty's two monster hits *Hello Darling* and *Make Believe*. The show is over and the selling goes on.

I learned a lot at the Twitty/Lynn Show. People are still doing damn good rock and roll ala 1958. Country music has grown up, maybe some of its audience hasn't. There is move-ment here, though. Bubblegum-mers, who by all rights should be clutching Donny and David pic-tures, were adamantly asking for Conway's autograph. I asked one little girl "don't you like Donny Osmond?" She replied, "Donny who?" The folks there didn't like rock and roll, just Conway Twitty. —R. Serge Denisoff

#### COLIN BLUNSTONE/ GOOD HABIT Guildford Civic Hall Guildford, England

It was midnight, and as my nose was dripping, I was freezing on the last train to London. Colin Blunstone, ex-lead vocalist of the Zombies, was performing that night in Guildford, a small city thirty miles south of Lon-don, and dripping nose or no, I wasn't gonna miss that.

Preceding Blunstone was this perfectly delightful sextet, Good Habit, whose sprinkling of humor was matched by their farcical green monk robes. Very capable and together, their brass infused rock was enjoyable and contemporary (unlike the dated arrangements of Chicago and BS&T). If they aren't signed to a record label, some A&R people should get off their haunches and start bidding.

As his gracious presence re-affirmed, there's simply no one who can deliver a love song like Colin Blunstone. "I guess I've just fallen in love with the wrong girls, and it's moved me to write these songs," he commented as he delicately entered the haunt-ing *Caroline Goodbye*, his last single. Blunstone's melodic, crystalline, aching voice, re-sembling a dry wind (please no comparisons with Yoko!), is the kind that is perfectly suited to evoking tears. Even on some of the more outright joyous numbers, like the Zombies *Care of Cell 44*, the levels of happi-ness cause a flow of salt water.

"It's only our third gig," Colin commented, and although his band — guitar, bass, drums, electric piano — will undoubtedly improve in their cohesiveness and musical knowledge of each other, things came off quite well indeed. Most of the selections were up-tempo (unlike most of his string embellished solo al-bum), Blunstone largely present-ing songs from his upcoming LP in a manner recalling the old Zombies (sort of) or a rocked-up Cat Stevens.

Despite his obvious vocal talents, Colin's choice of material was commendable. He did mostly his own composi-tions, but also new selections

authored by Chris White and Russ Ballard, and...AND those great old Zombies hits *Time of the Season* and *She's Not There!* They were both adequate enough versions, his *Time of the Season* cutting the one Argent used to perform two years ago. It's encouraging to know that a re-emerging artist doesn't hip-ly frown on his contributions to pop music of a few years ago — after all, if Blunstone doesn't somehow continue the Zombies legacy by performing an old number, who else will?

The hall was embarrassingly populated by only about 150. Yet a good number responded enthusiastically enough to elicit an encore. Colin wasn't ashamed by the poor attendance. All smiles (after all, it was a good gig), he explained that the band didn't know any more songs, and *Pay Me Some Interest* was done a second time.

—Harold Bronson

#### BYRDS/JAKE JONES Washington University St. Louis, Missouri

It's one thing to try and toler-ate English electronic muzak ala ELP, Yes, Flash, King Crimson, the Moody Blues and Aphro-dite's Child, but when a St. Louis group, Jake Jones, in-dulges in the already aborted art, the results are an unequivocal disaster. Let's just leave it in the immortal words of Stan Lee, "anuff said."

Contrary to some reports, Clarence White, a predominant lead guitarist, is still with the Byrds; although if you're a fan of their sixties folk-acid rock creations, you'll wish he was gone. The Byrds originated country rock circa 1968 with the splendid SWEETHEART OF THE RODEO, but by the time the Dead, Poco, the New Riders of the Purple Sage and countless others had commercialized it into a cliché, one would hope it'd be another chapter in their marvelous history. Unfortunately Whitey won't allow it. Clare made it clear he was the Porter Wagoner of the group in his total disregard of the flowing rock feel that made *Mr. Tambourine Man*, *My Back Pages*, and

*Chimes of Freedom* all unforget-table Byrds' classics.

With the same lineup for the last three years, prior to Gene Parsons recent departure, the Byrds had developed into a tight cohesive unit. Sadly, this is no longer true. The new drummer, who Roger McGuinn purposely omitted to introduce, was so embarrassingly bad, he made Scot Ashton of the Stooges seem like Ginger Baker at the height of the Cream career.

As Roger McGuinn pranced upon the stage, it was like seeing H.G. Wells' *Time Machine* re-visited. The feeling deep down inside was anticipation for a great evening. After the first four songs, *Lover of the Bayou*, *Great National Pastimes*, *Bugler*, and *I Want To Grow Up To Be A Politician*, it was all downhill.

The one notable exception was McGuinn's exuberant per-formance of his beautiful ballad *Chestnut Mare*. Attempts to re-create the Byrdmania of the preceding decade (*Eight Miles High* and *I'll Feel A Whole Lot Bet-ter*) were doomed by the lack of vitality that highlighted them way back when they were given the proper treatment by the right employees. Probably most dispiriting of all was the obliga-tory Chuck Berry *Roll Over Beethoven* encore, which never fit the Byrds' style but pleased the mindless masses predictably enough.

Surprising it may be to some (it sure as hell was to me), but the best Byrds in concert are the recent Byrds' compositions as the old band's magic cannot be recaptured by the one remaining original member and three re-placements. The sixties are gone Jim — so git it out right now in the seventies Roger!

—Scott Fischer

#### T. REX/ARGENT/ THE DOOBIE BROS. Academy of Music New York City

This was the first time I ever saw T. Rex. You see, I never par-ticularly liked their music. All that crap about wizards, druids, and goblins; played on acoustic guitar yet. Shit, nobody (and I

(con't on pg. 26)



# 1965 REVISITED

## LENNY KAYE MEETS THE SEEDS

The success of rock's first intelligent reissue series, those of United Artists and Atlantic, has opened the doors for other companies to do the same. One of the more unusual concepts was created and sold to Elektra by Lenny Kaye, despite the fact that little if any of the material came from that company.

The original idea was to collect some of the great singles that were around in 1964-7, break them down according to geographical origin, and put together a series of albums exploring the unique contribution of several local scenes to the rock music of that era. Elektra accepted this proposal, but later whittled it down to one album's worth of outstanding obscurities.

Titled NUGGETS, the album (scheduled for late October release) covers every important style in mid-sixties American rock from *Pushin' Too Hard* by the Seeds and *Hey Joe* by the Leaves to *I Had Too Much To Dream* by the Electric Prunes and *Run Run Run* by the Third Rail. The majority of the tracks on this two-record set fall into what could be called the "punk-rock" category, but there is a wide diversity of individual styles.

Illuminated by Lenny's own authoritative liner notes, this album is the start of what will, over the next couple of years, grow into a full-scale revival of 60's rock, which is after all now "oldies" too. There is a lot to be done — the "sound of the cities" idea is still valid, as would be collections of folk-rock, surf/hot-rod music, female group records, English Invasion singles, early psychedelic, and more punk rock. All of these projects are currently in the planning stages at various companies, and hopefully the blunders made in re-issuing 50's rock can be avoided this time around.

Also included in NUGGETS are: The Magic Mushrooms, Mouse and the Traps, The Castaways, The Barbarians, The Vagrants, 13th Floor Elevators, The Standells, Chocolate Watch Band, Count Five & The Shadows of Night.

—Greg Shaw

### BRITAIN

#### A LOOK BACK AT AUGUST (DON'T LOOK BACK)

By Our British Correspondent

August has been a pretty strange month in London. It started with an old timers Rock n' Roll Revival Festival on August 5th featuring Chuck Berry, Little Richard et al...even Britain's Billy Fury was dredged up for the memorial service. There's not too much to say about this Festival because I opted out of going. I suppose I should have gone if only to write about it, but really, Rock Revivals don't make it for me anymore. I'm sure if you asked anybody who went they would tell you that Berry was dynamite, etc.... but I'd rather remember Chuck and the others when they were in their prime. One can never relive the past and I find it depressing that such greats feel the need to carry on into the '70's via Revivals. If these revivals keep going on the way they have been we'll have nothing of the 70's to look back on except for memories of the 50's and 60's. Now I just know you're all out there bristling saying, "Well, what the hell does she want Berry to do? Never play live again?" No, of



At top Sky Saxon & the Seeds are pictured in a rare photo of the band, 1968. Actually this isn't the real Seeds at all. Only two original members are present. Sky Saxon and Daryell Hooper. But then, it doesn't matter anyhow 'cause the only people who realize the difference are those same three guys who will spot the only glaring error in Lenny Kaye's liner notes. He says, "The Remains became Black Pearl"—actually, Lenny, the Remains became David Bowie & the Spiders from Mars. Shown below are the Count Five, who were to 1965 what John David Souther is to '72.

course not. Let's be realistic, a musician is a musician forever, it would be cruel to deny him the pleasure of playing live. But for Chrissake, does it have to be at a Revival Concert???? All the greats could easily hold their own with the younger competition around today simply because they've been accepted and one has to really boob hard to lose that acceptance. For instance, Little Richard is walking the thin red line. He is in grave danger of forgetting the great music he makes for the satisfaction of massaging his ego. A few days before the Rock Revival Concert was to take place at Wembley Stadium, Richard made an unbelievable stink about the fact that Berry was topping the bill. He shouted about it to the music press and radio insisting that HE was the King/Queen of Rock. Richard carried on like a poor man's Ali and managed to sour everyone's opinion of him. (Berry I might add was cool, calm and collected about the whole thing, offering to give up top billing to Richard.) When Richard finally took the stage he was met with justifiable derision from the audience. Instead of giving them the music they wanted to hear, LR preferred to "camp it up." From all reports it was a sorry performance and LR tarnished a long held, well earned good reputation. Perhaps this is the damning factor governing most

Rock Revivals, one performer may feel that HE was greater than another performer and the battle begins. I know that I certainly wouldn't like to be in the position of having to choose the closing act from among such greats and sadly there is really no such thing as equal billing. For some strange reason it has been the custom that whoever closes the show is awarded top billing. I find this objectionable because I have seen too many good bands billed low who suffered a psychological disadvantage from the audience's viewpoint. Audiences have been conditioned to believe that the BEST band finishes the show...period. The most unfortunate consequence is that the bands themselves believe it as well and even worse, managers exploit the theory to the hilt.

Speaking of managers...a pox on Tony Defries who handles Bowie for confiscating all cameras at the recent Bowie gig at the Rainbow (Aug. 19 and 20). Defries wants Bowie's photos to be exclusive to the tune of confiscating cameras from professional photographers and fans alike. I can well understand Defries' motives behind banning professional photographers from taking shots of Bowie, but shit. Kids with Kodaks??? That's taking things just a little too far. It would be far better if Defries screen all photos for pub-

lication rather than using this uncomfortable method. To Tony Defries the first annual "I'm taking over from where Tom Parker left off" Award. Ass fulla class.

Forgive me for sounding off like this. The politics of the music business really doesn't belong in a music paper. But if you knew half the shit I come across every day I don't think you'd buy another record or go to another concert. I try being a "Fair Witness" to what's going on over here but it's a bit impossible without earplugs, blindfolds or a gag. Blech.

One of the nicer events of August was the Hawkwind Party held at the Rainbow Theatre on August 13. We were treated to six hours of life in the beyond (kind of like). When I arrived MAN were just finishing up their set and earned themselves an encore. If the audience had their way, MAN could have gone on forever, but there was a press on time. Before Man was Keith Christmas, a guy I've heard about for years but never managed to see. After Man was the Natural Theatre Company which was the bummer of the evening. After them came Beryl Billabong and the Sheilas. Yes, you read it right. Beryl Billabong and the Sheilas, a 10 (12, 14, 16???) piece group composed entirely of erotic females. A Lester Bangs' wet dream in the flesh! BB&TS's first mimed to Bowie's *Suffragette City* and then plugged in for *Wild Thing* and *Dirty Dirty*. Musically speaking, BB&TS's would play havoc with your eardrums if you happen to demand musical ability in a band. But who cares about musical ability when the noise is coming from a bunch of ladies dressed in pasties, garter belts (black of course) and chic Marat de Sade leather? The audience didn't mind at all. If these chicks could really get it together, Alice Cooper, Iggy and Bowie would have to hide out. Next came Magic Muscle who are good friends of Hawkwind and have been playing on a lot of Hawkwind gigs lately. Lastly came Hawkwind themselves bearing hints of the Space Opera to come. Like I said last month, I'm waiting for the Space Opera to be performed in its entirety before I tell you about a Hawkwind gig. So hang on in there.

Something to look forward to in September is the opening of the first of five rock venues known as Sundown. Four of the Sundown venues are outside of central London and that in itself is a plus factor. Also the Sundown folks seems to be booking pretty adventurously starting off with Steppenwolf and John Kay's Band on the 15th of September. They have also booked Quicksilver, Slade and a nice mix of newcomers, up and comers and cult appeal bands. This must hardly seem adventurous to you, but the venue and booking scene has been such a mess for the past two years that it's comforting to know somebody somewhere is trying to get it back to sanity. I'm really glad that newcomer bands will finally have the opportunity to play in a theatre conducive to and solely devoted to rock shows. It's a good and healthy experience for bands to play in an atmosphere conducive to rock. Up until the opening of the Rainbow, any band who wanted to play to an audience of 2,000 or more, were forced to hire the town hall, the civic centre or some such place and put up with the shit hassles (complaints about noise from nearby residents, and the fabulous downer line "we've got to shut the place at 12 giv, so finish by 11 will ya?"). Anyway, I'm all for the underdog bands here that bust their balls gigging up and down the country and I think they deserve a lot better than they've been getting in the venue department. As I told you last month, the music scene is really perking up here and there are a decent number of bands worth seeing. It would be incredible if the venue situation sorted itself out. If the five Sundown venues are able to survive (it's going to be hard) the scene will be really healthy. So, this month's "Hearty Handclasp Award" goes to Sundown as well as good wishes. Till next month then.

—Lady Bangla Boom





# Happy doin' what they're doin'...

## BRINSLEY SCHWARZ

On United Artists  
Records & Tapes



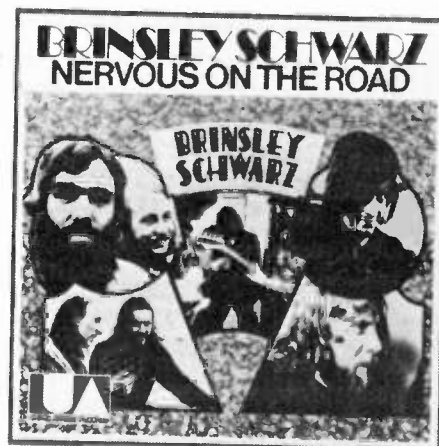
The time for titters is over. There's nothing silly about a group named Brinsley Schwarz, especially when they're making music that draws from such a rich vein of musical tradition. Few groups have managed to strike this chord of universal experience, and Brinsley Schwarz has been compared to all of them.

**Mike Saunders:** "Brinsley have come up with melodies and hooks that easily equal that of The Band at their best."

**Gene Sculatti:** "(they) follow the lead of Dylan, The Band, Little Feat and the Grateful Dead."

**Greg Shaw:** "The Band, the Dead, Dylan, the Byrds — all are known for their reshaping of American cultural archetypes into rock music. Brinsley Schwarz, despite their British origin, manage to do the same and do it equally well."

Their music is instantly recognizable by the warm melodies and vocals of Nick Lowe and Ian Gomm, its tight, semi-acoustic, totally relaxed mood, and its honest good cheer. Their fourth album, "Nervous On The Road" is even more delightful than their previous work. Chris Kenner's "I Like It Like That" and Ronnie Self's "Home In My Hand" duplicate the goodtime feeling of Commander Cody, "It's Been So Long" is a pure pop gem reminiscent of the early sixties, like the Beatles doing Buddy Holly after a few jugs of wine. "Happy Doing What We're Doing" could be compared to the Dead's "Playing In The Band." Threads of all these styles run through their music, but the result is pure Brinsley Schwarz. There are some records you just know are important the first time you hear them. This is one of those records.

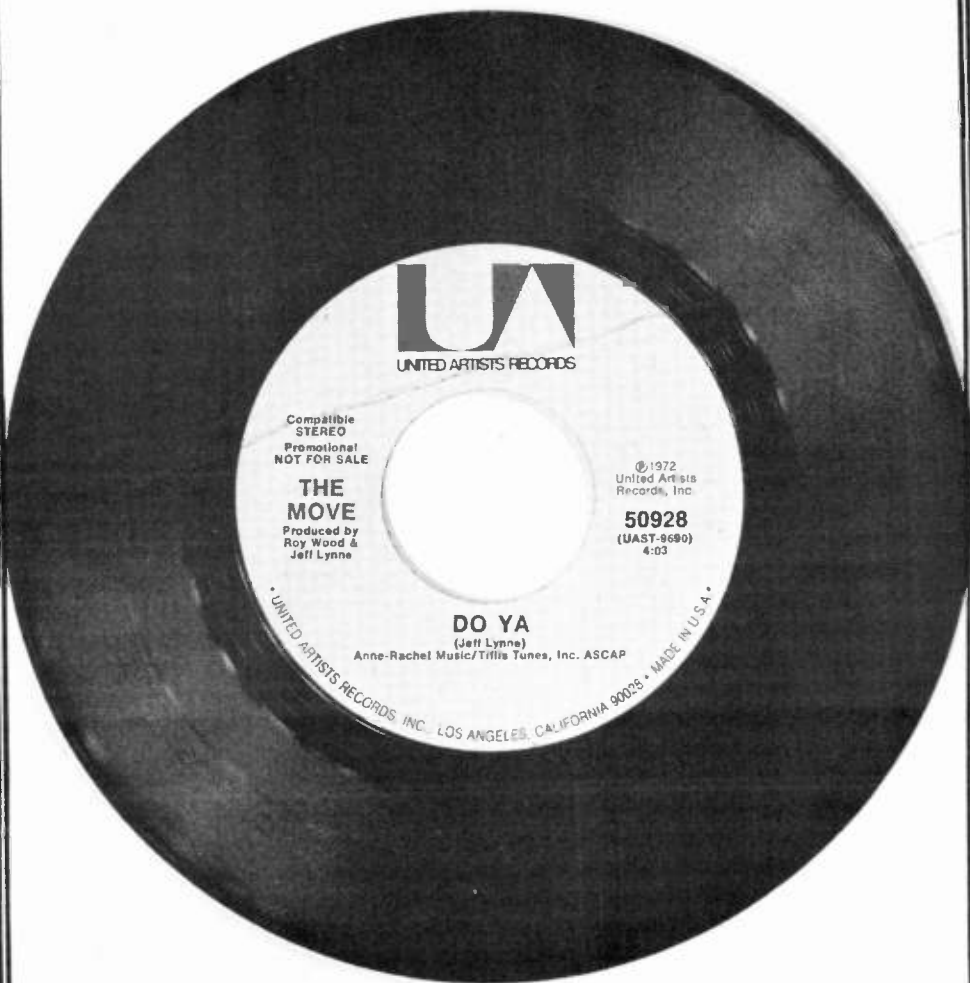




**DO YA**  
(Jeff Lynne)  
**THE MOVE**  
Produced by Roy Wood & Jeff Lynne  
**Flip: CALIFORNIA MAN**  
United Artists 50928  
Time: 4:03

It's like this you see, I went to the opening of the Spencer Davis show at the Ash Grove last week expecting to experience the ultimate chap, levi reality, you see boy, the Ash Grove is *laid back*. That's right, so hip is the Ash Grove individual as to make those Monday-nighters over at the Troubadour shudder in their leatherette fringe...Well, imagine my bewilderment when I came across an entire section of the room glittering like Alice Cooper gettin' it in the back with a Hoover what has a short...You betcha baby, and this wasn't David Crosby, wasn't even Elliot Mazer. Nope, this was the real thing, Shady Lady. And you thought you knew all there was to know about cock-rock. Huh. Why these boys got so much fem and glam, compared to their ranks, Bowie, Mott and Iggy-Pop would seem Woody Guthrie. Silks have never been worn *this* tight before.

So naturally when the kraut in the group, Gerhart, introduced himself to me I was prepared for nothing short of Alice in Wonderland at least, if not Rex Reed. But shit, what a let-down. Sparkles, frills, all that stuff, it's only a veneer, and it's not what we would be led to think (their T-shirts read "Fuck Shady Lady"). Mac



MESSAGE FROM THE COUNTRY LP combined with all the singles the group has had in the last year: *Do Ya, California Man, Down on the Bay, Chinatown, Tonight*, and there is going to be a brand new Move LP and it's called **SPLIT ENDS** and it should be out within the next seven weeks if we're lucky. In the meantime buy 17 copies of the *Do Ya* single.

**SOME SING, SOME DANCE**  
(W. Finkelberg—M. Pagliaro)  
**PAGLIARO**  
Produced by George Lagios  
**Flip: IT AIN'T THE WAY**  
Pye 65,021  
Time: 2:48

A couple of weeks ago I was travelin' all 'round the country and one of the last cities I was in, Detroit, happens to be where all the Cream people live in this huge palatial mansion. Actually they live in a ritzy suburb of Detroit called Hamtramck where the heads of Ford, Chivvy, U.S. Royal, Kellogg's & Motown thrive.

So Dave Marsh was showin' me the east-wing of the mansion and he stumbled across this single exclaiming, "*Boy, one of the best since the Spikedrivers, yeah, and it's gettin' a shit-load a play here*"... The first time I heard the suckin' record it sounded like a Stories outtake. When I got back to L.A. I picked up the record again and played it for mere curiosity's sake. And what do ya know, golly, it is the best since the Spikedrivers. Better even than T.C. Atlantic's *Faces* on Turtle

# 45 REVOLUTIONS PER MINUTE

by Martin Cerf

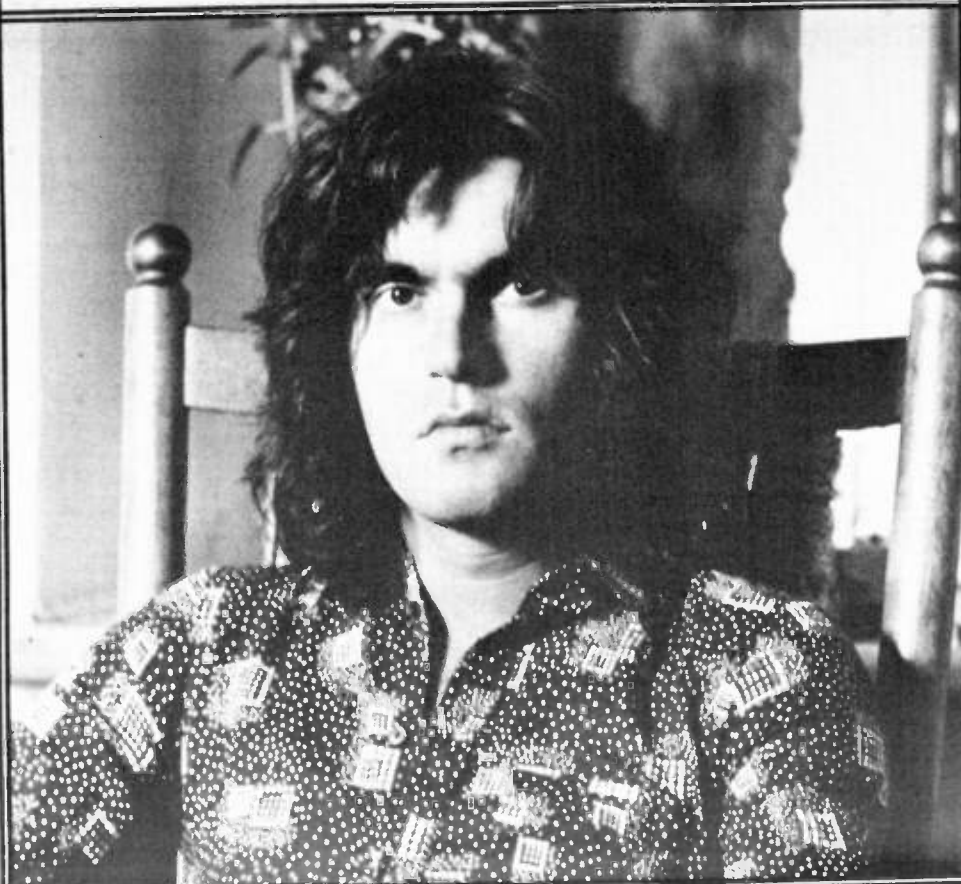
Davis and Kris Kristofferson got more swish. Miss Gerhart says, "*Vht doo you mean ve ain't gotten no tall-ent. Hev you ev-ver zeen uz perform? Ve takes our muzik zeriously zo dere...and Roy Vood, Bowie und da udders are all cheaps*"... Don't know why his fedders got fluttered, but I guess we'll just have to wait for the first Shady Lady LP, which by the looks of things is gonna be quite zome time. Which is all right 'cause as long as Roy Wood and Jeff Lynne keep puttin' out records like *Do Ya* we'll be satisfied.

