

SOLID ROCK

KLZ-FM

106.7

24 HOUR QUADRAPHONIC STEREO

ALBUMS

1. BANGLA DESH
2. AMERICAN PIE
3. LED ZEPPELIN
4. SEVENTH SOJOURN
5. KILLER
6. MADMAN ACROSS THE WATER
7. PAUL SIMON
8. HARVEST
9. THICK AS A BRICK
10. FIRST TAKE
11. HISTORY OF ERIC CLAPTON
12. EXILE ON MAIN STREET
13. TEASER & THE FIRE CAT
14. CATCH BULL AT FOUR
15. DAYS OF FUTURE PASSED

VARIOUS ARTISTS
DON McLEAN
LED ZEPPELIN
MOODY BLUES
ALICE COOPER
ELTON JOHN
PAUL SIMON
NEIL YOUNG
JETHRO TULL
ROBERTA FLACK
ERIC CLAPTON
ROLLING STONES
CAT STEVENS
CAT STEVENS
MOODY BLUES

APPLE
UNITED ARTISTS
ATLANTIC
THRESHOLD
WARNER BROTHERS
UNI
COLUMBIA
REPRISE
WARNER BROTHERS
ATLANTIC
ATCO
ROLLING STONE
A & M
A & M
THRESHOLD

SINGLES

1. AMERICAN PIE
2. FIRST TIME EVER
3. HORSE WITH NO NAME
4. ALONE AGAIN
5. HEART OF GOLD
6. BRANDY
7. I CAN SEE CLEARLY NOW
8. I AM WOMAN
9. YOU'RE SO VAIN
10. MY DING-A-LING

DON McLEAN
ROBERTA FLACK
AMERICA
GILBERT O'SULLIVAN
NEIL YOUNG
LOOKING GLASS
JOHNNY NASH
HELEN REDDY
CARLY SIMON
CHUCK BERRY

UNITED ARTISTS
ATLANTIC
REPRISE
MAM
REPRISE
EPIC
EPIC
CAPITOL
ELEKTRA
CHESS

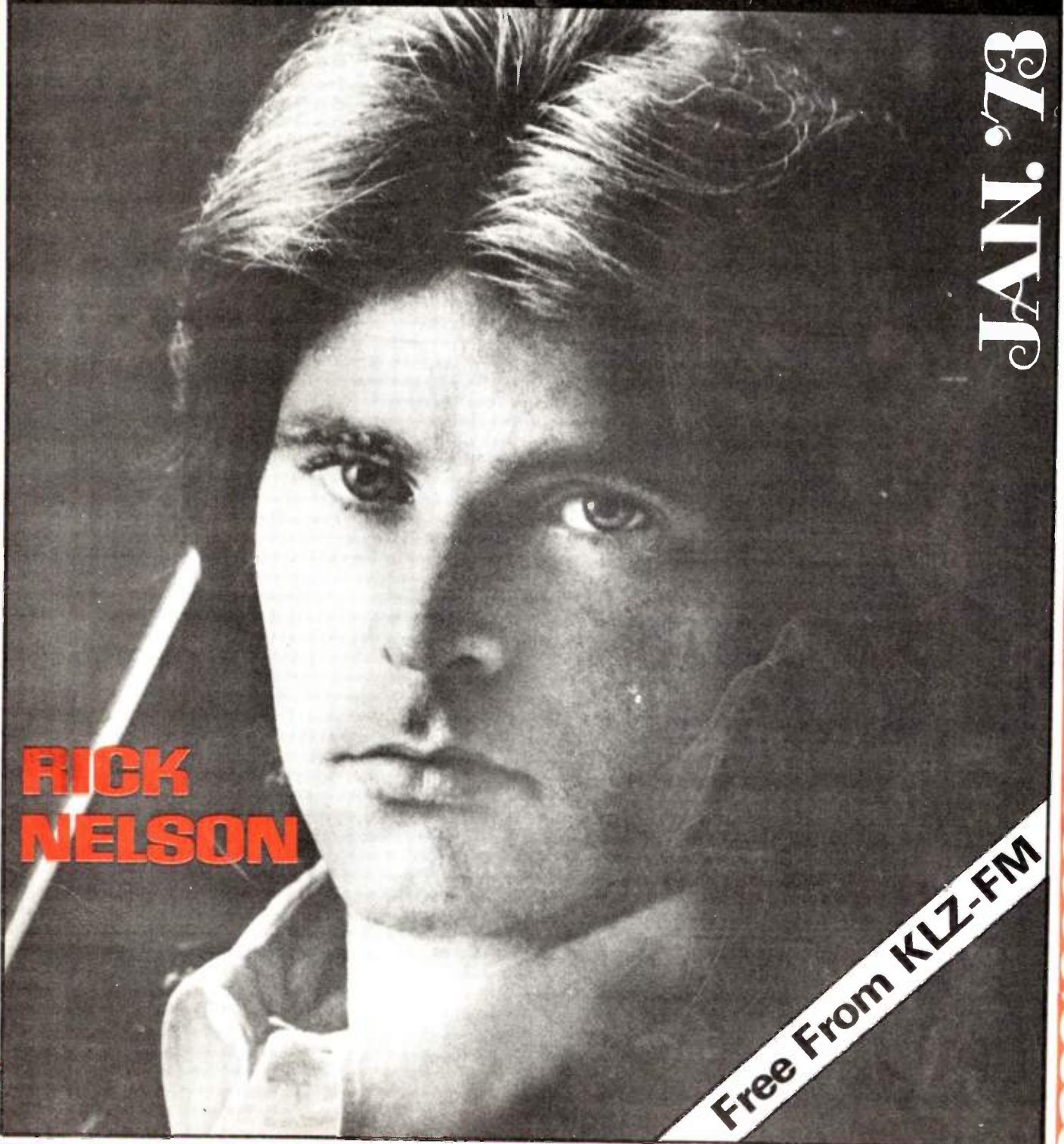
Denver's



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JAN. '73



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NELSON**

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WISHBONE ASH



Uriah Heep



Greg Papazian and John Leveke



Richard Creamer

At top, Keith Moon in high drag poses with former GTO lovely Miss Pamela. See page 4 for complete story.

LETTERS

Dear PRM:

In his review of "Slade Alive" Lester Bangs wrote that if someone wanted a copy of "Play It Loud," they should write to Lester and he'd mail them his. Well I called up Lester and he said the whole thing was false; he wasn't going to give away any albums, he had just written it. This from the number 2 rock writer in the entire USA.

America's number 1 rock writer, R. Meltzer, is well known for his weird and untrue statements such as his review of a Patti Dahlstrom album where he said he and Gary Kenton roller skated with Patti but she kept her arms around Gary the whole time and when I asked Richard he said he made the whole thing up.

So, if the number 1 and number 2 rock writers in the country write in an untrue way, soon other writers will pick this up and none of us rock readers will be able to believe anything we read. As a matter of fact maybe this is true already. Maybe Greg Shaw and Mike Saunders really like James Taylor and Bonnie Koloc and hate heavy metal and just do their writing as a way to rake in dough.

Before a Congressional investigation becomes necessary, I suggest rock writers agree at their next convention to honesty in reviews as a goal to be met in all future writing.

Dave Newberger
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Martin, Lester et al:

Sorry to read that Lester's brains were blasted beyond repair by the latest Black Sabbath or Uriah Heep albums. The Kinks' new album may not carry Lester's imprimatur but time will watch it ascend to its rightful niche in the Kinks' rather bizarre saga. Why is Lester so bitter about the band's reliance upon themes based upon British life? Isn't that better than the one million variations of American blues and r&b so successfully regurgitated by the Stones?

Magnum opus is a good description for *Celluloid Heroes* for it is a song operating on two levels — one superficial and one a mite deeper, less accessible perhaps but applicable to everyone. It is not just a song about Marilyn Monroe, George Sanders, Greta Garbo, Mickey Rooney and Bette Davis, Lester, but a song for the common man. It is the touchstone of the entire record, giving a person the hope so desperately needed after the cynicism of *Here Comes Yet Another*

Day and Maximum Consumption, and the wistfulness of *Supersonic Rocket Ship*.

The theme of the song and the record is simply that we are all equal. I may be a star but you are too. Life is a bitch and drinking/drugs provide only temporary relief from this tough burden. The faces on Hollywood Boulevard may be in concrete but our names are in granite after we pass. There's a slab waiting with Lester's name just as there is one for Nixon, for me and for Ray Davies.

The song and the record give everyone a lift with the thesis that you can be a star, if not of the world or USA, then at least of your street, block or more importantly to yourself. Anything which reinforces our battered egos should at least be given some second consideration. Ray Davies possesses a knack of subtlety sadly lost on you, Lester, a well-meaning rock critic whose ears and mind are badly in need of a vacation. I'd suggest that you spend more time letting the Kink's cleverness sink into that mind so abused by senseless volume. I'd also like to add that I consider EVERYBODY'S IN SHOWBIZ to be the least British of all their discs.

John M. Lomax
Houston, Texas

To L. Dork Bangs:

Dear Wiseass Chickenshit:

Think you're real cute, huh! Well I beddah get these albums from you pronto or I'm gonna have all Brooklyn down on you. Maybe you can print and get away with crap like this in Dave Marshmellow's magazine but not in PRM. So send me your copy of Slade's first album along with all these from your collection since they're all more than six months old: BLACK PEARL, LIGHTNIN' STRIKES — L. Hopkins, BLACK OAK ARKANSAS' first, RITCHIE VALENS at Pacoima, HAVING A RAVE UP w/Yardbirds, SEEDS 2ND, 5TH & 6TH: all your COUNT FIVE albums too.

Better giving than living.

E. Ramiriz, Jr.
Brooklyn, New York

Dear Editors of R.P.M.:

In the spirit of sharing good fortune please find attached check for one dollar, half the bet I won when Miss Chris Van Ness & Mr. Lynne Bronstein walked out of the MURRAY ROMAN press/prison party. "L. A. RADICALS" are so predictable...and such bores.

Nikolas Venet

Bookie

Hamtramack, Michigan

P.S. Is Chris Van Ness of Murray Roman walkout fame the same asshole who gave us the David Ackles/Better than Set-Pepper-best-L.P.-of-year review? If he is, I owe him fifty bucks for half the bet I won on that fuckup.

Dear Mr. Cerf:

One article I read about Slade said Noddy looked like Marty Feldman. Now PRM says he's downright ugly! Now, Nod's no Paul McCartney, but neither are you! (Although you are nice-looking.) Noddy's not so bad looking!

Anyway, Greg Shaw's article on Slade was the nicest, and best one I've ever read. He captured their personalities. It was really great!

Thanks so much and please do more on the hottest band in Rock 'N Roll!

Thanks,
Joanna Popkin

Los Angeles, California

P.S. How about an article on Family?

(Ed. Note: We gratefully acknowledge your observations of Cerf's and Noddy's respective mugs — but as for your postscript, ya obviously are not the PRM devotee you might otherwise appear. In our September issue Nik Logan composed the most definitive Family article on record — do some homework girl.)

Dear PRM People:

Considering the commendable intelligence and style with which you execute so many of your articles, I bet you could do some interviews that would bring *Rolling Stone* to its journalistic knees. The occasional teasers you've graced us with so far have been worth reading several times and storing away for future nostalgic moments. Thank you for a superior magazine.

Laurel Rainetree
New Orleans, Louisiana

Dear PRM:

Exceptions! Take one! (I think I will.) It seems that Mike Saunders is about as capable of reviewing a heavy metal album as Harry Chapin is. His review of SLADE ALIVE left much (an ear) to be desired. Boogie shit, indeed! You, Saunders, are a booger. When one speaks of mentalities, boogie or otherwise, one must be careful not to place himself in an equally degrading category as you have done, Mike. Specifically, that of the self-pitying

rock critic. What does this mean? It means that you had better start pitying yourself, chump, because your condition is critical, and me and Noddy Holder are gonna throw rocks at you if you don't shape up or take a cruise on a boat (a slow one to China). Slade are GREAT, they know how to rock, and besides, the record itself gathers up so much surface noise, that you have to buy another one in only three months! What else does one need to know to prove that SLADE ALIVE is a great, brain-rotting rock/rock-then-you-are-exhausted album? NUTTIN! Good for Lester and Greg.

RCA Veesta
Kevin Carroll
Edison, New Jersey

Dear PRM:

I'm getting sick of people expecting every new incarnation of the Byrds to sound just like the original group. Good as the original Byrds were, I think UNTITLED is better than anything they did with David Crosby. Okay, maybe Scott Fischer caught the Byrds on a bad night. But they couldn't of been that bad. And what's this bullshit about Clarence White? White (not "Whitey") is one of the best guitarists ever. I'm a "fan" of Folk, Acid and Country Rock and I'm glad he's around. The live *Eight Miles High* is one of the best acid rock jams since the Grateful Dead's *St. Stephen*.

I have a ticket to see the Byrds with Commander Cody on December 8 and for my money, McGuinn could walk on stage and whistle for an hour and a half and it'd be good.

William Meier
Evanston, Illinois

(Ed. Note: McGuinn's next will be a solo recording. It's the greatest hits of the Shangrals — instrumentally — on kazoo. You should just froth, sonny.)

Dear Adny Shernoff:

I am amazed at your supposed true statements about the Doobie Brothers concert (October issue) with T. Rex in New York. I know Tom Johnson of the Doobies very well and in our conversation of last Thursday night he informed me that:

1. He knows no one named Ralph Neely.
2. He never played in Randy Burns' Sky Dog Band.
3. He doesn't own a Sunn Amplifier.
4. They didn't even play Beehive State in New York.

(Continued on Page 30)

Performances

THE ULTIMATE ROCK CONCERT The Coliseum Los Angeles, California

KROQ, a low-watt AM station out of Burbank, has been around a few months now and must have spent millions on billboards which appear in locations far outside the station's signal, and a publicity campaign stressing the station as "the Rock!" (naturally the call letters are pronounced "K-Rock" rather than the more obvious and appropriate "Crock"). In actuality they play about as much or little real rock as any other station, and must have been on their last legs when the notion of a benefit concert for the local Free Clinic came into their heads. Not only would the concert be broadcast, bringing them ratings, but according to one story it was expected to count heavily with the FCC when their application for a stronger signal came up.

A massive campaign was launched for "The Ultimate Rock Concert," with one of those "new acts being added daily!" pitches that arouse immediate skepticism. Especially misleading were the repeated radio promos announcing Keith Moon as MC, while a cavalcade of Who hits unrolled in the background (in the end he only announced one act). Credibility was further breached when a *Free Press* article disclosed that only a few thousand tickets had been sold, while KROQ was announcing sell-out crowds approaching 90,000.

The show was already underway as we were driving down to the Coliseum and the moderators kept us posed on the many similarities between this event and such legendary conclaves as Monterey, Woodstock and the Isle of Wight, but upon arrival we found a scene more closely resembling the fabled ROQ's egg. Contributing delinquent factors were myriad technical malfunctions, consequent time delays, overbearing and, shall we say, somewhat misleading radio promotions, hopelessly randomized scheduled, and irritating security provisions so strict as to keep Keith Moon barred from the backstage area when he was unable to find a place for his stick-on clearance badge on the drag costume he had borrowed from the GTO's for the occasions, and a member of Crazy Horse was arrested and booked for carrying an open bottle of champagne backstage. The security so infuriated one patron, that when interviewed, he accused the station of promoting "bad Karma - if you know what that is," and fouling the "astral weather," and other equally heinous spiritual crimes.

But the important thing was the music, and it was there that the screwups became most annoying. Three promised groups, Crazy Horse, the Eagles, and the incomparable Mott the Hoople, were squeezed out owing to the aforementioned time delays and a 2:00 a.m. curfew as well as the reluctance of Stevie Wonder to leave the stage without overstaying his welcome by at least an hour. However, most of the scheduled acts did perform, and there were many highlights. The Raspberries flashed us back to '64 with their crisp guitars and neo-British harmonies in a tragically brief 15-minute set; Chuck Berry was in fine form with the best pick-up band I've ever seen behind him, and laid down some of his timeless rockers before turning the remnants of his act over to the audience for an obligatory ding-a-ling jackoff exercise; Elephant's Memory played some spirited rock & roll; the Bee Gees sounded just like their records; and the Four Seasons (that's right) didn't really sound like their records but gave it the old Copacabana try anyway.

This was fine stuff, but the astral weather was not always so balmy. Merry Clayton punctured eardrums with an overdose of shrill Topanga Canyon gospel soul; Batdorf & Rodney, introduced as the seventies' most nascent superstars, were so acoustically slick and sweet as to make one actually long for CSNY's sloppiness; Stevie Wonder plunged into a funk and was excruciatingly dull for the better part of an eternity; Arthur Lee staggered onstage with some purported new-look "Love" and proceeded to mangle *Little Red Book* and *Seven and Seven Is* in a manner both amusing and saddening; and the Fabulous Rhinestones, Sha Na Na, and Sly Stone ran through their usual rituals, none of which were particularly stirring. Still, aside from inequities in set-lengths, the musical portion of the program went well.

The audience seemed docile and fairly well satisfied with celebrating their very own Woodstock in a dark, chilly football stadium surrounded by hundreds of armed police. Portions of the show were being filmed for a later TV broadcast, and for the sake of making posterity wish

L.A. area, it was a diverting change, and a bit of ersatz nostalgia for some of us. Only a set by the Grateful Dead could have made the evening more complete.

-Chester Drawers

CROWBAR St. Denis Hall University of Windsor Ontario, Canada

After four months of being holed up and rehearsing endless fatiguing hours each day, my favorite rock and roll band, Crowbar, are out on the road again, testing their new show before their blitz on Britain next month. One Sunday night not too long ago found me and five or six hundred others crunched in front of the stage in the University of Windsor's St. Denis Hall in anticipation of a few more hours well spent imbibing raucous boogie as only Crowbar can exude.

The most notable thing about the revised stage show is the addition of a horn section, added to round out the group's sound and give it fuller impact.

Horns? Great Gods. I thought to myself, have. Crowbar sold out to the slick professional side of rock and roll? Will the added brass mean a loss in the great audience rapport the group has always utilized so well? Fortunately, my fears (and thereby delightful) *Tits Up On The Pavement*, Roly Greenway's *Newspaper Song*, and *Kilroy*, an old fashioned stomp which is highlighted by the sight of Kelly Jay turning his back to the audience and stomping his right leg up and down like a crazy acid-head stomping hallucinatory black widows. The crowd howls, and the stage is set for the group's traditional big finish which includes old rock classics like *Rock Around The Clock* and the newly incorporated *Bo Diddley* and ends up some time later with the ever popular *Oh What A Feeling*, (which has to be the ultimate in audience participation songs).

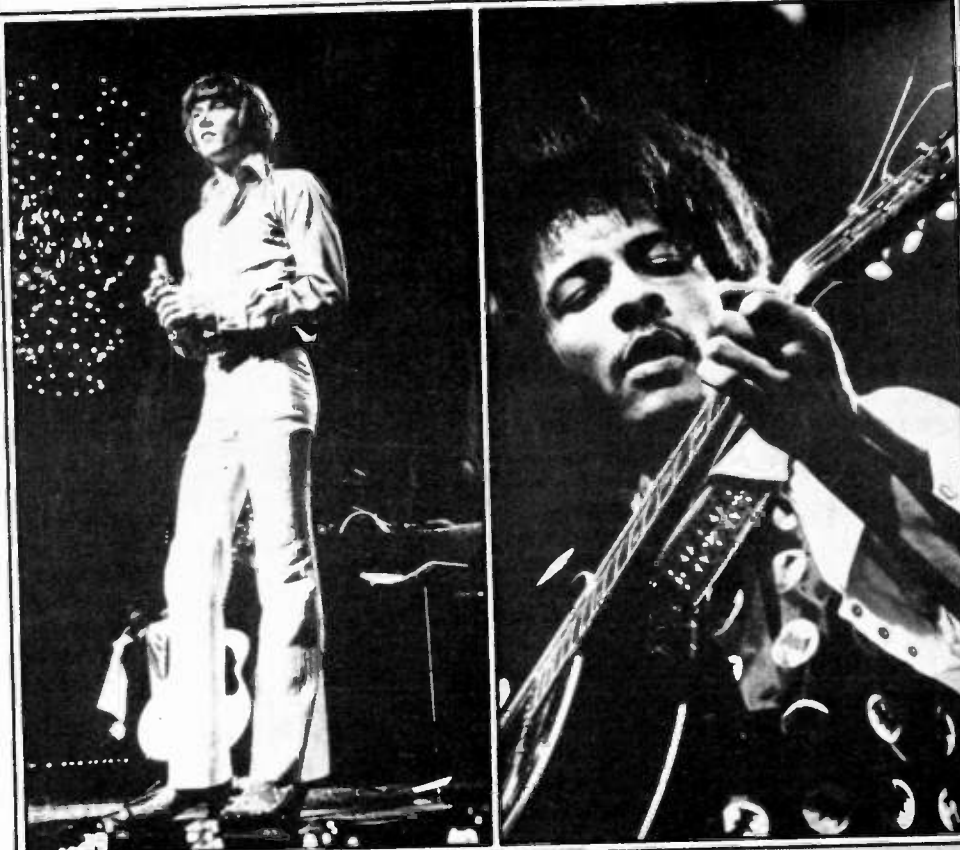
I guess I've seen Crowbar perform about as many times as anybody, but I always leave a concert knowing damn well I'll be back the next time they're within close range for the old '65 Stang to get me down there, (about a hundred miles, tops). Whether it's the sight of Kelly Jay slashing his fist into the air while growling "One Time, Two Time" to "Oh What A Feeling," or the possibility of finally resolving in my mind as to whether Ghetto or Ray is the better guitarist; or perhaps the tremendous sense of joy and camaraderie they all share and so openly show on stage, I don't really know. But when Crowbar gets down to playing that outrageous boogie music I generally get to feeling nearly as good as they do, which is, after all, what going to rock concerts is all about. 'Cha know.

-Alan Neister

EARTHQUAKE The Long Branch Berkeley, California

It was Halloween in Berkeley, and consequently time for the mildly legendary annual costume contest at the Long Branch, to the musical accompaniment of Earthquake and others. With the generous gratuity of a \$100 first prize in the offing, local sartorial ingenuity knew no bounds (including those of good taste; a quality, however, quite superfluous to such a dissolute bacchanalian revel); and ample opportunity to become acquainted with the varied results of said ingenuity was provided in the form of a band called Protoplasm, who were so deafeningly maladroit in the area of wounded-elephant guitar shrieking as to render any non-visual pursuits (talking, listening, etc.) completely impracticable (although hearing a group ripping off Iron Butterfly licks in Berkeley '72 was rather diverting, in theory at least).

The place was packed, and as the preliminary judging round approached, anticipation ran ever higher, infecting even the hordes of ubiquitous black dogs (without which no hip soiree can apparently function at full efficiency) running underfoot. A seemingly interminable parade of costumed hopefuls commenced, highlighted by the appearance of a six-foot tube of toothpaste; a military policeman sporting a pig mask (an amusing Berkeleyan trigger treat); a Count Dracula representation who bore an astonishing (if presumably unintentional) resemblance to Bill Graham; and a most accurate replica of the Statue of Liberty, down to an authentically mottled metallic green complexion. In addition, a turbaned gentleman in white makeup with a long tubular nose demonstrated an agreeable and praiseworthy enthusiasm for making informal tactile assessments of the bodily contours of the feminine contestants, much to the general delight.



Barry Gibb and Arthur Lee - on the same stage! How ultimate can you get? Not pictured: Stevie Wonder, Sly Stone, and John & Yoko, who were "there in spirit." Spirit didn't play.

they'd been there DJ Sam Riddle spent several minutes urging the crowd to wave their arms and applaud as though McGovern had just been elected, while the house lights were raised and the TV cameras panned the assembled multitude. But the greatest thrill of the evening was yet to come: a "special surprise" in the form of a rather confused long-distance phone message from Yoko Ono (interrupting the Bee Gees' set, much to their immense gratification).

It was a fairly sizeable crowd (estimated at 40,000), and events ran smoothly enough. Still, as a memorable and historic festival event it ranked somewhere between Mar y Sol and the 2nd Greater San Jose Folk-Rock Festival of 1969, despite energetic and incredibly rapid deejay commentary (on the order of "this festival is so groovy and together, the mellow vibes should live on forever!") to the contrary. But actually, what could you expect from an ill-starred combination of the moribund Woodstock spirit and that good old ageless Hollywood hype? In reality, it probably came as close as possible to actualizing its ostensible goals. Compared to the other concert settings currently available in the

were abated. The band is boogying as well, if not better, than ever. I should have realized that once a people's band, always a people's band.

They started off with their usual opening number, *Murder In The First Degree*, the frantic favorite that opens fast and sets the pace for the rest of the evening. Then into Ray Charles' *I Got A Woman*, a new effort for the band and one which fits well into their repertoire, *Where Were You*, from *Heavy Duty*, (their latest album), and old fave *Too True Mama*. All the stuff so far has been solid Crowbar, full-bodied and hard-edged. (The horn section, three pieces, and standing elevated above the back of the band, was almost lost in the terrible acoustics of the hall and so I really didn't have much of a chance to assess its value.)

Next, Joey "Cherub" Chirowski takes center stage draped in flowing capes and spangles, and leads the band in their new single *Dreams*, an effort which comes across much stronger live than on *Heavy Duty* (but then, what doesn't?)

At this point the horn section splits, and the band goes through more of its older stuff such as the ever-chauvinist

However, none of these promising contenders were among the prizewinners, those honors going to (fourth prize: two albums) a rather indifferently bandaged mummy; (third prize: two albums) a beplumed young lady leading what appeared to be a small albino camel, representing (with admirable clarity) "The Birds and The Bees"; (second prize: two albums) a gentleman encased in myriads of small balloons (all of which were promptly popped upon his departure from the stage); and, tying for (and splitting) the \$100 first prize, a rather waterlogged fellow who'd reputedly been submerged in a bathtub for the entire evening (the bathtub being planted inside the club but blocked from the view of 85% of the patrons); and a quartet of spectacularly if ambiguously festooned ladies (the most striking of whom featured a flamboyant pair of flaming antlers), who in the aggregate proposed to represent the four seasons (the girl with the antlers, upon reflection, actually was a dead ringer for Frankie Valli).

Finally (and fortunately for this piece's hopeful future as a concert review), Earthquake came on; and, although the set was probably not a representative one (in that troupes of guests and friends were constantly tripping on and offstage — and, as an incidental point, the band members, no matter how flash-oriented they may be, in all probability do not ordinarily appear dressed as a leprechaun, a 50's vintage dandy, and a surgical outpatient. The drummer, more conservative, confined his visual eccentricities to a rather ratty black wig. They were withal quite impressive. Although a regrettable tendency to prolong indifferent boogie/funk riffs to inordinate lengths did surface at times, the songs themselves rocked with infectious vigor, and any band that cops from both *Pretty Flamingo* and *Wild Thing* in the first 10 minutes must be admitted to possess immense promise (as well as admirable '66 roots; the latter adaptation, called *It's My Baby*, was especially enthralling). In the midst of a Bay Area musical environment choked with the most excessively wretched Latin/soul/funk/jazz/boogie bastardizations, Earthquake's perserverance, after two rather unnoticed albums and numerous local gigs, is quite encouraging.

We're told the act is no longer with the once foresighted A&M recording organization who had the good taste to sign the band in the first place. Tapes of other recent live performances in the Bay Area have surfaced around the glamorous Phonograph Record Magazine studios lately, and we're happy to report of their superior quality. Viewing the group live (as on this particular occasion) combined with the audition of the aforementioned tapes reinforces the general opinion that Earthquake's previous recordings match their potential little. Rumor has it the next LP will be produced by the revered Roy Wood (ex-leader of The Move, Electric Light Orchestra and now head man with Wizzard). The team would seem highly commercial and definitely recommended. This is not the cypto-horn, boogie, Chicago-ette combination we have been led to believe. Earthquake, in spite of the shitty name the darlings chose for themselves, are really quite pop and glam, and honey they are the closest thing to English you'll find in the States — next to The Raspberries and Christopher Milk that is. If they happen to make it around your neck of the woods, don't miss them fellas...And don't miss any of their albums except the first two on A&M.

—Ken Barnes

ELVIS
Cobo Hall
Detroit, Michigan

I'm getting pretty sick of all this talk about what a gross Tom Jones imitation Elvis has become. Baby fat and other people's songs, indeed. Bob Dylan has my

R: Keith Moon in
low drag: the ultimate
rock concierge. Far Right:
The King rocks-on,
for those who care.

sympathy, his middle ages are sure to be the scene of endless taunts if this is the only way we know how to react to the sight of a rocker outgrowing his teens. Christ, Elvis is almost 40, why can't we let him age gracefully?

So he's getting paunchy, so he doesn't shake his hips but instead does a few abrupt deep-knee bends, and especially so he does big production numbers like *You Don't Have to Say You Love Me* instead of hard-out rockers. So what? Look at Chuck Berry. When he was a young man his antics would astound today's audiences. He was all over the stage, playing jump rope with his guitar, the band blowing like a hurricane. Nowadays he does a limp pantomime, a few duckwalk steps and that's it, with pickup bands who'd never heard one of his songs an hour before. And who complains, or points out that a man of 45 looks ridiculous singing a juvenile song like *My Ding-A-Ling*? Shit, man, he's done enough. He doesn't have to put out for us dumb kids 15 years out. We're lucky just to see him. His old records speak for themselves, and a man's gotta ease off sometime. And the same's true for Elvis.

There's another thing Elvis and Chuck have in common, and another reason they're both still popular and always will be: sex. Sex was always at the root of rock & roll's effectiveness, you know the girls didn't appreciate the savage wildness of Scotty Moore's guitar or The Beatles' good taste in playing Carl Perkins songs. It was always the shaking hips/hair, the stud sneer or the boyish smile, the image of quintessential male sexuality coupled with the driving force of rock & roll that attracted the girls, reinforced the guys' own self-image, and made giants of those lucky few who caught the image vector at the right moment.

And they've still got it, of course, they'll charm the nurses onto their deathbed and knock 'em up too I'd wager. And that's why they're still around. Chuck's an obvious lecher, but Elvis plays it cool. All he needs is a glance over the shoulder, and a whole quadrant of the audience is screaming, jumping up, begging for that tiger's smile to be aimed a little more closely at them. And maybe that malarkey you read about middle-aged ladies doin' the screaming is true in Vegas, but at this show it was the teenagers who were acting some role out of a movie, recognizing his songs at the first note and freaking especially at the rockers, like they were really into his records. Some girls behind me that couldn't have been older than 21 and looked pretty hip, were discussing the show and comparing the number of scarves thrown into the audience to a seemingly vast number of past shows they'd attended.

Yeah, he did the big numbers, but he didn't do anything hopeless like *The*

Impossible Dream, it was all believable, the kind of stuff you could hardly object to a 35-year-old singer with any degree of maturity wanting to sing. And where I was expecting the oldies medley to be a slam-bang affair with 15 seconds for each song, from the reviews you know, I was quite satisfied with the dozen or so old songs he did almost all the way through, and with James Burton's superb guitar work. No *Big Hunk of Love*, but he did *Hound Dog* and *Teddy Bear* and plenty more, closing of course with a fantastic *Burning Love*. and lest we forget, the large portion of his hits, all the way back to *Love Me Tender* in 1956, consisted of slow mushy ballads. He hasn't changed all that much.

As a final defense for the poor old guy, lemme just ask you this. How would you like it if the world expected you to keep doing what you were doing in 1956. Don't know about you, but I was barely outgrowing tricycles and finger paints. We all gotta grow up, ya know.

—Greg Shaw

KRISTINA
Market West
Lima, Ohio

Rock and roll bands don't just happen or fall out of the sky just a little bit south of Moline. They get it together in a thousand little night clubs and meeting halls dotting these United States. These are the minor leagues of rock where people pay their dues.

Market West, in Lima, Ohio, is a typical mid-west club. It's just a bar with a small stage, tables, chairs, and booths. Half the people go to drink or to find a friend for the night. Market West has all of these things as well as a Miami modern decor of what some pathetic thought the Gay '90's looked like. People sit at long cafeteria-like tables drinking 3.2 beer or watered down booze in red, white and blue paper cups marked Pepsi-Cola. Two waitresses patrol the narrow aisles taking orders and delivering more Pepsi cups. Remember, the monitors in the high school cafeteria? The bandstand, nearly buried in wires and speakers, is nestled in the far corner of this darkened cafeteria. A living room sized area is reserved for dancing. A large sign announces the ladies john: **NECESSARY ROOM FOR LADIES.**

What you may ask is PRM doing in a place like this. Simple! If Charles Karalt can find interesting stories away from Washington, New York, and Los Angeles why can't we? Kristina is a rock band named after its lead singer! Kristina is a female hard rock singer supported by a four-man band! They're from West Virginia! (Allman Brothers, Asleep at the Wheel, Black Oak Arkansas country). Kristina, the singer, introduced as "the

hardest working young lady in show business," prances and gyrates on the stage in the best David Bowie tradition, doing other people's material as all dues-paying bands must — "play 'Louie Louie,'" but Kristina wears it well. Their *Four Day Creep* and *Sunshine of Your Love* rocks. When singing drummer John Ridgen's material, *Things Gonna Be Alright*, *Blues for Mary* there are flashes of something special. But at the Market West any band is a sideshow.

At 10:00 p.m. *Steve's Jam* opened the set. Some couples get up and dance — two maybe three. Strobes flicker, painting them in blue, red, and yellow. People will mill in the narrow aisles, clutching the ever present Pepsi-Cola cups. Soapers are dispersed. They nod (out) to the music. The first 50 minute set ends with *Bobby McGee*. Kristina has a bit of Janis in her which by definition is expected. Booze and downers take affect as the dancers multiply. "Clap your hands," urges Kristina, "C'mon everybody." A few do. To *Stone Cold Fever* — Kristina likes Humble Pie — she dances sensuously while doing a washboard solo. As the beer flows the tempo picks up. The aisle cruisin' increases. Zombies wandering up and down. A burley jock with long hair stumbles spilling beer and grabbing at girls not yet spoken for. In *Last Picture Show* fashion, a fight breaks out. Kristina's roadie says, "Make sure I'm not going to get this again," pointing to his swollen jaw. He was floored in a club brawl in Charleston the week before.

Kristina's rendition of *The First Time* cooks, but you can barely hear beyond the front row. The band is a human juke box. By 1 a.m. the small dance floor is packed — the evening's alliances are made. An auburn haired girl, Lima's version of Good Time Sally, greets dudes as they pass with their dates. They anxiously say hello and hurry off. The show goes on. The losers mill around the bar. "Maybe next week." I ask "Sally" why she came. "Because all my friends come here...ain't nowhere else to go." A friend interrupts, "I hate the place...I try to have a good time." Two guys at the bar come to "meet friends...pick up girls, you know." One waitress explained, "they come to dance, drink, who knows." Funny nobody mentioned the music. Kristina turned in a fine performance. She just may be one of the hardest working singers in show business.

Following the crowd out the door a huge cordon of Lima's finest, paddy wagon and all, greet the confused patrons. One kid says, "Once a month they bust us." He is corrected by another bystander, "No, every two weeks" Several policemen charge the bewildered people with clubs yelling, "Get off the

(Continued on Page 30)



THE ORPHIC EGG

"Classical Music" Ward

The folks at PRM have a story they tell about the girl who recently told them she was getting into classical music. When pressed for details, she identified her classical faves as Emerson, Lake and Palmer. Such misapprehensions as the one held by that girl have triggered, or perhaps more accurately, frightened the folks in London Records' classical department into seeking a way to present "Classical Music" to the jaded masses of disaffected rock listeners. And they think they've found a remedy: Orphic Egg.

Orphic Egg is a name derived from Greek Mythology and is meant to convey a general aesthetic message. The concept it now formally identifies is one which sprang from the feeling in the record business that youth could provide a substantial market for classical records. The classical market has, for some years, been the one which least profited from the boom in album sales. Classical record production is also very expensive. Both difficulties notwithstanding, classical records are important both for their academic and entertainment value and for the backbone they provide for live orchestral performances. Hence, a healthy level of album sales is an absolute necessity.

All of the record companies involved in the recording and releasing of classical product have been concerned with expanding the market in general. Perhaps the one in least difficulty, Elektra's Nonesuch subsidiary, has shown the clearest way to increasing sales; keep the prices down (Nonesuch is a budget label), make the packaging attractive, make the liner copy informative and, needless to say, appropriate and release interesting albums. The larger companies have each in their own ways picked up on these tenets. Most blatantly, there has been a rash of classical "greatest hits" LP's and gimmick albums like *Switched-On Bach*. The latter, considering current technology, represents a valid enough precept for reworking well-worn compositions, but the former have been widely hailed by the classical establishment as somewhat counter-productive. The other approach to generating and cultivating a new, larger audience has been to re-release previously available material in contemporary packaging, sometimes at budget prices, sometimes not. Most of the major labels (like CBS and RCA) have budget lines alongside their big-time classical catalogues, and a lot have good looking reissues have been showing up in both realms lately. This is also where Orphic Egg comes in.

With the help of John Davidson, a musician and come-lately marketing expert, Orphic Egg was set up as an actual custom label within the London Records structure. Its purpose would be to create and tailor regularly priced classical releases for a young audience, with special orientation toward collegians. Davidson would choose the selections for the initial release, which would be overly introductory, both for the label and in terms of turning the uninitiated on to the classics. Album graphics would be atypical for classical records, and the liner notes would be written by rock critics (!). Merchandising (advertising, promotion, etc.) would be aimed at the audience at whom rock and pop flack is usually shot. London saw the task of educating the consumer as their most important project.

All well and good, we think, but what's in the grooves? Davidson's first answer has been to provide a sampling of

MA



EGG

Ward

H'S HEAD



Classical music rolls over on its Bach, begging for those elusive rock dollars. (See Jim Bickhart's account of London's Orphic Egg on this page.) The Osmonds, who've got 'em all, don't appear worried. Don't miss the story of our British Correspondent's dream date with Donny and Michael on this page.

representative works by seven important composers. Drawing performances from the vast selection available in the London and the worldwide Decca vaults, he's pieced together seven LP's which combine some of the aspects of the "greatest hits" concept with some of those of a "primer" concept. They're called the Composer's Head series (*Beethoven's Head*, *Mahler's Head*, and so forth). The motto, doubtless a product of someone other than Davidson, is "let Orphic Egg crack your head."

Superficially, the choice of material for the albums, which incidentally is summarized on an eighth disc called *The Musical Head*, serves the intended purpose. The performances are by respected artists (Benjamin Britten, Zuben Mehta, Claudio Abbado, etc.) and music is fine. Probably the most curious thing about the whole deal is the liner notes. London, with what appears to be a totally straight face, terms such noted rock journalists as David Dalton, Lester Bangs, Ed Ward and Dave Marsh "classically-oriented rock critics," and uses their copy on the initial eight Orphic Egg releases. A sampling shows them to be experts to a widely varying degree. Dalton, for instance, seems both equipped and included to speak about the technical aspects of the music, thus rendering his notes not so dissimilar from those one might expect to find on any classical album, give or take a bit of

loftiness. Ward, on the other hand, permeates his less formal approach with hints of the definite boredom he feels for rock and keeps his remarks closely aligned to gut — rather than head-level reactions. Marsh is similarly bent, though his well-known affections for certain rock and roll syndromes separate his notes from Ward's somewhat. And so it goes. The writers take different directions in their attempts to interest the untutored potential listener in the albums. One thing seems sure, however, and probably remains not too serious a weakness, which is the fact that most of the liner notes are only slightly less untutored than those they're trying to reach. If, in the end, the communication is achieved, London will consider Orphic Egg "broken."

—Jim Bickhart

BRITAIN

Interlectual Encounters Abroad
By Our British Correspondent

Dearest PRM:

Gosh, we're so excited, Terrie Scooterpie and me. The whole world is beautiful. Last month DAVID was here for over two weeks and now DONNY is

here with his bee-you-tiful brothers.

First let me tell you about DAVID (cause he came first). David was on TOP OF THE POPS about 6 zillion times and he did his single *How Can I Be Sure* (which he probably wrote himself). Anyway, TOTP's did three films of gorgeous David, in one he was riding around in these old cars with 3 girls, and in the second one he was actually playing croquette (with the same 3 girls) and in the third one he walked around these beautiful gardens singing *How Can I Be Sure*, his new single which he probably wrote HIMSELF! Boy, I wish I was one of those lucky girls in those films, I bet they didn't even REALIZE how lucky they were. Anyway, David had this party on a big boat going up the Thames, so me and Terrie thought of this great idea. We figured David's boat would have to pass under Westminster Bridge, so me and Terrie went there and hung upside down by our feet waiting for him to pass so we could wave. Well, Terrie got very dizzy cause all the blood rushed to her head from hanging there for such a long time and she lost her balance and fell right into the river! So she tried swimming up to David's boat but the police came along and stopped her. Poor Terrie lost her David Fan Club Wallet and Membership Card in the river. (She wrote to the Fan Club to explain and they said "tough tacos Terrie" so she had to put out another quid for a new wallet, but it didn't matter she said.) But anyway, we got to see DAVID in the flesh and it was great, fantastic and incredible.

Unfortunately, David didn't have any time to do live concerts, but he said he would be coming back again in March to play. In the meanwhile, his TV series "The Partridge Family" is back on the Beeb again. Boy, I remember when they took it off, me and Terrie went right down to BBC Television Centre along with all of David's fans from Superstar Magazine and we actually demonstrated! It was the most exciting day of my life. I spent the whole night before making a huge banner to carry which had David's picture on it and then me and Terrie wrote, "BBC IS UNFAIR AND A COMMUNIST PLOT" on it. But now the series is back again but I still think Communists or somebody like that is running the Beeb.

Soon GORGEOUS DAVID was leaving so me and Terrie went to Heathrow Airport to wave goodbye. We made a big banner for that too, which said "DON'T GO DAVID, I'M HAVING YOUR BABY" which we thought would make David laugh, cause he has such a good sense of humor (he's so funny on the show).

Anyway, a few weeks later Melody Maker said that the Osmonds were coming and had invited all their fans out to the airport to meet them. So Terrie and me put on our Donny T-shirts and went out there with this terrific sign which spelled out DONNY in 3 foot high letters and on the other side we drew a HUGE picture of Donny's beautiful teeth. Well, the airport was real crowded and we waited by the customs area and who do you think we saw? Ole Elton John who thought everybody came to see HIM, isn't that a scream????! Then Donny appeared and everybody went crazy. Terrie and me ran out to the parking lot to see him get into his personal limousine and there was about 5 million kids out there too. Donny looked real scared, but he was still smiling that gorgeous smile.

The car drove away to the Churchill Hotel so me and Terrie got there as fast as we could. When we got there we found out that the Jackson Five were in the same hotel and there was a trillion kids screaming outside for Michael and Donny. One guy had this sledgehammer and started hacking down the hotel door while his friend held a switchblade in the doorman's back. It was really exciting. Our Donny banner got torn to shreds and Terrie lost her shoes.

We finally got inside the hotel by
(Continued on Page 30)

A new album from the
English group that's as good as their cover.

IN THE CAN.

THE GASH

Sovereign
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ENGLISH TRENDS IN LA

"Rodney Bingenheimer Makes Good"

HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA — Just when we all expected it least, it happened. With our pants down, mouths wide open, Rodney Bingenheimer fulfilled the unknown pledge of achievement he set for himself when he was a lad of 19... "Someday I'm gonna make it." For those select few who fail to place Rodney: Well, our teenage pop idol gained early notice in the middle sixties in Southern California through — (1) *Doubling for Davy Jones on the NBC-TV series The Monkees*; (2) *A now legendary weekly column in the radio freebee Go Magazine*; (3) *Being a chum and tour-guide for The Hollies, Bob Dylan, Kim Fowley, David Bowie (a difficult bill to fill, even for Rodney), The Seeds, The Chocolate Watch Band, Family, The Byrds, Donovan, Uriah Heep, etc.*; (4) *Co-writing several classic California smashes, among them, I Live For the Sun and Gator Tails and Monkey Ribs, made popular by The Sunrays and The Spats respectively.*

Though Rodney's probably better known in pop circles for merely "hangin' out round L.A. for ten years," there's narry a pop star what's entered the Hot 100 who hasn't come to terms with Rod the real Mod. He's been written up by gossip columnists like Rona Barrett and Lisa Rococo (who joins the PRM contributors as of this very issue). He's been punched out by the late Brian Jones and had a song written and performed about him on the GTO's first and only album. So, if all this hasn't jarred your memory, you have nerve reading a magazine dealing with the science of pop culture. 'Cause Rodney is both a verb and adjective in this context. Author Nat Freedland made this observation early in the L.A. rock-scene in his revered *Wailing* column in the Free Press of yore.