And as for *Do Ya*, ya really couldn't ask for a finer single. Sure, and it's like the Beach Boys meet Lou Reed... "*Do ya, do ya want my love, do ya, do ya want my face, do ya do ya want my mind, do ya do ya want my love*"... It's even got this bridge in the middle of the song that sounds just like *Itchycoo Park* or *Sky Pilot*, you know John, the stuff with the phrasing what sounds like a couple a supersonics breaking the sound barrier over San Luis Obispo. And riffs. Criminy, you never heard a riff like this one. 'Cept in *I'm Waitin' For My Man*, and the lyrics, these are the kwaziest: "*Well I heard ya cryin' singin' out of tune, I heard the preachers bangin' on the drums, but I never seen nothin' like you*"...

You know what *Do Ya* used to be? It was the B side of *California Man*, but all these people like Jim Bickhart and Richard Cromelin and Ben Edmonds kept tellin' Bill Roberts (does promo for You-Ahh Records) how fab it was so he got it played in the Northeast part of our fair county and now it's the A side and now it's the first chart hit for the Move in the States since *Flower In The Rain*... And if you haven't heard it, you're cruisin' for a bruise Jim.

I was gonna go on 'bout how some people like John Mendelsohn and Adny Shernoff would just goo-goo and ga-ga over *Do Ya* and others like Ed Ward couldn't get into it, but ever since he sent over his boys to bust up our production room and punch out our paste-up kid thinkin' it was me for saying he couldn't get into *All The Young Dudes* by Mott the Hoople in the last issue, I'll just let it alone.

Oh, ya know those same people that helped get *Do Ya* flipped, Richard Cromelin and Ben Edmonds...well, they've helped U-Ahh put together an LP made up of five or six cuts from Capitol's



Greg Shaw and Dave Marsh agree that the Pagliaro single "Some Sing, Some Dance" is the missing link of 1965. It makes this whole business of 7" worship worth the price. Pagliaro, a Canadian, is pictured above Jeff, Roy and Bev who otherwise are known as the Move.

Records, *Suicidal Flowers* by Chrystal Chandler on Cobblestone, *Let's Tranquilize With Color* by the Psychedelic Parkinglot, whose lead singer, Danny O'Keefe, now has a hit record on Signpost called *Good-time Charlie's Got the Blues*. *Some Sing, Some Dance* could have been the follow-up to *Tell Her No or A Young Girl* or the second hit the Zepons never had after *She's Lost You* on Rotate Records. This guy Pagliaro has a voice more itsy-poo than middle-period June Allison, more sloppy than P.J. Proby, and dippier (as in Jim Dippy) than Martin Mull.

There's an entire rash of these English pop re-makes goin' round nowadays like the Raspberries and Stories. It's about time. Can't live by Tower of Power alone ya know, need some relief now and then.

Yes folks, this is, plain and simple, 1965 but in 1972. *This is not an old recording*. And believe me, I wouldn't steer ya wrong — this is worth writin' off to Bell Records in New York (they distribute Pye in the States) at 1776 Broadway, New York. New York and askin' 'em to send you a copy for free like we did. It's much better than Pagliaro's first two singles *Rainshowers*, *Lovin' You Ain't Easy* and we shouldn't have to wait too much longer for an LP... This guy got what cha have been lookin' for....

**PUT THE COUNTRY BACK IN COUNTRY MUSIC**  
(Gary S. Paxton/ Ronald Hellard)  
**JOHNNY BOND**  
Produced by Gary S. Paxton  
**Flip: FLY ME, TRY ME**  
Starday 9342  
Time: 2:14

If you've had it up to here with all this mock country music like Johnny Bond has, what with all them wah-wah's and da-dip-da-dips in your Loretta Lynn records lately, then you'll wanna hear "*They've Taken The Country Out Of Country Music*" 'cuz this is Nashville's definitive protest story that tells us in no uncertain terms to get our hippie-asses out of Tennessee... "Take yer violins and stoe-it".

Gary Paxton was the guy responsible for all those novelty singles back in the early sixties like *Monster Mash* and *Ally Oop* and now he's left Argyle for the tall grass. He's been round down there for nigh-onto two years now.

(Continued on Page 26)



# THE FOLKS DANCIN' THERE WERE ALL SHOOK UP

## JOHNNY RIVERS

BY GENE SCULATTI

If the Seventies are starting out, as they appear to be, making good on the debts incurred against all the various minorities over the years, rejoice. If dozens of other exploited, oppressed groups can now move and groove under the light of their own long-sought liberation, our day can't be far behind, brethren.

You know who you are. You rock 'n' roll kids: pop kids, all you pre and post-teens who grew up somewhere along the line attuned to the crazy rhythm, the Big Beat, the Rock of the ageless. All you guys and gals weaned on a sturdy diet of custom airwaves raunch, gooey pop fluff and that timeless sensibility monickered "rock & roll." You grew up on that splendid noise, that glaring aural object of parental scorn, you salivated for the joltin' jocks and the hot Tunedecks, whether those Tunedecks were inhabited by Presley, Holly, the Fab Four, the Four Seasons, the Raiders, the Seeds, the Yardbirds, Creedence, Tommy James or them Stones.

Unfortunately, the supply of that sweet secret elixir has somehow dwindled in the past two or three years. It's hard to get now. But hold on. Everybody gets delivered, and we're no different from any other long-suffering bunch. The signs are upon us and the time is right for...

What's this kind of music for anyway? Surely not for counting good angels or leavening out the imbalanced corners of the cosmos. Isn't it supposed to have something to do with "A place you really get your kicks/That's open every night about twelve to six," where they play a brand of magic that's "got a backbeat, you can't lose it," where "Everybody's doing a brand new dance now?"

There's lots of angles. How many groups can you name who still make people dance to their music? Thankfully, there's more of them coming along, but a quick headcount would probably collect Commander Cody's boys, Flash Cadillac, T. Rex, Slade, the Dead sometimes, and few others. It wasn't always that way. Used to be that rock & roll and ass-shaking and foot-stompin' were inseparable.

Back in '64, not all the action was on the beach, in the water, in those woodies. There was a huge indoor club dancing scene going on, bulging at the seams, a mammoth wave of dancefloor frenzy sweeping the continents with electricity, sweat and a litany of steps, gestures and expressions as long as your leg. The discotheque scene, the 1964-1965 dance-mania, was a solid form. Its accoutrements were many — hot combos capable of dishing up limitless quantities of shake 'n' quake sounds, low ceilings and hardwood floors, op art restrooms, mini-skirts and Go Go girls in elevated birdcages, Sybil Burton's post-Dick hubby, this old wrinkled guy Killer Joe Piro who knew the steps to a hundred individual dances



Guys like Johnny Rivers who've played central parts for such a long time, making records like *LA REGGAE* are the people to provide the direction for all of us who want so desperately to get back on the track. . . . Don't you ever hang up your rock and roll shows, and welcome back fun recordings.

(including the Schmirnoff's Mule) and gave lessons, dances like the Swim, the Frug, the Shampoo, Watusi, Jerk — and so strong was the form itself that it spread outward from Hollywood's pioneer Whisky A Go-Go and set forth a generic line of video successors designated

Shindig, Hullabaloo, Shivaree, Hollywood A Go-Go, etc.

All of which would be mere gristle for a trivia tome were it not for the fact that this whole phenomenon was so visible a manifestation of the basic R&R equation. The music was the center, and as close to

that center as anybody was this guy Johnny Rivers.

Along with a host of others rocking the West Coast folk up and down the golden state, along with the Standells and Bobby Freeman, George & Teddy and Redbone's Pat and Lolly Vegas up in Frisco, Johnny Rivers was the Guitar Man. His sound was basic (he worked with a trio at first), unembellished by superficial frills we've been tricked into accepting as standard rock fare lately, skeletal almost, and, for its dearth of instrumentation, turgid and simmering under a steady fire. His rhythm was the handclap, that celebrated *chunk chunk* that Van Dyke Parks claims defines authentic R&R, the Creedence choogle before Creedence ever choogled (give an ear to his *Parchment Farm* on MEANWHILE BACK AT THE WHISKY). It's the same sound you hear in those singles joints all over the San Fernando Valley in L.A., downtown in S.F., in places like Fremont, Concord and Napa and Long Island. And it's always irresistible.

Johnny Rivers knew what he was doing. He was reworking that rich legacy that defines the rock as part and parcel of all of us R&R Kids' lives, breathing new fire nightly into Mose Allison, Lloyd Price, Jerry Lee, Dale Hawkins, golden Motown and trad folk, kickin' on out. The roll-call of his hits tells it well; *Memphis*, *Maybelline*, *Seventh Son*, *Mountain of Love*, *Midnight Special*, etc.

He went on as well to turn some handily crafted specimens of pop rock into kingsized hits (*Secret Agent Man*, *I Washed My Hands In Muddy Water*, *Summer Rain*), and last year he surfaced again with *Speak His Name*, a Jesus rock-bo-ga-lo, and then Frankie Ford's *Sea Cruise*, yet another just-in-time swig of that secret elixir. And now he's got an album, *L.A. REGGAE*, a bonafide dancing album with guts and some brilliant moves to boot.

There's no timetable for roots rediscovery like there was for acquiring "hipness." Roots are there all the time, close to the surface and easy to grasp. For instance, Huey Smith's *Rocking Pneumonia and The Boogie Woogie Flu* (with Larry Knechtel's great piano), sounding as natural here as it would've sounded shouted out across that sea of bobbing Fruggers and Swimmers in '64, almost as flat-out Fine as it might have sounded coming out of the tubes in '57. And *Memphis* again, the band riding the tune with the forcefulness of a polished and magged pickup cruising the main drag of a small town on a midsummer's night, Johnny singing with the assured ease of the driver.

Not to mention a solid *Knock on Wood*, *Brown-Eyed Girl* in all its La Bamba'd glory. *Borderline* (as genuinely "pretty" as 60's slow rock was allowed to be), and Paul Simon's *Mother and Child Reunion*, the organ burbling and the guitar sweet, the song tailor-made for Rivers' vocal, a near classic cover of one of the few true pop gems to grace AM this year. And one called *Life Is A Game*, full of "Mexican" chords bumping along, that same harmonica (whose?) from Barry McGuire's great Dunhill nonhits, crowd noise ala BEACH BOYS PARTY, singing along ala Billy & Lillie, and Johnny coming on in dandy form re 1965 Dylan "protest." Probably the ace sleeper of the whole set.

So, y'see, there's much in store. Guys like Johnny Rivers, who've played central parts for such a long time, making records like this one, are the people to provide the direction, for all of us who want so desperately to get back on the track, for all of those beginning to see the light coming out of the tunnel. Don't ever hang up your rock and roll shoes — put them on and dance...welcome back fun-recordings. Empty yer ears of all that intellectual garble. What's done to the late sixties and very early seventies. What Frankie, Fabian and Shelly did in the late fifties and early sixties. Rivers pulled us out in '63 and he'll do it again in '73....



# MAKING IT WITH THE RASPBERRIES

By Mike Saunders



I've heard disc jockies turn blue on the air from the embarrassment of stating the title of the song, *Go All The Way*, and the name of the group...the Raspberries. Now what sort of a dorky name is that? Just at a time when the Revolution had supposedly cleaned up all our music, made it fit for human consumption, along came groups like Grand Funk to corrupt the kids. And then their progeny! Not only that, but now from the other side of the fence, the Raspberries — no regard for vibes, no mellowness, none of the things that made our counter-culture what it is today. What's a respectable 1972 dj to do. Just when you're getting hip, smoking dope on the job, learning how to talk slower than the speed of sound...Shit.

Besides, it's obvious that these Raspberries are out-and-out reactionaires, utilizing Beatles riffs from the dark ages back before the Grateful Starship discovered rock in 1967.

Another early sign, and a good one, was that rock critics by and large hated the Raspberries. The sticker affixed to the group's LP seemed to be the problem — yes, that sticker. If you can't judge a record by its sticker...Now really. You have to remember, there were people who hated the Troggs. Spoilsports beyond conception of the imagination.

Among the confusion (and the reaction that this group might be lame cuz they sounded awfully commercial and might have Top 40 hits and stuff), one thing got lost: the Raspberries are really really good. Ask any aficionado of lightweight English pop, and they'll inform you that the Raspberries' two and three-part harmonies are near perfect for the genre, and secondly that the group's songwriting shows a thorough assimilation of Beatles-derived rock in all its many forms. Plus, in Eric Carmen the Raspber-

I COULDN'T SAY WHAT I WANTED TO SAY  
TILL SHE WHISPERED "I LOVE YOU"  
SO PLEASE, BABY, GO ALL THE WAY

ries possess one of the finest lead voices ever heard in the style. Add everything up, and you've got a Top 10 single and hit album the first time out, and quite possibly the most promising group to emerge in the vein since Badfinger.

Ask the Raspberries what's going on, and you learn the following:

PRM: How long have you been together?

Eric: Two years. I was in only one band before the Raspberries, and that was Cyrus Erie....we recorded two or three terrible singles for Epic. Wally, Dave, and Jim were all in The Choir, who had a semi-hit with *It's Cold Outside*.

Dave: Forming the Raspberries was a logical outgrowth of our previous experiences. If you don't count the James Gang, the Outsiders were the only group to ever make it out of Cleveland, and sometime shortly after that the local rock and roll scene died.

PRM: How much original material had each of you written before your first album?

Wally: About 50-100 songs each; Eric, Dave, and myself. Some of the tunes on the album were written just a week or two before it was recorded. As a bar band we couldn't play original material, we had to do Beatles and Stones stuff. So it was a big thing getting to record our own material.

PRM: How did you (Eric) learn to sing like that?

Eric: From having sung in groups 6 or 7 years, with my first obsession having been trying to sound like Paul McCartney. There were times in my singing career when I was

Roger Daltrey, at times I was Stevie Marriott, and for one brief period I was Robert Plant. But Paul McCartney was the biggest influence, and my own style developed out of that.

PRM: When will there be a second Raspberries album out?

Wally: We just finished recording it. We do much more rock and roll on our new album because we're much more of a R&R group than our first LP indicated.

Eric: With the first album, we wanted to demonstrate a variance of styles. Some songs wound up orchestrated, and we had trouble reproducing them on stage. Because we don't want to wind up like the Bee Gees, toting a 30-piece orchestra around, this time we wanted to have more songs that would be good stage numbers.

PRM: What do you think of Badfinger?

Dave: They're really good. They sort of have an advantage, being from Liverpool and being on the Beatles' label.

Eric: I love their albums, because they sound just like the Beatles. We played on the bottom of a local bill featuring Badfinger about two years ago, when we'd just been together three months, and they were really trying then — I thought they were just about the best rock and roll band I had ever heard.

Wally: It floored us that you mentioned the Left Banke before we started the interview. Although they only had two hits, they were a heavy influence on both Eric's group and the one Dave, Jim, and I came out of.

PRM: What were you saying about the Hollies earlier?

Wally: That I liked the old Hollies best, back when Graham Nash was with them. Blaring harmonicas and stuff.

PRM: Can you reproduce your recorded vocals outside of the studio?

Dave: Yes. We really sing like that.

PRM: As far as vocals go, what did you think of the mid-60's Beach Boys?

Eric: Tremendous. Now there was a group.

Wally: You can't say enough about some of the things Brian Wilson did, really. Our own Jimmy Ienner is a tremendous producer. But Brian Wilson...he was both a one-man group and a superproducer all in one.

PRM: What sort of stage act do you want to have?

Dave: We don't like audiences that sit on their asses stoned...Ideally, we'd like to help bring hysteria back to rock and roll shows.

PRM: Finally, do you see your success as symbolizing anything in particular?

Eric: That a tender teenage sex-oriented song can still make it...if it has a good melody.

The Raspberries' success also attests to the durability of Beatles-influenced rock, a phenomenon with a diverse and fascinating history. It all started in 1964 with the Beatles, of course, who like the Hollies had patterned their group harmonies largely after the Everly Brothers. The main effect was that group vocals were brought into white rock in a way never before really tapped — the Fab Four proved that their vocal harmonies could be just as exciting and inspiring as the buzz-bomb instrumental work of, say, the Yardbirds or Who. The excellence of the Beatles' early albums through RUBBER SOUL hardly needs to be reiterated here, and the Hollies' early work (particularly such LPs as *IN THE HOLLIES STYLE* and *HEAR! HERE!*) has been hugely underrated.



The rather uningeniously-dubbed Mersey Sound of groups like the Searchers, Gerry & The Pacemakers, Billy J. Kramer, and Peter & Gordon was almost wholly Beatles sound-alike stuff (Lennon-McCartney songs having in fact launched the careers of the latter two artists), but it proved to be short-lived. What eventually evolved into the music described by the term lightweight English rock proved to be a much more refined style.

Countless groups following the English Invasion were indirectly or otherwise influenced by the Beatles, naturally, but when groups like the Merry-Go-Round and Left Banke (who left a fine album before Mike Brown and Steve Martin split) emerged in 1966-67, it marked a new event — American groups whose overriding inspiration was the Beatles.

Then came the Bee Gees from Australia, the most blatant Beatles sound-alikes to date, hitting the U.S. in 1967 during the second English wave (The Who, Hendrix, Cream, Procol Harum, etc.) with instant commercial success and an extremely promising debut album. Their specialty turned out to be over-orchestrated ballads, though; and the Bee Gees have tumbled down the road to a very uneven career ever since — fine singles on occasions, but the bulk of their albums contained alleged merits that seem discernible only to staunch Bee Gees fans. It's interesting, though, to see groups like Tin Tin and the Marbles record in a style some would call Bee Gee-derived rock, although little of worth has come of it yet.

The late 60's saw many groups turn with great success to a Beatles sound at one time or another: The Herd, early Move, Idle Race, the Marmalade, Grapefruit, among others. The Beatles' own white album/ABBEY ROAD period seems to have had huge effect on the course of lightweight rock; later groups frequently mixed an early Beatles influence with a large helping of the later Beatles style (with the instrumental sound of the white album serving almost as a prototype for many groups). Eventually, the music evolved into numerous offshoots, encompassing even one-shots like Edison Lighthouse and the Flying Machine — it was no longer so much a matter of Beatles



*Can the Raspberries make it on Top 40 with more balladic numbers? Or in an attempt to guess what's expected of them, will they try and come up with some more rocky stuff? Oughta be interesting.*

sound-alike vocals as it was now a distinct musical genre, with characteristic types of songs and chord changes. Which, when scrutiny was applied, usually traced back to the Beatles.

In recent years we've had Emmit Rhodes, who achieved repute for a while through his Paul McCartney emulations; Marvin, Welch & Farrar, who had a fine debut album only to sputter with *SECOND OPINION*, an uneven second LP that wasn't even released in the States; the Flame; regularly periodic comebacks by the Hollies;

and current American groups like Stories and the Family Tree-Roxy-evolved Wackers (strong ABBEY ROAD influence on *HOT WACKS*).

By far the most successful group, though, both commercially and aesthetically, has been Badfinger — *NO DICE* is widely regarded as a classic album of the genre. Certainly the group with the most raw talent to burn, Badfinger remain a total enigma insofar as *STRAIGHT UP* wallowed in the solemnity and mock profundity that was the ultimate undoing of the Beatles themselves; where Badfinger goes from

here is anyone's guess.

Anyway, that's a very sketchy outline of the heritage the Raspberries are heir to. One of the most encouraging things about the continued existence of Beatles-influenced groups, to me anyway, is that the charisma of the early Beatles is still seen as something worthy of total emulation. And it's not just the music, you know; it's the whole image. The Beatles were not nearly so much a cleaned-up antithesis of the Stones as they were a reflection of innocence and youthful exuberance — in this respect the Beatles certainly triggered strong identification ties in their audience.

The sort of innocence common to the air of Beatles-rock groups is hardly a substantial alternative to the punk-ish or otherwise commandeeringly authoritative swagger common to almost every great hard rock group, but it's a proposition I would hate to see lost. You'd have to be a total jade to disapprove of the idea of joyousness in rock, and the same goes for the irresistible melodies Beatles-influenced groups have specialized in over the years. Oh, I know how Progressive rock snobs can't stand the idea of music being catchy, but us less loftily-minded fans sure do like those pretty ballads. As for the Raspberries' place in all of this, their music admittedly may be ephemeral to an almost unprecedented degree at times, but they still carry a bit of that magic. And the stuff that they do well, they've got down letter perfect.

Where the big question lies for the Raspberries at present is in developing a consistent rock and roll-ish side; although guitarist Dave Smalley wrote two reasonably good rockers on their debut album, the group's forte so far remains ballads. This is really ironic, too, because what made *Go All The Way* a big hit, and indirectly the album, were those raunchy opening chords. Can the Raspberries make it on Top 40 with more balladic numbers? Or in an attempt to guess what's expected of them, will they try and come up with some more rocky stuff? Oughta be interesting.

Lastly, I've got to mention the thing that knocks me out most of all about this group. The Raspberries' songs, any of them, would sound great on a car radio. And that's really all there is to it.