So Rodney is making his mark after a decade of endless backstage doors. It's not like the world's on fire and Eliot Mazer still hasn't signed him, but little old Rodney (5'6"/24 years) actually has opened his very own nightclub on the Sunset Strip. It's called, appropriately, "Rodney Bingenheimer's E Club." (the E stands for English or Ecology, E Underarm Deodorant or anything), and even though the poster-painted, tacked-up, mural-ette sign outside would lead you to believe otherwise (Bingenheimer is spelled Bingenhim), it's Rodney's just the same. The club is positioned in an ever so logical location, a mere two blocks from the Continental Hyatt House and just minutes from the hot Whisky A Go Go.

Rodney's E Club has managed to attract that brand of debutant what's given Leon Russell and Elton John the inspiration for more than one song. There's Cynthia Plaster Caster (Elmer's Glue-All), The International Butter Queen (Mazola), and Suzie Creamcheese (Knudson), and their horde. Plumage, glitter, and aluminum abound here. And everyone is in style.

But this is serious business for Rodney. And the club isn't such a bad idea at all. Says Rod, "We don't have live entertainment, only records, like pubs in England. This is Los Angeles' first stark-raving discotheque, and it's complete with all the fringe what makes those in London tick." The front of the place resembles more of a lumberyard than a nightclub. It's wood slats hammered diagonally. No varnish. Entering you're part of an endless corridor of mirrors. At the end, a small window there, you'll find Cynthia, Miss



Richard Creamer



The dears just can't stay away from Rodney's E Club, where on any night of the week you can see trends bend and fashion in action. Just ask Ultra Violet and David Bowie, shown above with the charming Mr. Bingenheimer himself.

Queen, or even Rodney who are happy to relieve you of the E Club's two and a half buck cover charge. "We charge 'cause we don't want just anybody in here," claims Rodney. "The cover keeps the undesirables out and sifts through would-be crashers and hangers-on."

Down the mirrored hall and through a second door there's fourteen Cantonese tea tables with minute stools surrounding each. The capacity of the pub is 120 (standing) and Rodney predicts the club will turn a profit in a matter of only eight weeks. "We'd like to open a chain of these. Our people live for this brand of entertainment. There have been a couple joints like my E Club opened in Hollywood these past few months. Places like the Rainbow Bar and Grill (owned by PR hot-shot Bob Gibson) and the Ooh Poo Pa Do. I think the Strip is comin' back to life. It's as if it were 1967 all over again and it feels great."

Rodney sez his club is promoted by word of mouth. None of the ritzy \$2300 per month billboards which litter the Strip, no newspaper adverts, radio spots, but "already Don Steele has done a bit on his weekend show about David Bowie and the Spiders comin' down to the place and spending the entire evening. John Gibson mentioned us in his column and even Bob Gibson is sending us some girls now." And it would seem his means of

exploitation is most effective indeed. In its first two weeks, The E Club has been virtually full every evening. "And the trendiness is spreading with every breath, gracious me."

The E Club opens nightly at 6 p.m., closes at 2 a.m. But soon the place will become an after-hours room for future members who will pay a lusty \$50 per year to be a Rodney Card Carrier. "This place is where it's all happening, already we've had three members of Uriah Heep, Elton John, David Bowie, Noel Redding, Ray Davies, and Ansley Dunbar," Rodney exclaims proudly. "And the pop stars realize this is one of the few places in L.A. worth hanging out at." Which, in actual fact, is true. Los Angeles has long needed a place for the formal groupie cum-on. And since it's only minutes from the heated blankets of the Continental Hyatt House, who could wander elsewhere for one's proverbial piece?

"I've finally got something going for myself. After all these years, I've got a gig, and I love it. Gonna make a go of it"...Rodney, along with the help of his silent but ever present partners, the legendary Tom Ayres and recuperating Ted Weintraub, may just make the Rodney Bingenheimer E Club into the next Trip. L.A. is lookin' for a scene, it might as well be Rodney's scene as anyone else's. At this point he's made

narry a farthing, "but I'm having a great time," says Rodney. "And basically that's all I'm really interested in now...I want everyone to have a good time, boogie with the music and enjoy themselves, and that's the truth."

It's got the location, Lisa Rococo has given her nod, the price is right, and we all like the English (very) records he plays, and certainly Rodney has the reputation. But Rodney admits, "Who knows what will happen, by the time this story is published, we may be out of business."

—Martin R. Cerf

HOLLYWOOD

HOT FLASHES AND THE HOLLYWOOD DREAM By Our Glitter City Correspondent

Hello dears. I'm Lisa, and this is Hollywood...With all the biggies (not to mention the biggies-to-be) who've been running around town lately, it's a shame that Kim Fowley decided (or was there more to it than simply deciding?) to go abroad on such short notice. The 6-foot, 3-3/4 inch ("I look taller when I wear stripes") bon vivant was last reported in London, perhaps trying to sell Mott the Hoople on his new song, based on *Citizen Kane*. Good luck, love, and hurry home...But at least we've had David Bowie, who simply adores Hollywood. He Greyhounded back in a couple of weeks after his smashing concerts here to mix Iggy Pop's first solo album. Should be the smash of the decade...

Hot news on the Hot Band: Sylvester to be the Janis of the 70's? Word is that the Whisky's Mario offered Sylvester and the Hot Band more money for a return engagement than he has to any other recordless performer since the late, great Ms. Joplin (but that first record will be out any minute now, and look out, Iggy). And we must all get to Tokyo to see the TV special that was taped at the club during his SCORCHING Saturday set by a crew of lovely Japanese video men. Write to Blue Thumb and demand a charter flight!!! In attendance during the week were Goldie Glitters, Spencer Davis and Ziggy's pal, sweet Cyrinda Foxe. Where was Iggy, Cyrinda?...

Speaking of Goldie: She, the immense Miss Divine and especially Paula Pucker and the Pioneers were SIZZLING in San Francisco's Palace Theatre production of *Vice Palace* (which was helped along by a \$20,000 contribution from Warner Bros.' Pete Marino!). Ticking the ivories at the show, by the way, was Peter Arden, Sylvester's old pianist, who rejoined Sally for a couple of nights at the Whisky before fleeing back to the city. The poor boy can't stand rock and roll...

Naughty Naughty: Hot Tuna's roadies, who stole all the backstage passes for their group's Palladium concert from the briefcase of promoter Sepp Donahower; Robert Hilburn, who printed something Elton said about Dick James and got the Times slapped with a lawsuit from Mr. James' solicitors; whoever the spiteful person is who has banned Wally, former Cockette and now with the fabulous Angels of Light, from the Palace...What's this about one or some of Those Tap Dancing Fools (who, by the way, caused quite an uproar in the lobby of the Beverly Hills Hotel when they arrived en masse and en drag to visit Andy W. — and that's not Williams) being booked into Max's Kansas City? He/they didn't make it, of course. The dears can't make it across the street...

Have you been wondering how those cosmic cuties the Rowan Bros. manage to look so healthy? Well, you would too if you lived in Stinson Beach on the same block with Dr. Hippocrates. The good Dr. Hip, looking pretty robust himself, was spotted at the Troubadour catching his Neighbors' L.A. debut...There's murmuring in certain quarters about a Stones TV special, half of it to be

(Continued on Page 30)

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and KLZ-FM Stereo

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in concert

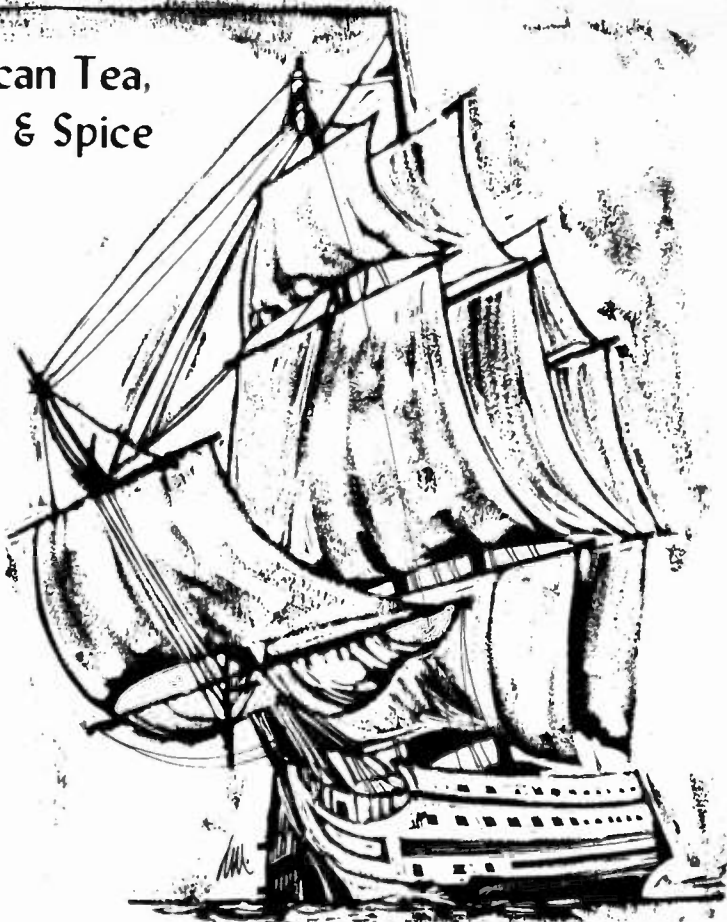


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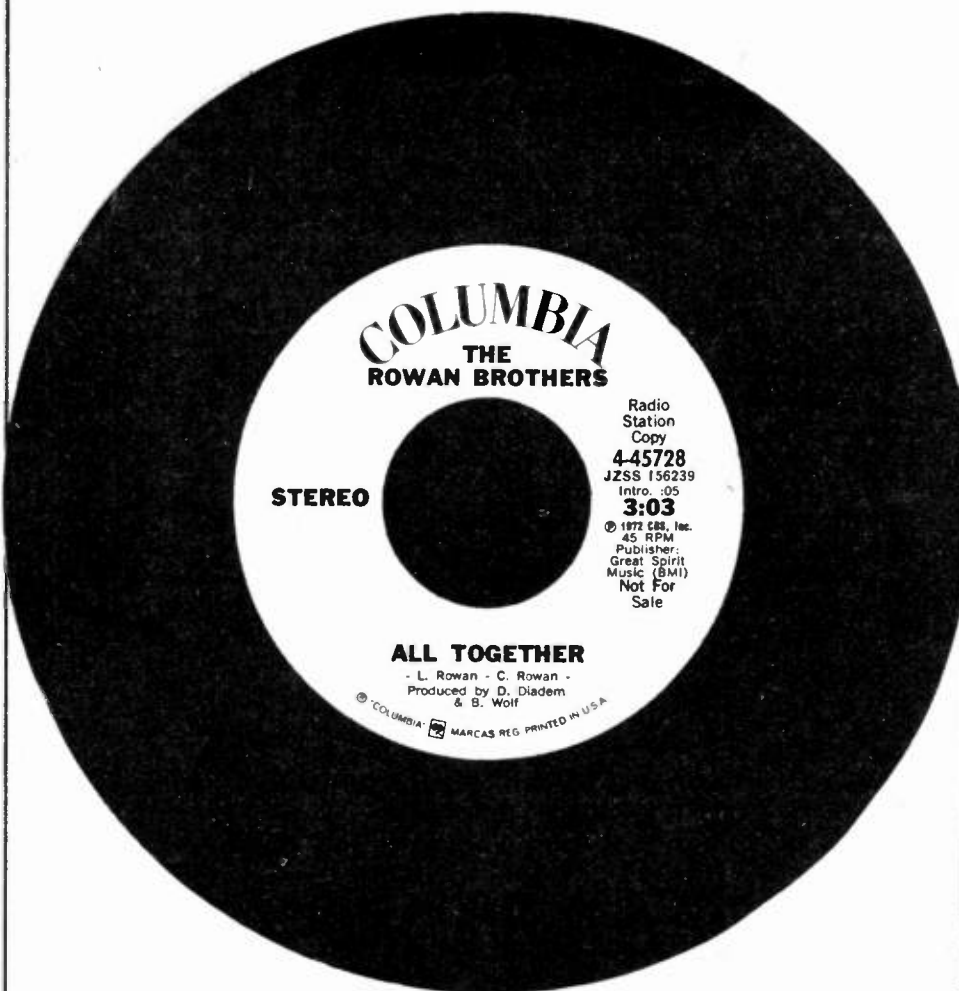
The Region's Leading Buick/Opel Dealer

DEANE BUICK 1080 SOUTH COLORADO BLVD.

ALL TOGETHER
(L. Rowan/C. Rowan)
THE ROWAN BROTHERS
Produced by D. Diadem & B. Wolf
Columbia 45728 Time 3:03
Flip — No Information Available

The other day I got my "1972 Fusion Poll" form in the mail. It was xeroxed. It wanted to know what my all time favorite recordings of the year were. What made it the toughest was the fact my favorites of 1972 haven't been released on plastic yet. Like the Asleep At The Wheel LP which was just completed down in Nashville with good ole Joe Kerr, Ray Benson, and Ed Ward. And then there is SPLIT ENDS by the Move which is a compilation of tracks from MESSAGE FROM THE COUNTRY and the group's last five singles (that was thrown together by Ben Edmonds and Rich Cromelin). And then there is some other real good unreleased stuff too, and it qualifies for the 1972 poll since it was cut this year...sure, there's the greatest rocker and letter writer in the world, Andy Zwering's ("snow beach") new album(s)...He had his first on Buddah, so did Risa Potters...She's got her second on Buddah, Andy doesn't...

About the Fusion Poll, my favorite LPs, well, it's mighty hard to choose between the WORLD OF STEVE AND EYDIE and HARD ATTACK by Dust, but there comes a time when we all must be put to screws (R. Meltzer knows 'bout that), and I was faced with a choice



All Together...and don't understand it's greatness.

Now this year has produced some pretty scalding singles on a lotta levels, but never has space music come to terms with WABC on the basis which *All Together* by the Rowan Brothers does. Anything you might have heard about this group from their corporate father, Columbia, is, based on this single alone, an understatement.

Ya know, there have been recordings and then there have been recordings...like as good *Midnight To Six Man* by The Pretty Things, *Race With The Devil* by Gun and *Hello World* by the Tremeloes were, they all suffered from one basic weakness; they didn't come off from tape to plastic, this does. Why, I didn't know the shitty turntable and cart I got had it in 'em to sound like this...No, no, it's just too, too fine...

I don't know, maybe next year I'll find something much better, but if you're in the market for a new underdog group to root for, you need stray no further than the Rowan Brothers. Again, I don't know about the 33-1/3 from which this single comes, but it demands further investigation (based on the brilliance of *All Together*). And if the Rowans cut any more tunes like *All Together*, it'll be worth the half-million smackers good ol' Clive Davis is said to have dumped on them.

And if you don't believe this is the greatest single, plain and simple, you've missed the boat. You are the very same people who are now telling your chums about The Kinks and Grand Funk. Ya

45 REVOLUTIONS PER MINUTE

by Martin Cerf

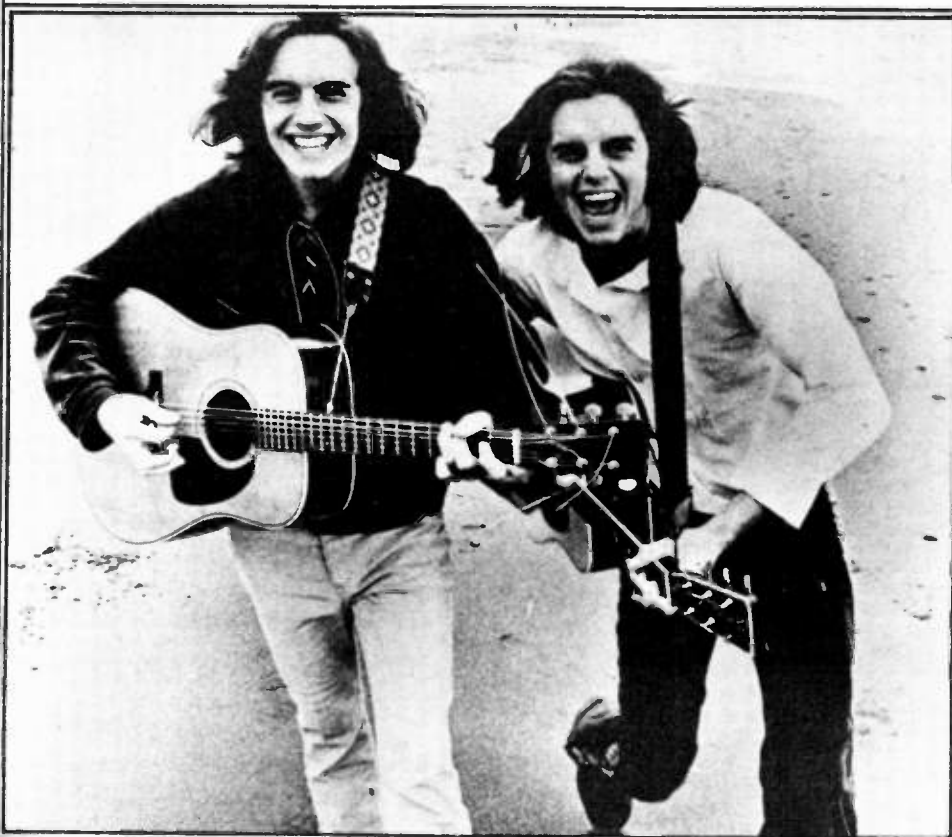
The Rowan Brothers

between George Jones and Gary Glitter...(Don Arden, manager of the Move was telling me that Gary is older than Liberace. He says he's such a good rocker 'cause he was around the stage door when Cochran, Vincent, and Vee were. He says he wears a wig. He says he's too old to get it up. He says he's the greatest. And I know why. Anyone who waits till he sees his chicks rock and roll before he comes on, well, he's got his smarts together.)

Well, it was a tie, Dust were just ahead of George. *We Can Make It* by George Jones is better than *The Race Is On* and *Picture Of Me Without You*. But don't take my word for it...Fusion knows...Remember last year when they voted the Kinks' LP the best LP of the year...They got billboards, trade ads, progressive ads, and a great campaign out of the good old boys at RCA for that vote. (We suspect Fusion's poll is as democratic as the infamous Phonograph's best, worst, and ho-hum listings.) Which brings us to the Rowan Brothers...

When I saw that billboard on the Strip for these Southern feds with the heading "Could be the best thing since the Beatles" — Jerry Garcia, I knew the Rowan's LP was to be avoided at all costs...So, when Columbia sent it to me in the same package as those other gems from Loggins & Messina, West, Bruce & Laing, well, it sat in the pile which sits. And then one day I discovered I was robbed and those hippies took about 500 LPs, and my new color Sony TV (middle class) and the TV stand. And you'll never guess which stack of LPs they nabbed...you guessed it, the one with the Rowans, Cher, Vigrass and Osborne, Glass Harp and Ratchell...so, it wasn't all that bad a rip-off (I got some 100 dollar insurance now).

And then Columbia gave me a second chance (this company has the absolute best singles going, even better than Bell and Atlantic, what with Philadelphia International, Epic and Mums...I'm knocked out). I got this package with the Loudon Wainwright single *Dead Skunk*, *Song Seller* (re-service by the Raiders)



and, *All Together* by the Rowans. I dropped my very tired and broken Thorens a-top the pressing (all vinyl, injection molded)...WHITE LIGHT, WHITE LIGHT, SAI BABA, OATMEAL...Sounds like Hawkwind meets Lobo...Screams commercial space-rock and the first of its kind.

Every single cheap trick you ever heard is pulled by the Rowan Brothers, and do they have their shit down, this is so good, why, I don't even want to hear the LP. It would have to be a disappointment. These cats got phasing better than *Sky Pilot* by Burdon dumb lyrics, lamer even than *Midnight Man* by The James Gang...like getta load-a this Dave, "The universe is nothing but a

fantasy, of light's elusion throughout eternity beginning from the wind and womb of space of consciousness evolving through the human race" — Absolutely the best garble, the closest thing to *Stumbling Over Melted Moonwax* by Amon Duul yet.

This single is too good to be a hit, and that's not being snotty-nosed and bratty. It's one of those records like *Substitute* by the Who, *Do Ya* by the Move, and *66-54-3-2-1* by the Troggs. You know it's doomed from the beginning. Like I've played this single for at least seven, all have cut themselves on the spot. They're paralyzed...when I quack to them it's the Rowan Brothers, they don't believe it. Most heard the LP but completely missed

gotta anticipate the trend friend, not follow it...R. Meltzer knows that (just read all 'bout it in the great new issue of *Fusion* which has R.'s whole life story in it)...R. Meltzer knows what the Rowans are trying to tell us, do you, do ya??) (100 points).

Postscript — I just decided *All Together* is better than *Yellow River* by Christie, *I Didn't Wanna Love You (Till I Saw You Rock and Roll)* by Gary Glitter, and *I Wanna Be With You* by the Raspberries.

NATURAL MAN
(Vanda-Young)
MARCUS HOOK ROLL BAND
Produced by Wally Allan
Regal Zonophone RZ 3061
Time (very long)
Flip — Boogalooing Is For Wooing

I'm not really concerned that this record hasn't been released in the United States any more. Well, mebbe juz a little. You see, I'm in an interesting position. A lucky one for which I'm grateful. If I come across a great single, or group, I get to call it to the attention of this here record company called United Artists who presumably will check it out. There's a couple others around who hold a similar relationship. Like Ralph Gleason at Fantasy, Don Heckman at RCA, Ed Ward (with all good companies) and others. And why not use our good sense? Rockridics like Ed Ward know what they're talking about...He's documented the subject matter for so long, obviously he's able to analyze the demographics of a specific recording and judge its worth against the competition. (Ward's tastes have brought Asleep At The Wheel, Mott The Hoople and Commander Cody to the surface. And John Mendelsohn was tellin' us consistently about the Kinks, David Bowie, the Move and Christopher Milk so long ago I almost forget I'm teenage.) Which brings me to the matter at hand, the Marcus Hook Roll Band.

Where did I first hear *Natural Man*? Over the phone, from this guy, Ron Eyre, who works out of UA in New York City. He wanted to know what I thought...He's always playin' stuff on the phone and sending tapes and what not...But most of

(Continued on page 28)

STEVE MILLER BAND



Anthology

**The Best of the
Steve Miller Band
1968-1972**

THE MUSICIANS:

JAMES CURLEY COOK
TIM DAVIS
NICKY HOPKINS
GERALD JOHNSON
PAUL McCARTNEY
GARY MALABAR
CHARLIE McCOY
LEE MICHAELS
STEVE MILLER
BOZ SCAGGS
BEN SIDRAN
BUDDY SPICHER
RICHARD THOMPSON
LONNIE TURNER
BOB WINKELMAN

A SPECIALLY PRICED
TWO-RECORD SET,
COMPLETE WITH EIGHT-PAGE
BOOKLET.



Capitol

MEET ROBERT VELLINE

you've got a lot in common

Robert Thomas Velline is twenty-nine years old and, like you, he cares. Cares deeply about the problems facing us all in 1972, the quality of life and the importance of being real. And this concern shows on every track of his first album for United Artists, *Nothin' Like a Sunny Day*.

Backed by some of the finest musicians in Hollywood, Velline lays it all out in beautifully evocative tunes like "My God and I," "Every Opportunity," and "Going Nowhere." He has been compared with Fred Neil, the Band, Van Morrison, Todd Rundgren and Carole King. One reviewer said, "Going Nowhere" has the immediate and inviting likeability of Rod Stewart's 'Maggie May.'"

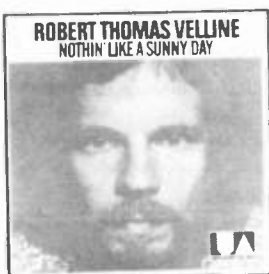
Respected critics like Mark Shipper are saying that he is "...even more of what Cat Stevens and James Taylor already are ... makes me feel like a kid again!"

There are many things we could tell you about this record—the tasteful production, the warm humanity with which Robert Velline sings his songs—but perhaps a line from "It's All the Same" will explain this extraordinary artist better than we could:

"Sing a song about love,
sing a song about a sunny day

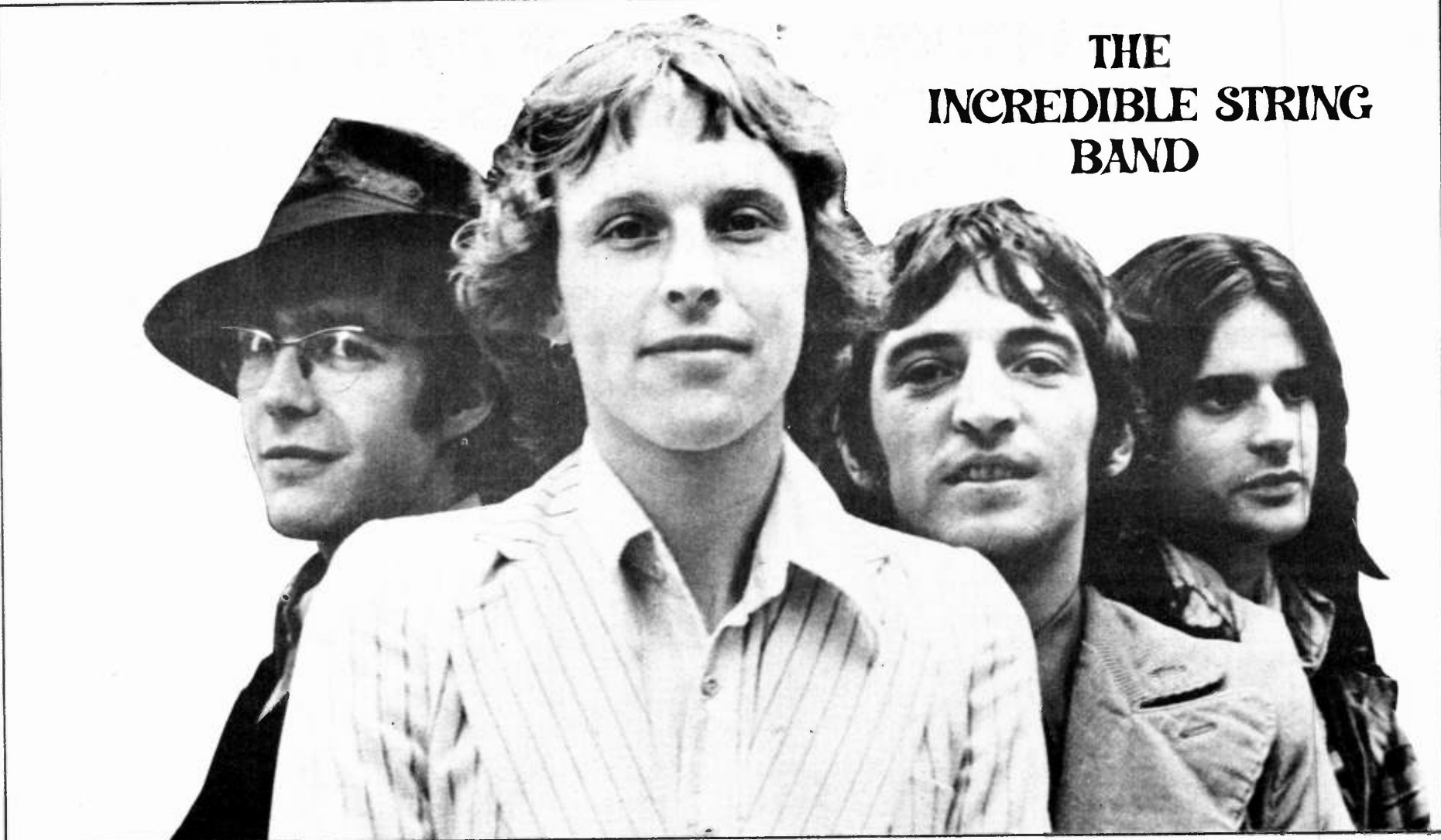
Paint a picture of freedom,
and someday it'll be that way."

Robert Thomas Velline.
It's like meeting an old friend for the first time.



Robert Thomas Velline
Nothin' Like A Sunny Day

THE INCREDIBLE STRING BAND



by Jim Bickhart & David Lees

Collectors of Donovanoid ethera during the era of Tyrannosaurus Rex were also probably nodding their heads to the Incredible String Band. When Bolan bopped and boogied from the evanescent to the electric, the String Band seemed intent on remaining close to the karmas of all. Their gift was a talent for music with both depth and range within an otherwise limited genre, and their progress was organic, not commercial. So fans could listen on, safe in the assumption that the ISB were likely to remain "far out" and "heavy" in a manner quite different from that in which Led Zeppelin were similarly described. The Incredible String Band grew from a Scottish-Gypsy banjo and fiddle duet featuring Robin Williamson and Clive Palmer. (Palmer, a founding member of the ISB, stayed with the group only through one album but has resurfaced recently on the British folk circuit.) Seeking to expand their repertoire, they added their friend, Mike Heron on guitar. Odd hybridized original songs began emerging from the trio and

famed folkie record producer Joy Byrd captured the Sound on wax for Elektra Records, who in those days lived for the esoteric much more than they do today. The time of all this being about 1966, one can easily imagine what kind of following the band developed; eccentrics and heads. Clive was involved in the operation of the Incredible

Folk Club in Scotland, and it was establishments like this in which the trio first gained their reputation. They apparently drew their name from that particular source as well. The nature of the Incredible String Band's following served to define their early mythology. That they termed themselves a String Band indicates their own approximate intentions.

Beyond that, it was kind of nebulous. Clive departed the band to run his club and Robin and Mike continued writing songs which ranged from image-conscious descriptions of personal experience to other-worldly allegory barely

decipherable to this day. They were a ready-made for the emerging drug culture, as subsequent career events proved. For awhile, their music showed the relationship and leaned heavily on the visual imagery. American FM rock radio greeted them heartily and the developing rock and underground press found them good copy. They toured the U.S. rather randomly. "We didn't seem too intent on accomplishing anything in the accepted sense," recalls Robin Williamson. "For us a tour would be several gigs spread over a few months, with long periods of time spent sitting up in the woods or exploring the country in between. For instance, we would play in New York and then scoot up to a cabin in Vermont for six weeks." During this period, they saw a lot of America, released several of their best-remembered records (including their Big Chart Item in England,

THE HANGMAN'S BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER), annexed their lady-friends, Rose Simpson and Licorice McKechnie, to the band and developed an interest in Scientology. With the help of their record company, tours became slightly more organized and oriented toward promoting their album releases. They even managed to be in the right place at the right time to play the 1969 Big Sur Folk Festival. Still, commercial growth stumbled along at a slow pace.

"Concerts by the Incredible String Band in those days were much less professional than they've become," says Robin, "for several reasons. To use all of our instruments on stage involved dragging this great load of a trunk full of them around from city to city. Also, there were gaps between songs on stage while we tried to match up these different manners of tuning a variety of things so as to be able to play. It all contributed to our reputation as an exotic, eccentric group." The ISB's effort to get their various points across led to what in retrospect seems like a rather momentous project in the context of a small time, big time folk group,

the surreal theatrical presentation, *U*. To create and perform the show, the String Band expanded their coterie more than two-fold. They created a communal living situation in the countryside of Scotland and brought friends out to help with the details. Among them were the Stone Monkey Dance Troupe, featuring Malcolm Lemaistre, now an ISB member, and Janet Shankman, an American artist who is now Robin's wife. "Stone Monkey grew out of the *Exploding Galaxy*," explains the multi-talented Malcolm, "a very creative artistic conglomerate in England from the days of flower-power. A couple of us had ideas we couldn't carry out in that group, so we split off and went to New York. There we ran into the ISB, down on one of their sojourns down from Vermont. They spent a lot of time telling us of all the forest paths they'd found." *U*, now commemorated only on Elektra 2-Lp set by the same name, was pieced together in early 1970 by committee, with a director. It had originally been commissioned for

performance in New York, but ended up being performed in several American cities to skeptical reviews. "It suffered from lack of organization," says Robin. Malcolm agrees. "If we try something like that again, which is quite possible, a director of some sort will be necessary. The experience taught us a lot about that particular problem. It's been a prime concern of ours the last couple of years: organization." "U had no kind of coordination," adds Mike Heron. "It was a flow, very like our music." *U* served as kind of a natural turning point for the band. The need to use extra people and additional techniques to accomplish a goal seemed to have a definite effect on them, though it didn't severely alter their music right away. Solo albums for the two remaining founder members were planned and later executed. A film soundtrack was written and recorded (released on a UK-only Lp, BE GLAD FOR THE SONG HAS NO END). The group changed labels in England

to encourage product sales. Rose left the group and was replaced by Malcolm, who brought with him his pantomime, songwriting and dancing skills. The group took over production of their own records when Joy Boyd retired. And they surrounded themselves with efficient, concerned management. The result of these moves was encouraging. While it had a predictable and helpful effect on the band's business and functional life, it intensified rather than detoured their artistic approach. "We've become more concerned with successful communication," explains the outspoken Williamson, now twenty-nine years of age. "We used to use a lot of exotic instruments on our records in an effort to make the music fit the songs; to color the recordings properly. Certainly we had an interest in all those instruments from different parts of the world, but it wasn't a matter of pride. We've since learned that a guitar put through two microphones and an amplification system can be made to color a song quite similarly to whatever rare instrument we would have used before. Thus, it's become normalized somewhat." The most recent, and obviously transitional String Band LP's, *LIQUID ACROBAT AS REGARDS THE AIR* and *EARTHSPAN*, have mirrored the new attitude. And even more significantly, they've vented the new interest in overt communication through more accessible songs; narratives instead of fantasy parables, human participants instead of beasts. They've now also changed labels Stateside, from the ever less esoteric, yet still modest Elektra to the high-pressure Reprise. The ISB acknowledged their waning status as a family affair (two musicians, their old ladies and a folksy record label) by switching to a company where business Takes Care of Business. *LIQUID ACROBAT*, their last for Elektra, marked the major step taken toward simplified sophistication. There's some rock and roll, the first for the band as a whole (Mike Heron, a closet-rocker apparently from way back,

(Continued on Page 29)



AN EMOTIONAL ACCOUNT OF THE MOST IMPORTANT MUSICAL EVENT IN THE HISTORY OF NASHVILLE BY CHET FLIPPO

WILL THE CIRCLE BE UNBROKEN



These lethargic days, when the term country-rock has become almost a catchword for rock muzak or pallid imitations of the original, it's highly unlikely that many of the countrified rockers would even recognize their predecessors, let alone admit their debt to the old horses of C&W. Even more unthinkable is the notion of actually sitting down with the oldsters and pickin' a little to see what would happen when the third generation encountered the first two. Yet that very thing happened in the summer of 1971 when one of the best of the original country-flavored young groups journeyed eastward to Nashville for one of the most remarkable recording sessions ever. The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, which has been practicing its own brand of pop-country eclecticism since 1966 (yielding some good music as well as such notable NGDB graduates as Chris Darrow and Jackson Browne), was the group with the audacity to ask the old-timers to meet on their own turf, in a Nashville studio. Sessions in Music City USA are a world unto themselves. They're a meeting place for one of the world's most exclusive clubs — a loosely-knit fraternity with no written bylaws but with tough unspoken rules. If you can handle your instrument like it's part of you and you don't need to rehearse a song more than once and can recognize a tune from the first couple of bars and don't make a show of yourself, why then you might be considered for admission. It was doubly tough for the Nitty Gritties: they were invading Nashville not to ask help for a faltering career (as is so often the case when a rocker-popper-folker calls on the Nashville cats) but to jam with half a dozen authentic giants of country music. It had never been done before but NGDB producer Bill McEuen was brash enough to think his group could get away with it. To a large measure they succeeded.

McEuen, with the considerable aid and influence of banjo pioneer Earl Scruggs, managed to persuade Roy Acuff, Maybelle Carter, Doc Watson, Merle Travis and Jimmy Martin to get together in the studio with Scruggs and the Nitty Gritties, along with stellar sidemen Vassar Clements, Norman Blake, Beecher Kirby, and the late Junior Huskey. I don't know if those names mean anything to you, but an analagous situation would be for the Flamin' Groovies to cut with Roy Brown, the Orioles, Elvis, Hank Ballard, Bill Haley, and LaVern Baker. If those names don't mean anything to you, then skip it. Anyhow, it was an unheard-of thing. Acuff, for instance, hadn't recorded in years. He didn't need to. He was the undisputed King of Country Music, a mainstay of the Grand Ole Opry since 1938, and his old recordings and his Acuff-Rose publishing house had made him a rich man. He is also a conservative man and it took some talking to get him into the same studio with a shaggy young band. Another performer of Acuff's historic stature, Bill Monroe, reportedly declined the session altogether.

—Please turn to next page

WILL THE CIRCLE BE UNBROKEN



But then he wasn't essential for these recordings, which amounted to a veritable history of American country music. Acuff provided the sound of the mountain swing band of the 1930's and he brought along his sidekick of the past 34 years, dobro champion "Bashful Brother Oswald" Kirby. For the original high, lonesome bluegrass sound, there was Jimmy Martin, who was Monroe's lead singer and guitarist in 1949. Another ex-Monroe protege, of course, is Scruggs, whose three-finger banjo style has had a great deal to do with spreading bluegrass from coast to coast. Monroe was most influential in developing bluegrass, but it took Scruggs to popularize it.

Then there was Mother Maybelle Carter, whose influence on the past two generations of folk musicians has been immeasurable. Everyone from Woody

Guthrie to Joan Baez has obviously been well acquainted with her expressive flat-picking.

Merle Travis, who sadly is no longer recording, is one of the monster guitarists in C&W history as well as a gifted writer and singer, although you seldom hear about him. His coal mining songs (such as *Sixteen Tons*) were the most genuinely representative of that genre but his

influence didn't stop there. Roger McGuinn, for example, didn't bother to give Travis credit when he recorded his *I Am A Pilgrim*. Chet Atkins, on the other hand, freely admits that he started out by copying Travis' style and he named a daughter after the Kentucky picker. The only other comparable living guitarist, Doc Watson, named a son after Merle. The record of Travis' and Watson's first

meeting is one of the valuable bits of dialogue included in the final recorded package.

So those are the credentials for the principals involved although it's regrettable that any of them need to be formally introduced to you. As with so many innovators, their public recognition has not kept pace with their achievements. Maybelle is now best known as Johnny Cash's mother-in-law, Acuff is a museum piece trotted out for the tourists at Opryland, Merle Travis is forgotten and out of work, Jimmy Martin has been reduced to peddling his own albums from a card table at minor bluegrass festivals, and Doc Watson keeps putting out brilliant albums for companies who don't seem interested. Only Scruggs, as leader of a youth-oriented progressive-country group, is enjoying any kind of popular

NASHVILLE HISTORY

success.

But they all came together for several days in Nashville because a long-haired producer from Aspen asked them to. No one in Nashville had ever thought of such a session, because they were all too busy trying to find a new *Harper Valley PTA* or *Happiest Girl In The Whole USA*. So it was done and this handful of almost-forgotten trailblazers produced a work that will live for years as a compendium of some of the best moments of the past four decades of American music. *WILL THE CIRCLE BE UNBROKEN* naturally won't sell as well as a certain other three-record set (also in a white jacket) that was released the same day, but then there's no accounting for popular taste. Just think how poorly it would sell if the NGDB name weren't on it. You won't believe this, but the other day I was in a record shop where Maybelle's *Wildwood Flower* was being played and a young shopper who was browsing in the country-rock section actually observed aloud that "hey that's some chick tryin' to copy Joan Baez." Two bystanders had to be physically restrained from strangling said shopper (against my will I might add). Really though, there's no point in abusing the ignorant. You can't expect them to know. The only thing that'll help is albums like *Circle* that present an important section of American music to another segment of the audience. It is wishful thinking to expect that a good country album will be listened to by anyone who isn't already convinced.

The *Circle* sessions raised many eyebrows in Nashville, a town that's become blasé to supersessions. The country music hierarchy is mostly conservative and self-adulatory and is really a closed circle and it came as a surprise to many that Acuff and the others would allow themselves "to be used by a buncha hippies from California" that was actually the phrase bandied about town. The country chamber of commerce doesn't mind if a Baez or Ronstadt or Cohen or even Dylan comes to town for a musical shot in the arm but the *Circle* business was at once reactionary and revolutionary. Puzzling. Some hippies that wanted to cut in Nashville but they wanted all those fossils (another term applied to the session by some Nashvillians); they didn't want McCoy or Robbins or Buttrey or Putnam or the other usual first-aid technicians.

The sessions were a well-kept secret until the last minute and no outsiders were allowed in. When I got to Nashville all I knew was that the Nitty Gritties were cutting. When I pulled up outside Woodland Studios and spied Scruggs and Acuff strolling inside, I began to suspect that something was indeed up. Then when I made it into Studio B and heard Doc Watson's flawless picking I realized the NGDB had pulled an enormous coup. Bill McEuen had a triumphant smile that said it all. They had already finished one day of taping and things were going so smoothly that songs seldom needed two takes. So I just sat in the control room for three days and witnessed some extraordinary recordings. My previous studio experience was limited to rock sessions, and the contrast was staggering. I had cut down on my intake of such sessions after growing tired of hearing take after ragged take, with giant holes left for overdubbing and frazzled nerves and doping contests and shouting matches between stars and producers. But *Circle* was literally like cutting in someone's living room. Scruggs would wander in, pick up his banjo, hit a note and then be halfway through a finished take before you realized he was recording. The same held for the others: they were so thoroughly professional it was breathtaking. Here's Doc Watson introducing *Down Yonder*: "This was recorded a long time ago by Gid Tanner and His Skillet Lickers. How does it go, Vassar?" Fiddler Vassar Clements responded by sawing his way into the song and everyone followed his lead. One take.



In Nashville with the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band. Top to bottom: the late Junior Huskey, the 1972 Dirt Band, the 1968 Dirt Band, and Earl Scruggs with Doc Watson.

The final product is such a rich blend of traditional country, bluegrass, honky-tonk tunes, mountain songs and progressive C&W that it'll take you several days to ingest it all. The performances and production are well-nigh letter-perfect and the artists sound as good or better than their previous recordings. For instance, Maybelle's spectral vocals are just as effective as they were in 1935 when she originally cut *Keep on the Sunny Side*, *Wildwood Flower*, *I'm Thinking Tonight of My Blue Eyes* and *Will The Circle Be Unbroken*. The latter is a true modern-day time-warp, with Maybelle alternating verses with Martin and Acuff, while they're flawlessly backed up by Watson, Scruggs, Travis, Oswald, Clements, Huskey, the NGDB and a full chorus. That one song is almost worth the price of admission.

Circle may yet make full-fledged stars of Watson and Clements, both of whom are at times almost unbelievable. Watson's speed-picking and authoritative vocal delivery and Clements' astounding fiddling have to be heard to be believed. Clements, the true workhorse of the session, plays on 25 cuts here and never duplicates himself. Listen to his sly, delicate treatment of *Orange Blossom Special* and you'll see why many people consider him the best fiddler in the world.

It was inevitable that the NGDB come out second best in an encounter with the old pros and they may have done themselves a slight disservice with this album. They were invariably eased into the background — well, who could compete with the likes of Scruggs, Watson, et al — and the three cuts on which they sing lead suffer by comparison with the other 34 songs. What do you do when you're in your early twenties and you've been playing a little country music and you suddenly come up against someone who wrote and recorded your favorite songs thirty years ago and can outpick you with one hand? You swallow a bit of pride and sit down by the wall and play some unobtrusive rhythm licks, that's what. That shouldn't take anything away from the Dirt Band. They come as close here as any young band has to a true feeling for C&W.

Still, there was an invisible barrier between the Dirt Band and the old-timers. Acuff, though he was polite and solicitous, was still extremely reserved. There was one exchange between the Dirt Band and Doc Watson that gives some idea of the gap. Watson was giving directions to Clements for *Tennessee Stud*: "Now, your fiddle break comes right after I get back and whup her brother and her paw and sang a chorus."

NGDB member: "Meanwhile, back at the...ranch, ha ha."

Watson, in the flattest, most chilling, dismissing tone imaginable: "Yeh."

Many times, obviously, the same language was not being spoken in Studio B. And why would Acuff address Doc Watson as "Doc Watkins?"