*The Raspberries are a band to be reckoned with. Any negative prejudgements you might have held for the group for fear of their being non-trendy or lightweight, any misgivings should be squashed from your thorax immediately. "Go All The Way" is the best pop single since "Tell Her No" and these guys got the image to back up whatever flaunts imposed here. Take a gander at these mugs . . . Glan if there ever was my friends, and of the highest order to boot. Below starting left right we have the smug-looking Dave Smalley who despite the name is renoun in certain circles as "quite a lover, indeed." Next to Davy is Wally Bryson who ran away from home at the spry age of 13 to play back-up on a Ronettes tour with the Beatles in '65 returning to his ancestral Cleveland home only after picking off some of the tastiest runs on the more classic Phil Spector recordings of the last decade. Eric German is next, he's known mainly for pop contribution to the legendary 1968 Isle of White pop festival. Lastly, Jim Bonfanti. Among Kim's credits we found he was the drummer on the follow-ups to the one and only Outsiders hit, "Time Won't Let Me"; the tunes "Girls In Love" and "Respectable".*





# OH LORD, PLEASE DON'T LET ME BE MISUNDERSTOOD

David  
Ackles  
Feature  
Time Out  
19-25  
M- 372

# DAVID ACKLES

**DAVID**

BERNIE TAUPIN is writing behind the huge control board in studio A at IBC — a place so towering that his jeans tucked into his boots, have to occasionally be unbuttoned and then tucked up again. He can rap up and down just to make sure he can hear the audio beneath where David Aschles is en-

**SOUNDS**  
April 1, 1972

# Happy writer of sad songs

**EXCLUSIVE**

[illegible]

**JOVIAL**

**DAVID ACKLES**  
*American Gothic*

**Record masterpiece**  
DEREK JEWELL

DEREK JEWELL

[illegible]

elektra records  
15 columbus circle  
new york, n.y. 10023

# The Overrating of DAVID ACKLES

by Jeff Walker

A few months ago a sometimes pleasant, sometimes depressing, sometimes intriguing, sometimes boring album by David Ackles, called AMERICAN GOTHIC, was released by Elektra Records. I am sure that at no point during this album's production and subsequent handling did Elektra, Ackles or anybody else deeply involved with it, imagine that it would receive the hysterical attention it did from those who make and break records. AMERICAN GOTHIC, if nothing else, will go down on Rock annals as the definitive example of positive overreaction. Ackles was praised as if he were the Prodigal Son returning home and the record itself was discussed almost reverently; in terms of *"the best of the decade," "the most important record since SGT. PEPPER" or "if you buy only one record this year, make it..."*. Many of the reasons cited for these over-zealous statements were repeated verbatim from review to review. But, rather than convincing me they must be on to something, it really just proved we get the same mail. The best example of these reviewers, and the original inspiration for the critical turnout on AMERICAN GOTHIC, is Chris Van Ness, the music editor of Los Angeles' Free Press. Van Ness wrote a long, eloquent, emotional essay on Ackles

after receiving a tape of GOTHIC a few months prior to its release. His article was printed a month before the album became available and set the stage for what amounted to the sacrifice of a perfectly decent record. The Ackles piece was lifted intact from the Free Press, sent out to the press, and that started it all.

The only truly absurd part of Chris Van Ness' review was his die-hard insistence that **AMERICAN GOTHIC** matched, point for point, **SGT. PEPPER** as a record of immeasurable value and originality.

Ackles: "I appreciate the fact that Chris (Van Ness) was trying to convey his sense of excitement over the album and he chose as his means the comparison to Sgt. Pepper and the overpraising of it on certain levels. I appreciate that, but I can't agree with it because I just wrote it as an album. I'm not trying to shake the world. I'm not trying to change the course of music. I'm just trying to express what I know about music; what I feel about it with the utmost honesty possible, that's all."

By now, the tide of opinion and reaction to AMERICAN GOTHIC has subsided considerably. The album has taken its place among the "A's" over at Tower Records here in downtown Hollywood



(on The Strip) and in another five years, when someone else deems another record the successor to SGT. PEPPER, it probably won't even be brought up. Why then did so many critics see fit to take a good, artful, but somewhat limited record and then proceed to over-praise it so out of proportion that the true merits of AMERICAN GOTHIC not only lost their impact, but became a hellava chore to find. I, personally, only came to appreciate Ackles' work for its own sake by accident in the midst of preparing this piece, but, then, I *wanted* to understand what they were all shouting about. Most people, I fear, will settle for their first impression.

Ackles: "The reviews have been such that it has put me on the defensive, because the next person to want to review the record feels all the praise has been given and his first tendency is to condemn out of hand."

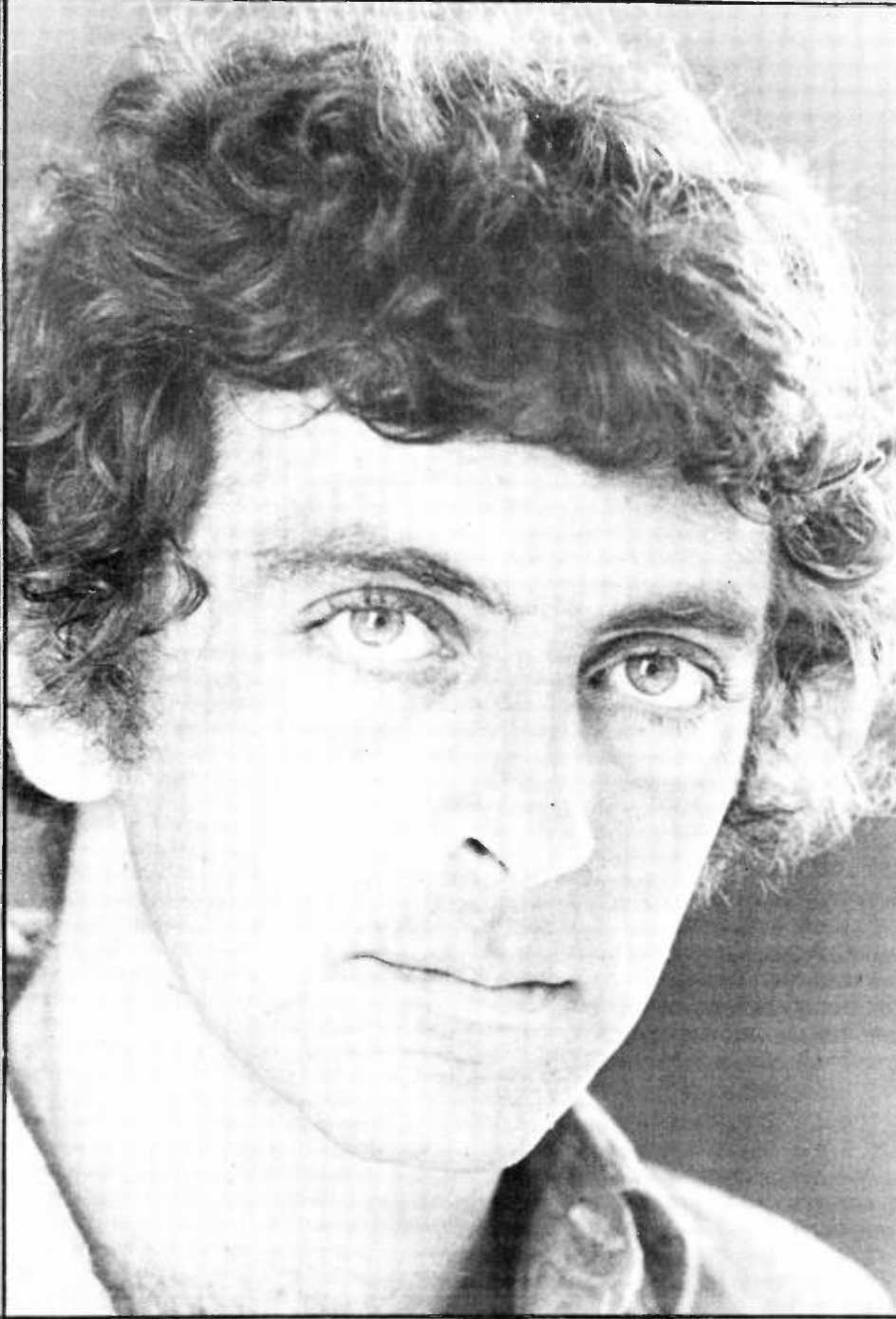
The reasons that Van Ness, in particular, went so overboard in lauding AMERICAN GOTHIC can only be guessed at, but there are some obvious factors that can be discussed. Surfacely, Van Ness drew a great deal of attention to a friend he once harshly criticized (his reviews of Ackles' first two albums were as negative as this one was positive). Chris knew that Elektra couldn't very well ignore his review, he knew there would be a critical backlash and he knew that Ackles' name would be flooded into the minds of a generally open public. Instant controversy and a job well done. I think we can assume, though, that Van Ness was honest in his feelings about AMERICAN GOTHIC; and his words were meant to do to us what the album did to him. What evades me, even now, is *why*? We can safely question the musical awareness of any army of critics that freak out on an album that is unashamedly derived from a source familiar to all, that is performed very dramatically, is arranged very lushly but, no matter what, just is not earth-shaking. Too much music gives one jaded ears and often something a little different becomes something *great* in the translation from ears to print. Don't these well meaning fellows realize that in giving Ackles a wider stage to perform on that they have deprived him the pleasure of direct communication and have made him defend a position he never intended to take?

Ackles: "People are reacting to the reviews and not the album, which is not fair. It's just music, it's just a way of communicating and if it doesn't reach you, it doesn't and that's valid."

Anyway, so we can get on with discussing Ackles as composer and performer on a more objective level, let's get this SGT. PEPPER thing out of the way.

Ackles: "This whole 'album of the year', Sgt. Pepper, change in American music; all of that supposes more than I care to suppose. You can't compare anything to Sgt. Pepper because that was an experience we went through, rather than just a piece of music we listened to."

Quite frankly, and accurately, there are no grounds whatsoever on which to compare AMERICAN GOTHIC to the genius and timeliness of SGT. PEPPER. The fact that a difference of opinion has arisen is enough to prove that Chris Van Ness based his comparison on several factors: that, like SGT. PEPPER, AMERICAN GOTHIC explores a complete spectrum of musical influences and, in doing so, has opened us up to many new forms of music; that, like the Beatles, Ackles studies the state of his country's being and the time in which he lives; and that he accomplishes this more originally and more effectively than anyone else has. None of the above are completely true. Ackles does obviously utilize his earlier influences, but his achievement doesn't transcend his source, as the Beatles' did, and that source is not as widespread. What AMERICAN GOTHIC does do, is to modernize a theatrical form of music first experimented with in the Germany and America of the thirties. As everyone who



It is now two years since the last album. I suppose that's almost too long between songs, but it was needed as a kind of sorting-out period. I've been living in England for part of that time in a house in the country with apple trees and swans and a river running past the back porch. It seems like you get a sharper perspective on your own country when you're away from it, so the time has been a big help in a lot of ways. This album is the result of distance and peace and a lot of patience and kindness from a lot of friends. Many, many thanks.

David

has written about it points out, to a different conclusion, Ackles' music sounds as if it were a recent collaboration of George Gershwin, Kurt Weill, Maxwell Anderson and Bertolt Brecht; and, except for the inherent humor in the song *Oh, California!*, it is as deadly serious as if it were. Ackles goes no further in time or distance to explore unfamiliar musical ideas, he expresses his thoughts through music that was first conceived in a time wrought with misery, and it shows. Ackles carefully builds a mood that is at once sentimental and pessimistic. On record, he doesn't approach the humor he injects into his live performance because he believes that by going from dark to light and back again, when he isn't there personally to clarify his intentions, will cause the listener to switch off. As a result, AMERICAN GOTHIC is a bit restrained in effect and David fails to exercise the wit and imagination that the Beatles used in abundance.

As far as opening you up to new musical forms goes, it is first a pre-requisite that you have never heard *Threepenny Opera*, Jacques Brel, Judy Collins' *IN MY LIFE* or anything Randy Newman has written. The first three examples pre-date Ackles musically and Newman parallels Ackles' outlook; only more cynical than pessimistic, and more cerebral than intell-

ectual.

One final thing that should be remembered when speaking of Ackles/Gothic and Beatles/Pepper in the same breath, is that the latter were four separate creative beings working very closely with a fifth, George Martin; there was very little chance of any one idea getting out of hand. Ackles' work is a solitary achievement — composition, lyric and every complex note of the arrangements — under an almost invisible production by Bernie Taupin; and there is little evidence of outside — or self-discipline. This was David's first time out as arranger and he needed someone to curb his over-zealousness, and Bernie Taupin just isn't George Martin.

There is just one more of Van Ness' statements regarding Ackles that is pertinent to this re-evaluation, but it is an important issue — especially because it represents the most extensive disagreement between critic and artist and is definitely applicable to the credibility of Van Ness' entire case.

Van Ness: "Gone was the pretentious singer/writer whom I had heard on two earlier albums. Gone was the pessimism and empty protestation which had characterized the other albums. Gone were all of the Hollywood arrangements and phony production that had been in the

way of David's music."

Ackles: "That's a point that Chris and I still disagree on because I think there's a natural progression from the first song on the first album to the last song on this one that is unstoppable and undeniable."

This is a point which, again, indicates the critic's penchant for overstatement and also gives us an insight into Ackles' view of his own growth. I believe that AMERICAN GOTHIC is a progression, but it does retain unmistakable residue of the pretension and pessimism of his first two albums. Whether one appreciates the music or not, David's above statement says it all and this issue is one in which the final say has to belong to the artist. If David's first album is the essential Ackles, then AMERICAN GOTHIC is the ultimate Ackles — and there is no questioning the directness of his route. What remains is for David to merge the two and give us the *definitive* Ackles; something that, even with my own tastes and personal reservations about the genre in which David works, I look forward to.

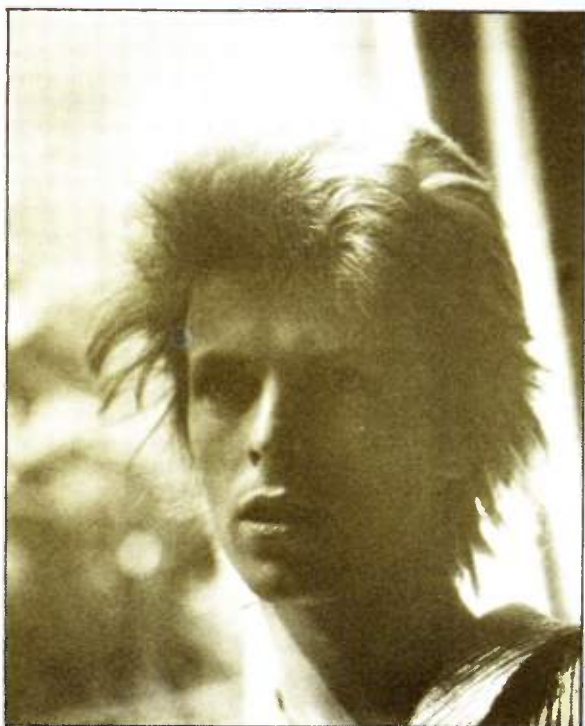
Granted, those reservations were formed without Ackles contributing to them. I simply grew more cautious over the years in my attitude toward such near-maudlin performers as Lotte Lenya, Edith Piaf and Charles Aznavour. I became impatient with the never changing mood of music more suited to a smoke-filled, booze-ridden cabaret than to my living room and as a result, I've been more than a little biased in my opinions of the performers that have continued in that genre. There do exist, however, a few artists with the potential of making cabaret music palatable to the harder audiences of today, *without* limiting themselves to the easy-listening market. Kris Kristofferson has captured several markets by successfully combining the sentimentality and self-pity characteristic to both cabaret and country-western music. Fred Neil, Kenny Rankin and Jake Holmes manage to appeal to a wider audience by using the less emotional format of a pop-jazz base. The more successful performers like Harry Chapin and Carly Simon (and, if you stretch it, Paul Simon and James Taylor) have proceeded from folk beginnings; first capturing that audience and then stylizing their musical and vocal presentation, going on to continuously expand it.

In many ways, Ackles combines them all; and Elektra, instead of aiming their campaign at readers of *Rolling Stone*, should realize that and start exposing Ackles to a more receptive audience. I can very easily see Ackles stealing the Carson Show or playing Carnegie Hall (in the classic sense) or becoming a favorite of middle-class, liberal, intellectuals. That particular audience is constantly shucked by Art tailored to its tastes and would probably be very open to the honesty and feeling that Ackles puts into his music.

A rock-oriented listener, on the other hand, might dismiss Ackles as a softer version of Randy Newman. David is more concerned with creating a mood than provoking a thought; happier getting a knowing smile than a laugh. But, he is more likely to self-indulge than Newman. Those differences run throughout Ackles' and Newman's music, but rather than making one superior to the other, those differences could simply be the demarcations of their two audiences. There is, of course, room for Ackles' music in the market he is currently being sold to, and I'm sure his almost fanatical following will remain appreciative; but there is a *need* for it in another market too often ignored, and I'm sure David can appreciate that.

If you buy AMERICAN GOTHIC, do so without expecting it to knock you on your ass. Just listen, carefully and objectively, and see if something comes to you. If you do buy it to hear the "album of the decade" and your first reaction doesn't quite see it that way, don't blame Ackles. Just think twice the next time about succumbing to far-reaching statements by crusading critics. We should all know better.





# DAVID BOWIE: FLEETING MOM

With not so much as the Ed Sullivan Show, Shindig, or Hullabaloo, a Winky Dink screen or a fifth Spider like Murray the K to add grease to his glitter — wham glam thank you ma'am — David Bowie, essence of Tutti Frutti and Trendiness Incarnate, candied darling of those who would boogie on 'till they play NASHVILLE SKYLINE over and over and over again, has come to America, to turn young dudes into momma-papa space invaders, young women into funky thigh collectors of electric dreams, and experienced music biz executives into lovers (of sorts). In this year of David Bowie Superstar, his ostensibly fatal twenty-fifth, there are those who think him a hype, though to Marc Bolan, wash-out wizard of the unfulfilled promise of bopping mania and once Bowie's "only friend in the business," David is not "big enough for me to be bitchy about. I could see Rod Stewart."

Something is happening here and you don't know what it is, do you droogies? Well, come along, this mid-tour wrap-up will be a ray-gun to your head. David Bowie is the *Face* of 1972 whose pictures you may have seen more often than you've heard his music. Having released no fewer than five albums in the States on three different labels with each album presenting a completely different facet of what has become a fascinating succession of images and intuitions about rock and what people want from it, Bowie is consistently the ironic victim of the accuracy of his own forecasts. In 1967, on Deram, he was a pop singer who won corny awards for his Newley-ish collapse of a love song, *When I Live My Dream*, and wrote album tracks about veterans who hung around playgrounds, but Cat Stevens hit with *Matthew and Son* and David was aced. He quit pop altogether, found a Buddhist monastery, joined a mime troupe, and came back with *Space Oddity* on Mercury in 1969, the summer of the first manned flight to the moon. The record met stiff opposition from patriotic top 40 outlets who didn't like the idea of Major Tom opting for outer space. Bowie himself refuses to fly over water and won't stay in a room higher than the fifth floor of a hotel. His first producer was the ubiquitous Mike Vernon who made the first famous Mayall, Savoy Brown, Fleetwood Mac, Ten Years After, etc. etc. records; just the guy to get into bouncy bits like *She's*





# ENTS In a glamorous career

## It's Not How Long You Make It...)

by Ron Ross

at Medals, about a dyke who joins the army and escapes from a fatal bomb raid by rolling out of camp the evening before as a lady of the night. His producer on *Oddity* was Gus Dudgeon and the arranger Paul Buckmaster, the team that would later bring us Elton John, but it wasn't in the stars for David to break in America at the time, despite the tune's top five popularity in England. By 1970, when *THE MAN WHO SOLD THE WORLD* was released on Mercury without producing a hit single of any kind, Bowie had a new manager but no agent. 1970 was thus not a year when too many had the opportunity to get to know David Bowie or his music for that matter, which was unfortunate because now Tony Visconti (the mix-master behind T. Rex's *Roxy Music*) was on the board and bass, and David was *HEAVY*. He'd enlisted Mick Ronson on lead guitar and Woody Woodmansey on drums, the core of his present band, and was writing existential and bruising electronic things about *Saviour Machines*,otomy, pathological murder, and other light subjects. The music was spectacularly living in the best Cream/Hendrix/Zeppelin tradition, and altogether a departure from the MAN OF WORDS/MAN OF MUSIC, Dylan cum James Taylor stance which was the only time our karma kid ever verged on the sentimentally absurd. *M.W.S.T.W.* was hard to take in its high energy, but consistently so without any embarrassing lapses of self-assurance. Apparently hot love on white swans was more what English teens in the know had in mind.



Back here, at Mercury's home office in Chicago, publicist Ron Oberman who had met Bowie in London even before *Space Oddity* was impressed with David's quiet sensitivity coupled with what seemed incredible self-confidence and ambition. Oberman decided that if David wasn't to show himself on stage, a sure way along with not having a hit single to die a death, that he's better get his charm in gear with press and radio people in the U.S. A tour of Washington, D.C., New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Francisco could not really hope to break *M.W.S.T.W.*, but Oberman saw such a promotional visit as an investment in the future. He worked out a similar trip for

the Mod when that Star-To-Be was between Beck and the Faces, so Mercury was at a loss for talented rockers those first months of 1971.

Bowie played it straight for the Eastern part of his trip; doubtlessly he was feeling way around a country he'd never been to before. By the time he hit 'Frisco he'd picked up a couple of dresses and some undeniably omnisequal social techniques, impressing the ever-alert John Mendelsohn as enough of a kindred spirit to warrant a spot to the point news story in *Rolling Stone*. Six months later *THE MAN WHO SOLD THE WORLD* was a two buck cut out, and Rod Stewart was gettin' ready to show Cat Stevens and Elton John into happening-ever-after land.

Now in summer of 1971, a most peculiar and relevant chain of events went into motion. Bowie's manager Tony De Fries brought over to the States four tracks from hopefully soon to be released *HUNKY DORY*, since *MAN WHO SOLD THE WORLD*, David and Mercury had parted company to the mutual relief of both, and he was once again "available." David's American trip hadn't all been thrills and spills; in New York he'd been ignored at a folk club where he'd asked if he might do a set and there were still parts of the country that found a young man in a dress something other than elegant. So De Fries wasn't taking any chances: he waved *HUNKY DORY* before a lot of itchy A&R ears. Among those first interested were the folks in the United Artists Records Creative Services Dept. Upon hearing the initial tracks presented for *HUNKY DORY* (which included *It Ain't Easy*, a tune by Ron Ross that failed to make it on *DORY* but did show on *ZIGGY*, and *BOMBERS* which has still to see a commercial release). What took place subsequently is unclear, but UA's Bill Roberts describes it this way:

*Mike Stewart (UA President) and Tony agreed upon an equitable deal and we decided to draw up contracts. Before they could be signed Bowie apparently read an alternative deal from RCA with greater revenues. Marty (Cerf) and I were crushed but that's show biz buddy.* The alternative deal was with RCA Records in the alternative office of the frivolous Dennis Katz.

### THE CLOSET OPENS

Dennis Katz, a lawyer who affects penny loafers and velvet bow-ties after the manner of Ray Davies. Katz cherished an ambition to make RCA something more than a distributor for Elvis Presley and Jefferson Airplane product, and in one short year he perhaps recklessly but idealistically signed Lou Reed, the Kinks, and David Bowie to the recording company of a corporation that makes its profits selling defense technology to red blooded American heretics. It was all quite fitting, if not exactly calculated to sell any of the Trendy Triumvirate's discs. But although De Fries had a lot of offers, Katz really wanted Bowie even though he'd heard nothing from David but those few *HUNKY DORY* tracks, because good golly Miss Molly, RCA's the last place anybody'd expect to find a rock and rolling queen bitch, and shock tactics were part of his master plan. De Fries wanted a company that wouldn't tell him too much about what to do with his boy, a company where David would stand out and receive the maximum amount of specialized and hit-hungry attention. The Machiavellian net drew tighter around the protagonists.