The music, which after all is apolitical, eventually broke down most of the barriers and there was mostly an open attitude of give-and-take. It resulted in what must be regarded as the album of the year (unless you prefer that other three-LP white album and if you do your vote doesn't count). It's a landmark in C&W albums.

Thirty-seven songs that you'll never find advertised on the teevee during the late show because this is the only place that you'll find them any more and this, dear friend, is the gen-you-wine *thang*. Original hits by all the original artists in killer versions. Urban renewal will soon bulldoze these rare artifacts so, neighbor, act now. Send in your money, because this is positively our last offer.

Well, goddamnit, it is a great album and it's doubtful that any session of this magnitude will ever be allowed to happen again. It's more than history, though: it's some damn fine music. Congratulations are in order to all those responsible.

Detroit, founded in 1736 by a turncoat (to both sides) halfbreed Indian named Quazimodo from the Kuitee tribe which dwelled circa 1670-1777 on the shores of Lake Michigan, was one of the most famous colonies of the French-Indian War. It was here that Admiral Hackensack suffered a defeat at the hands of the bear-trappers which was so ignominious it can't even be found in most history books, and it was here that fort Belle Isle was erected against the wilds. That Belle Isle has since become a rather slezoid amusement park frequented by tourists, deviates, sharpies trying to sell the Chrysler Building to tourists, and hippies intent on finding a secluded place to squat and crack their Boone's Farm bottles (marijuana is virtually legal in Michigan now, but you can still go to the slam for boozing if under 18), should not discourage the serious student of the history of this most storied zone of the United States.

Nothing much happened in Detroit for the next hundred years or so except that it was a terminal for the underground railroad (immediately upon arriving from Dixie and detraining from the subways the ex-slaves were put to work in some of the many textile factories proliferating in the area at the time) and Horace Mann once stubbed his toe here in the middle of a whirlwind lecture tour delivering speeches against the evils of using lead pencils instead of pens in schools ("They have erasers," he said, "enabling undiligent students to cheat with just that much more impunity.") But in 1896 Henry Ford invented the automobile, and from then on things began to pop and hop in this part of the country.

Soon the textile industry was all but rendered obsolete, as not only blacks but many whites went to work in the automobile factories springing up in Detroit and environs like so many artichokes. And what was the success of these great centers of industrial enterprise? They choked off art and created a population of slaving zombies, good only for production of precision parts and reproduction of future generations to produce the camshafts and generators of Tomorrow. No art or culture at all was heard from from Detroit for many years, except for the annual Detroit Dog Show and the phenomenonal success of a sculptor named Belvedere who applied his genius along more economically feasible lines and went into the aluminum siding business.

It was not until the late 1950's, in fact, that some rumblings of a new generation began to be heard from Motown. At first it was from the blacks who make up 60-70% of the city. They began to put out records by groups with names like the Supremes, the Temptations, the Contours, etc., which sold records in the many of millions and made them much money. Unfortunately, they did it all within the framework of Capitalist honko society, and it didn't amount to a hill of afterbirths in the end. It was plastic. It was prepackaged. It was not art of the *People!*

But hold on. A change was a-comin'. There was a new generation of young whites around Detroit and Ann Arbor who had finally decided that, much as they dug reproducing, they did not want to *produce* one more hubcap! No! And all their lives they had been hearing metallic, mechanical rhythms in the din from the factories that destroys the hearing of everyone in this city just as the pollution of the water in the Detroit River forces them all, much as they might resist, into drinking alcoholic beverages every day and night.

So the young white kids picked up this sheet-metal din, hearing how close it was to the rattly clankings of rock 'n' roll, and turned it into a *new* brand of rock 'n' roll which was more metallic, heavy, crazed and mechanical than anything heard on the face of the earth in 6,000 years of Western history.

Once these young white kids got their scene going there was no stopping them. Detroit became the Mecca of rock 'n' roll, capturing the attention of the media and drawing musicians from all over the country to its incredibly healthy scene. Such dynamite groups as Big Brother and the Holding Company, the Grateful Dead (though they actually hailed from Ann Arbor), the Honeycombs, Lothar & the Hand People, Tommy the Truck, Totall Crudd, and Agememnon & the Handjobs were spawned from these rich, rippling headwaters. But that was only the first generation. The second and third generations were yet to come.

MITCH RYDER

The second generation's ultimate personification and personality was Mitch Ryder, *nee* Bill Bradshinkel, who set fire to Detroit and America and in fact most of the free world of the early Sixties with his dynamite group the Detroit Wheels.

Mitch Ryder did a lot for Detroit. For one thing he looked like Bianca Jagger before that became fashionable, so everybody thought he was a fag in spite of all the *Hit Parader* articles showing him at home toting his kids around on his head saying things like "*Booker T. is the living end.*"

So he looked weird enough to be ahead of his time even if the only way he was ahead of his time was in the way his singles made a Little Richard rock 'n' roll revival half a decade before that had bloomed. He put Detroit on the map as soon as everybody from El Cajon to Bangor got down to trying to figure out if he was really singing "*Everytime she kiss me she kiss me like afuck*" or what. We had a lot of fun with that.

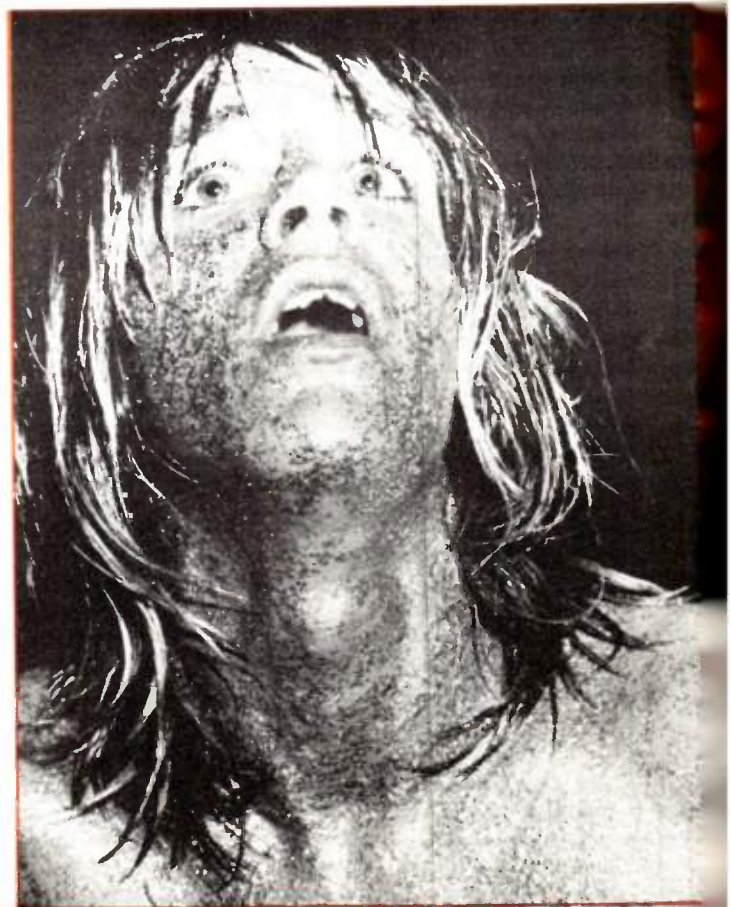
Ryder never was too smart though. If you wanted to get really racist (and there's no way to avoid it if you live in Detroit) you could say that he was the supreme evidence of miscreant culture which results when Polacks take acid, even though he wasn't pure Polack himself — fact, he had some nergroid blood back in there someplace. Just dig that nose. It's pure, organic. He didn't earn that off a fist.

But Mitch blew it anyway. His trademark was his scream, a pure whitehot searing falsetto wail that rocked from Little Richard to the psyched out primal scream to every queen in tubes' range, and he worked it stone down and on out. Mitch screamed till his face turned beet red a month of one nighters, since he never did really learn how to sing, and by '72 he'd blown the whole shot. More operations on that throat than we can count, finally had to relinquish his new band, Detroit, to some warbly third string shag cut Rod Stewart, and I saw Mitch hanging out backstage at Alice Cooper concerts. Well, rock 'n' roll ain't supposed to last forever, right?

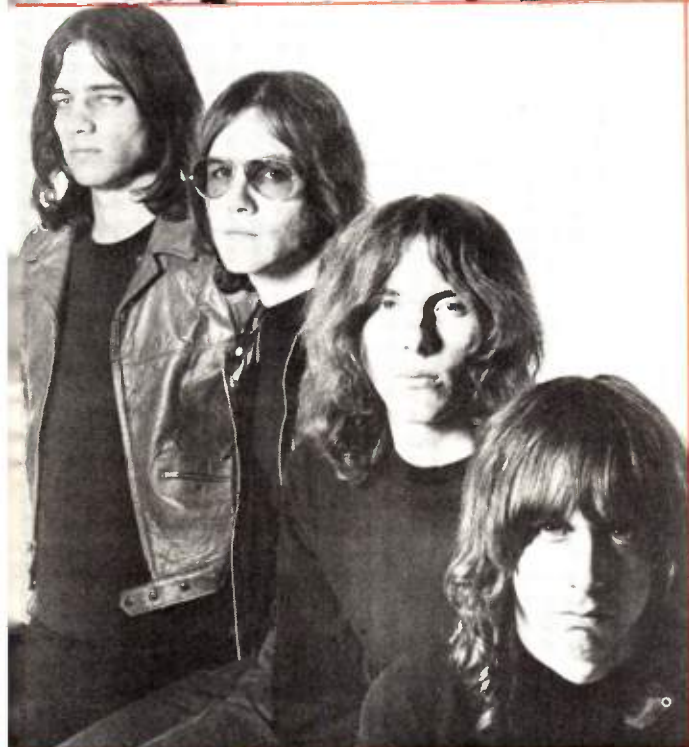
MC5

No it ain't. Detroit knows that, that's why everybody's sitting on their mitts and keeping their traps shut now even though they hit the white light glare late in the Sixties. Long about '68, '69, some of '70 it was, and Detroit was a THREAT. The MC5 weren't so original, but they took the moves and the noise to a whole 'nother level. So good that most folks who seen 'em back when still can't be completely rational about

DETROIT ROCK C



OIT'S ULTURE



Upper left, Iggy Stooze; upper right, the MC5 defy America; middle left, the Amboy dukes; center right, the Stooges; left, Mitch Ryder; above, John Sinclair. Photos by Charles Auringer, Lisa Gottlieb, and Leni Sinclair, courtesy of Creem Magazine.

BY LESTER BANGS

it. Go to the Rainbow Peoples' Party House in Ann Arbor and they'll take you down and show you that 3 minute film of the Five in everybody's Golden Era, all in color and produced and shot by Leni Sinclair, who held down the Hill Street fort while John was in jail those long months. They probably wouldn't speak to the MC5 now, but the flick is a nice reminder of a time when so many teens were ready to *move to get down with it* and blast the continent out of space to neon. Pure punk shit, but one of the best fantasies of the decade. So now the Five are trying to come back from Europe and they're still the best rock 'n' roll band in the world after the Stones. And they may make it yet. But everybody's jaded enough that not much is riding on them or any other chips these days.

The Rainbow Party, *nee* White Panthers and Trans-Love Energies, carries on, digging bomb craters in protest of the war all over Ann Arbor and then planting dope in 'em. Biggest one's right in front of their house at 1520 Hill Street and it's got several dozen fine healthy young marijuana stalks standing straight and proud in it. Groovy. At this writing, possession of grass in Ann Arbor is a five dollar fine. Everybody's happy. Call the Rainbow House at certain times of the day, though, and whichever of the faithful answers the phone may be somewhat less than totally helpful: "uhhh, rrrrrrr, whusssss goin' awn, mayun?" A friend called there the other night and told me that the phone was answered by a stoned out nineteen year old voice: "This is the police. Don't call here." Paranoia daze. But John Sinclair is a nice guy, and still the most accessible counter cult politico in America. I was sitting in his office when somebody mentioned a past proposal of mine to hold a *Put John Back* festival, and he just laughed. What a good egg. Just get Rainbow Folks to show you the Five film, where he's captured for all time in the wings of a '68 concert, rearing back and lunging low blowing his guts out through a sax of which couldn't possibly have had more technical comprehension than sheer moxie and irresistible spirit urge. In other words, he lived all our punk fantasies better than most of us, and should be respected for that. So did the Five. come to think of it. The last time I saw them, Wayne Kramer was talking about "anarchy of the mind." Roll dem bones.

THE STOOGES

The Stooges wuz a horse of a totally different color. I can recall even from my own South Cal remove them frenetic days of late 68 and early 69, when the word was out across the land that the Five was gonna ball your mama and shake your brains right out your left eardrum and destroy Imperial Amerika while they wuz at it. It was a mighty big offer and you either bought the whole soufflé or you sneered and spat from word go. It helped if you lived in the Midwest of course, in fact the closer to the hysteria you were the more sense it all made, and if you wuz somewhat removed you might have a tendency to look on it all as, ah, just *wretched excess*. Jive ass postures. Eric Eneman's cover article in *Rolling Stone* did much to spread the myth and make people suspicious, because Mr. E. portrayed the Five (in his enthusiasm) as even more punky than they in fact were, and it's true that they may have been the punkiest band in history:

"Toke down, mothafucka!"

"The Five are all deeply into William Burroughs..."

"Chicks live with the Five, and besides sewing all their clothes make some of the most *destroy barbecued ribs you ever chomped into...*"

But that's not fair, judging the madness of them days by the dialectics of the 70s. The Five have never been appreciated on the mass level they always deserved, and when the mania failed to fly that far out of Michigan on any mass level, and John Sinclair wound up in the pen on bogus dope charges, and the band themselves hooked up with future Rolling Stonette Jon Landau to try and make themselves as respectable as any Young Rascals, it became clear that a new derangement was in order. The Michigan scene was still strong and crazed enough to support one, and the Stooges were the inevitable result.

Iggy Stooze is one of the alltime geniuses of rock 'n' roll. He has said that he taught his band every note they played on their two Elektra albums. It may be true. Musical instruments sprawled all over the Stooges' Ann Arbor den, if you happened to be hanging out and it was time to jam Iggy would propel you towards the closest available axe, vibes or guitar or bongos, or whatever, and you would *play* no matter who or what or where, and it would work.

The Stooges worked because they had no program but total chaos, they didn't care, and it was time for that. Their two albums are teenage classics:

It's 1969 okay

War Across the USA

Last year I was 21

I didn't have a lot of fun

Now I'm gonna be 22

I say my my and a boo hoo

Now we're gonna be face to face

And I'll lay right down in my favorite place

No fun to be alone

Freaked out for another day

A thousand lights

Look at you

See that calf

Down on 'er back

She got a TV eye on me

I've been hurt

But I don't care

I've been dirt

And I don't care

'Cause I'm learning'...

It was sheer poetry for the interrupted dry grope of growing up in the Sixties. The Five had poetry too, but at their best they were always solidly anthemic, in the tradition:

PLEASE TURN TO THE NEXT PAGE, BROTHER.....

Well I feel pretty good
And I guess that I could
Get crazy now baby

Cause we all got in tune
When the dressing room
Got so hazy now baby
I know how you want it mama
Hot quick and tight
The girls can't stand it
When you're doin' it right
So let me up on the stands
And let me KICK OUT THE JAMS!

or:

The dance from which all dances come
Nipple stiffener.
Come together.

The mother lode, Marrow of the mine, all the way back to New Orleans and Chicago when the first new note jumped out of them old blues. Letting loose, getting loose, so glad to bust that bit at last. The Five were true believers. Still are, that's their strength. But the Stooges had the strength to realize that they lived in a time when belief was worthless, and most of the audience would be more than glad to spew their potentials against the wall. Not to join together in the band, but to blow every juncture to bits.

Only trouble is you can't sustain yourself long enough to build much outa that kind of negative energy, and the Stooges burned it to the drain. They weren't the only band done in by smack, just the most obvious example, and by the summer of '71 the Stooze Story was terminal city. Elektra dropped 'em and they broke up and their instruments were repossessed. Iggy trailed off and spent several months playing golf. Landed in England, eventually got the band back together with former lead fuzz rage axe Ron Asheton playing bass and the old bassist up front on lead. Word from the Isles had them making a strong comeback earlier this year, and by the time you read this they may have hit the States again. The Ig himself has been recording in L.A. of late, produced by David Bowie. There are an awful lot of us out here banking an awful lot on them making it this time. The Five and the Stooges were simply in their equal and separate glories the essence of American adolescence in the Sixties. Five the hot rod strut, Stooges the self-mauling desperation behind all that. It ain't easy. But both may yet prevail. At least both have learned their lessons well.

SRC

Who else? That's where the gloom sets in. The Michigan scene was always more prolific in spirit than actual product, and after the MC5 and the Stooges we get into the *also-rans* and it's pretty sticky territory. SRC plugged away until they turned into Blue Scepter and then back to SRC and who knows what now. They never quite got the rave in hand. Three albums on Capitol, though, if anybody wonders. The Rationals were in many ways the fathers of this scene, recorded one album for Allen Klein way too late in their career, it was a classic but went largely unnoticed because by the time it was released (70) the heat was off the Michigan hype and they seemed to the uninitiated like just another Mutzie. Some personnel changes in the wake of a breakup have given us Guardian Angel, who've recorded singles but no albums as yet, and word out of Ann Arbor if that means anything has 'em strong contenders. Maybe. They play free in the park there every Sunday afternoon.

UP

So do the Up, who became the Trans-Love White Panthers Rainbow Party's noise machine when the Five departed. The Up have played in the park in Ann Arbor every Sunday for years, never getting much better but Serving The People in their own way. They recently fired Frank Bach, lead singer for



five years or so, and it just may be that they're trying to marshall their resources to make it in a big way. Most people hereabouts think they're a joke, but I always liked 'em and hoped some record company would sign 'em so their masterpieces of revolushinerry racket could be preserved forever. They're sheer banal clatter, and fun on that level. When John was in jail they used to rouse the Sunday afternoon crowds with a ditty called *Free John Now*, the highlight of which was a fuzz chord ascending with as many fists as possible and "Free...John...FREE JOHN NOW!!!!" Then "Free...John...FREE! JOHN!...Free...John...SMOKE! DOPE!" Like David Peel with metal mariachis shoring him up. It was cool, balm to the heart, definitely stirring. One '71 afternoon RCA producer Richard Robinson trucked all the way from Manhattan out to A Squared and the Otis Spann Memorial Field (as it's unofficially called now) to hear a band called Pride of Women which was an all female high energy aggregation that was also once one of Detroit's brightest hopes. Unfortunately they'd just changed lead singers so they didn't turn in one of their classic shows that day, but I tried to keep Richard awake by interesting him in the Up anyway. R. Robinson wasn't buying it, though, and went back to New York to produce Lou Reed and scoff a bit more at the decline of the Michigan mania.

Even if they disband tomorrow, though (which is unlikely — the Rainbow Party needs 'em too much), the Up have aural evidence of their particular aspirations preserved in wax forever. On Rainbow Records, natch, which you can order for a buck or so from 1520 Hill Street. First classic single was *Just Like An Aborigine* b/w *Hassan I Sabbah* ("Hassan I Sabbah/Livin' in the Hills..."). Then there's a real collector's item they were giving away free at the John & Yoko Free John Sinclair concert in Ann Arbor last December. On Rainbow Records, the Up doing *Free John Now* b/w Allen Ginsberg and Peter Orlovsky doing one of their usual boring mantras all about John too.

SINCLAIR

Sinclair himself is the granddaddy and spiritual breadman of the whole shebang. In the old beatnik days he had the local bohemian community organized into one of the country's leading literary havens, being himself a poet of no little recognition. Also a respected jazz critic at the time, he was among the first to

recognize the energy potential of rock & roll, and as the scene he'd laid the groundwork for began to come about in the late '60s he brought it all together via the *Ann Arbor Sun*, today one of the oldest surviving underground rags. Lately, however, he and his marijuana militancy have become dated and almost ludicrous relics of a bygone era, like the Jefferson Airplane or something. The Up still does *Free John Now*, except they changed the lyrics to some really gawky construction on the order of *Now John's Free Again, hip hup hooray,* they blew it bad, because if they had any sense they'd realize that their audience is so post-literate that *Free John Now* applies with equal eloquence to the man's post jail status: "*Free John Now! Now John Free! Glad as glue be you and me!*"

To grossly generalize, yesterday might best be summed up in a tape of one of John's speeches that I first heard in Detroit a year ago, though he made it way back in the halcyon days of Kick Out the James and Up Against the Wall: "Everybody's stuck in weirdo jobs, weirdo school, wierdo insitutions. The whole thing sucks. And will be dealt with, uh...immediately." Now the best part of the *Sun* is the "Voice of the People" column, where *Sun* staffers collar random freaks at the Sunday concerts and record the opinions of the People on issues of the day. Prime sample:

Question: What do you think about the Ann Arbor Sun?

Al: "It's not bad. I like the radical articles they have in it. Now and then they drop something in it about some brothers and sisters, and that's the part I dig."

That's the part I dig. Sure, what a culture, what a great beautiful vista of absolute dunceed outness. Nothing beats it anywhere else. And even if the music ain't all it once was or promised to be, the hippie lifestyle can still be lived on its highest, most blissfully unparanoid level in Ann Arbor. If that's what you want.

THE FROST

Some casualties of the Midwest rock 'n' roll scene: The Frost. Dick Wagner is enough guitarist that Alice Cooper have utilized him on their albums when Glenn Buxton's imagination failed. The Frost made three albums for Vanguard during the boom, clangingly spirited, but never quite made it as an idea, a sound or a lucrative proposition. The Third Power

got to do one for Vanguard, slipped into obscurity even faster than usual. They used to live just down the road from the new CREEM offices in Walled Lake. Wilson Mower Pursuit from a proximate neighborhood, legend has it they were the best live Detroit band ever, something happened in between though and they never got caught on wax. Savage Grace did, unfortunately. I wonder if their lead singer is still modeling his Jim Morrison moves in the bathroom mirror. Oh, yeah, Frostitute Wagner is back on RCA with a new band called Ursa Major. Not bad, if you like Black Sabbath's darkest abysses slowed even further into prehistoric murk. And of course there was the Frut, whom many thought the lamest band in rock 'n' roll history what with their utterly *declass* ripoffs of Fifties classics and their dynamite originals like *Take Your Clothes Off and I'll Love you*. The Frut were great, pure balls, and I imagine they're still jumping on it if they haven't all oozed too far into the Zone...

BOB SEGER

Survivors: Bob Seger is a rock 'n' roll genius. Never recorded properly, he was a Fogerty from the Midwest before anybody outside Oakland had heard of Creedence Clearwater. It was just his bad luck to get classed as a Fogerty ripoff in the wake of the great Creedence fad. *Ramblin' Gambler* Man was a sizeable sixties hit, his MONGREL album on Capitol (1970) is a gem worth seeking out:

I seem 'em dumpin' garbage
In my rivers and lakes
I seen 'em send up John Sinclair
You know two joints is all it takes
I been so high
My mind were fried
I had to dodge the farmers on their
midnight ride
And that ain't all
I wasn't born lookin' back
I can't tell white from black
Kesey next to me now darlin'
Straighter than a railroad track
And I ain't even got me a congressman
That I can call

I'm gonna roll and smoke
And boogie and ball.

I thought I heard him scream
Hey man you're leanin' on my dream.

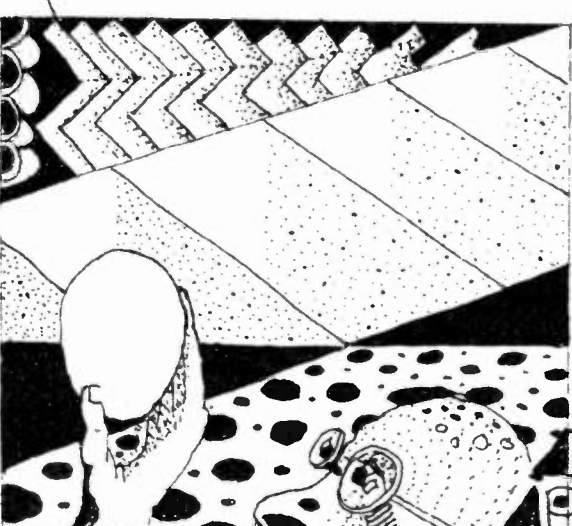
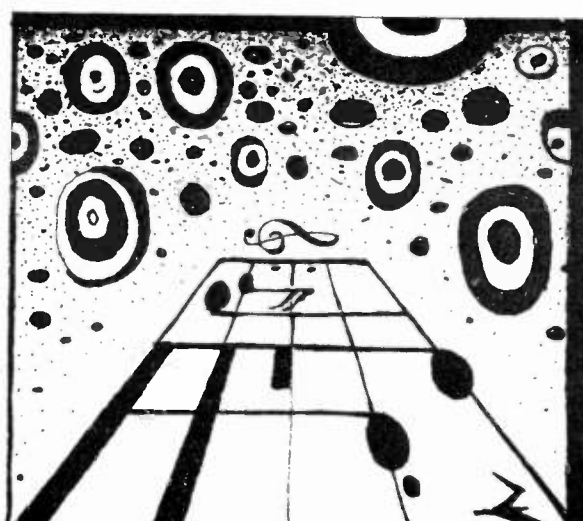
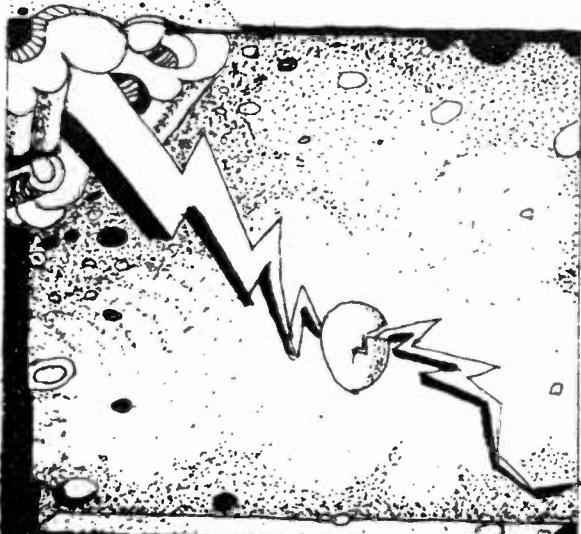
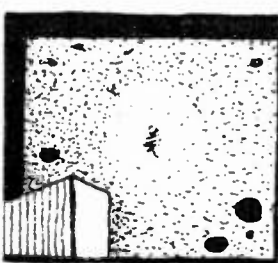
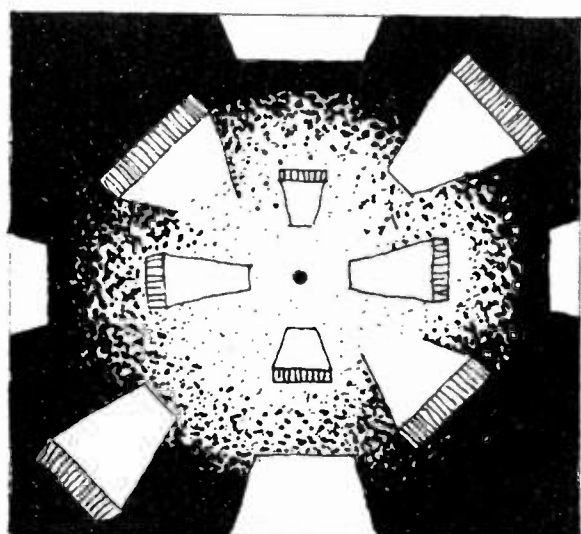
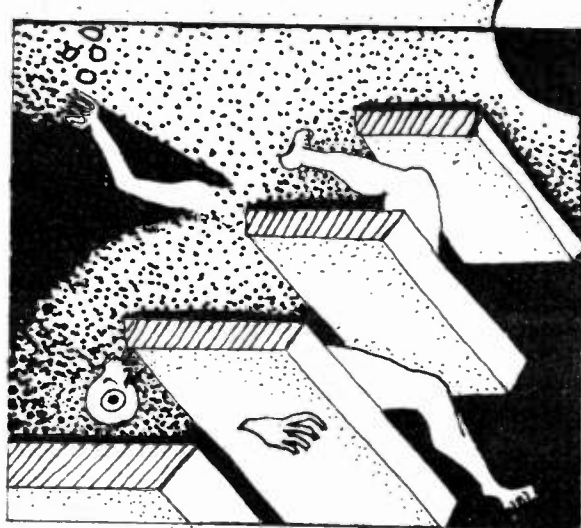
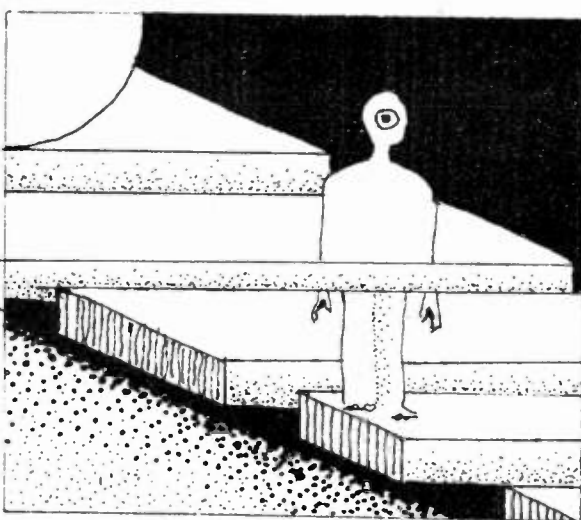
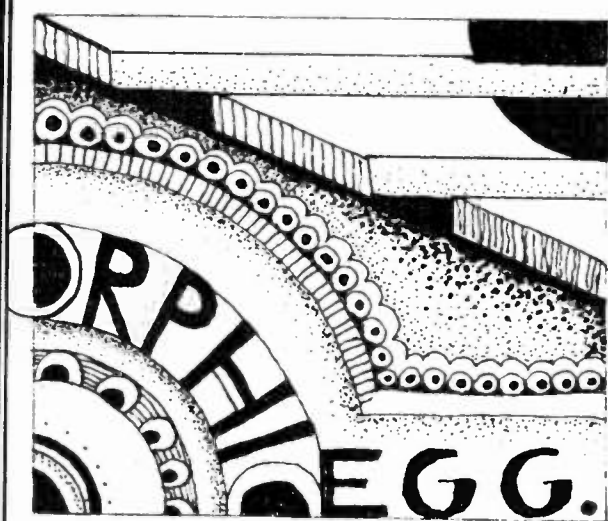
Seger beats Fogerty by a mile because he knows he's still a kid in the thick of it, so he doesn't have to worry about the authenticity of his folk visions. He didn't have to conjure a bayou because he grew up in the bull's eye heart of the frying pan, which is why he's still writing lines like:

You hit the street
You feel 'em startin'
Ya know they hate you
You can feel their eyes a-glarin'
Because you're different
Because you're free
Because you're everything deep down
they wish they could be
They're LOOKIN' BACK
They LOOKIN' BACK
TOO MANY PEOPLE LOOKIN' BACK

**THE AMBOY DUKES
BROWNSVILLE STATION**

The Amboy Dukes have been one of the longest running Midwest bands. I can recall shoplifting their first Mainstream album, complete with extended jam on the Them arrangement of *Baby Please Don't Go*, from an all night supermarket whilst warped on terpin hydrate in 1968, and being disappointed when I played it the next day. But I'm not so picky now, so I'd probably love it. I do enjoy the GREATEST HITS set that Mainstream saw fit to issue and I picked up for a quarter in a West Coast bargain bin, even though I never play it. They also made a couple of albums for Polydor, of which the less said the better. You may think you love metal enough to tolerate any

(Continued on Page 30)



Orphic egg
A Product Of London Records

Bach's Head • Ravel's Head • Mozart's Head • Mahler's Head •
Beethoven's Head • Prokofiev's Head • Stravinsky's Head • The Musical Head •

From the Orphic Egg. (A new concept.) It'll crack your head.



by Todd Everett

Rock and roll was here to stay. We knew it in 1957, and Danny and the Juniors put it into song in 1958. But what we *didn't* know in 1957 was that Ricky Nelson was here to stay.

Those were the days of Elvis Presley, Chuck Berry, Fats Domino and Buddy Holly. Artists, though we seldom if ever thought of them as such.

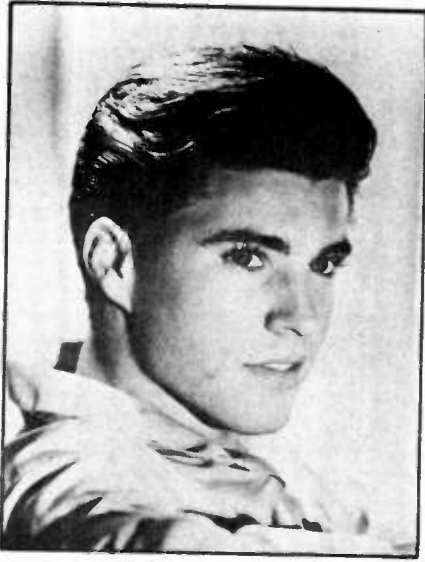
Those were also the days of Skip and Flip, Tom and Jerry, George Hamilton IV and Marty Robbins. Simpy singers, simpy songs. *It Was I, Hey Schoolgirl, A Rose and a Baby Ruth* and *A White Sport Coat and a Pink Carnation*.

And we all knew which category Ricky Nelson fell into.

We felt pretty free to put Ricky into any category we chose. He was a lot closer to us than, say, an Elvis or a Chuck Berry. Why, we practically grew up with Ricky. Playing himself (and how much more honest can you get than that?) Ricky appeared on radio and television every week, right where we could follow his family life with Pop Ozzie and Mom Harriet, brother Dave and friend Wally. We knew that he didn't mess around, boy — a wisecracking kid, just about our age. Whatever our age was, that's the odd part.

So when somebody you grew up with — and the show was on the air for considerably more than ten years — comes out and pretends to be a teen-age idol, he loses a lot of the credence that a greasy phantom like Elvis might bring with him. Ricky Nelson sexy? Hell, we see him at the malt shop every week. How sexy is that?

Such was our fantasy — at least for those among us who chose to think about it. Here, though, is the reality.



RICK NELSON

You're Not A Kid Anymore!

"I'd always liked to sing, but didn't pay a whole lot of attention to it. I was going to school in Hollywood, though, and a lot of my friends were in the business like I was. Some of them were singers. The Four Preps were good friends of mine; they were going to Hollywood High, too. One day they were going to do an assembly at another school. They invited me along for the ride, and I can. They did their show, and then introduced me. Most of the kids had seen me on television, and there was a lot of applause. We were all just fooling around, so I decided to sing a song. The only song we could do like that, on the spur of the moment with no rehearsal, was an Elvis song, 'My Baby Left Me.' It's a simple blues, with easy lyrics and I really liked the record. I sang the song, and there was pandemonium. The kids actually chased me out to the parking lot. It really surprised all of us!"

Not too long later came Ricky's first record. "I told a girl I was dating that I was going to make a record, just to impress her. She was impressed, all right. So I had Dad get some musicians together. The band was led by Barney Kessel, a jazz guitarist. We recorded three songs at National Service Studios, the same place that we filmed the TV show. The songs were 'I'm Walkin', A Teenager's Romance and You're My One and Only Love. The first song was my idea; I was a real fan of Fats. The others weren't my idea."

"Dad shopped around, and we finally sold the three songs to Verve Records. They were released in 1957. One of the episodes of the show was built around my singing. The next day the record was released and the orders started pouring in."

'I'm Walkin' was a solid hit. The flip side, though, A Teenager's Romance, was even more of a hit. Ricky's audience evidently preferred the sentimentality and acne approach rather than Ricky's rocking preference.

There were financial problems. The record company wasn't coming up with all the money Ricky and Ozzie felt that they were entitled to. "We sued them. And then we shopped around for another label. We signed with Imperial, and then Verve sued us, for breach of contract. Dad pointed out that I had signed the contract with Verve when I was a minor, and we eventually won ours. You see, Dad graduated from law school before becoming a bandleader."

The years on Imperial — 7 in all — proved to be Ricky's most productive. Consciously drawing on the Sun Records sound he enjoyed so much, he produced his own sessions. "Of course, that was before the word 'producer' had been invented. Everybody just sort of contributed ideas, and I made the final decisions. Lou Chudd, who ran Imperial, let me do whatever I wanted. It was in the contract."

It was in Chudd's office that Ricky found the nucleus of his band. "Bob Luman had just come up from Louisiana to try to get a record deal. He came over to Imperial, and was turned down. But I like the musicians who were playing with him, and hired the guitarist and bassist, James Burton and Jim Kirkland. My drummer, Ritchie Frost, I found playing in a burlesque house in L.A." Luman, of course, developed into a quite successful country singer; he's still on the charts.

In addition to the band, which was assisted by pianist-arranger Jimmie Haskell, Nelson employed the Jordanaires, best-known as Elvis' vocal backing group. Until, that is, shortly after *Travelin' Man*.

"The song was written by Jerry Fuller. He was recording for Challenge Records at the time, and had had some minor hits. When he wrote the song, he had Sam Cooke in mind. But he wasn't interested, so Jerry brought it to me. On Jerry's demo record, the voices were done by Jerry, Dave Burgess (leader of and guitarist for the Champs) and Glen Campbell. I liked their voices on the record so much that I used the group on mine from then on."

Ricky's Imperial records were recorded in two studios. The first, on Fairfax Boulevard in Hollywood, is now the site of a laundromat. The second was United Recorders Studio B, on Sunset Boulevard. The recording varied from one-track, through all the latest developments — two track, three track and four track. "Three track was a real luxury. When four track came along, none of us knew what we'd do with all that extra space." Ricky sang and played rhythm guitar. Burton played lead, Osborne played bass and drums. Piano, when used, was played by Jimmie Haskell. All, it probably doesn't need mentioning, are currently top studio musicians; Burton is now Elvis' lead guitarist, Joe Osborne, who replaced Kirkland, played with everyone from Simon and Garfunkel (it was Joe on *Bridge Over Troubled Waters*) to Johnny Rivers (all his first records) to the Mamas and the Papas (all of their records) to just about anybody else you can mention. Haskell, beginning with his string arrangement for *Ode to Billy Joe* has had a solid career ever since; he, too, participated in *Bridge* by the way. Fuller is a top producer, Campbell is Campbell and Dave Burgess is reportedly out of the business, living off his investments somewhere in the Midwest. With the exception of Burgess, none of them had been doing much of anything before joining the Nelson team.

Nelson's material was divided into two or three categories. The first, and probably most successful overall, was the greasy kid stuff — *Young Emotions*, *Young World*, *Teen Age Idol*, and so on. But for every such song, Rick (he changed the name when he turned 21; we might as well start paying him the courtesy; by now, he's earned it) drew from the country or r&b catalogs — *My Bucket's Got A Hole In It*, *Have I Told You Lately That I Love You?*, *Milk Cow Blues* and *I'm In Love Again* all reflected the "heavier" side of Nelson's musical tastes.

Ricky's songs came from a number of sources, but he seemed to favor certain writers when it came to choosing new material. Chief among them were the Burnette brothers, Johnny and Dorsey. "They'd wait outside the house for me to come home, and then grab me and play their latest song." The technique worked; the Burnettes wrote by far the largest share of Rick's Imperial Records hits, including *Believe What You Say*, *Just A Little Too Much*, *Waitin' in School*, *It's Late*, *My One Desire* and *A Long Vacation*. Johnny and Dorsey, of course, had their own careers going, too. Both had been members of the Burnette Trio, a group that wrote and recorded (on Coral), the original version of *Train Kept A Rolling*, later immortalized by the Yardbirds. Johnny

recorded for Liberty; in the early sixties he had such hits as *Dreamin'* and *You're Sixteen*. On Era Records, older brother Dorsey's hits included *Tall Oak Tree* and *Hey, Little One*, at about the same time. Johnny later died in a boating accident; Dorsey is still alive, writing (*Magnificent Sanctuary Band*) and recording, now for Capitol.

Another favored Nelson songwriter was Baker Knight. For Rick, his biggest hits were *Lonesome Town* and *Never Be Anyone Else But You*. He also wrote *The Wonder of You*, a hit for Ray Peterson in 1959 and for Elvis a couple of years ago. Knight, whose songs were more country and pop-oriented than the Burnettes' teenage/slanted lyrics, is currently living in L.A., and was last heard from writing songs for the Sugar Bears TV cartoon series (where else are you going to find rock and roll trivia like this?).

Rick's first number 1 single, *Poor Little Fool*, was written by Sharon Sheeley. Eddie Cochran's girlfriend at the time, Sharon was also collaborating with Jackie DeShannon on songs like Brenda Lee's hit, *Dum Dum*. *Poor Little Fool* was originally an album cut; it was released as a single against Rick's wishes. He felt that it would be cheating his audience to release a single that was already available on an album. Rick's next number 1 single, by the way, was *Travelin' Man*, almost three years later. He hasn't had one since; despite a good number of hits (BULLETIN! As this is being written, *Garden Party* has just been certified gold. Congratulations, Rick! And now, back to our story).

By 1963 it was time for some more label shopping. Rick was signed, by Decca, to a 20-year contract (remember: Dad was a lawyer!). The results were interesting.

"Because of that contract, I could experiment, without having to worry about having a hit record every time. I just had to produce a certain amount of material every year. So I had a tremendous amount of freedom."

The freedom was exercised; gradually at first. The first Decca sides, beginning with *You Don't Love Me Anymore* and *I Got A Woman*, didn't vary too much from what he had been doing at Imperial. In fact, they had about the same kind of lukewarm success. Continuing in the same vein, Rick went on to score with *String Along*, (an old Fabian number), *Fools Rush In* and *For You*. The last, which hit the Top Ten nationally, was in 1963. A cooling period followed.

During that time, Rick tried a little bit of everything. The first few Decca albums were, like the singles, conservatively close to what Rick had been doing toward the end on Imperial. His fifth album, though, was pure country — BRIGHT LIGHTS AND COUNTRY MUSIC it was called, and a damn shame that neither it nor its successor, COUNTRY FEVER, are available today. Not too surprising, though; neither created much stir at the time, though the sound was something that Rick had been working up to for some while.

The next period involved production *per se* — orchestras and the like — and experiments in types of material. Stick around; Rick'll say something about that before the article is over. Again, there wasn't much success. Rick's last chart single had been *Mean Old World* in hitting number 96 in 1965.

Rick's next chart single, and it would bounce into the top 40, was the start of the peak of popularity he's just come to. It involved introspection, decision, a new band and a return to an old concept. The billing was Rick Nelson and the Stone Canyon Band. The association began in the middle of 1969 and is still going strong, attesting to the values of both simplicity and "doin' what comes naturally." Can it be termed a "new phase?" Not really; Rick's records have never sounded drastically different from one another. A "new attitude," though? Perhaps.

It seemed that Rick was fed up with acting out the vestiges of what was, despite his real talent, a manufactured image. As a teen idol he was just about forgotten, and the time seemed right to re-establish himself on a more honest level. With his background in hard rock and his strong interest in country music, he fit comfortably into L.A.'s then-active country rock scene.

He and the Stone Canyon Band were, in fact, among the better practitioners of that style — certainly in a league with more widely acclaimed colleagues such as Poco. Rick himself was beginning to return to his own roots, remembering those Sun records that had led him into rock & roll. He took up the guitar, and developed into a pretty good rhythm player. The group's repertoire took on *Honky Tonk Woman* and some other hard numbers, in addition to the usual country and Dylan songs, allowing Rick to express all sides of his musical personality.

It was a good, vital period for him, but either Decca's hesitance to push him or a still-lingering public distaste for any reminder of the pre-psychedelic era kept Rick in obscurity through some of the best work of his career. Not only had he become a country-rocker *par excellence*, but his songs of introspection had proved him an artist of real depth and substance, and a year or so before this stuff came into full vogue to boot.

If anyone had taken the trouble to listen to his RUDY THE FIFTH album, for instance, on which a song called *Life* had such truly thoughtful lyrics as: "Life I can't do without you there's something about you that keeps me goin'/Life I don't wanna stop now I been through so much now because of you/Tell me life what are you here for, tell me life I wanna know more, tell me life what are we here for," we might've been spared the infinitely sappier existential angst of the likes of James Taylor.

But it didn't happen, and any way you look at it Rick had every right to be bitter long before the added insult of his *Garden Party* rejection. He was the classic example of an artist unjustly overdue for recognition. And, as you might imagine, one with plenty to talk about.

United Recorders is, from the outside, a building that could be a warehouse. Long and rectangular, it has few windows worth mentioning — some on the second floor — and an anonymous-looking door. Inside, though, it's one of the more sophisticated studios in Hollywood. A lot of film and commercial recording is done there, so there's considerable space. A good number of records are made there, too, so the equipment is first-rate.