So *HUNKY DORY*, as produced by "the actor" David Bowie and engineer Ken Scott, presented a blond tressed androgynous Bowie that any movie goer could love, and classics like *Changes*, *Andy Warhol*, *Oh You Pretty Things*, and *Life on Mars* drew an immediate and enthusiastic critical response. Unfortunately, many of the reviews were by long-standing fans who had been waiting for their chance and, like the various record company people with whom Bowie would become involved, they were a little too anxious to presume that which they had been the ones into all along. Much of what was written about David was terribly insidey, and but for Richard Cromelin's definitive piece, taken from an interview he'd done with Bowie during the promotional trip, and published in *Phonograph Record Magazine* last January, there would still be little detailed factual information available on Bowie's career. After another six months of journalistic hoopla, Bowie still had no act, no hit, and no sales to speak of, although *Changes* had gone top ten in Boston and, of all places, Memphis, due to the efforts of an extraordinarily dedicated and together group of radio and retail people. To RCA's amazement the album didn't sell though proportionate to the airplay the single was getting where it was being played; it was as though they were trying to market a poetry book.

There was, however, a *David Bowie Society*, put together around 1970 by a lovely boy from Cleveland named Brian Kinchy,\* who thought it would be nice to get in touch with "the kind of people who were into Bowie." Long before *HUNKY DORY*,



Brian's letters were an important source of information about Bowie, taking great care to list additions to the discography, alternate versions to various tracks, and all the enticing rumors that make following an obscure artist worthwhile. Brian lives within bicycling distance of Jack Springer,\*\* founder of the Move Society and a fan supreme. That people were getting to know each other through loving his music paid David a greater compliment than all the "Album of the Year" picks he could put in the "so what" file: *by your fans ye shall be known*.

Just before RCA indicated that breaking him internationally was a matter of life and death to any number of its

\*The David Bowie Society has grown in recent months to a total of 63 writing



## BOWIE'S GLAMOROUS CAREER



members. And more are coming together daily. Those wishing further information on the society should write Brian Kinchy at 6609 Biddulph Street, Cleveland, Ohio. \*\*Lest we be accosted publicly — be informed that the Move/ELO Society is still operating at full capacity. One may reach Jack Springer and his group at 1422 Northland Avenue, Lakewood, Ohio 44107.

executives, Bowie was contradicting himself every time he gave an interview in England. At one point, he'd say, "I don't study (rock) much, and I'm not a follower of anything much. I never wanted to consider myself in the rock business too much." — this from someone who had already had a smash single in England, put out more than half a dozen less successful singles, made three albums, and quit the biz twice, both times presumably for good. Then again, "I can only face this business if I'm totally involved in it, and I can't do that if it is boring and takes itself seriously. How can anybody be a serious pop artist at 24?" Note the consistent references to the "business" of rock and roll.

The wide range of musical styles and lyrical viewpoints expressed on the various albums might have indicated a failure to find a groove in which he worked really well for a lesser artist. Yet from the surprising ironies of his superficially straightforward pop tunes on *Deram*, to his brooding myths for our time like *Oddity*, *The Cygnet Committee*, and *Memory of a Free Festival* on the first Mercury album, to his exploration of the essential passivity of a drug culture happy to be steam-rolled by heavy metal music on *M.W.S.T.W.*, and on to his Beatlish return to relative simplicity with *HUNKY DORY*, in which he evaluated both the Coming Race and contemporary reference points like Andy Warhol and Bob Dylan, David Bowie has been a unique example of the rock artist as critic, an attitude toward the art and life styles going on around him which his long-time fave Oscar Wilde had deemed ideal some seventy-five years earlier. David Bowie knows what audiences like about any given style of pop, as certainly as he knows how to get the most from any given style with which he is working, and by adding his own peculiar overview, Bowie brings to light not only the essential value of a style, but promotes his own constantly changing image at the same time. Since he has never really been in a position to lead the public wherever he felt like taking it, it has been strategic for him to reflect what's been happening, but pop is listened to superficially by almost everyone, including many who make a living from it, so the tendency to dismiss David Bowie as imitative has been as strong among those who haven't listened but merely judged, as loyalty to David has been fierce, sensitive, and intelligent among those curious enough to put two of his albums together and ask a few questions.

Tired perhaps of winning over people who didn't have to pay to hear him, Bowie apparently decided he'd tie up all the loose ends, aesthetically and professionally, by getting his ass on the road to perform *THE RISE AND FALL OF ZIGGY STARDUST AND THE SPIDERS FROM MARS*, an album about rock and roll designed once and for all to make a rock and roll star out of David Bowie. The content of *ZIGGY STARDUST* and how its concepts relate to Bowie's earlier albums should be the most pertinent aspect of any discussion of Bowie's validity and his chances for success in this country, but one last dramatic and political episode shall intervene to point up just how hard a record company has to try these days without American Bandstand or Woodstock to count on.

*ZIGGY STARDUST* was an instant nova with Bowie's wide following of writers, mainly because it combined some of the best energies of what has been a very good year for the Beatles (in the form of Todd Rundgren, Badfinger, and Nilsson) and the Stones (in the form of a monster tour, Alice Cooper, the Flamin' Groovies, the New York Dolls, and other phenomena still on a subterranean level). *Starman* was ostensibly a sure-shot single, easier to hum and more optimistic than the rest of the album, yet no less original or strangely reassuringly familiar. Wise-ass top forty music directors decided that it sounded too much like Elton John's *Rocket Man*, a huge hit coincidentally released the same week as yet another manned space flight and produced by none other than Gus Dudgeon. Set-backs like that sort of typify the straight-thinking music biz, but a lot of promotion men at RCA had probably never heard of *Space Oddity* either, so Bowie's trendiness out-did him once again.

### AND LET YE BE JUDGED BY YOUR FANS, ER, CRITICS

Early in July, RCA publicity decided rather abruptly that if Mick Jagger (of whom David had said in May of 1971, "the Rolling Stones are finished.") could make the cover of *Life*, the least they could do for the company's numba one progressive rock priority was to get a spread in *Playboy*, *New York* magazine, or maybe the *Earth News*. To that end they would send a small select team of un-converted press to England to hear Bowie's so long in coming rock and roll show in context. A number of New York rock writers, notorious as a group for getting very far on very little, invited themselves aboard, and like the goose that laid the golden eggs, David Bowie was about to be sacrificed to the emotions that well up in a straight writer's breast when someone offers him a free trip to Europe to hear and interview an allegedly gay rock star he has never heard of, who is described over the phone, somewhat sketchily, as the "next

Elvis Presley," and who is almost certain not to sympathize too too deeply with one's culture shock upon discovering that London is un-air-conditioned. The following account of that "junkt" was written in a somewhat hysterical frame of mind, my introduction to one of my colleagues taking the form of a question, "Did I feel I had to earn my way over?" when he learned that I had actually been talking about David Bowie of my own free will. With the exception of David's actual performance, the trip was downhill from there. Our story begins.....

"Well, the idea is, you see, that Friday and Saturday is the only time that kids can stay out all night," David Bowie's manager is saying, "so the Kings Cross Cinema is still a movie house until midnight, and then..." Iggy Pop and Lou Reed, Flamin' Groovies and Brinsley Schwarz rock out between disco selections of underground faves, the red-blue bijou soho smoky from street hash smoked casually through special filters. "Bet you wish you looked this pretty," Lou and Iggy both say in their turns at different times to the same kids. It's emigre rock at its slinkiest and jaded best.

The bands argue as to who goes on first, the desirability of a four a.m. breakfast show somewhat less than ultra. A champagne blond, silver lame Iggy Pop slides off-stage unscratched to ask Tony De Fries, with his most nasally endearing motor city moue, "Still want to manage me?" It must seem a superfluous question to a man who within half a year will bring back to the United States both David Bowie and Mott the Hoople, polished and spitting, hit-bound to be sure.

In between sessions at the Cinema, a Canterbury cackle of dazed blase writers, flown at no little expense from New York to behold David Bowie's Words Become Flesh, motorcoach to Aylesbury, a veritable village after the left-handed hustle of summer-time London. In Aylesbury, a quarter to three is rather much, but Mott, Sabbath, Genesis, Bowie, and the like pass through with refreshing frequency and good looks are jolly logically par for the course. This is Bowie's last gig on his first full scale electric tour of England, all small halls and many of them, but after some six weeks his *ZIGGY STARDUST* is breaking big and though *Puppy Love* tops the pops, the oddity that is *Starman* seems headed for the top twenty. Unlike Bolan's boogiers, Bowie's fans don't scream or ooze.

No matter how much this music, this country, this pop star, inform one's sensibility, the experience of David Bowie and the Spiders in Aylesbury Friars becomes oddly and pleasantly abstract, a set piece, just right, and one hopes bewildering for the folks from *Playboy*, from *New York*, and the *New Yorker*. Because if they think they understand it, they'll ignore it. Bowie cannot be too self-consciously bee-zaah; he must know himself better and more flexibly than their pre-conceptions of rock stardom. The necking teens can't be too much of distraction. But as David moves chameleon-like and lithe across his act, one feels that things are copesetic after all, if naught else but guitarist Mick Ronson's Townshend-like majesty bears testimony to the Spider's sting. They play it left hand, don't take it too far.

Yes there is something quaint about the mimic gestures, the lights, the scream of Ronson's one handed flash on *I Feel Free*. Despite David's crew-cut, despite Mick's platinum and red sequined splendor, the show is not so much Decadent as fun, the band itself a bitch and accessible even, loud, groovy, and completely without pretensions. It is very magical, but it is not Alice Cooper, nor the Who, nor the Stones;

surprisingly, it's almost too accessible, and Bowie's American fans will expect him to be Ultra to the point of an insanity he just doesn't seem to feel these days.

It's very nice, probably the ultimate teenage dance, and the stakes are just very much different from those David is anxious to play for in the States. At home, Bowie is no hype, and the more blase of the American visitors will maintain that Iggy is just "so much more outrageous, so much closer to the edge." But Iggy don't pour hot wax on himself no more, stabs no pencils into his side, and his band, who look fine, can't play to save their asses. Ain't rockers the craziest people?

The strangest thing about David's show is that the band is magnificent, and

they suit Bowie down to his platforms, but there is still a sense in which David Bowie stands alone, a step removed from his band, a step removed from the kids, a step removed from his own growing self-view as a superstar. It is this aloofness, a promise of an intimacy never, never to be granted, that will make him that superstar. Anybody can have a lot of David Bowie, but no one is going to get all of him.

So in some ways the acoustic numbers, which give Mick a chance to get his act a little tighter off-stage, to fix his do, are the most compelling. On *Space Oddity* and *Port of Amsterdam*, Bowie's power as a rock actor is awesome, sophisticated to a point where his performance makes a full circle and comes back to put a bemused smile on the face of anyone who hears him. With Mick whispering a countdown on *Oddity* which all the kids know and love, David has the audience whoop the rocket rush and even as they whistle and shriek, they turn to one another knowingly and it really is nothing if not far out, totally unexpected and very right. Imagine a thousand people getting into it and then coming down so David can finish the song. On the Brel number, he sits so still, sings so smooth, brings the words to emotional life with such mystery and electricity, that the unreality of the whole situation is just fluffed up and made comfortable. A Lou Reed encore and hundreds of thrown-out Ziggy posters prove the capper.



These are the boys who are changing the face (and body) for pop music as we know it. . . . David Bowie, Iggy Pop (formally Iggy Stooze) and the dreaded Lou Reed. These are pop, and the world knows it.



On two separate occasions David Bowie is shown in performance giving Mick Rosen a mock BJ on G string, a combination which is quite literary, unbeatable.



Meanwhile, back at the Dorchester Hotel on Hyde Park, London, W.1, Main Man management has a tea party in the most beautiful suite; money could not buy these rooms in America. The pink satin wallpaper, the summery opulence of this incredible park outside, always just a name and a watering place for Blind Faith and the Stones, the charm of the antique Japanese bedstead inside are made for a David Bowie party. But David is tired, and very humanly so, a little flat after this tour, not up to head games and really just wanting very much to be liked. He's very likeable, very sincere, very soft-spoken and listens better than he has to. Bowie looks adorable. A tight fitting white filmy suit with polka dot sequins zips down to reveal the whitest chest. How come it doesn't seem an affectation? The funniest white platform foot gear make him look like a very tasteful orderly at a gay clinic, but today at least David isn't jumping through any hoops. Those of the press crew that didn't bother to listen to his records before crossing over are probably disappointed that he won't explain them. Too bad. They'll have to write the story themselves.

He plays tapes of his Mot the Hoople sessions and he glows, glad to have something to talk about besides himself, glad that some of us really do enjoy hearing how Mott's improved with some of his material and his production. All of their raw promise has been stylized by Bowie and it's very precise, excellent pop-rock, very sophisticated, but it's not the Spideis at all so it would be silly to presume that Bowie has appropriated Mott for his own ego.

Iggy Pop and Lou Reed show up and add tone to the affair. It's becoming like a rock and roll comedy of manners, but very relaxed, very inclined to take the luxury and small talk as a nice way to spend Sunday afternoon. Bowie's wife, Angie, is convincing Iggy he'll be a smash outside London, and he's getting off on telling her they'll go down a bomb and it's really all just talk, because you know they'll line up to see Iggy just because he's Iggy and worth the price of admission just in case. Somebody jokes about Iggy falling out the window before he gets the idea himself and there's nothing anybody can do about it.

Lou appears to have beaten himself to pulp, but on him it looks good. Bowie talks him up, telling us about the sessions he scheduled for Lou with Klaus Voorman and Keith Moon. A press person is surprised to find that Bowie is producing Reed instead of vice versa; highly improbable. Lou has been plagued by a naked crazy lady that followed him home from his gig, and he's just too exhausted to do much about her one way or another. Someone asks Lou if he's living in London now, and with a perfectly straight face and a glance at his plum nails, Lou replies, "You call this living?" I can't take it any more, more.

Before the press junket, Bowie had rarely if ever received a bad write-up, but what had been intended as good karma all around just aggravated what was already a strange and discouraging situation in terms of making the Record Buyer aware of David Bowie. A lot of the press people didn't write articles at all, a couple actually didn't think Bowie was very good, at least one important rock writer who had liked Bowie in the past changed his mind.

Just what David Bowie has expected out of making pop music has always remained a little mysterious. Recently he told an interviewer, "I'm not a musician. I'm not into music, you see, on that level. I don't profess to have music as my big wheel, and there are a number of other things as important to me apart from music. Theatre and mime for instance...I have a creative force which finds its way through a musical form." Obviously rock has reference far more to certain intuitively understood emotional patterns and life styles than it does to instrumental or even compositional prowess. After all, Eric Clapton and Bob Dylan have been pop stars as much as they've been anything else. If they hadn't been, we probably wouldn't have heard much from them.

#### THE MIRACLE OF TEENAGE

Bowie's been everything else: pantomimist, Buddhist, apprentice commercial artist, husband, father, record producer, and hit songwriter. Perhaps the link between his many talents and his present success as a rocker is another quote, "I'm still very much a teenager. I go through all sorts of fads." By HUNKY DORY, Bowie had come to limit himself in a most deliberate and specific way: he would investigate and express, as had great rockers like Eddie Cochran and Pete Townshend before him, just what it was to be teenage. Todd Rundgren, Bowie's American counterpart as a repository of

satin style, has come to prominence on this side of the Atlantic by drawing pretty much the same conclusion.

It is now ten years since the Beatles released *Love Me Do*, a longer period of time than from Elvis to them, and in England at least, Marc Bolan has so whipped up the raver yearning to breathe free in every teenage body that even Ringo has declared him "born to boogie" and documented T. Rex on film. It should be noted that Bolan, Bowie, and Rundgren were all about fifteen or sixteen when the Beatles hit, an age when they were prepared to do something about what the music did for them, or at least to perceive the possibilities of themselves as potential stars — *I could do with the money; I'm so wiped out with things as they are,* Bowie would put it at long last.

Because Bowie quite frankly sees rock as ego extension, he is invaluable for his insights into teenage ego. As early as the *London Boys*, *Join the Gang*, and *Maids of Bond Street* on his *Deram* album, Bowie's concern with the juxtaposition of the Apocalypse and flipped-out kids has been one of his strongest recurring ideas, turning up at intervals in such diverse teentunes as *Memory of a Free Festival*, *Wild-Eyed Boy from Freecloud*, *She Shook Me Cold*, and *Right On Mother* (for Peter Noone). Soon after, pop got heavy, started taking itself seriously, and the first generation of Beatlemania presumes themselves to have grown up. Even if he never put together a blues group, Bowie's own circumstances meshed with the non-chewiness of the time and the Mercury albums were resultingly avant. But rock is not art, is not indispensable for what happens to be artistic about it. Rather it is a happy habit, a plastic psychic energizer, a silver dollar survey that enfranchises a teen by letting him know that other kids like the same things he does. Bowie's earliest in-crowd numbers were about how trendiness kills even the coolest cats — "speed jive, don't want to stay alive, when you're twenty-five" — and even at nineteen, Bowie could look from the group/clique/gang/band out, or from the outside in, to the individualistic and wildly

decadent passivity of more recent songs such as *Life on Mars* and *Quicksand*. Victimized by cosmic changes, the persona of *Quicksand* is a sacrifice to the evolution of the Homo Superior, while the girl in *Life on Mars* is hooked to a film on the silver screen which she's already lived "ten times or more" without realizing that by now you "can't tell them apart at all." Have the teenage blues ever been more gloriously conceptualized, complete with Beatlish hand claps, plastic saxophone riffs, and Wagnerian strings?

HUNKY DORY demonstrated that Bowie could connect the generation that missed the Beatles with the real Stones with a generation that was waiting for theirs, and all he needed to be all things to all boppers was to be just far enough ahead of other rockers in the field. The clincher was ZIGGY, a boogaloo dude who faced with inevitable catastrophe became the special man only to be killed by his fans. Professionally speaking, Bowie was up against the wall; nobody wants to make brilliant records and have nobody but his record company and reviewers care much, so taking the irony and evil of Lou Reed, the unpredictable energy of Iggy Pop, and the musical styles of the Beatles, the Stones, T. Rex, and Jeff Beck, Bowie cut off his hair, dyed it red, and prepared not to give much of a damn what anybody over fifteen thought about it, 'cuz he knew he had the aesthetes covered anyway.

In Britain, where T. Rex was getting a bit too pre-pubescently sticky for cats and kittens who already knew where to put it, Bowie hit home with a sparkling

story-teller of hard rock album and a killer stage act. The Rolling Stones, so eagerly and emptily awaited in the United States, were out of the picture on a teen level in England where you're either immediate or a myth. If glitter was glam, if T. Rex and Slade were the bees knees, then all David had to do was reach the kids that wanted something more, because the Stones and the Beatles had given more, and intuitively, Bowie's potential audience already knew it.

It was impossible this past summer not to be aware of David Bowie, just as it had been impossible to ignore *Bang A Gong* the summer before. Page after page of ads in *Melody Maker* announced a new Bowie, a new single, a new album, a new tour, and finally the funkiest advert of all, a pic of David blowing Mick Ronson's guitar on stage. At about this time, it began to appear to some that David Bowie was a hype. Ignorant of his checkered career, seemingly forgetful of even *Space Oddity*, put off by his presumed fagginess, a lot of people decided that the whole trip was a lot of sound and fury and signifying nothing.

(con't on pg. 26)



Bowie has unique talent for looking entirely different each time the camera encounters him. In the pose above we see the Kathern Hepburn quality present itself. And lucky for us.





# PHONOGRAPH RECORD REVIEWS

## SLADE ALIVE Slade Polydor

Good for Slade. They made it at last. These guys have been kicking around the Limey lard-tub for a little while now, garnering a fan or zealot here and there but never quite smashing thru the windows to the clear air of big money and nerve-knotting shrieks of maniac public adoration. Time has come today for Slade, they're there now whether they like it or not, and high time, too.

They started out as one more brainstorm from a sleazoid salamander pulling down a hefty check for protecting his fantasies from the biz beast's belly. They were always a real and authentic band, don't get me wrong, who paid the usual dues and slogged through the usual back alleys to crank it out at the usual rubes with their usual suds. But — kinda like the Move — Slade's breakthrough into prominence on the world media scene was initially predicated on generous helpings of jackup grease. First US album on Mercury was a real dud called BALLZY, and they issued it under the handle Ambrose Slade. You can find it in lotsa local bargain bins if anybody cares. It's got an old version of *Born To Be Wild* which might be some kinda dry run for the bigleague workout they give that Steppenwolf staple here, but the whole setup don't look too good. If you're smart enough to follow my advice you'll avoid those bargain bins like the clap from here on out because they're useless, detritus-ridden pestholes which cause not only exaggerated cases of psychic depression which sneak up on you at odd moments just when you think you've found some priceless gem for 59 cents but also are known to impart to habitual loiterers a rare form of athsmatic allergy known as the Musty Rack Dust Croup, and that is no fun at all. Just ask Hot

Scott Fischer, who is currently convalescing from an aggravated attack in an East St. Louis hospital with only his Amon Duul II albums to sustain him. If you pity poor Scott's plight maybe you should send him something to cheer him up. Just truck on down to your local bargain bin and procure copies of the Rascals' FREEDOM SUITE, the Original Sound Track from VALLEY OF THE DOLLS, the Every Mother's Son album, EVERYBODY LOVES A CLOWN by Gary Lewis and the Playboys, Helen Gurley Brown's two record Carnegie Hall concert on GNP Crescendo, the Alan Lorber production on MGM called PHLUPH, the DIFFERENT STROKES sampler from Columbia, SGT. LYNDON'S LONELY HEARTS CLUB BAND on Atco, Hamilton Streetcar's one and only set, both of the Mystic Astrologic Crystal Band's albums on GNP Crescendo, BACH'S GREATEST HITS by the Swingle Singers on Phillips, Vaughan Meader's THE FIRST FAMILY, ARCHIE MOORE'S PHYSICAL FITNESS RECORD, the BORN TO BE WILD album by Kim Fowley (instrumental), Mystic Number National Bank on ABC Probe,

THE TINGLING MOTHERS FLYING CIRCUS on god knows where, MGM's soundtrack from TWILIGHT OF HONOR starring Richard Chamberlain, MGM's original themes from THE GIRL FROM UNCLE (nice cover shots of Stephanie Powers, who's never looked as good since she got into made-for-TV schlockers, though), WAYNE NEWTON SINGS SONGS FROM THOSE FABULOUS THIRTIES, and A BOY AND HIS DOG by Leonard Schaeffer on Warner Brothers. The whole thing will cost you about \$2.36, and if you and everybody else reading this does it (it's easy, since all those albums are available in every bargain bin within the continental United States and not a few outside the 30 mile limit to boot), and then mail them all to Hot Scott, his hospital room will become so crammed with collector's items that he will come close to suffocating and have to be scooped out by the prodigious heaveho's of the buxomest nurse on the grounds, coming within a shrink-wrap inhalation of losing his life, after which he will be cured forever of the dreaded virus mentioned earlier and proceed to live a normal life and what's more HE CAN

THANK US FOR IT, THE UN-GRATEFUL PUNK!

So BALLZY by Ambrose Slade is out. They had another one after that and before this, and it was a horse of a whole nother hue. They'd shortened their name to just Slade, the album was called PLAY IT LOUD and picked up by Atlantic's American subsidiary Cotillion, who may still have it in their catalog if Kinney hasn't totally reduced them to a plop of quivering jelly (just try to find THE CLOWN or PITHE-CANTROPUS ERECTUS by Charlie Mingus some time; MCS will be the next to go, and Black Pearl got axed long ago). It's a good album, take it from me cuz I kept the promo copy I got when it came out and when Rob Houghton ripped it off I even went so far as to call Atlantic up and ask for another one. An extreme measure, I know, but this is an extraordinary case. Here was an album which almost nobody in America got to hear or know about, in spite of the facts that

(1) It was produced by ex-Animal Chas Chandler, who obviously knows his kickass metal music well.

(2) It was the closest British

equivalent to the MCS's BACK IN THE USA that I can think of, sharing its frenetic intensity, its thematic concern with social mores and juvenile delinquency as a revolutionary tactic, and its utter bassless thing-as-a-slab-of-burning-celluloid production.

(3) It had a cover version of *The Shape of Things To Come*, originally done by Max Frost and the Troopers in that schlocksterpiece *Wild In The Streets*, except that this time the song validated itself by Slade's rage as a JD militant bustass streetfight anthem.

(4) It had real Clockwork Orange lyrics like "Let me in your sweet box baby" and "Know who you are/Know where you're going to/Run round this world taking all that you want you're not bothered!"

(5) They actually covered a Bread song and made it heavy on a par with their supreme pissoff

(6) Twelve songs. Most of 'em under 3 minutes.

(7) They were hyped up and down as the first skinhead rock group, when the cover foto showed most of the personnel obviously not skinheads (just look at 'em now — the usual dull dorkoid pack of Limey jerks), but in spite of it all their music didn't turn out very self-conscious. Not nearly as self-conscious as, say, the MCS or Alice Cooper.

So that album was once and may be still around, so you should get it if you like the above unless you have to forage in bargain bins in which case write me and I'll send you my copy (40,000 14 Mile Rd., Walled Lake, MI.) because I can't listen to anything more than six months old (I can't even listen to WHITE LIGHT/WHITE HEAT or Black Pearl anymore).

And whether you scour down to it or not, trot like an amok to your local discoteria and pick up SLADE ALIVE!, their first for their latest label and even more unpretentious than its predecessor. They're real big in England



The photo at the top of the page shows our heros, Slade, the picture of rock decadence. Left to right is the very naughty Noddy Holder, prissy Jimmy Lea, Stikes (the Slade chauffeur), bully Dave Hill and the cheeky Don Powell.



now, and you can tell by the audience. Before this came out, Jeep Holland, the famous record store owner and rock authority of Boston, Mass. called me up and raved my ear off for two hours one night about how this disc was the greatest live rock concert record ever, better than KICK OUT THE JAMS, etc. etc. etc. I half believed it, mania will half convince you every time, so the first time I listened to it I was half sorely let down, because it ain't *near* KICK OUT THE JAMS or certain other eruptions from the night of pre-history, but like I said they're all old shit so this's gotta be better anyway. And anyway look at what *surrounded* KICK OUT THE JAMS. And anyway the only group in all of human history better than the MC5 is the Stones, so this pak's inferiority to KOTJ ain't no slur.

What SLADE ALIVE! is is gutbust concrete sledgehammer get it off junk jive for right now, rendered as deftly as (to quote *Time* magazine on the Dave Clark Five in 1964) "a jackhammer battering ugly holes in the shaded street of a respectable suburb, overturning the Welcome Wagon sending 39 Hospitality Hostesses still clutching their address books tumbling out onto the raw concrete to crack their skulls and lay in the cruel sun and wonder." Other words it's gooder'n shit. *Hear Me Callin'* beats 10 Years After's version (though that's not so hard to do) by virtue of sheer bullying barge — in uncouthness, and *Born To Be Wild* ain't as good as Steppenwolf's but does catch the desperation right nifty. The originals are wonderful; they don't mean a diddly damn. Neither does anything except the blurbs on the inner sleeve, where members of the band and various critics including New York's famed Lisa Robinson blather on past all discretion about how Slade is obviously and unavoidably the Now Sound and Next Big Sensation. Never wanting to be one to forego my usual standards of brevity and concision over such hypey raves, I will sign off this review right here and tell you TO GO BUY THE BEST AND FIND OUT FOR YOURSELF, IF IT'S CRAP YOU CAN ALWAYS BREAK IT IN HALF AND STICK THE JAGGED EDGE TO SOME FAT TWEEDY GUY'S NECK AND USE THE ENSUING NET GAINS TO BUY YOURSELF A COPY OF HOT ROCKS AND SOME SOPORS TOO.

—Lester Bangs

by Mike Saunders

Slade have been responsible for some excellent singles, but as for this album, forget it. SLADE ALIVE! is the most accurate representation of the boogie mentality in a long, long time — that grey netherworld occupied by groups of minimal technical ability (not all that important), but (this is the crucial part) who also lack the technocratic aptitude to be a heavy metal group or blast furnace rockers of one kind or another.

That's a bit too academic. Here's what the LP sounds like: Slade playing a set before a live studio audience, with all but one of seven songs three-chord boogies of varying types. Chuck Berry boogies, shuffle boogies,

etc. *Born To Be Wild* certainly wasn't originally a boogie piece of shit, but that's all Slade get out of it.

Vocalist Noddy Holder urges the crowd to get it on about 27 times during the set. Twenty-seven times too many if you ask me. The recorded sound is thin, with the rhythm section sounding strangely anemic and punchless. The worst song of the whole lot, one so tasteless I feel compelled to mention it — *Keep On Rocking* — is a shoddy pastiche of *Sweet Little Rock and Roller*, *Ooh My Soul*, and *Tutti Frutti*. Start to get the picture?

In short, SLADE ALIVE! isn't merely mediocre — it's awful. It's rock and roll, sure, but as much as I hate to admit it, there is such a thing as bad R&R. Some groups just don't have it, and despite their status as one of England's biggest hard rock groups, that's about where Slade stand on this album. Maybe they should get some of those 37 ex-members of Savoy Brown, and find their true niche.

by Greg Shaw

This is one of the best live albums I've ever heard. Mike Saunders is out of his mind. There hasn't been such a sense of excitement on record since KICK OUT THE JAMS. Slade is England's premier rave-up group, filling the same role the Stones did in 1963. Or '64 even, now that I think back on the four or five superb singles they've put out in the last year or so. This is the group that's gonna galvanize the new pop explosion that's getting ready to burst on the world in the next year or two. This album will be revered eight years from now the way the first *Pretty Things* LP is today. This record is far more important than it sounds.

What distinguishes Slade from a thousand groups who remain popular on the concert circuit by playing endless sets of boogie-based shuffles is the fact that Slade's music is not based on anything remotely related to the blues (unless you consider Chuck Berry "remote") but rather on solid, quintessential rock & roll chording and pacing.

The only non-originals are TYA's *Hear Me Calling* and Steppenwolf's *Born To Be Wild* (the latter building to a searing rhythm guitar crescendo like the Yardbirds or Quicksilver did at the end of *Smokestack Lightning* only, and significantly, derived from pure synthetic rock & roll rather than any obvious blues standard) as well as John Sebastian's *Darling Be Home Soon*. The only slow song on the album, it's interesting to note that it stems from 1965, where according to accepted theory any new revival of rock culture is gonna have to find its roots.

I don't know if you could call *Get Down and Get With It* an original or not. It's credited to Bobby Marchan, which is just incredible enough to be perfect. Marchan was the guy who sang on all those Huey "Piano" Smith records in 1958 or so, and he's been around on various labels since then with lame soul schlock. For him to surface again with a song like this is remarkable because the song itself is so out-of-the-ordinary.

As a single it knocked me out. What's great is that it's the first record in years to urge its listeners to get on their feet and do the Jerk. The music is on a Stones 12 BY 5 level, blistering rock & roll with all stops out. Translated here into a live scene with people on their feet and stomping, it's exactly what's needed to clear the air of all the obligatory "getting it on" we've had to suffer through and set an example of the real excitement that can be set loose by the proper band.

I think Slade's the band that's gonna do it. They're getting the same phenomenal coverage in the British Press that T. Rex and David Bowie got when they began to break loose, and if the pattern holds we can expect to hear a lot more from them. For now, I can't get enough of this album. Heavy Metal is fine but it ain't Hard Rock. There's no need to make a choice, but if there were I'd take Slade with no hesitation. I can't help it, I just love rock & roll.

Bowie THE RISE AND FALL OF ZIGGY STARDUST AND THE SPIDERS FROM MARS, which has a healthy 60. Think that over for a while while I proceed with the business at hand.

With Buddy Holly sadly departed, Johnny Cash and Carl Perkins doing Standard Gasoline commercials, and Buddy Knox who knows where, there has been a definite void created in rockabilly music. It figures that someone was going to make a move sometime, and it's just a stroke of perfect Hollywood coincidence that his name would have the western flavor built in. All he needed was a prefix, a band with a wierd name (to keep up with the times, natch), and a recording contract. So what if they're not really a bunch of hillbillies; Commander Cody and His Lost Planet Airmen play downright shitkickin' music with a cosmic touch, and there isn't anything like it.

Anyone who goes to see the band live at some club knows that they're going to be shown a good time. If you're not drunk

That song, which seemed almost like a novelty item in the context of their first album (LOST IN THE OZONE), has several logical successors (listen for *It Should've Been Me* or *Semi-Truck*) on this new lp.

As a matter of fact, this band is learning how to make really good AM music, a mode which was perfected, for a time, by Creedence Clearwater Revival. What I mean by "good AM music" is that which is not meant for the large concert hall or for a stoned session under the earphones, but rather for foot-tapping and singing along to your neighborhood bar juke box or your car radio. And, while this record may not represent perfection in that genre, it is certainly a step in that direction. Right now, Commander Cody and the Airmen are a lot more sloppy and alcoholic than John Fogerty and his gang, making them a better live act than Creedence, but a lot less likely to get their share of AM airplay.

HOT LICKS, COLD STEEL is a trifle laid back and unobtrusive compared to LOST IN THE OZONE and even more so compared to their live act. They even go as far as to sound like Banana and the Bunch on several tunes, most notably on *Watch My '38*, the nadir of the disc. But for the majority of the time, they know their niche and they stick to it. *Truck Drivin' Man* and *Cravin' Your Love* are even-paced, cleverly instrumented, and more than slightly drunken. A joy to hear. There are also a couple of country rockers, *Rip It Up* and *Truck Stop Rock*, plus a surprising rendition of *Tutti Frutti*, which, although they give only a slight indication of how the Airmen can fly, make great mid-day listening.

My suggestion, other than to go out and get a hold of a Commander Cody record, is to go see them the next time they're in your area. Hank Williams meets Chuck Berry. How can you resist?

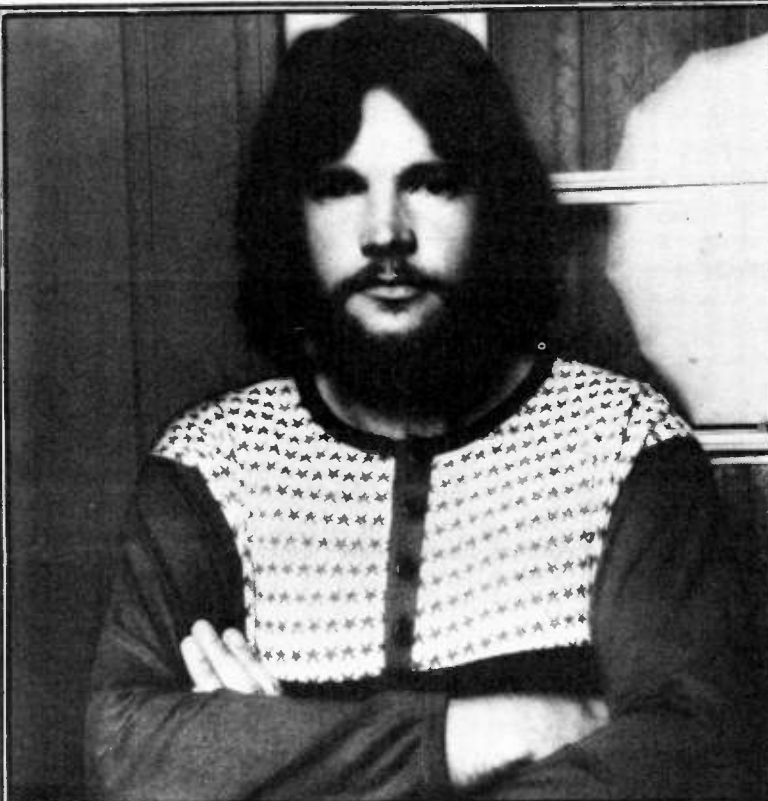
—Gary Kenton

#### TRAVIS WAMMACK Fame

There are some names you never forget. Names like Narvel Felts, Felton Jarvis, Elvis Presley. . . Good Southern names for self-styled Southern boys what made some of rock & roll's great wild records. Such a name and such a man is Travis Wammack. I first heard of him in the summer of 1966 when I discovered a little-known single on the ARA label. It was an instrumental called *Scratchy*. This first side had been a minor hit on select R&B stations. But it was the flip that really hammered his name into my mind.

*Firefly* was originally recorded as the A side. It was an R&B instrumental featuring the fastest guitar playing I had ever heard in my life, and not just fast but good. Brilliant, even. I was in San Francisco at the time and publishing a rock magazine, so I had some power and I did everything in it to bring this record to somebody's attention. I played it on the radio, took it to Bill Graham and begged him to bring Travis Wammack to the Fillmore, and wrote articles trying to build up some interest. And all to no avail.

In the meantime I had unearthed some other records,



"The music is hard to categorize. Many of the songs are in the R&B style, Wilson Pickett horns and all, a couple sound almost like James Taylor singing with a rock band, and others are straight rock and roll."—Greg Shaw on Travis Wammack's latest album. Travis is shown above Commander Cody & His Lost Planet Airmen.

#### HOT LICKS, COLD STEEL AND TRUCKERS FAVORITES Commander Cody & His Lost Planet Airmen Paramount

Right off the bat, this record review is distinguished by the fact that it has the longest heading of any review in 1972. A typesetter's nightmare! Yessir, the total number of letters in the group name and album title totals an astronomical 73, beating out the No. 2 heading, David

when you go to a Commander Cody performance (it's a good bet the band'll be tanked up), they'll intoxicate you, rock you, roll you, and leave you crying for more. But making records, as we all know, is a totally different animal from doing live shows. And despite their ability to make friends in clubs, the Commander and his men would probably have been ushered into obscurity long before the release of this, their second album, had it not been for the success of their single, *Hot Rod Lincoln*.



vocals this time. A tremendous version of *Louie Louie*, Maurice Williams' *Stay*, another instrumental called *Distortion*. With every new side I heard my awe increased. These records rocked with the clean solid funk of Booker T.'s Memphis allstars, moving along effortlessly while Wammack rode on top with his torrents of magnificent guitar pyrotechnics. Among the tight band of Wammack followers I had built up were some who believed he must be Lonnie Mack in disguise. Mack at the time was unknown, forgotten two years after his amazing *Memphis* single, and not only similar in style but about the only other guitarist anybody knew of who could play that good.

It wasn't until 1972 that I heard of Wammack again, when he surfaced on Congress Records.

So many writers, including yours truly, have railed against the trend toward solo albums by longtime sidemen that I feel it important to stress Travis Wammack's background. He was the first guitarist to use fuzz-tone, on *Scratchy* (recorded back in 1961). Along with Link Wray he was one of the original experimental stylists of rock guitar. His stage show is flamboyant and exciting, and in my opinion he has, more than ever, the quality of a star. As soon as his Atlantic contract expired he was back in the studio, recording first for Congress and then for Hall's Fame label. And, financially rewarding though it is, I have a feeling he won't be playing sessions much longer.

The reason I say this is because I've just heard his latest Fame album. Of course it's good — it could hardly be bad what with Wammack and the men who play on some of the finest records made, backing him on vocals and doing their very best. But it's more than that. It's clear from the first note that Wammack needs no propping up; he takes the lead and performs as deftly and brilliantly as always.

There was a moment of disappointment when I realized this wasn't an album of guitar showmanship. There is guitar work, some of it breathtaking, but the emphasis is on songs — arranged, sung, and recorded with the care to detail and overall effect that makes for the kind of record people will want to listen to over and over, years after Johnny Winter is forgotten.

The music is hard to categorize. Many of the songs are in the R&B style, Wilson Pickett horns and all, a couple sound almost like James Taylor singing with a rock band, and others are straight rock & roll. What they all have in common is professionalism, sincerity, and real depth. His version of *You'd*

*Better Move On* has more pure soulfulness than anything I've heard from a black artist in recent years, a beautiful cut. And when you hear it followed by *Funk No. 49*, which demonstrates to perfection what the James Gang and every other heavy soul-derived white group has been trying to do these last few years, you realize you're listening to an artist who's something special.

And the wonders never cease. *So Good* sounds like Isaac Hayes doing punk-rock, *You Are My Sunshine* is done on a rock-country level with horns, *Darling You're All That I Had* is a pure ballad in the Nashville style, and hard rock is the only term for his treatment of Dennis Linde's *I Don't Really Want You*.

But he always comes home to R&B, with the songs already mentioned as well as *Whatever Turns You On* and Clarence Carter's *Slip Away*. Travis Wammack isn't black, but neither is Steve Cropper, and there's a similarity about both men; a soulful quality that creeps into everything they do and makes it somehow reflect more realism than most anything else. Also Lonnie Mack, a name that still comes to mind whenever I hear a Travis Wammack record. I think Wammack is better — more versatile and more facile too — but any music with that kind of inherent depth will always be important and we can never have enough of it around. We've lost Lonnie Mack, but we've still got Travis Wammack, and if he doesn't reach the top this time we'll only have ourselves to blame.

—Greg Shaw

#### NEW ORLEANS PIANO Professor Longhair Atlantic

So you've heard Dr. John and Fats Domino and Allen Touissant and Huey Smith and some of those other rockin' wizards who came out of southern Louisiana? Now's the time, then, to hear the music that *stayed* in New Orleans, created by the man who *invented* New Orleans piano.

Professor Longhair was just a quaint name in Louisiana musical mythology to me until a few years ago when, by sheer accident, I happened across a copy of his second Atlantic single: *Walk Your Blues Away/Professor Longhair Blues*. I was damned near poleaxed by the sound: New Orleans piano and shuffle like I'd never heard, plus Longhair's gravelly, blustery vocals. When I discovered that it was recorded in 1949, I fell all over myself trying to find out more about him.

His few records (three more singles on Atlantic, one on Mercury, at least one on Federal, and several more on obscure

labels) were generally unavailable, but they had obviously had a great influence on musicians who heard them. His real name, I learned, was Roy Byrd but he had recorded under several guises: Roland Byrd, Roy "Bald-head" Byrd, Professor Longhair and his Shuffling Hungarians, and Professor Longhair and His Blues Scholars. He had never left New Orleans, not even to tour, and that was a big reason why he'd never achieved any real success. Nobody seemed to know much about him anymore.

Then in 1970 *Blues Unlimited* editor Mike Leadbitter flew to New Orleans and found Byrd, then 52 years old, in ill health and working as a janitor in a record shop. The re-discovery seemed to serve as a tonic and Byrd has been recording since.

Meanwhile, Atlantic had tapes from their two recording sessions with Longhair — in 1949 and 1953 — and decided to release them as part of their invaluable Blues Originals series. So that's where this album came from and it's like finding a streak of gold in a barren hillside. NEW ORLEANS PIANO is an immeasurable contribution to music in general and early rock 'n' roll in particular. It also fills in a big gap in the story of Louisiana piano which has received scant attention, though that's beginning to be remedied and I hear that Gary Von Tersch is preparing a book on the subject.

Six of the cuts here have never been released (although a different take of *Tipitina* appeared on the flip side of *In The Night*) and any one of them conceivably could have been a hit any time in the past twenty years. *Ball the Wall* in particular, where Longhair is backed by the great Lee Allen on tenor sax, is brimming over with his in-

fectious good humor and non-stop boggie. I defy you to listen to it (or any cut here) while keeping your body still. It just can't be done.

"C'mon baby we're goin' ballin'," Longhair rasps in *Tipitina* and you know he meant it, gonna go "drink some mellow wine." He shifts into nonsensical mush-singing "oolla, woola molla dolla," while that graceful, almost stately, shuffle bumps along behind him. And check out that rumba in *Longhair's Blues-Rumba* — like nothing you ever heard before.

This ought to be required listening for everyone who claims to be a rock 'n' roll fan, especially the types who think John Lee Hooker imitates Canned Heat. This, dear listener, is the real thing (a term that's hard to use anymore without embarrassment, but here it applies) and that doesn't come along so often that it can be ignored when it does. I wish that some of his other singles — *Bald Head* on Mercury, in particular, and *Big Chief* on Watch (which, along with *Tipitina*, appears on Dr. John's GUMBO album) — were available for an anthology.

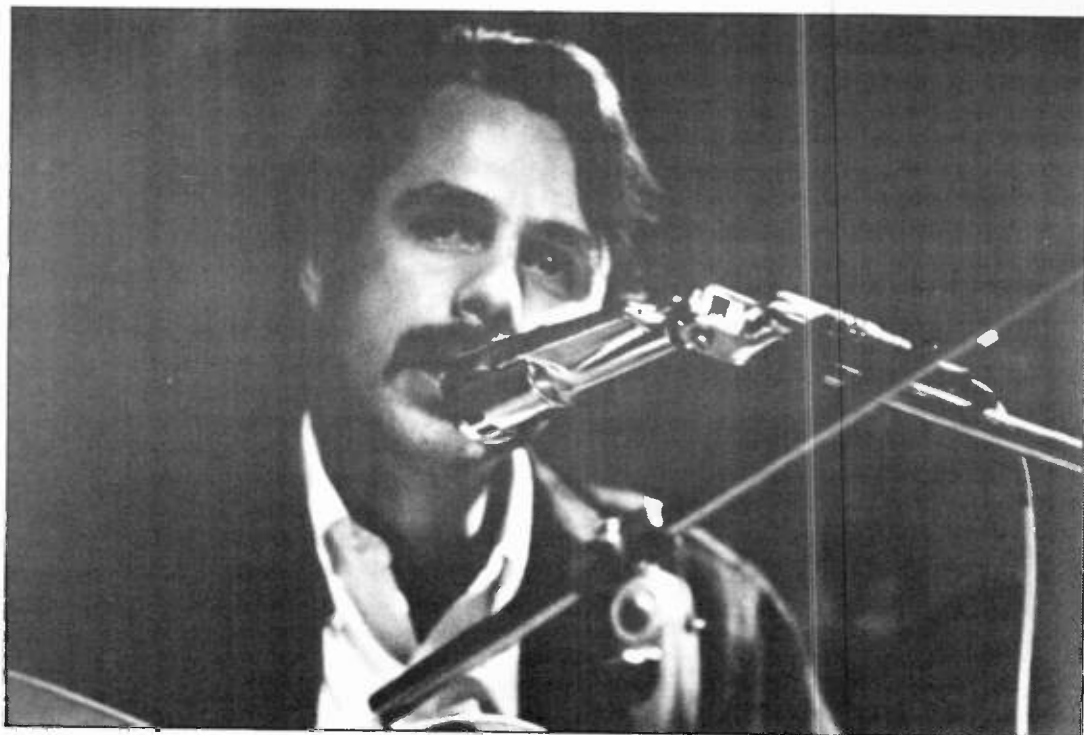
Until they are, or until he finds a record company interested in his new recordings, this record must do. If there's any justice in the music business (an attribute it has never been accused of possessing), Professor Longhair's legacy will finally be recognized and maybe the old man can finally make a few bucks from his music.