(Continued on Page 29)

PHONOGRAPH RECORD REVIEWS

Mott The Hoople

Columbia Records

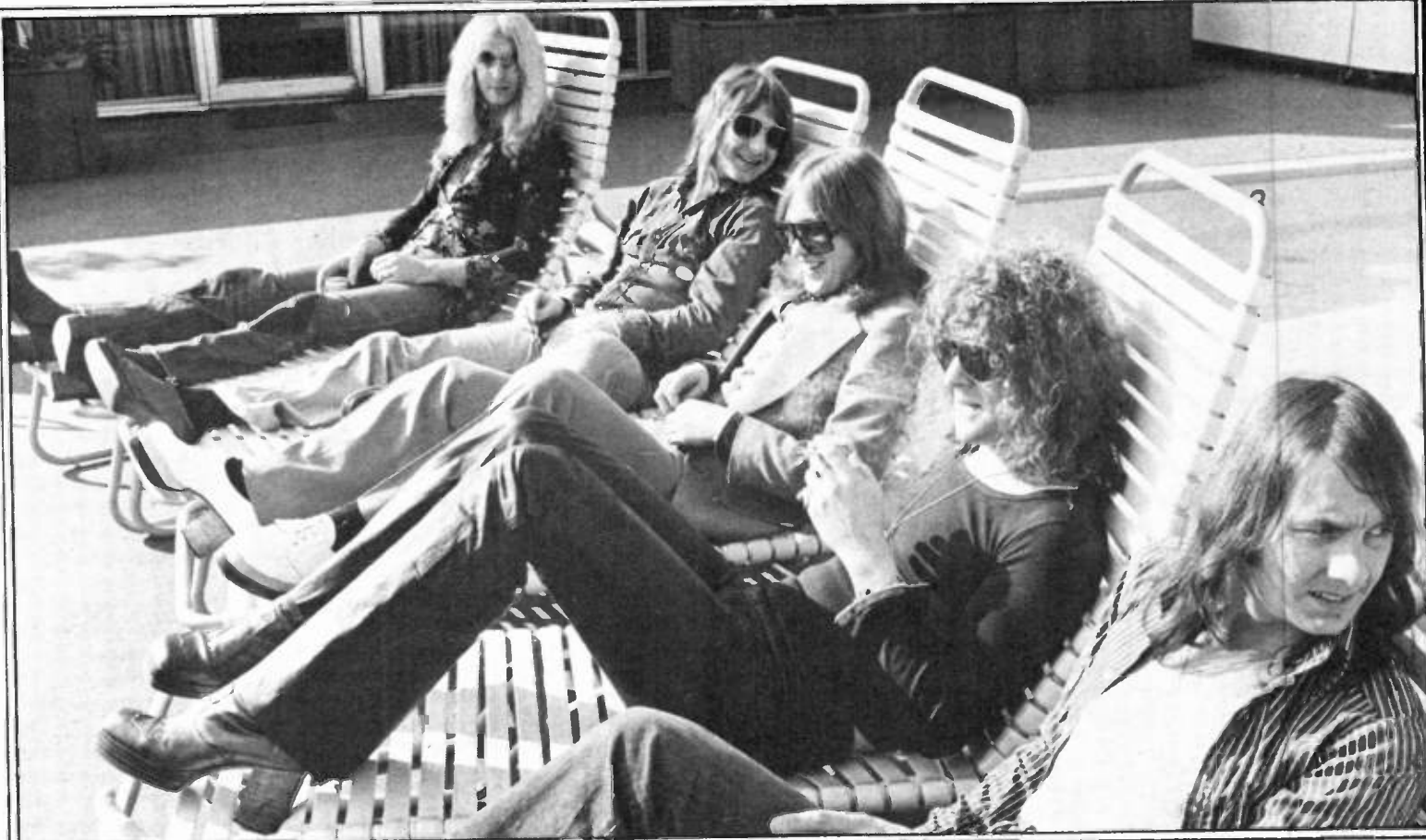
Hey, I got a great name for when Mott The Hoople become real big and famous: HOOPLE HOOPLA! Remember that when you read crazed Hoople/frenzy/riot reports in DISC. Oh, and there's gonna be riots all right. Ask Ian Hunter (lest I forget, Ian is Mott's sort of leader, the one with the Bolan hair and punk shades; he rocks out on vocals, piano, and guitar), or better still, ask David Bowie. I love David as much as anyone, but talk about fingers in the pie! Between promoting himself and perusing Lou Reed, darling David has (a) persuaded a talented but directionless group called Mott The Hoople to stay together; (b) wrote, produced and probably performed on their hit "All The Young Dudes"; (c) produced an LP of the same name, and (d) made Mott record Mr. Reed's "Sweet Jane," played sax, and even brought his buddy Mick Ronson in to arrange strings on one song. Naturally, Mott The Hoople are forever indebted to David Bowie and David Bowie is forever indebted to Lou Reed.

Mott The Hoople had the good sense (or stubbornness) to side-step the obvious pitfall of becoming second sweetening to Dave Boo. After all, isn't this their fifth album? Yeah, 2 or 3 in there weren't so hot, but by now they should know the ropes enough to give us the great one they're surely capable of, and they finally have. Every single song is wondrous — no Thunder-buck Ram or Death May Be Your Santa Claus this time, maybe, but for once you don't have to strain yer bod hopping up 'n down skipping and rejecting — turn it on from the beginning (in this case *Sweet Jane*) and (ahem) let it rock!

As for the record: The aforementioned *Jane* is listenable only — suffering from weak vocals and under-production — but what did you expect? It's on the next song that Mott begin to cook. Entitled *Momma's Little Jewel*, it comes out quintessential Mott: the famous Dylan-esque vocals, funky/metallic rhythms, and punko lyrics; all mashed in to create the perfect Mott rot.

From *Jewel*, the rest of the side (except *Dudes*) is slightly non-descript, but it rocks and it's fun. *Dudes* itself, like any great single, sounds strangely out of place here. It's on the second side that Mott fully realize their awesome potential. It opens up to the sound of someone dialing a phone and you can bet that booger was shocked to hear the raucous hoopla of *One Of The Boys* on the other end! I think the guy hung up in amazement, but as usual, curiosity reigned, and he called back just in time to hear the raveup ending — Ian Hunter shouting *Hitt!Hitt!Hitt!Hitt!* over the awesome din, and assuring us that he is, after all, a prince. Needless to say, the album's best song, and a perfect choice for the next single. (Unfortunately it was the flip side of *All The Young Dudes*.)

And as my good buddy Hot



Scott always says, the thudding throb continues with organist Verden (Fally) Allen's *Soft Ground*. In NIX ON PICKS NO. 2 (not out yet) Kevin Carroll describes this as *Heepily Purp* and so do I, but freakier. Next is guitarist Mick Ralphs' opus, *Ready For Love/After Lights*, one of the strongest numbers in their live show, and it once again proves Mick's songwriting and singing abilities (how 'bout a couple more next time, bub?). And finally, *Sea Diver* is an anthemic, orchestrated track which is nice, if somewhat superfluous.

Look, why don't I just get this out in the open by saying that this is EASILY MOTT THE HOOPLE'S BEST ALBUM, it's GREAT and EVERYBODY SHOULD BUY IT.

—Peter F. Tomlinson

Postscript — Just so I don't make any more enemies than I already have, the production (by, uh, wait a second, lemme find — oh, David Bowie) is excellent.

DON McLEAN United Artists

I once saw Don McLean at the Troubadour, this right before the success of *American Pie*. I remember his lead-in rap to the smash... "I don't know if you've heard this song yet. Well, those that have, join in, that's what all this is about, right?"...Well, the side wasn't on KHJ here yet, it was on KDAY and since the entire Troubadour population, when listening to AM radio, listens to KDAY, it all worked out fine, and there was actually a chorus goin' right along with good ole Don. That surprised me. No one sings in Los Angeles.

Then the single made it. Then the album made it. I'm not sure if you're concerned with the extent to which albums sell. I find it interesting. The Don McLean LP is important for a lot of reasons. But on a volume level, it's intriguing coming to the realization that it ranks right up there with the all time best

sellers in the history of recorded music. You bet. There's JOHNNY MATHIS' GREATEST HITS, THE SOUND OF MUSIC, TAPESTRY (C. King), HAIR, and (you guessed it) AMERICAN PIE.

When AMERICAN PIE, the album, was released, reactions were incredibly splintered. Some were disappointed there were no more up-tempo, bass/drums tracks ala PIE. Others were glad, content with the ballad-melodic stylization, colorful imagery which McLean is known for as an artist. Some know him as an artist. Others call him by the misnomer, "the GUY who cut *American Pie*." Well, all who thought Don a one-hit wonder were sure surprised when he came back with *Vincent*. In England it sold and outlasted *American Pie*. (In Britain, McLean won every possible poll this year. *Best Song*, *Best Artist*, *Best Writer*, etc.) Regardless of critical observations, Don McLean has become a household name on the basis of virtually

one album. (His first LP, TAPESTRY, was re-released earlier this year, but his record company was careful not to promote it as his "new" LP, hence, most have remained unaffected by the recording one way or the other.)

So, it's been over a year since AMERICAN PIE. I haven't forgotten about McLean. *American Pie* was hit over and over, like *Louie, Louie* in the middle sixties. And at long last, the new album is with us.

I tend to believe the masses would agree that in terms of an album, DON McLEAN is far advanced over AMERICAN PIE. That is, the sum of the sides are the greater here.

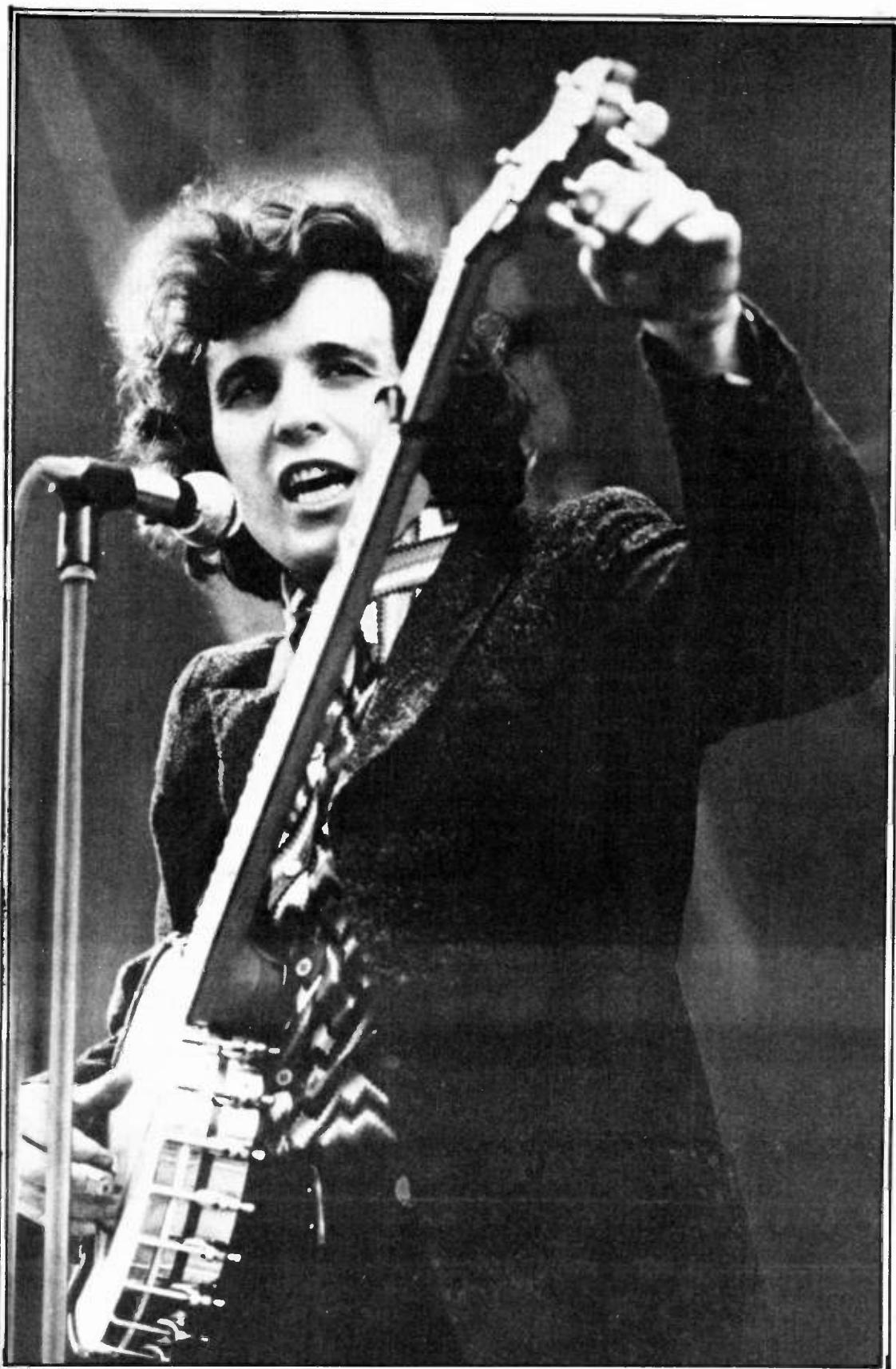
The first thing what's gonna happen is everyone will look for the next *American Pie* here. I think many will find it, thematically that is, in *Dreidel*. And if you look at the side in that light, your perception will be dulled. The only resemblance is that it's the first cut on side one and it's an up-tempo recording with an allegorical statement. But the same could be said of twenty other tunes released weekly. And to draw a parallel to *American Pie* is unfair. Taken on its own merit, *Dreidel* is among the finest pop recordings available. The production is clever, there's a few gimmicks thrown in, and assessing the side in total, I've come to the conclusion this is the obvious next McLean single. Whatzit all 'bout? Ah well, er, you see, it's nothing like *American Pie*. Not at all. What was *American Pie* all about? Er, uh...it doesn't matter...It's all open to subjective interpretation anyway...

As the LP progresses, I find more of McLean's satirical, intellectual, humor visible. His fascination with the west is exemplified several times here in *Bronco Bill's Lament* and *The More You Pay (The More It's Worth)*. The atmosphere here is an accomplishment in itself.

I've been sucked into McLean's ballad-consciousness finally. I wasn't convinced with *Castles In the Air*, he gained more ground with *Vincent*, but



Above, Mott the Hoople relax at poolside. L to R: Mick Ralphs, Overend Watts, Buffin, Ian Hunter, Verden Allen. Directly above, in a 1971 Basin Street pose, Mott seem unaware that David Bowie and Hoople Hoopla are about to descend on them.



WHO CAME FIRST Peter Townshend Decca/Track

Here we have the debut album of Peter Baba. Believe it or not, in his youth Baba fronted an incorrigible reds-popping teenage quartet responsible for such gems as *I Can't Explain*, *Anyway Anyhow Anywhere*, and **THE WHO SINGS MY GENERATION**.

Around 1968, I remember reading about Peter's forthcoming ultimo Who single, *Glow Girl*, which was to incorporate reincarnation, handbags and airplanes. Sort of a modern death-rock single if you will. Something went wrong somewhere. Very wrong. Instead of a neat three-minute single, *Glow Girl* mutated into a ghastly 2-LP rock opera (the name eludes me at the moment), about anything and everything and mostly nothing at all. A few good rock and roll numbers were interspersed here and there, but mostly it was a bunch of pretentious drivel. The boy had gotten cosmic.

Around the turn of the decade, Baba was seen leading his cohorts in imitation Led Zeppelin riffs. No great controversy ensued, since the Zep were so much better at same riffs. *Join Together* pretty well settled the whole matter, being the lamest Led Zep steal ever.

Here we have Peter Baba on his own. What does it sound like? Not much. Most of the cuts resemble the Who's most saccharine ballads, especially since Baba's voice is a strong ringer for that of Roger Daltrey. Three tracks of nine qualify as abominable: *Evolution* sung by Ronnie Lane, which was lousy a couple years back and even worse now; one cut by the neighbors; and *There's A Heartache Followin' Me* where Peter gives C&W a go.

Baba makes one attempt to rock on the LP. It's pretty weak, though. *Let's See Action* runs an obese six minutes, and is further diluted by the anemic rhythm section (all instruments are played by Baba). Between you and me, WHO'S NEXT put me to sleep, but I still think I can differentiate between varying degrees of dullness. This album is about a tenth as good.

So that's the legend of Peter Baba. Believe it if you will.

As for me, I dunno, man. I refuse to believe the rumors that the artists responsible for this album, not to mention the accompanying promo booklet

where Peter rambles on about his pop (Meher), is the work of the same guy who wrote *My Generation*. No way.

—Mike Saunders

PASS THE CHICKEN AND LISTEN Everly Brothers RCA

Earlier this year the Everly Brothers released an album called **STORIES WE COULD TELL**. In a piece I wrote for PRM at the time (July, 1972) I rather harshly criticized them for taking a timid, uncommitted course. *STORIES* was a weak album in many ways. It was almost desperate in its attempt to divorce the Everlys from their past; its tunes were on the whole undistinguished; it was highly over-produced, and peopled by one of those superstar lineups of session musicians and "drop in" guests. Finally, it lacked any emphasis whatsoever on the most vital and unique factor of the Everly Brothers — their vocal harmonies. In an effort to compromise themselves and their various audiences, the Everlys left behind the best of what they once were and fell into most of the traps of current trends.

If someone had asked me at the time what I would consider the ideal Everly Brothers album, I would have given them a choice. Either the boys would get together alone in front of a tape recorder and put down an incredible display of vocals only they could perform, with minimal acoustic instrumentation; or they could head back to Nashville and make a record with all those guys that were beginning at about the same time they were and have since achieved fame and fortune to various degrees.

PASS THE CHICKEN AND LISTEN is that latter choice come to full fruition. It is a fine mixture of modern country and bluegrass. Old rock (*Not Fade Away*) old Boudleaux Bryant (*Rocky Top*), and a touch of Prine, Kristofferson and Newbury. The musicians involved, including Bobby Thompson, Dale Sellers, Pete Wade, Johnny Gimble and Weldon Myrick, have injected more energy into their playing than I have heard them do on any of the many other records they have made together recently; as if they were very definitely playing this session out of love. And the production by (to top it all off) Chet Atkins, one of the few legitimate living legends of modern country music, is exactly suited to the Everlys. It is tame, yet constantly exciting and vibrant. Like all great country music, when it's time for the musicians to howl, they howl; but when it's time to sing, those instruments take a back seat and give a fine foundation to the best singing I've heard the Everlys do in a long time.

Die-hard music lover that I am, I'll still hope hard for that acoustic/harmonies album, but **PASS THE CHICKEN AND LISTEN** more than elevates the Everlys in my personal esteem. They are right back up there, they have proved themselves and they are moving forward again. It is ironic that it took going

here, with *If We Try*, shit; this hits home. A melody line, golly, we haven't seen the like of this since *Yesterday*, *Alone Again (Naturally)* and *Twilight Time*. This is a gem. Those of us rockers prone to shunning the delicate lyric will find cause for debate with *If We Try*. You don't have to compare notes to come to terms with the conjectures of Don is layin' down here. ***"When I see you on the street, I lose my concentration. Just the thought that we might meet creates anticipation. Won't you look my way once before you go and my eyes will say what you otta know/Well I been thinkin' about you day and night, and I don't know if it'll work out right, but somehow I think it might, if we were ordinarily should

delivery is believable. McLean's humor, satirism is omnipresent throughout side two. *Narcissisma* is a teenage lament... **Narcissisma* has no pride or delusions/But *Narcissisma* lets me find my place/*Narcissisma* is the pride of Pomona. He's added a tasty rock and roll refrain throughout and the back up chicks here beat the shit out of those on *Lightnin' Strikes* by Lou Christie. And the use of silence is one of McLean's many talents. He knows when to stop, when to come back in, he's got timin' folks, and he uses it better than ever on *Narcissisma*.

And on standard

McLean's critics will have a tough time of it with DON McLEAN. He may have taken fourteen months to produce the one after *AMERICAN PIE* (the tendency is to say "The follow-up to *AMERICAN PIE*"), but the time wasn't wasted. McLean knows what he's doin'. He need no longer leer at the brilliance of Tim Hardin. He's transcended that. I think he knows it.

—Nik Venet

* All Don McLean lyrics © 1972 Yahweh Tunes, Inc.
***"On The Amazon" © 1928 Harms, Inc. Copyright renewed.

—Jeff Walker

They're a monument to youthful exuberance, a triumph of pure adolescent joyousness over post-teen disillusionment, and maybe just the last straw it's gonna take to break the back of an absolute and outdated culture whose mere presence has clotted up the environment for the past five years more than ten thousand Chevrolets ever could. They're the Raspberries, and their great new album, **FRESH** is here and the time has never been riper.

You knew there was something special in this band, not because *Go All The Way* shot up to number one with such blinding speed, but because it became the record-every-top 40-jock-starts-his-show-with-in-every-city-in-America for two solid months, and that's the loftiest goal any 7 inches of plastic can aspire to. Hell, *anybody* can make a number one song (even coma dealers like the Moody Blues and Chicago) but only when a record gets show-starter honors nationwide can it be considered a true achievement, an effort worthy of our highest praise. Try it yourself and see if it doesn't sound incomplete to listen to *Go All The Way* at home on the stereo without a boss jock shouting "...THREE O'CLOCK IN LOS ANGELES..." (substitute your town) over those raunchy opening chords.

The essence of top-40 radio is vitality and zit ointment and that's why the Raspberries fit in so well — it's what they're all about. They're the first completely teenage-oriented band of the seventies and it's about time. Pity the poor 16 year-old who in pre-Raspberry days was almost cruelly forced to listen to pretentious claptrap about how Jesus was gonna save us and how we're gonna have to get closer to the ground and back to the land. And if he was sharp enough to tune out the folksingers in self-pity city for Grand Funk Railroad, he still had to contend with their inane "*brothers and sisters/stop the war*" routine just to get at a little rock 'n' roll.

Right about here some sociology major in Berkeley with patches on his levis even though there's no holes in them is bound to say, "Wait a minute. Today's 16 year olds are different. They're concerned about peace and pollution. They care about the meaning of life and the quest for internal tranquility."