—Chet Flippo

#### SEVEN BRIDGES ROAD Steve Young Reprise

Steve Young, southern boy country singer and roundabout sort of protege of Van Dyke Parks, has one of those great,

Greg Papazian



Shown above is Steve Young, native of Alabama who now resides in California. A review of his first album for Reprise Records by Jim Bickhart appears below.

low-down, strangled voices all full of nasality and pathos. But when he wants to, he can croon, and he can warble like the bug-eyed Sal Valentino, and there have been people so impressed with him that they've spent five years trying to rescue him from absolute obscurity. Like Parks, whose art Mr. Young's in almost no way even closely resembles.

Steve Young's second solo album (the first is three years old, now deleted from the A&M catalogue; before that, he did one record for RCA with a band called Stone Country) lays only partially bare what Young has to offer the listener. His country and western songwriting is not very original, but it is entirely workmanlike, and he sometimes has a good way with words. Musically, he has mastered the dubious art of the stereotype; his songs follow along just such strict lines. There are stock c&w ballads which utilize his low voice, there are ballads which require the crooning, and faster-paced, rocking bluegrass songs. Finally, there is one startlingly accurate copy of Jimmie "the singing brakeman" Rodgers' blues style. Any deviations from these norms, and there are three, were not written by Steve.

The album's title song, reprised here from the A&M album, and done a couple of years ago by Joan Baez, sets the tone of the album. It is stock country with some melodic twists. The lyrics are about the south, as much in state of mind as actual locale. Both the lyrical and melodic styles recur several times throughout the album. Faster numbers like *The White Trash Song* and *Long Way to Hollywood* prove good vehicles for Nashville session fiddlers and banjo players. The latter is autobiographical and loosely describes some of Young's career frustrations. The former is quite a rocker, but not as hot as the year-and-a-half old single version which featured Ry Cooder (it was titled *Sea Rock City*).

Young's primary problem is that, despite a strong, identifiable voice, he doesn't yet have a way to stamp his music as his own. The predictability of this record makes it very easy to sing

The new Kinks LP, *EVERYBODY'S IN SHOWBIZ* is a two record set. One LP of the Kinks in concert and another in the studio. At left is Ray Davies in quad.







Jon Levick

Arlo Guthrie's latest recording *HOBOS LULLABY* is chronicled on page 26 by Bobby Abrams.

along with; maybe you could get it to practice your country harmonies. Van Dyke wouldn't mind, and neither would Steve.

—Jim Bickhart

### EVERYBODY'S IN SHOWBIZ The Kinks RCA

I sure did want to like this record. If the Kinks found a special place in your heart and souls when they first blared *You Really Got Me* in '64, you never really wrote them off, no matter how far they mired themselves in piddling diddles on the state of English life which had more sociological and anthropological interest than the average rock 'n' roll record but probably a hell of a lot less wrath and roll too. And wrath and roll is still the axle.

Even most of the Kinks' old pals jumped on 'em last year when they released *MUSWELL HILLBILLIES*. People claimed that Ray Davies' once laser-acrid wit and eye for human frailty and psychological warp had degenerated to the point of sappy musings about alkies and fatos and so what? Who could care about any of his characters any more?

Well, so what is what I say too. Who cares about David Watts, any and every shuffleboard-addicted members of the Village Green Preservation Society, or the Dedicated Follower of Fashion for that matter? Isn't this stuff one reason why we quit school and stopped reading poetry, not to mention the likes of Thomas Hardy? Who needs all these quaint little cartoons? If you're gonna complain about *MUSWELL HILLBILLIES*, you should really start with *VILLAGE GREEN*, or even *FACE TO FACE*. 'Cause that's where it all began, when the Kinks traded in *Milk Cow Blues* for *Rosey Won't You Please Come Home*. Not that *Rosey* was bad, but... look, if you're going to pose as a Chronicler of the Human Condition, you might as well turn it into a burlesque act sooner or later, because you're gonna get laughed back to busking if you don't. Who needs to have all these human frailties pointed out to 'em? I'd rather listen to the obvious sot-clown on *MUSWELL* turn the whole thing into hilarious melodrama by drooling in his dram about "demon alco-

hol" and how every rummy one day has "gotta stand and face it/Life is soooo complicated."

Which brings us to *EVERYBODY'S IN SHOWBIZ*. Two records, one live and one new studio stuff. The new stuff is really the same old stuff with minor alterations, but nothing'd be wrong with that if that was all that was wrong. The thing, see, is that Ray's sloppy, maudlin little homeries become great fun by their very boozy, utterly don't-give-a-tenth-of-a-shit looseness. I thought.

Only problem is that when you take stuff this excessive and inconsequential, it can only be fun, it can only be taken so long as it's good. And like some of the lower points of *MUSWELL HILLBILLIES*, a majority of *SHOWBIZ*'S studio stuff is dull, inane, tired (as opposed to lazy) dreck. *Here Comes Another Day* is worthwhile because it's nice to see that Ray still has the gall to toss down another likker-and-hangover song and then stuff it into an arrangement so close to the Band's *Life Is A Carnival* that it's obvious that the man has no shame and that's the glee of it. Same goes for *Unreal Reality*, which is another piece of oh-deah-whah-did-my-mind-go? nonsense cut from the whole musical and lyrical cloth of *Acute Schizophrenia Paranoia Blues*, enhanced delightfully by the marching band oomph and ragtime waddle of the brass piled on. The Kinks' use of brass is sheer genius, when it works. Excelsior when it doesn't.

Most of the other studio stuff is just lifeless, with all kinds of puke camp sentimentalities which find their magnum opus in *Celluloid Heroes*, which is just dumb enough to contain the lines "But please don't tread on dearest Marilyn/Cause she's not very tough/She should have been made out of iron or steel/But she was only made of flesh and blood," but not dumb or loose enough to bring the utter hokeyness of it off.

The live sides were my great hope before listening, but they fall too. Seeing the Kinks in concert is not exactly a neuron exorcism, but one of the most solidly, hootingly entertaining experiences available these days. The sloppiness, the bottles, the slipping horns, blown cues, Ray's preening and the band's jumble all fuse to create a real party atmosphere. Unfortunately, it seems to end at the ticket

window. Without the visual track, it comes across just as flat as the rest. When you can't see him hold up his bottle and stare at it with the most ludicrously remorseful expression of all time in the middle of *Alcohol*, well, you might as well go pop anudder, brudder, and be your own clown. Campy ventures like *Baby Face* are okay, but not one song from the golden age when the Kinks actually did get it on in the classical sense, even though they still do some of those songs, admittedly in somewhat truncated versions, in their show. Boo! And get Bette Midler to sit in on the next one, Ray.

—Lester Bangs

*Ed. Note: Perhaps Christopher Milk's SOME PEOPLE WILL DRINK ANYTHING due shortly on Warner Bros. will fill the void. We'll be watchin' for it.*

### TENTERFIELD SADDLER Peter Allen Metromedia

Gee it is indeed an honor to be reviewing the new Peter Allen elpee for Phonograph Mag. It seems like only yesterday that I ran into Peter for the 3rd time in my life. It was right outside Golden Pizza on 6th Avenue and Bleecker Street or is it the part that's already Carmine Street, but anyway that's where it was. The same Golden Pizza where they filmed *The Tiger Makes Out* starring Eli (short for Elihu no doubt) Wallach and his lovely bride Ann Jackson, the star of *Secret Life of an American Wife* starring Walter Matthau. Inside G.P. they got photos of Eli and Ann and the guy showing 'em how to make a pizza and the guy pronounces Eli's last name "Wuh-LOCK," accent on the second syllable instead of the first. No there is no alternate pronunciation of Wallach. Peter was wearing his hat and his estranged spouse Liza Minnelli's latest flic (it's called *Cabaret* and I got no idea if it's any good 'cause I ain't seen it) was playing 50 feet away at the Waverly Theater and he was walking in that direction but changes are he already saw it by then 'cause he had that movie-goer's look on his face but who really knows?

Yes it sure is wonderful getting this chance to analyze all the cuts on Petey's latest and greatest waxing. 'Cause the 2nd

time I saw him he was real nice to me up at Metromedia when Barry Shaw still worked there and was trying to get me to review *Spirit in Flesh* and even though I already reviewed Elephant's Memory when they were still on Metromedia that didn't count, Barry wanted a whole new review 'cause he had taken me to the Brass Rail and now he's working at Elektra. Peter is still with Metromedia and that second time I saw him he was also wearing a hat and he remembered that Lillian Roxon — a fellow Down Underer — had introduced us once before.

That was the 1st time we had ever run into each other and it was at Max's for the Australian Ballet's superduper party featuring Lillian's map of Australia in fruit and everybody was there including everybody. At that time I didn't know anything about his son-in-law of Judy Garland background 'cause all I could see was his beige velvet pants — no purple cause he was no show-off — and he was such a swell guy, just about the swellest guy you'd ever wanna meet. Much nicer than Ray Davies. Much nicer than Pamela Polland. Much nicer than Tony Joe White. Nice guys is what you would call him and he's gotta be the finest musician since 1950 and you know what else?

He's produced by Richard Landis who I once told I would give a great review to if he ever sent me his album on ABC but he never sent it to me so he'll have to accept kudos for just some production but getting back to Peter Peter Pumpkin Eater himself I gotta tell you it sure ain't e-z picking a favorite cut so I'm just gonna list all the cuts cause they're all damn good and Phonograph won't mind if I take up some additional space in so doing so here goes: *Tenterfield Saddler* (the title cut), *More Than I Like You*, *The Way I Came In*, *Good To See You Up There*, *I Can Tell A Lie*, *Just Ask Me I Been There*, *Cocoon*, *Harbour* (the English spelling), *Somebody Beautiful Just Undid Me*, *The Other Side*.

Meanwhile Liza M. is sacrificing his name by occasionally dating Desi Arnaz, Jr. I hope Peter writes a song about that and says that Desi, Jr. has no nose.

—R. Meltzer

### BLACK AND BLUES Arthur Gunter Excello

This is an album that rockabilly, rock 'n' roll and blues fans alike should flock to hear. Arthur Gunter, similar to Arthur Crudup, was one of Presley's seminal influences (Presley "covered" Gunter's *Baby, Let's Play House* for Sun Records in 1955) — both in his singing and guitar playing styles. Yet, Gunter's talents were much more kaleidoscopic than that last sentence indicates...In Gunter's six-year recording career (1955-61) he recorded twelve singles (24 tunes) for Ernie Young's Nashville-based Excello label. Fourteen representative titles comprise this tribute album — most authored by Gunter and all evincing an authoritative "blend" of Southern black-white traditions. Plus, all feature healthy doses of Gunter's uniquely rock 'n' roll amplified guitar style — along with Crudup (who also has a fine retrospec-

tive disc out on RCA Vintage), Gunter had the effervescent mixture of blues and hillbilly down pat long before Presley, Cochran and Vincent came along. The latter trio never surpassed Gunter's songwriting abilities either — check out *No Naggin'*, *No Draggin'* or *Little Blue Jeans Woman* for example. Both sound like a hybrid combination of Blind Boy Fuller and Buddy Holly.

Blues tunes, however, were Gunter's forte. His husky, throaty voice was more suited to the blues (which is actually what his first hit, *Baby Let's Play House* was) — examine *Ludella*, *Blues After Hours* or *Honey Babe* and you'll hear what I mean. Add Skippy Brooks' barrelhouse piano to proceedings (along with an occasional tenor-lift from Louis Brooks — I really wish the marvelous *We're Gonna Shake* has been included) and the result is vividly atmospheric and evinces a tone-perfect "low-down" feel. Other tunes, on the order of *You're Always On My Mind*, *I Want Her Back* and *No Happy Home* seem immersed in a bar-blues tradition (that reached its apogee in Chicago's turgid post-war blues recordings), that was strident yet relaxed, funky yet polished; leaving plenty of space for an impassioned vocal.

Plus, there's no getting away from Gunter's uniquely incisive "potpourri" guitar style, that varies wondrously from tune to tune. Had Gunter been born white in Memphis in the Thirties, there is no doubt in my mind that his original version of *House* would have been on Sun Records. And his popularity wouldn't have waned but risen with the advent of rock 'n' roll. Similar to Gene Vincent, Gunter devoted his solo space to various series of single-note, treble-furious guitar patterns — all dove-tailing wondrously with Skippy Brooks' "alley blues" piano stylings that, one might also assert, foreshadowed the more overt approach of Jerry Lee Lewis. Listen to Gunter's scat vocalizing to Brooks' boogie beat, in *Baby Can't You See* for instance. Back to Gunter's guitar, however, on *Little Blue Jeans Woman* ("Got the meanest little woman, meanest I've ever seen/When she goes to bed at night, she puts on a pair of blue jeans") that is a virtual cascade of treble notes, all accenting Gunter's very Gene Vincent-oriented vocal attack. Similarly *No Naggin'*, *No Draggin'* features a typical Gunter-envisioned rockabilly (a la Carl Perkins) sense of both lyric and musical dynamics. Gunter eases the lyrics out ("We're goin' down to the club/case and have ourselves a ball/Won't be no teasin' or squeezin' or fightin' or fussin' at all"), pauses for a surgingly provocative, Presley punctuated solo, then subtly slides back into the declamatory lyrics.

It's on the blues tunes, however, that Gunter really shines. From *Let's Play House* to *Ludella* (that evokes the Chicago essence of Jimmy Rogers), Gunter manages to coalesce his forthright lyrics ("You may go to college, you may go to school/You may get religion baby, but don't you be nobody's fool") with a bluesy, rockabilly beat — all supported by marvelous, single-note accented guitar playing, that somehow



reverberates and radiates the mood of the tune. *Blues After Hours* with its lazy atmosphere, is also in the same vein.

Let me close on the upbeat. Mike Leadbitter, co-editor of the English Blues journal *BLUES UNLIMITED*, asserts in his excellent liner notes: "Let's work together somehow and make his music live again. It'll be worth it. The Excello people in Nashville think it's worth it. Bud Howell, President of the Company, has signed Arthur to a new contract and he is presently working on a new album." Let it rock!

—Gary von Tersch

#### TOULOUSE STREET Doobie Bros. Warner Bros.

I don't know about you, but it happens to me all the time. I get some album in the mail, listen to the whole thing a couple of times, and like it well enough without seeing anything special in it. Then a month or two later I hear something on the radio that knocks me out, and damned if it isn't from that album.

The latest example of what I call the Warner Bros. Camouflage Effect (for no particular reason other than that it seems to happen most often with the products of that company) is the Doobie Brothers. Perhaps it was because I found their previous album so dull, but on first audition I heard nothing of value in *TOULOUSE STREET*. Now *Listen to the Music* is one of my favorite records, and as I listen to the album in a new light it begins to take on some redeeming qualities.

It was such a surprise to hear this sprightly slice of purest pop from a group I'd written off as part of the Laid-Back Acoustic San Francisco Syndrome, but I've got an open mind, and I'm ready now to give the Doobie Brothers credit for one of the best singles of the year.

The album itself, to the ears of this new fan, ain't all that bad either. *Rockin' Down The Highway*, which directly follows *Listen To The Music*, seems a likely candidate for a followup single, and one that I wouldn't at all mind hearing a few hundred times in my car. However, it's not quite as choice as the lead track, and as the side progresses the songs become less and less memorable, until the final song descends to the use of hackneyed horns.

Side two, however, fails to stand up even to my determinedly receptive inspection. *Disciple* has a fairly good beat but it doesn't go anywhere or do much of anything. It's buttressed by two of those acoustic throwaways alluded to earlier, preceded by a completely pointless rendition of *Jesus Is Just All Right* and a rather out-of-place Sonny Boy Williamson song, *Don't Start Me To Talkin'*. It was done better by John Hammond years ago but years before that it was done once and for all by Sonny Boy, himself. The Doobie Brothers' version is not likely to change this state of affairs.

So anyway, I admit I was wrong about this album. There are two good songs, one great song, and the rest was about what I thought. But they're getting better, and you can be sure

I'll listen to their next album more carefully before selling it to the hippie up the street.

—Greg Shaw

#### HOBOS LULLABY Arlo Guthrie Reprise

Encyclic rhythms, ineluctable modality. The great Mandala. I toss a pebble into a brook and it creates neverending ripples, infinite generation. The total sum of energy in the universe is equal to the sum total of mass multiplied by a constant (the speed of light squared). Metaphysics as the proof of a natural universe.

It's far out, this album I have my turntable. I wasn't always an Arlo Guthrie fan, in fact the second time I heard ALICE'S RESTAURANT I was bored by it and any interest I might've had in Woody's son was killed by that and subsequent exposure. Then in June, I was out in California, north and south, and all I heard on the radio was a catchy tune called *City of New Orleans*. It sounded a lot like Dylan, especially that old Dylan, where every tune dripped greatness by any criteria. And not all this hokey imitation stuff, like the new Graham Nash album or Neil Young's last smash, *Heart of Gold*. Parenthetically, I often wondered if Bob was playing harp on that cut. Maybe yes, maybe no but it sounded so much like that Chaplinesque gamin who blew such great harp in those long bygone days.

Dylan came to New York in the fall of '61 or '62 and made it hip to imitate Woody Guthrie. Dylan succeeded as instantaneous legend; soon everyone wanted to be Dylan; certainly it is an eagerly sought media appellation. What's great here is Arlo Guthrie, Woody's progeny, wanting to imitate Bob Dylan imitating Woody Guthrie! Even more far out is that he succeeds and in the process captures the quintessential spirit of both Dylan and the elder Guthrie. This conception just continues to knock me out, flat on my back, and I'm astounded that via this process, Arlo has achieved newfound maturity as a performer and songwriter.

Okay, enough of this metaphysical crap. You as reader want to know what it's about, and not in this convoluted logic of a New School dropout. Nitty gritty talk, just like you get in *Rolling Stone*. Clearly outstanding tune is *City of New Orleans*, a story of a train that metaphorically tells a story of America. It sounds like it's off Dylan's first album, with an understated harmonica in the background. A straightforward goodtime music jam, *Mapleview (20%) Rag* is tops, very uplifting, and the two jugband tunes, *Anytime* and *Ukelele Lady* are refreshing and joyous. If you have a fond spot in your heart for this sort of thing, you will remember how much fun Kweskin was before he and Mel became God or Manson or whatever the American Avatar is these days.

Side two closes with the best rendition of *Hobo's Lullaby* I've heard. This was one of Woody's favorite tunes, one of the few he performed that he himself did not write and this might account for the inspired performance. Another gem is a Hoyt Axton tune, *Lightning Bar Blues*. Once there was a San Francisco group

that did this kind of thing, the group called Mad River and the thing was pseudo-electrified Fahey type riffs. It's done real well here by Ry Cooder playing slide and the tune outdeads the Dead as a tribute to Ripple wine. Some more pseudo-country (that whole crowd of rock and roll cowboys are on hand on yet another album) on a tune called *Shackles and Chains*. It's an uncomplicated song about prison and a man gone wrong for the woman he loves. Before folk music became complicated with smack and mental breakdowns, this is the kind of stuff people sang around the fountain in Washington Square Park. Its inclusion on this album makes me think of my favorite Dylan song, maybe his best *I Shall Be Released*. Prison is a rich source of material for life metaphors, and who are the free in a world like this?

Wrapping up a look at this album are three more tunes, one a somewhat obscure Dylan and two others of a Dylanesque quality. Gone is the bitterness, that rare fingerprinting quality of Dylan's, in Guthrie's version of *When The Ship Comes In*. Otherwise it sounds just like the master, same inflections, same pauses, same gravity of tone. And Arlo's gentleness infuses the song with a newfound vitality — I mean, how long has it been since you listened to any Dylan song off *TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGING*? It puts you through nice changes, try it some time. For that, Guthrie has accomplished a lot, 'cause people been mostly concentrating on Dylan's recent masterpieces. *Days Are Short* sounds so much like *Days of 49* that it does a public service showing us how Dylan got from the beginning to *SELF-PORTRAIT*. In some ways it out-Dylans the old pro, by copping every one of his rote formula moves, especially production techniques.

Everybody's got a favorite tune; *City of New Orleans* is obvious. Beyond that, I feel a special fondness for *1913 Massacre*. It is an incredible, unbelievable echo of a song from the first Dylan album, *SONG TO WOODY*. Wow! Too much and far fucking out. *Hubris* with style. The king is dead, long live the king. Arlo of course carries off this song and at once shows he could carry off anything. The world goes on; nothing changes, only time.

—Bobby Abrams

#### I CAN SEE CLEARLY NOW Johnny Nash Epic

Upon first hearing Johnny Nash's *I CAN SEE CLEARLY NOW*, I was sorely tempted to pass it off as nothing more than hip, semi-sophisticated bubblegum music. It has all the elements necessary to produce a sound easily accessible to minions of teens and subteens: the high, smooth vocals (often double tracked), catchy, danceable rhythms and simple, direct, love oriented lyrics.

What Nash has done however is not bubblegum at all. Instead, it is a fluid combination of West Indian Reggae and Detroit Motown's better points resulting in one of the year's better albums. Although not uniformly strong (it has some throwaway cuts that merely run races with

similar cuts on the album), the majority of the songs are more than listenable.

Nash, an America to Jamaica transplant and veteran of the Arthur Godfrey radio/TV show, is part of the mounting evidence that Reggae may be the wave of the future in pop music. With Paul Simon's *Mother and Child Reunion*, and McCartney's *Love Is Strange* paving his way, Nash follows in their footsteps but with ideas of his own rooted in that infectious ass shaking rhythm.

On *I CAN SEE CLEARLY NOW*, he uses a variety of instruments and effects, ranging from Jamaican percussion to Moog synthesizer. Fortunately, he avoids the pitfalls of overproduction. His melodies are simple, the beat strong and distinctive yet not imposing. Pleasant is a good word.

Side one, the weaker of the two, begins with *Stir It Up*. A single released in February, it is a moderately powerful song and it sets the album's pace. He then works through *That's The Way We Get By*, reminiscent of the pre-Motown Shangrila and Ronnette genre and *Guava Jelly*, a change of tempo cut steeped in solid Reggae tradition, to *So Nice While It Lasted*, a tune guaranteed to bring tears to your eyes and resurrect memories of that first love. It's plaintive lyrics and melody showcase Nash's ability to write touching material that's not overly sweet or syrupy. *Ooh Baby You Been Good To Me* and *You Poured Sugar On Me*, wind up the side, the former much enhanced by a weaving organ and the latter supported by some amazingly robust bass.

Side two is where the gems lie, beginning with the title cut. A song that becomes indelibly etched in your memory due to its exceptional production and overall appeal, Nash makes the most of this happy tune. *Comma Comma* is slow and full of feeling. Here, Nash makes effective use of double tracing his voice (something he does on almost every chorus of every song), lending solidity to the vocal's emotional effect. The cut is very visual and should be listened to in a reclining and relaxed position or at least cheek to cheek with your favorite girl. One listen to Nash's apparent pain and she'll feel guilty as hell if she ever leaves you.

*We're All Alike* is the record's message song. It refrains from directly attacking subjects like love, choosing instead to approach it in a round about way. "We're all alike, we're all evil/Down till the day we die/Then we shall all see the sky/Know the wide open spaces we call home...We're all lazy, take what we find/Take us apart, fills us with wine/You take me, I'll take you..." etc. It also reflects Nash's gospel background. Next is a real upbeat standout *How Good It Is*. It's another one of those masterfully produced and arranged pieces that you'll find yourself humming three weeks later. *Cream Puff* and *There Are More Questions and Answers* finish up the side. Neither attains the heights scaled by the previous four, but they do all right.

All this praise aside, *I CAN SEE CLEARLY NOW* is not an overwhelming album in the strict sense of the word. Rather, like Neil Young's first effort, it

appears to be a quality sleeper, but maybe a few good reviews will help break it. It is an educational experience because it is something other than your typical "drek-rock" and it clearly shows its influences.

So teenagers, spit out your gum because here is an album that will at least mature your taste in music without offending your delicate ears.

—David Rensin

#### DAYDO Alun Davies CBS — U.K.

For those attuned to the lyrical and the catch-as-catch-can poetic, with the background accents in the acoustic/experimental vein, this English release by young Alun Davies (a buddy of fellow Anglophiles Spencer Davis, Alex Campbell, Gerry Lockran, Bert Jansch and the Mark/Almond duo, among others) is right up your figurative alley. Add Cat Stevens to that list — in fact it is Stevens who is mainly responsible for Davies' current upsurge. *DAYDO* was half-produced by Stevens, who contributes some fine piano-work to affairs as well. A listen to the caustic *Poor Street* or the enigmatic *Old Bourbon* ("I found a little black dog out New Orleans/where the rain changes hard streets into streams/as the day faded dark from under a car...") reveals that Davies possesses much the same prismatically frozen energy sense of reality that Stevens operates from.

All of which gets down to the fact that Alun Davies can write, play (guitars) and sing his mostly self-composed tunes/lyrics/songs that zero in on moods (*Market Place* and *Waste of Time*), places (*Portobello Road* or *Poor Street*) or, most effectively and powerfully, people. People like Abram Brown, who "rides a tricycle once in a while/why bite off more than you can chew/he says with a smile" or the mystery girl in *Vale of Tears* who is asked to "board a boat and sail away down a river we know/I know where we could go/to a chateau, close by to the Louvre Museum/we would like low just playing for time/but oh, I know, a vale of tears dissolves the show." The accent, throughout, is personal and happenstance revelatory — even Buddy Holly's *I'm Gonna Love You Too* is treated as a rave-up dialogue between Davies (who, incidentally, does a pretty good Buddy Holly affectation) and an insistently ethereal female chorus.

Alun Davies, with this well laid-out album, asserts once more one of the main strengths of the English contribution to today's Music World: that of the troubadour, one-man band, poet/guitarist/vocalist combination — I guess it all started in the mid-Sixties with the emergence of Donovan. Now that Cat Stevens has been recognized, maybe the just-as-talented Mr. Davies has a chance. Recent releases in the States which are comparable are Eric Anderson's newest *BLUE RIVER* or John Fahey's *OF RIVERS & RELIGION* — that Andy Williams logo-ed record sleeve has got to go though.

—Gary von Tersch



## NITZINGER Capitol

I had a friend who liked to spend his youth being incorrigible. When he wasn't involved in the strangest shenanigans involving overdoses of patent medicine in some unholy combination he was searching for the rock and roll record that could epitomize his struggle to frustrate what attempts his fundamentalist mother made at civilizing him. John Nitzinger could have had an adolescence like this and now finds it enough to be the musical epitome of what parents find wrong with rock music.

Who the hell is John Nitzinger? Well, it might suffice to say that he's the non-band member whose songs *Don't Eat the Children*, *Hangman's Dance* and *Promises* were featured on *BLOODROCK USA* or that Jim Rutledge the lead singer of Bloodrock produced his album but that would leave totally unnoticed the fact that he's already on the way to carving out his own sweaty little niche in rock annals by the inclusion of some live material performed by him on a recently released festival album. If the significance of that escapes you, best go back and listen to the second and third sides of your Woodstock album (you do have a copy, don't you?) and sit through *MAD DOGS AND ENGLISHMEN*, *GIMME SHELTER* and *MONTEREY POP* then come back and finish reading this.

After the rousing backing given Nitzinger by Capitol Records, the band is pretty well on the road to commercial success. Maybe some might find "Chances of a miracle have long been dead and gone/Patience seems Hysterical—I never could have won/I need only miracles but you need everyone." a little bit too dramatic for their palate, but there's enough ass shakin', hand clappin' getting down musically to keep you enthralled. Good and sexy is what this trio is, and their audience is going to become broader as the band tours the whole country.

The sweaty trio has almost become a rock institution since Cream came along. Grand Funk turned quite a few heads too. It's too early to say how far Nitzinger is going to go, but their appeal is definitely strong to people caught up in the pill rolling wine chugging concert circuit. Coupled with the fact that they are a trio and are bound to sound more overwhelming live, big things could be seen for them.

So much for the flowing praises. When you see a formula success in the making before your very own eyes, exuberance is kind of hard to keep down. Besides, it's ideal for offending any limp wristed folkies who are always pontificating on the virtues of mellow music and organic corn. When you put your money down, stand up tall and proud. And when you get it home, make sure you play it loud.

—Rob Houghton

## ROLLING THUNDER Mickey Hart Warner Bros.

While chronicling the Bob "Ace" Weir album recently, I

allowed myself to speculate somewhat facetiously on possible upcoming solo efforts from the rest of the sprawling Grateful Dead menage. I came up with a few likely nominations, but somehow neglected to consider the possibility of ex-drummer Mickey Hart recording his own solo album; so naturally Mickey's, called *ROLLING THUNDER*, was the next one out, and we must still await with bated breath the long-promised *Sam Cutler & The Kwipment Krew Play Popular Wurlitzer Favorites For You* opus.

At any rate, here's Mickey's LP, and if you like loads of stars on your solo albums, and especially that funky down-home Frisco variety, he's not about to disappoint — take a gander at these stellar objects: Sam Andrew, Bill Champlin, John Cippolina, David Frieberg, Jerry Garcia, Paul Kantner, Phil Lesh, Barry Melton, Grace Slick, Stephen Stills, Bob Weir, and the Tower of Power horn section, plus a few less famous folk, some congas and timbales, and a couple tablas players (and, no doubt, a few tablas dancers, this being San Francisco). Mickey turns this crowd loose on a varied program of four instrumentals and five vocal numbers (sung by Frieberg and Weir for the most part), written mainly by him alone or in conjunction with various cronies. Three of the instrumentals are rather diffuse affairs spotlighting tablas and freaky guitar squiggles; while the other, *Deep Wide And Frequent*, is both a showcase for heaps of aimless spaghetti-finger guitar work and an absorbing exercise in contemporary hornmanship by the Tower of Power contingent, who blow every bit as stridently and flatulently as on their own recent smash album and unforgettable hit single.

The Tower crew dominates most of the vocal tracks as well, obliterating the tail end of the otherwise tolerable (and halfway tuneful) *Blind John*; adding a delicate touch of superlame supper-club horn riffs to the *Pump Song* (whose melodic monotony in any case can't be exaggerated); and providing a spark of novelty in the umpteenth rendition of *Playing In The Band* by minions of the Dead family, by staging an impromptu breath-holding contest among the trumpet squad. The winner? — you, the listener, of course.

Of the songs themselves, *Blind John*, with a pleasant though gratingly repetitious melody, is passable; and *Hangin' On* is likewise fairly innocuous (if you can ignore yet another indomitably noisy horn arrangement). *Young Man* and *Fletcher Camaby* are musically pretty dire, however, the session for the latter song, judging from the gargled lupine quality of his vocal, apparently contrived to catch David Frieberg in the midst of a traumatic lycanthropic transformation. This track's principal virtue is the inspired undermixing of the Tower of Power horns, while *Young Man* earns even more effusive acclaim by omitting them altogether, although it somehow manages to give the impression that they're still in there somewhere.

All in all, a more tedious and lifeless vinyl artifact would be hard to imagine. Hart's musical

contributions are limited to percussive preoccupations, but he is definitely right in there with those drums throughout the LP, there's no denying. He will win the gratitude of everyone concerned, in addition, for providing such a delightful opportunity for the Marin Band Harmonic Society to get together and have what sounds like a very groovy time indeed making this album. Next time, though, it might be considerate to think of the people who have to listen — but enough idle chatter. The Hart album is out now, so if you're hip and you like the Grateful Dead (a blatant tautology, actually), what are you waiting for? No self-respecting Dead head should tarry another moment; snap it up now, for there will surely be another Dead solo following on its heels. I wouldn't even venture to guess who...

—Ken Barnes

## THE ACADEMY IN PERIL John Cale Reprise

If someone told me a year ago that John Cale was planning to compose and record a musical interpretation of the history of England I probably would have rolled my eyes upward and imagined a tour of British decadence and perversities. The corrupt court of George III, Oliver Cromwell's quasi-inquisition, the orgiastic Hellfire Club, the Druids' taste for Earth-worship and sacrificial rites, and Jack the Ripper all seemed ripe for celebration by the only real near-genius to come out the Velvet Underground. But, much has happened to Cale since he's been in England. Though he has occasionally met musically with old chums Lou Reed and Nico, Cale's tastes have definitely

shifted from the brilliant sleaziness of his V.U. days. As Warner Bros. says in its press release, "I wonder if Andy Warhol would appreciate the fact that John now wears sweatshirts and plays tennis."

*The Academy in Peril* is the culmination of all Cale's changes and from what I can delve from it all, as absurd as it may sound, his intention of telling England's story in music is perfectly serious. The most obvious musical change Cale has gone through is really a shift in emphasis. The Velvet Underground made its statements in a rock idiom using classical interludes to drive home a point or to make a cynical observations; in *Academy*, Cale's format is almost purely classical, this time using his rock experience to accentuate or punctuate. Whether or not Cale succeeds in presenting British history is, I suppose, up to the listener. By their titles, only four of the ten pieces can be directly related to England; *King Harry*, *Capt. Morgan's Lament*, *John Milton* and *The Academy In Peril*. Five pieces are historical, but not exclusively English, and *Legs Larry at Television Centre* (aside from borrowing greatly from the Bonzo Dog Band) is a funny, irrelevant cut in which John plays the part of a director giving instructions to his crew and making various asides to himself.

The music itself is consistently beautiful, emotional and quite effective. In only two instances does Cale even use the human voice: talking in *Legs Larry* and in a low singing mumble on *King Harry*. Otherwise the violin and piano dominate, interspersed with the ingenious use of a conglomeration of unusual instruments. The opening cut *The Philosopher*, sounds as if it were arranged by Spike Jones and uses a slide guitar as if it were of some exotic origin. Remarkably, and pertaining most to the album's historical outlook, Cale's compositions lend themselves very easily to visualization. It is often reminiscent of an elaborate movie soundtrack; complete with repeated themes, various flourishes and pageantry and a central storyline tying it all together. Though they don't seem to be in any discernible sequence, each of the ten pieces succeed in evoking the people and periods their titles suggest.

The most pleasurable and indicative aspect of *The Academy In Peril*, in terms of Cale, is that no other composer could pick such an unlikely subject, arrange his work with such complexities, present it in a package designed by Andy Warhol and have it come out without an ounce of pretension. Though limited, I'm sure, in appeal and certainly aimed at an audience other than old V.U. freaks, Cale's new work takes a new step in reworking classical ideas into original form. Cale hasn't just given classical treatments to his music as Neil Young, Procol Harum and Colin Blunstone have done earlier this year, he has written classical music.

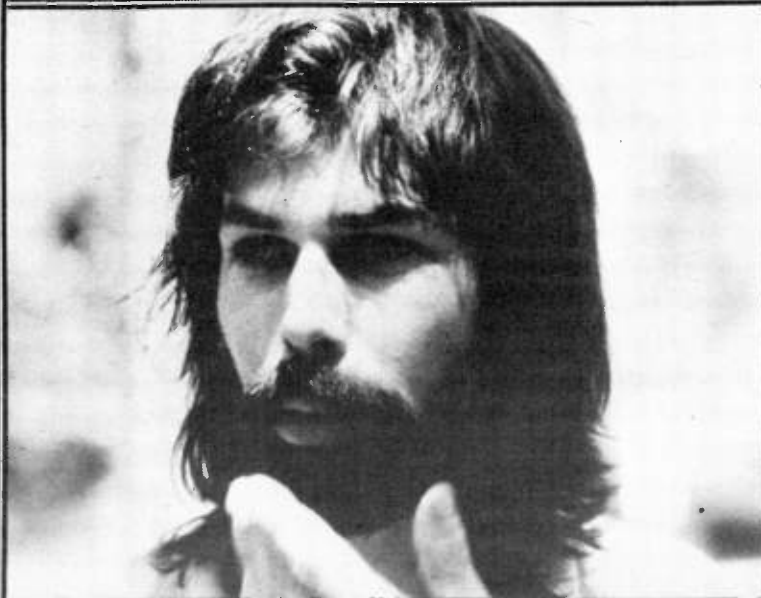
—Jeff Walker

## CLIFTON CHENIER Recorded Live At A French-Creole Dance Arhoolie

Yet another fine album from  
(con't on pg. 26)



At the top are the Doobie Bros. Greg Shaw's review of *TOULOUSE STREET* is on page 26. Below the Doobie's are Capitol Records Nitzinger and at the bottom is the once drummer with the Grateful Dead, Mickey Hart. Ken Barnes review of his first solo album is on this page.





# JAZZ

BY COLMAN ANDREWS

It's always something of an event when Sonny Rollins comes to town. For that matter, it's something of an event when anyone even knows where Sonny Rollins is. He's not one of your more constantly visible jazz musicians. Which is all right, because — presumably thanks in part to his frequent self-imposed exiles — he has maintained a solid independence of style and manner, has thus far successfully eluded R&B rhythm sections, Leon Russell songs, Creed Taylor, and other similar agents of the dilution of jazz in our time.

He was in Los Angeles recently, to play a concert at the County Museum of Art and to tape a 30-minute TV show for KCET, a local educational station. I missed the former event, but caught the latter, a situation which I excuse in retrospect on the grounds that those who saw both concerts have since told me that the TV show sounded better anyway. (It will be broadcast, by the way, some time in the next three or four months, and I strongly suggest that you watch for it.)

Rollins' group included a drummer named David Lee (whom he had brought with him, I understand), pianist George Cables (from Max Roach's group, among others), and L.A. bassist Henry Franklin. The leader, sticking to tenor, though he was recently recorded on soprano as well, was in fine form. Although he seems to have retreated a bit stylistically, sounding more like he did 10 years ago than five, he was as strong and mellow and slyly numerous as could be. And, as he has traditionally done, he played several long, unaccompanied solo passages, including one as a coda to *In A Sentimental Mood*, which swung more than any rhythm section could have.

Especially this one. With the exception (the notable exception) of Henry Franklin, Rollins' fellow musicians didn't add up to much this time. But Franklin, one of the finest Fender bassists there is and no slouch as an acoustic bassist either (he played the latter instrument with Rollins, of course), sounded awfully nice. He's very fast and very fond of grand, fluid, portamento passages. His sound surrounds the listener, pulls him in. And is a near-perfect match for Rollins' own warm, superbly controlled tone.

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The night I should have been seeing Rollins at the museum (perhaps), I was in fact drinking Spring Mountain chardonnay (1969) at the Hong Kong Bar, whilst listening happily to Billy Eckstine. Or nearly happily, anyway. The thing is that Eckstine is past it. I mean no disrespect to the man. He was tremendously important as a bop-era bandleader (and as a pre-bop-era bandleader, for that matter). His bands were, in fact, incubators of bop. Miles and Bird and Diz played under his leadership. So did Fats Navarro, Art Blakey, Dexter Gordon, Lucky Thompson, and more. When he sang, he was texturally pleasant, a good phraser, occasionally a good dramatist despite his casualness. His range was never extraordinary, he was never exactly pyrotechnical. But he was solid and stylistically interesting. Which he still is. But his range is even less today, and his power is even more elusive. Worst of all, his repertoire — with the exception on one nice, extended medley of his older hits and near-hits and signature songs — ranges now from the Carpenters and lesser Leon Russell to some drably emasculated R&B. (Luther Ingram can sing R&B, Billy. You can't.) He has been sold, or has sold himself, apparently, a bill of goods; update the old image, sing some of that contemporary stuff (some of those young long-haired white guys really write good songs, you know), work with creative giants like Al Bell and Isaac Hayes...

But he is nice to listen to anyway, even singing *I Want To Make It With You*. I mean, if you have to listen to songs like that, you might as well listen to them sung by Billy Eckstine. The whole point is that you *don't* have to listen to songs like that, and Mr. B. doesn't have to sing them.

Anyway, mention must be made of his accompanists: his long-time keyboard man, Bobby Tucker, is extraordinarily good at what he does. His piano lines are thoughtful and unobtrusive and his organ playing is gentle and affectionate. Bassist Al McKibbon, though he can strut the bop with the best of them, also knows the virtues of well qualified restraint (one of the most valuable lessons George Shearing has to teach, after all), and he did a grand, big-toned job. Best of all, though, was drummer Charlie Persip. He sounds, today, like the Jack DeJohnette,

set of post-bop jazz with occasional traces of '70's rhythmic simplicity and of century old Afro-canonical themes. Masekela himself plays flugelhorn with a punchy, muscular style that seems continents away from the sweet sno-job flurries of *Grazing* (which Masekela himself, by the way, now calls "disastrous"). Dudu Phukwana, who is very highly regarded as a reedman in London today, plays masterful alto — a switch from his usual masterful tenor. There is an American pianist, Larry Willis; an African drummer, Makhaya Ntschoko (that is, he's a drummer of African origin, but the drums he plays are more or less conventional jazz drums); and the bassist is Eddie Gomez, who is also a regular member of Bill Evans' trio. The compositions are mostly by Caiphus Semenya, a long time associate of Masekela's, and they're quite good. The five players work well to-



*WATERFALLS* by John Klemmer was recorded live at the Ash Grove in Los Angeles, and showing once again Klemmer is an extremely intelligent musician and an extremely, intelligently imaginative utilizer of electronics.

say of a generation ago. That is, though his style, his concept of dynamics, his mechanical abilities, his interpretation of the drummer's role, are all radically different from DeJohnette's (to name one example), still there is this similarity: both men play with incredible, ceaseless imagination. They are not only hard working drummers, but hard *thinking* drummers as well. They never rest, never merely keep time. Their idioms are impossibly different, but their workmanship draws on the same kinds of impulses. More important, in this particular case, is the perfection with which Persip matches and sets off the music of the other two players and of Eckstine himself. As a drummer, he is very good; as an accompanist, he is a virtuoso.

\*\*\*\*\*

Some recent albums: First and foremost — not necessarily because it's the best of the albums here reviewed but because it's the most unexpectedly good — *HOME IS WHERE THE MUSIC IS* by Hugh Masekela (Blue Thumb BTS 6003). Did the man say Hugh Masekela? The South African Al Hirt? The guy who did *Grazing in the Grass* and stuff like that? Yep. The very same. Only, as the four sides of this excellent lp and as his own wonderfully written liner notes indicate, Masekela has left that other bosh behind and has got back to the place he started from: a strong stance as a jazz-loving, jazz-playing performer with good sense, a good lip, and a good ear for other people's good compositions.

*HOME IS WHERE THE MUSIC IS* breaks no new ground, to be sure, but it is a beautifully lyrical, masterfully stated

gether, swinging, stalking, and sometimes even soaring off into mysterious musical space. But this, overall, an accessible, listenable album of great charm, worth even the trouble it takes to deal with its ridiculously complicated packaging.

Other lps: *WATERFALLS* by John Klemmer (Impulse AS-9220), recorded live at the Ash Grove in Los Angeles, and showing once again that Klemmer is an extremely intelligent musician and an extremely, intelligently imaginative utilizer of electronics, and that Wilton Felder is indeed — as he has been called — the Fender bassman's Fender bassman;

*DAMISI* by Harold Land (Mainstream 367), which is something of a comedown from the fiery, well fashioned music on *CHOMA*, Land's last lp, but which still shows glimpses of the fact that it's more exciting to listen to a good musician trying to become a free musician than it is to listen to a free musician trying to become a good one; *LIVING TIME* by Bill Evans with the George Russell Orchestra (Columbia KC 31490), whereon Evans' lately faltering keyboard theses are given mighty, magical support by the scrupulously intricate, unfailingly exact wildnesses of George Russell, and whereon Evans is forced to play in more adventuresome contexts that he might otherwise choose for himself all to a most intriguingly uncommon end: *THE SKIPPER* by Henry Franklin (Black Jazz BJQD 7), which is, to quote Pete Welding inexactlly, "one of the most beautifully produced albums of the year," and to which features the leader's acoustic and Fender bass (see above) to fine effect, around, behind, and along with the unobtrusive musical skills of Oscar Brasheer and Bill Henderson, among others, in a well written, amiably impressive album of great competency; *CROSSCURRENTS* by Lennie Tristano and Buddy DeFranco (seperately)(Capitol M-11060), one of the second issue of Capitol's Jazz Classics series, especially notable for three DeFranco cuts which feature Teddy Charles and Jimmy Raney, and for the Tristano sides, with Warne Marsh, Lee Konitz, and Billy Bauer, including "Intuition" and "Digression," which may just be the earliest examples of "free" (barless and without a repeated chord progression) jazz ever recorded; *PIANO REFLECTIONS* by Duke Ellington (Capitol M-11058), also one of Capitol's Jazz Classics, which is some rare Ellington piano trio music, certainly less exciting than the *MONEY JUNGLE* trios with Mingus and Roach (on UA, reissued on Solid State, about to be re-re-issued on UA), certainly less angularly involved than the Ellington/Jimmy Blanton duos on RCA, but which is nevertheless extremely valuable to anyone who has even wanted to listen more closely to Ellington the pianist (a fine Ellington to listen to), as it illustrates how orchestral he is even as a pianist, through well known tunes like *Things Ain't What They Used To Be*, *Prelude To A Kiss* and *Kinda Dukish*, and with more esoteric numbers like *Janet and Dancers in Love*; and *SAHARA* by McCoy Tyner (Milestone MPS 9039), which includes a lovely solo piano piece called *A Prayer For My Family*, some hard swinging Tyner ensemble work, a Tyner koto solo, and the obligatory long, African influenced, percussion-dominated track, which has brilliantly perfect moments but which also sometimes seems to waste the talents of its performers by presenting them as random noise-makers. (Drummer Alphonse Mouzon, by the way, sounds much more at home and inspired here than he did with Weather Report.)

## OCTOBER'S BEST

1. NUGGETS
2. FULL HOUSE
3. CATCH A BULL AT FOUR
4. A TRAITOR IN OUR MIDST
5. SONGS ABOUT YOU
6. 4TH

- LENNY KAYE
- J. GEILS BAND
- CAT STEVENS
- COUNTRY GAZETTE
- JIM DIPPY
- BLACK SABBATH

- ELEKTRA
- ATLANTIC
- A&M
- UNITED ARTISTS
- PROTECTION
- WARNER BROS.

## OCTOBER'S HO-HUMS

1. PHOENIX
2. CLOSE TO THE EDGE
3. ROCKY MOUNTAIN HIGH
4. ROXY MUSIC
5. ROWAN BROS.
6. ROCK AND ROLL PART 2

- GRAND FUNK
- YES
- JOHN DENVER
- ROXY MUSIC
- ROWAN BROS.
- GARY GLITTER

- CAPITOL
- ATLANTIC
- RCA
- BRITISH ISLAND
- COLUMBIA
- BELL

## OCTOBER'S WORST

1. CHI COLTRANE
2. BLOODROCK PASSAGE
3. I'LL PLAY THE BLUES FOR YOU
4. SONG SUNG BLUE
5. ROCK MY SOUL
6. KREAG CAFFEY

- CHI COLTRANE
- BLOODROCK
- ALBERT KING
- JOHNNY MATHIS
- ELVIN BISHOP
- KREAG CAFFEY

- COLUMBIA
- CAPITOL
- ATCO
- COLUMBIA
- EPIC
- DECCA

The above listings are results of a critic's poll conducted over the last 30 days nation-wide.



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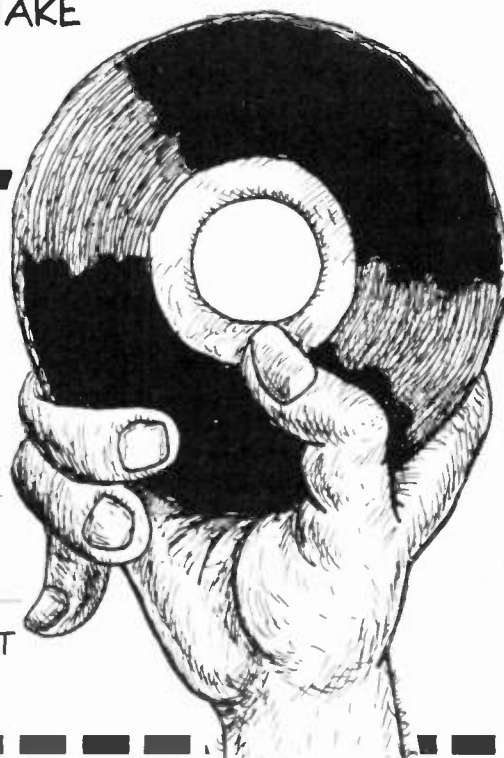
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### Performances (con't from pg. 5)

mean *nobody*) has the right to pick up an acoustic guitar except for Lou Reed or Ross Friedman. What *has* attracted me to T. Rex though, is the fact that in England there are about one million teenage girls who want to suck on Marc Bolan's pud. Now that gets me excited. Like most rock writers I'm a frustrated rock star. The appeal of groupies, booze, money, and a color TV is too much to withstand. But alas I soon realized I was never going to reach that goal so settled for rock "critic." Rock critic?! It ain't all that bad. I get layed every once in a while by a fan. I weasled free tickets for this concert, and I got stone cold drunk at the Slade press conference/party yesterday afternoon. So even though I may never be a rock and roll star I swear I'll do my darndest to become the first superstar rock critic (even though the head man will always be the renowned John Ned Mendelsohn in that category).

The first act was the Doobie Brothers, who have two incredible albums out on Warners Bros. Before they got this band together, the Doobie Brothers (their name really isn't Doobie but Tom Johnston and Ralph Neely) played in Randy Burns' Sky Dog Band. Good experience for anyone, I'm sure you'll agree. The opening cut was a killer, but was it worth it? Tom Johnston, the lead guitarist,

took a dive off his Sunn amplifier which resulted in a sprained neck and PRACTICALLY KILLED HIM! The song was *Beehive State* by Randy Newman and it cooks like a worm in a hot frying pan. Maybe a little too much because they had to leave the stage after that unfortunate injury. A quick change of equipment ensued and Argent took the stage. They were adequate but in these troubled times is that enough? They played *Hold Yer Head Up*, *Liar*, *I Desire You*, all their hits plus (not pus) an encore of *Good Golly Ms. Molly*. Run of the mill rock.

An electrical excitement filled the air as T. Rex's roadies, Hugh Mars and James Cleavland (I told them I'd mention their names) set the stage. Cries of *Bang A Gong* and *Jeepster!* filled the air and one citizen seated four rows behind me yelled "encore!" before the show even began! Marc Bolan and the boys bounded out on stage to the delight of the crowd and tore into *Telegram Sam* (which he incidentally wrote for Sammy Davis, Jr.). Marc proved his ability on lead guitar was beyond that it was normally taken for. A good point to remember is that Mark is the lead guitarist, lead singer, and sex symbol of the band. Which means he has to concentrate playing individual notes, singing in tune, and shaking his hips all at the same time. A tricky combination indeed. But as Marc says, "*Those exercises sure do come in handy.*"

I was totally captivated by Marc Bolan's stage presence. I had read in *Melody Maker* and *New Musical Express* how the little rascal had caused riots in the homeland. But it wasn't till I saw him in person that I realized

the extent of his pixie charisma. In the rush of the crowd I lost my pen and note pad. Even worse some undersexed sub-teen stepped on my bottle of Jack Daniels. An act worthy of her death, I merely knocked her in the face a few times.

To run through the songs would be pointless. They all sound alike, even more than on record. I think the combination of the beat of the songs, Marc Bolan's stage movements and voice put his young fans into a hypnotic trance. They seemed to be totally possessed. Glassy eyes wide open, they marched towards the stage like lemmings to the sea. Those up front grabbed and cried wishing only to touch Bolan. All I can say is, if I were Bolan I'd give them all a number, line 'em up outside my hotel room and take them all on. One by one, till my juices ran dry. It would be good exercise anyway.

—Adny Shernoff

### Phonograph Record Reviews (con't from pg. 23)

Clifton "King of the Zydeco" Chenier. Plus, this one was cut "in concert" at an actual Louisiana-flavored function — held last November in the heavily Cajun-settled city of Richmond, California. More than four hours of Clifton's unreal Cajun/blues accordion playing and strident, yet good-timey vocalizing went down that night and some

forty-five minutes of it is here. Per usual, Clifton is buttressed by an excellent combo — consisting of Cleveland Chenier on rubboard (a funky cousin to the somewhat more complicated washboard), Robert St. Judy on drums (resonant and ever-thumping), with Joseph Morris on bass and newcomer Felix James Benit on guitar filling in the gaps as well as hypnotically blending in with the metal streaks of sound that Clifton manages to ooze out of his chrome-studded, forty-pound accordion.

And ooze is the correct word. Zydeco music is, by nature, up-tempo and heavily dance oriented — though Clifton also plays some fine, sensually textured, blues tunes as well — and when a good zydeco unit works themselves up to the proper elevation of musical frenzy and involvement, there are few things I would rather hear. The point is the Clifton Chenier and Company start out at and never vary from that, uniquely Cajun, sense of reality that is straight from the bayous and swamps of the Louisiana headlands and byways and known as Zydeco. As Clifton more than asserts on *Tighten Up Zydeco*: "All right, put your dancin' shoes on baby — cause it's pretty fast," and you rarely ever get it any faster than Clifton can pump it out. And not only Clifton, who takes a break half-way through, allowing his brother and St. Judy, on rubboard and drums respectively, to out-do Bo Diddley's band at its most primitive-sounding. Similar hoo-dooings occur on the album opener, *Zydeco Cha Cha* and on the mesmerizing *Tu Le Ton Son Ton*, just to cite a couple. No wonder Clifton has the reputation he has down South and particularly in Louisiana. He sells a

lot of Cajun singles down there and jukeboes, from one end of the state to the other, are jammed continuously with his 45's.

I mentioned the blues earlier — and this disc doesn't ignore this equally infectious facet of Clifton's musical prowess. At the outset of *Bad Luck and Trouble* he forthrightly states that "we're goin' down in the alley now" and proceeds to weave a cumulative sort of blues — with the accordion and vocal continually peaking and ebbing, that few, if any, can equal. Similar wonders occur on the equally seductive *You're My Mule* — to say nothing of Clifton's concert and album-closer *Going Home Blues and Mess Around* (and, c'mon Chris, Chenier didn't compose the latter) that opens with a moody, late-hours sounding instrumental and then evolves into a vibrant Zydeco re-shaping of a tune that Ray Charles did a lot with. And which, believe it or not, Clifton oozes even more crazily swirling, ever-whining mysterioso out of than Ray ever thought about. That's my opinion, anyway.

There are a lot of Clifton Chenier albums on the market currently. Besides four earlier Arhoolie discs, he has an album on Bell and a fine collection of his early Fifties sides (Clifton first cut in 1954) on the recently revived Specialty label. But, for many, this well recorded and nicely cross-sectioned "live" album might well be the place to start listening to Chenier. It's certainly a thrilling document for those of us who chanced to be in attendance at St. Mark's Hall that November evening last year when the Zydeco King came to town.

—Gary von Tersch

### Letters (con't from pg. 3)

upon occasion, listed your address as Austin, Texas and sources tell us that you have pursued higher education at two of the great Southwestern Conference Universities. Anyway, you know a lot of good rock 'n roll trivia that is actually good for nothing save writing articles such as your recent Fanny expose in PRM, during which we were particularly stunned by the mention of one of the great and long forgotten cult heroes of the mid-sixties, namely, Sean Bonniwell. Who can forget those turtle-necks and black leather gloves with the fingers cut off for easy guitar fretting? My one lingering impression of the beloved Music Machine was that they undoubtedly possessed more Vox Super Beatle Amplifiers than any other band in existence. But really, Mike, how 'bout a little of the old Texas rock and roll stars? How about some news on Rocky Erikson and Dennis Keller? Surely you remember. Let's get back to the good old days of the End of Cole Street, Love Street, and the infamous Catacombs. Come on Mike, show us your roots. You are being watched.

Yours incognito,  
Strange Associates, Ltd.  
Dallas, Austin, Houston,

### 45 RPM's (con't from pg. 8)

Some of you Johnny Bond fans will recall his other big hits "*Hot Rod Lincoln*" and "*Ten Little Bottles*". Bond comes up with a great single about once every five years and this one was worth the waiting for.

So if you're among the traditionalists who believe country music has lost its validity due to rock's influence, here's yer chance to get back at Jerry Garcia once and for all. There's a very good chance you won't be able to find this in your

local store because the Starday recording company can't afford the luxury of its own distribution system, so write 'em for the record. The address is Box 8188, Nashville, TENN 37202. Say Howdy to Gary for us and tell 'em we miss him in LA.

—Martin R. Cerf

### David Bowie's Glamorous Career (con't from pg. 17)

What this reaction did signify was that it was pretty easy to confuse ZIGGY STARDUST with David Bowie, since David wasn't going out of his way to distinguish the two. This kind of one on one identification can be a tricky problem for a rocker; it almost got Jagger killed at Altamont, and even John Lennon got so tired of vibe-suckers assuming he was a full-time Beatle that he turned hippy at a very late date. To make it, Bowie had to convince his audience that he actually lived what they were tempted to become, but he assumed an understanding of the nature of theatre which a rock audience denies almost by definition. We want our stars close to the edge, and we pay to keep them there. Daltrey and Townshend never quite became Tommy in the same way that the ads proclaim "David Bowie is Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars." Ray Davies isn't Lola yet, nor is Jagger very likely to become *Performance's* Turner. And nobody laughs at Joe Cocker as Joe Cocker or Sly Stone as Sylvester Stewart anymore.

### SURE, WE CAN USE ANOTHER REDHEAD, WHERE IS HE?

One can hardly blame Bowie for taking advantage of what seemed like a fool-proof way to get himself across, especially when the album is so stylishly great in the STICKY FINGERS down, out, and gorgeous genre. But this willingness to blur identities makes Bowie's future in America a bit problematical. If he is the

archetypal pop star then he can't possibly open to Poco or Humble Pie, can he, but the way this first short tour has been set up, he is the first English act to tour as a headliner first time over since the Beatles and the Stones. We didn't really know what a hype was then; we just knew what we liked, and if we didn't like it we could turn off the television. A good seat to Bowie Carnegie Hall concert in New York will cost \$6.50, just what it cost to hear the Stones on their last tour.

For another thing, he will play in only seven cities in the very classiest of concert halls before audiences of fewer than 3,000 people, most of whom will have already bought his album, which means that ZIGGY isn't going to become a heavy chart item the moment David finishes his third gig. After all this time, with such a dedicated following of hard core fans having waited for so long to hear him, Bowie will still not have been exposed to Alice Cooper/Sabbath/Grand Funk types who are indeed the People, who would chew a tasty and tasteful red-head up before spitting him out, and who buy the majority of hit records; they make stars.

Finally, no one is willing to let Mick Jagger retire, nor does anybody ever consider that Alice might want to do a few acoustic numbers. The examples are a bit ridiculous but what could Alice ever be but a killer? We want what we want from a star, and Bowie has been five different potential on five different records. He will lose his value if he loses his flexibility and Bowie's real test will come after he inevitably succeeds here within the next couple of passes. David does know what makes a hit single, his band is the best trio since the original instrumental nucleus of the Beck group, and he's even the best looking star aside from David Cassidy that "16" could ever have a hand in creating. All of David's albums have

been carefully calculated to get him to a point where he has a choice and consequently a certain amount of power; it is hard to know what tomorrow may bring musically and in terms of image. One really shouldn't be dependent upon the other.

David Bowie is so damned good at what he does undertake to do that he may just become one of those rare transcendent culture-makers like Dylan or the Beatles that can take a mass audience anywhere he feels like going. He has been very, very busy this year between the album, a tour of two countries, his Mott the Hoople and Lou Reed projects, a new single, *John I'm Only Dancing* (marking something of a backing off from the accessibility of ZIGGY), and special shows like his theatre presentation at the Rainbow in London. His energy and attitude have never been higher, and it would be great to have a superstar that could get records out every six months as in the pre-SGT. PEPPER days, with each one newer than the one before.

Hopefully Bowie won't get bored with the whole thing, won't discover that he loves money beyond all else, won't be found in bed with Raquel Welch's husband as he once predicted he might be. Artists like David Bowie can revolutionize a business that all too often sits around waiting for another twist to come along or at least another Jethro Tull or James Taylor. Bowie can open a lot of heads and turn a lot of people on to themselves, their feelings and their sexuality. All of this hasn't a lot to do with on-stage symbolic blow jobs, but somehow it all figures, and if you've ever thought it might be nice to see a band that combined the best of the Living Theatre with the Yardbirds, check out the Spiders when they come to town. When was the last time anybody asked you to freak out in a moonage daydream?

—Ron Ross



# Phonograph Record Reviews

(con't from pg. 23)

## WHISPERING THUNDER Jeffrey Cain Raccoon/Warners

Well, the folks at Raccoon have done it again. Jeffrey Cain is one of the original Raccoons, a very talented folksinger who somehow managed to put out a first album that, with the exception of a hilarious song called *Houndog Turkey* fell flat on its face. Well, he's more than made up for that with *WHISPERING THUNDER*.

For one thing, Jeffrey has focused on his subjects well — when he's serious, he's deadly serious, and when he's having fun the fun is infectious. Mostly he's having fun, but the title track of this album shocked me when it was released as a single some months back, just as it must have shocked the nation's deejays and program directors, none of whom played it. "This is the story of Jonathan Jackson," it begins, and when I heard those words I thought, oh no, he really blew it now. But Cain saves the song easily — he's not make any judgments, save that "This is the story of the whispering thunder/That comes before the rain." It's a powerful song.

The quiet, introspective songs work, too. *Soul Train* sounds like the very best stuff that Jesse Colin Young's been doing, and *Mockingbird* is a nice song of the sort you could imagine Cain singing a kid to sleep with.

But it's the funny stuff where he really shines. Comparisons with Dylan in a good mood are

inevitable, but the songs are clearly Cain's own brand of zaniness. *Mighty Moe* is a civilized King Kong-like ape who has somehow been captured and sent to a zoo in America, where he pleads to speak to his psychiatrist, to be allowed to take a bath, and to see a lawyer. *Moonshine Is The Sunshine* asks the musical question, what would happen if the fish drank all the water "And we all died of thirst/In a giant fish manslaughter?" And *When I'm Thirsty* is a vintage Dylan cop, backed by some of the most biting, menacing hard rocking music ever to wear a Coonskin cap.

Yeah, well done, Jeffrey Cain. Check him out, folks.

—Ed Ward

## BANDSTAND Family United Artists

One of the last things that you'd think about a hard driving rock and roll band is that they would be a collection of eccentrics. The demands of the moment sometimes turn quite colorless and amorphous groups into "far-out" personalities driven by the hell bent fanaticism of ambition. Sometimes groups headed up by clever and resourceful individuals will develop into gimmick laden novelty acts that overshadow whatever genuine musical talent they possess. They receive fame, sometimes, and even wealth, depending on how in-tune they are to the changing tastes of the public. More often, they languish in a hand to mouth existence until their impoverished members get fed up, and start looking for more lucrative activities like brick laying. But genuine eccentricity, not being espe-

cially marketable as a selling point for the audience, or even conducive to the group's musical development, is a rare thing to find in something as commercial as a rock group. But it is precisely what is to be found in Family.

Perhaps the name might be vaguely familiar to you as the group that no one even heard of that provided Rick Gretch to the late lamented super group, Blind Faith. That is, no one in the States ever heard of them, but in England, Family has been thought of as local favorites who could not, or would not try their hand in the big time. Family's stubborn, hard-headed quality appealed to the Britishers, as they resolutely refused to alter their style, or make any concessions to the mass market. They have suffered financially as a result, but were able to grow as musicians unhindered by the necessity of coping with instant overhype success.

*BANDSTAND*, Family's new album should be able to do better in America than their last release, *FEARLESS*. Certainly anybody who picked up on the other record would be if nothing else, at least curious as to what kind of material the group could put out. They certainly have one of the most original vocalists around in Roger Chapman, as well as a dense, subtle, richly textured sound that is lovingly tended to by Charlie Whitney, Jim Cregan, Rob Townsend, and Poli Palmer.

The first song on the album is *Burlesque*, a perfect single for the radio stations, which, with its vicious neanderthal beat could provide the airwaves with the most excitement since Hendrix. Outside of the fact that it is impossible to understand what the hell Chapman is saying with-

out the lyrics kindly provided on the sleeve, *Burlesque* is one of his best performances. *Bolero Babe* is a moody number, not unlike some of the material that the Beatles did after *SERGEANT PEPPER*, but gutsier, deeper. *Broken Nose* provides some of the best drumming I've ever heard, plus, if I'm not mistaken some kind of moog, or maybe it's a kazoo.

The rest of the songs are equally good, only varying in mood and intensity. *My Friend The Sun* sounds something like a Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young number, but it's good anyhow. *Ready To Go* is strongly reminiscent of Family's *FEARLESS* album, and is, in short, a gem.

In case you should want to get this record, just look for the album cover made up like an old time television set. Family is on channel two.

—Rob Houghton

## DOBRO Mike Auldridge Takoma

It is an inescapable conclusion that of the major idioms of American music, country is the oldest, most varied and most able to grow. Nostalgia for early country (hillbilly, country blues, bluegrass, range songs and much of our original folk music) goes way beyond the 20-year history of Rock or the sixty-year history of derived blues and jazz. It goes back to the earliest days of America and has unmistakable roots in English traditional music. Something that is more evident today than ever before as American Country bands and English traditional bands grow closer together and take many of the same directions in their push forward. For clarification — listen to Mike Auldridge's ver-

sion of *Greensleeves* on this *DOBRO* album and then listen to the same song on *MORRISON*; a recent album of English folk dances (on Island) played by various ex-members of Fairport Convention and other English groups. The comparison is obvious but accurate.

This review is really a continuation of my piece on Country Gazette last issue; for this Mike Auldridge album joins Gazette as an ultimate expression of music in the country and western terms. It is neither too crude nor too refined, and also like Country Gazette, it is near perfect. I wish I had written about them together because I don't want my praise of one to detract from the other: Both are important and both are essential to any country music aficionado's collection.

Auldridge's record contains mostly traditional or standard country songs (*Tennessee Stud*, *Silver Threads Among the Gold*, *House of the Rising Sun*) played with rarely matched intricacy and mastery by Auldridge. Ben Eldridge on banjo, Dave Bromberg on lead, Vassar Clements on fiddle, and one of the original dobro virtuosos, Buck "Uncle Josh" Graves. Auldridge sings on only two cuts: *It's Over* and *Take Me*, both plaintive love songs, the kind which Bob Wills and Tommy Duncan once crooned over southern radio. Auldridge's voice does that comparison every bit of justice.

It's one of the signs of a great artist if he can take a familiar idea and expand on it, or at least express an old one better than most. Auldridge does both on this record. He takes you back and shows you where it's going, with no shit in between. *DOBRO* is an exquisite record.

—Jeff Walker



"Son Of Obituary"  
the new  
George Gerdes LP  
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# Family

**The British band with a great new album, "Bandstand", a fast-climbing single, "Burlesque," and an American tour with Elton John. Welcome to the USA, Family!**

**1972 Concert Tour  
with Elton John**

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September 27  
Boston Music Hall  
Boston, Mass.

September 29  
New Haven Arena  
New Haven, Conn.

September 30  
Spectrum Arena  
Philadelphia, Pa.

October 1  
Memorial Auditorium  
Rochester, N.Y.

October 2  
Montreal Forum  
Montreal, Can.

October 5  
Maple Leaf Garden  
Toronto, Can.

October 6  
Cobo Hall  
Detroit, Mich.

October 7  
Memorial Auditorium  
Buffalo, N.Y.

October 9  
Nassau Coliseum  
Nassau, N.Y.

October 11  
Horton Field House  
Illinois State University  
Normal, Ill.

October 12  
Civic Culture Center  
Wichita, Kansas

October 13  
Field House  
University of Kansas  
Lawrence, Kansas

October 14  
The Hilton Coliseum  
University of Iowa  
Ames, Iowa

October 15  
Auditorium Arena  
Denver, Colo.

October 18  
HIC Arena  
Honolulu, Hawaii

October 20  
Seattle Arena  
Seattle, Wash.

October 21 & 25  
Community Theatre  
U.C. Berkeley  
Berkeley, Ca.

October 22  
Anaheim Convention Center  
Anaheim, Ca.

October 23  
The L.A. Forum  
Inglewood, Ca.

October 27  
Tucson Civic Plaza  
Tucson, Ariz.

October 28  
Civic Assembly Plaza  
Phoenix, Ariz.

October 29  
San Diego Sports Arena  
San Diego, Ca.

November 1  
Gallagher Hall  
State University  
Stillwater, Okla.

November 2  
Assembly Center Southwest  
Tulsa, Okla.

November 3  
Fair Grounds Arena  
Oklahoma City, Okla.

November 4  
Memorial Auditorium  
Kansas City, Kansas

November 5  
Municipal Auditorium  
Dallas, Tex.

November 8  
Coliseum  
Texas A & M University  
College Station, Tex.

November 9  
Municipal Auditorium  
San Antonio, Tex.

November 10  
Assembly Center  
Louisiana State University  
Baton Rouge, La.

November 11  
Mid South Coliseum  
Memphis, Tenn.

November 12  
Memorial Auditorium  
Nashville, Tenn.

November 14  
Memorial Coliseum  
University of Alabama  
Tuscaloosa, Ala.

November 15  
Atlanta Coliseum  
Atlanta, Ga.

November 16  
Charlotte Coliseum  
Charlotte, Ga.

November 17  
Civic Center  
Charleston, W. Va.

November 18  
The Coliseum  
Hampton Roads, Va.

November 19 & 20  
Carnegie Hall  
New York, N.Y.

November 21  
Baltimore Civic Center  
Baltimore, Md.

November 22  
State Farm Arena  
Harrisburg, Pa.

November 24  
Jackson Coliseum  
Jacksonville, Fla.

November 25  
Jai Alai Arena  
Miami, Fla.

November 26  
Bay Front Center  
St. Petersburg, Fla.



**"Bandstand"**  
LP: UAS-5644  
8 Track: U-8452  
Cassette: K-0452

**"Burlesque"**  
b/w "The Rocking R's"  
#50591

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