Well, bullshit. I'm not gonna pretend to be sixteen anymore although I'm just a few miles away from it physically (and about half a block away mentally) but I do know a lot of



The Raspberries: the first completely teenage-oriented band of the seventies, and we're not gonna let you forget 'em!

in Berkeley is crazy!

Is he trying to say that today's highschool and junior high crop aren't primarily concerned with getting laid, getting high, getting the car off the old man, getting an electric guitar, getting a bullshit story together that's believable enough to his girlfriend's parents to let her stay out all night so they can sleep together when his parents go away for the weekend?

The key word here is *parents*. Attitudes and morals may change from generation to generation, but the one constant is parents, and every kid, no matter how liberated, has them. Even the dork in Berkeley has them, but the big difference is he doesn't have to live and deal with them and watch as they frustrate 88% of his desires and plans. And the 12% that's left over is usually spent figuring out ways to beat the morbid boredom that sitting in classrooms for six hours a day can present.

Now how much time does that leave for pondering the inequities of society and finding internal tranquility? Not a hell of a lot, but that's how it should

days, sent to your room where you turn on the radio only to find *Isn't Life Strange* waiting to drive you down through the floorboards.

The Raspberries aren't gonna revolutionize rock 'n' roll, but they are gonna democratize it to the point where a kid can punch a button on a car radio and at least have a chance at hearing a song that deals with his concerns and not his older brother's. Their success (which is assured by both their brilliance and the need for this type of music) will pave the airwaves for the many bands who will follow their lead and ideally, in a year or so, some sort of balance between the jades and the kids will have been achieved.

That glorious day will owe its arrival to groups like the Raspberries and songs like their current hit *I Wanna Be With You*. If *Go All The Way* was, as it has been called, the finest pop single since *Tell Her No*, how do you rate *I Wanna Be With You*, which is twice as good? The best pop single ever? I'm not arguing. With its ringing guitars, thundering drums, great vocals and bracing intro, it's nothing

characteristics of its creator. Nearly all rockabilly singers sounded amazingly like Elvis, punk-rockers like Mick Jagger, and so on.

Those of you who are looking for it will find lots of Beatle cops on FRESH. They're obvious — parts of *I Wanna Be With You* come from *Hold Me Tight*, the chorus of *Goin' Nowhere Tonight* will remind you of *I Don't Want To Spoil The Party*, and there's lots more too, which you can figure out for yourself. If you agree with me, you'll think it's great to see a group that's less concerned with being ORIGINAL than it is with being *good*.

But if you insist on writing the Raspberries off as Beatle imitators, you're still half-wrong even if you think you're right because fully half of this album is Brian Wilson-inspired. You have to give these guys credit — they really know the right people to get ideas from! Their *Let's Pretend* is an achingly beautiful ballad, sounding just like (and every bit as good) as Brian's best stuff. Thematically, this cut and most of the others seem to come from *Wouldn't It Be Nice* — the everpresent wish for a better world, to break down the barriers that we call

but the more I listen, the more I find to like about the melodic stuff, which is so fine and so far ahead of every other band in or out of the genre. There's really very little here that can be criticized. I can only report that I honestly find this to be the most impressive new album I've heard in years and one that you're going to enjoy immensely if you dig the Raspberries' singles and the middle 60's Beach Boys/Beatles sound as much as I do.

—Mark Shipper

* © 1972 C.A.M. USA, Inc.

OVERLAND STAGE
Epic

Six Jesus freaks playing rock and roll: what is this world coming to? This is the first album by OVERLAND STAGE, a Christian-oriented rock group from Fargo (believe it or not), North Dakota. If you're looking for gospel music, you won't find it here. What you will find is an album of refined rock and roll, much of which deals with something a lot more important than a dual quad four-barrel, and going steady with Mary Lou. Instead, we're talking about 'salvation,' and, like the song says, "don't you got it?"

The day when walking into a record store can be an embittering experience...

Actually, the fact that these scum are *proud* of being zombies is secondary. Creem Magazine recently carried an ad that claimed that some "friends of mine" had just released a "very important" new album. Overland Stage would have you believe that their music is "refined." Back when this whole nouveau rock schtick was just getting started, I was using words like "important" when, say, Procol Harum came out with their first album, and people laughed. And if Mick Jagger had come out on stage pretending to be a friend to his audience — you can bet wouldn't nobody have paid attention, let alone screamed.

Maybe today's teens aren't easily excited by a dual-quad four barrell, but that don't seem to worry the Honda dealer. Maybe they don't care about goin' steady with Mary Lou, but I bet they wouldn't mind getting into her pants.

Piss off Overland Stage.

—Ed Ward

JOE COCKER
A&M

It's ironic — and probably too late to do him any good — but Joe Cocker has finally released the long-awaited, fairly-fine follow-up album to that inspired first and crowd-pleasing second album, *Unlabeled*, years back. After all his... foolishnesses since... the Mad Dogs... ss, drugs, ... had

And the night I saw him Joe stubbornly insisted on doing a set mostly made up of new stuff (all on this belated release) that no one could easily respond to, especially since his performance was so lackluster anyway.

Too bad. Now that I can hear the tunes over and over, recollected in tranquility as it were, their possibilities and his gravel-voiced strengths are apparent — excessive at times, yet couched throughout in Chris Stainton arrangements tailor-made for Joe's rockin' *Black-Eyed Blues*.

So the odd old bloke's still got *Something to Say* — *High Time We Went* on to the music itself. *Pardon Me Sir* launches everything well, a sort of boogaloo shuffle with jaunty piano and the Sanctified Sisters (backing quartet) gettin' happily: "I'm quite sure you understand," sings Mr. Interlocuter/Joe and Mr. Bones/I answers, "Yassuh, deed ah do!" high-steppin' right off the vaudeville stage.

And right into *High Time*, with its Big Hurt styled, drone-heavy attack — repetitious but mesmerizing as well. *She Don't Mind* then blends funky rhythm, guitar sprinkles, and off-the-wall piano into a languid filler, while the bass and piano warm up and into *Black-Eyed Blues*, as does Joe's potent vocal: "I need a vaccination for the black-eyed blues." But the repeat-beat and dreary lyric drag on too long; ditto the gentle farewell called *Something to Say* that closes Side One.

Disc flipped, the Allman's *Midnight Rider* is slow to get going — overdramatized at first — but fully compelling thereafter: horns, congas, piano and the Man himself all into some late-night wailing. And then it's live cut time for the album's most galvanic moment, the Penn-Moman monument called *Do Right Woman*. Jivin' Joe and Pianissimo Chris lead the so-soulful way, with the Sisters as sweetly inspired as Aretha's, Jim Horn taking a honky sax solo, and everybody je' gen'rally gettin' gospel off for a smooth-flowing, 7-minute soupcon of satisfaction.

After that, nothing could sound as good; and *Woman to Woman* bucks and wheezes like some drunken mismatch of relentless AmerIndian rhythm and Renaissance-Italian castrati vocal. The album climbs back a shade with *St. James Infirmary*, a guitar, drums, and sax, de-blooze extravaganza for Neil Hubbard, Conrad Isidore, and somebody; but Joe's merely congested — "died standing pat," indeed.

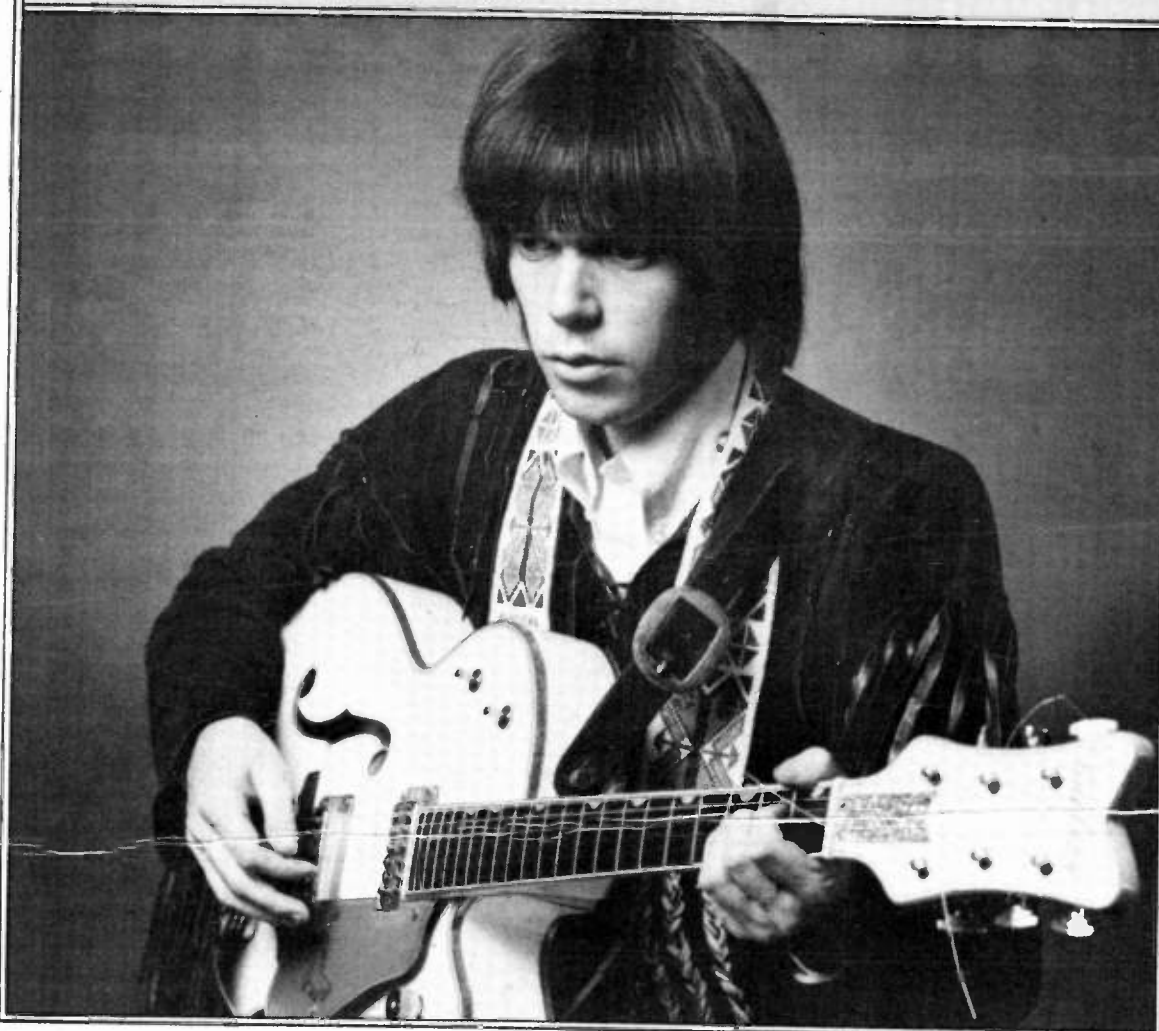
All in all, however, a pretty good comeback shot. JC emerges from his buzz or nod with a fully competent, often invigorating set. But Stainton's backup band cooks harder than Cocker himself. There's still a leak somewhere in the rusty pipes.

—Ed Leimbacher

JOURNEY THROUGH THE PAST Neil Young Warner Brothers

There's the KKK on the cover, the same KKK that gave its name to Amerikkka somewhere along the line. The other contributor, Amerigo Vespucci, ain't nowhere to be seen.

Remember when fringe was something you wore and not something you were? Remember Indian beadwork and the Avalon Ballroom? Remember Buffalo Springfield? Neil Young does (above) but R. Meltzer remembers things even Neil's forgotten. See below.



Neil's the guy whose poppa is almost as famous as him. He used to be even famouser. Scott Young is his name and he's the biggest there is in the way of English-language Canadian sportswriters. He's such a big shit that they have his name on billboards with comments of national concern. When Neil was 15 or something he hit dad for a loan so he could get his band an amp but Scottso said "Fug off Neil" so he hadda hit mommy for the 500 bucks (Canadian currency). He still loves mom a whole lot.

There are no daddy or mama songs on this album.

No cause this ain't real life, this is film. Film about the past. A lotta things have happened in the past: Oklahoma Land Rush, Charlemagne, Magna Carta, Jesus C., death of Alexander Hamilton in the house where Paul Williams lived 160 years later, birth of a nation or two, Luther Burbank and the primus berry, and many, many more.

And speaking of cinema, who could possibly know more about it than Neil Young? After all his woman's Carrie Snodgrass who's been in more than one celluloid masterpiece herself. Including the highly regarded *Diary of a Mad Housewife* in which Richard Benjamin really makes a fool of himself. Dick lives just a couple blocks from the hands typing this revue and he's often seen in the company of his pretty bride Paula Prentiss. Ain't it wonderful how couples have so much fun together?

And while we're on the subject of Carrie there's that song *A Man Needs a Maid* which may or may not be about the role that Carrie played in that fic. It is not in this film or at least it's not on the soundtrack album from it. But it very well might be in Neil's next film or maybe the one after that. Or maybe Federico Fellini or Benvenuto Cellini might select it as the theme song called *A Man Needs a Maid*. In any event it's not on this one, you'll have to obtain HARVEST if you wanna

hear it or the Rubber Dubber bootleg of Neil live somewhere in Southern California.

Beach Boys are on this one too, *Let's Go Away for Awhile*. It's not the first time that one's been used in a movie. It was used about 3-4 years ago in something that came out of the UCLA film school about people in cars driving to a funeral. They played it over the credits with an airplane flying overhead. That's like going to see *Lady Sings the Blues* and discovering that it contains *Wasn't Born to Follow*.

The Tony & Susan Alamo Christian Foundation Orchestra & Chorus is here too, so if Christers give you the creeps you'd better skip those cuts if you don't wanna puke. Don't skip Neil however, he's damn, damn, damn, damn good.

—R. Meltzer

WHY DONTCHA West, Bruce & Laing Windfall-Columbia

Leslie West is gross. Jack Bruce is famous. Corky Laing is basic. Together, they make up what amounts to Mountain '72 starring Jack Bruce as himself, replacing his stand-in, Felix Pappalardi. Any naive soul expecting anything strikingly original from this lineup will be disappointed; WHY DONTCHA is half excessively heavy rock, half blatant mediocrity with one quality cut tossed in to confuse matters.

As could be expected, it is the rotund Mr. West who is responsible for most of the excesses. While I don't feel that he's reached his true potential (he's never learned to play guitar with his belly, for instance), the way Leslie honks out phrases like, *Wontcha send for the doctor 'cause I'm dyin'* of blooze is irresistible. *Why Dontcha*, *The Doctor* and *Love Is Worth The Blues* are all dense chuggers in the tradition of *Mississippi Queen*; powerful in the physical sense but impossible to take seriously, these cuts are perfect mindless body music.

It is Jack Bruce, however,

who reaches the apex of absurdity and he does so with no pretense of taste or style. His vehicle is Eddie Boyd's *Third Degree* the most ridiculous thing he has attempted since *Born Under a Bad Sign*. Bruce's blues vocals have never been particularly convincing, but he reaches a new low trying to put across lines like, *Got me accused of forgery/I can't even write my name*. Remember that, autograph hunters.

Pete Brown wrote the lyrics to the rest of Bruce's featured numbers and like many Bruce-Brown collaborations, *Out Into The Fields* and *Pollution Woman* tend to blend into the background no matter how loud I play them. *Pleasure*, on the other hand, is the best piece of rock and roll Bruce has recorded. The band sound like they had been doing their Chuck Berry homework with the

emphasis on the delightful Johnny Johnson piano fills Jack overdubbed rather than an imitation-Berry guitar break usually found on this type of number.

Whether West, Bruce & Laing will stay together longer than most so-called supergroups is a moot point; certainly, they could do worse. Taste is not their strong point but they're no more obnoxious than Savoy Brown and since when is taste a necessary part of rock and roll anyway? In any event, I plan to keep this album around but anyone with an imagination and without a sense of humor should avoid it at all costs.

—Michael G. Davis

ROXY MUSIC Reprise Records

Given that this isn't a lead review and that therefore what I'm about to babble may seem like mere polemic, I feel I have to tell you anyway, despite the possibility of abuse: This is so far and away the best, most original, most incredible album of the year that it makes the mind boggle. I have the opportunity to try and convince you of this, and it's an opportunity I cherish like Tim Leary would cherish a free pass to the White House water purifier. Cause this album is so great I wanna turn the whole bloody world on to it. LISTEN, BROTHERS. THIS IS IT. THIS IS WHAT YOU'VE BEEN MOANING FOR SINCE 69 AND IT'S HERE NOW SO DON'T BLOW IT!!!

Exactly why? Well, the reason is simply that in Roxy Music you can glean elements of every musical style or taste we've been party to in the last five years. It may not be obvious at first, but it's all there. You can make a good case for your favorite group at nearly every given point. I should have made a list of every identifying riff nearly submerged in the mix, but I didn't. Like, some are a little more obvious than others. What I correctly identified as a Velvets feel in side one/cut one, a friend argued for Phil Spector working the Chipmunks at 16 and a half. Beelheart's definitely



From the good, to the bad and the ugly. If you were Leslie West and had to look at this face in the mirror every day, you'd have the blues too.

there, but refined and musical. Stan Getz is there, but broken-nosed and hard. The gruesome complexity of King Crimson melts with the hump-rock orgasmic Stooze climax. Freddy and the Dreamers melt into the Fugs and come out Shirley Bassey. It's all there if you wanna make a case for it.

And so, having all these obvious sixties influences, the sound comes across as both a total amalgam of the sixties and the first original sound of the seventies, complete with seventies (and eighties) super-electronics and forties/fifties jazz decadence. The total sound of this album assures that whatever happens to the band, ROXY MUSIC the album will remain an entity to itself for ever and ever amen.

The sound is strange, cosmic and unearthly, and because of that it takes a hell of a lot of work to actually get into the album with all the intensity it deserves. But it's like olives or octopus meat or chocolate-covered angleworms, you have to be patient and work up a taste for them and forget about other people puking in your face. Everyone I know, me included, saw nothing in the album the first couple of times through. But without exception, everyone I've submitted it to has now seen the light and are spreading THE WORD throughout the land with me. Given time and the slightest touch of patience, the subtlety of the musical blend and the sheer incredible outrageousness of the talent, originality and brilliance begins to seep through, slowly at first until, like when you guzzle ten or twenty oz. of vodka, it suddenly belts your being like Hans Schmidt's right hand.

What's really neat is that the group themselves knew that this was gonna happen, that not everybody could really embrace the whole thing all at once. So they put in some simpler, boppier tunes which force you to come back the first few times. You play the album all the way through to get to stuff like *Re-make/Re-model*, a Velvets space-truck Stooze hard-on shuffle, which is the best opening album cut since *Hey Grandma* or *Virginia Plain* which sounds like Ray Davies before his vasectomy; or *2 H.B.* which is the best tribute to Bogart imagineable, and is sung in an alcoholic nostalgia stupor in which lead-vocalist Brian Ferry is eyeing some warm body across the table and spouting poetry while crooning *Here's Looking at you, babe* while all the time his premature ejaculation is running down the inside of his tiger-skin pants.

Finally, because you've been forced to listen to the originally less interesting stuff, it too begins to invade your consciousness. That's when you begin to realize that the real meat of the album is contained in these truly empyrean and timeless masterpieces, like *Ladytron*. This is the most painful yet psyche-grabbing moment in rock this year. (challenged only by Stephen Davis' appointment at *Rolling Stone*). It begins with a synthesizer solo, real down-slow heavy stuff which sets up a mood entirely in contrast to *Re-Make* which preceded it.



Roxy Music: Paul Thompson, Eno, Bryan Ferry, Phil Manzanera, Rik Kenton, and Andy Mackay. "Strange, cosmic and unearthly." Jerry Garcia, who has been called the same in less-refined language, nods out while listenin' to the new New Riders of The Purple Sage — unreleased of course.

Then Ferry breaks in with the most unearthly and poignant warble imaginable, reminiscent of what God might sound like after he sees Alice Cooper's new *Concentration Camp* stage routine and decides to divide the orb into component neutrons and start over, and so sings to an empty universe, *You got me girl on a run around, got me runnin round town*, or something to that effect, which I find myself singing to the stars at night hoping that Roxy Music will come down in their neuro-orbiter and take me to this place where only sounds have meaning and nothing else matters, period.

Yeh, sure it sounds like just a lot of strange sound effects and shit the first time you hear it, and maybe it doesn't fit into any category except its own, but for your own sake don't give up on

it. It'll eventually grab you like a benevolent cancer and you won't play another album with the same sense of impartial joy for weeks to come. Roxy Music deserves every one of those hypes they've been getting in the English press. You bet buster!

—Alan Niester

EUROPE '72 Grateful Dead Warnerizers Ken Barnes

I just got the new Grateful Dead album called EUROPE '72 and I wanted to tell you about it, as the Grateful Dead is about my favorite group in the world since I saw them play *Alligator* all night at the Avalon on two tabs of Owsley purple. If you are thinking that is not many tabs for a group as big as the Dead

who are one of the biggest groups in the San Francisco Sound, you are right but it was really heavy acid then. They have gone through a lot of changes since then, like everybody else, and now they have even gone to Europe and come back with a 3 album set which has many new songs and some old ones too.

Many writers and magazines have called the Grateful Dead "the greatest rock and roll band in the world" and it is easy for me to see why when you think of all the different kinds of music they know how to play on this album. They play country and western like a Hank Williams song *You Win Again* which Bob Weir sings just like in Nashville, and folk music like *Morning Dew* which was on their first album but is now 10 minutes long. Of course everybody

knows about *Pigpen* Ron McKernan singing the blues, he does an Elmore James song called *Hurts Me Too* which is done real slow to get all the emotion and feelings into it — he is, in my opinion, as good as many of the old time blues singers like Albert King and Muddy Waters and John Mayall, and does a song he wrote himself also later on in the album called *Mr. Charlie* which is good. The Grateful Dead also proves in this album that they can do rock and roll like Chuck Berry and Little Richard, if you heard them doing *Johnny B. Goode* in the album called *Grateful Dead* you know they can do Chuck Berry but listen how Bob Weir sounds like Little Richard in *One More Saturday Night* which is his own composition from his album ACE.

In fact that is one reason why the Grateful Dead is so great, because of how they can play so many kinds of music and make it sound like the Grateful Dead — they are truly an electric band. But they also do some new songs, like *He's Gone* and *Jack Straw* and *Brown-Eyed Woman* (not the one Bill Medley did but a different one) and *Ramble On Rose*, *Tennessee Jed*, *Epilog*, and *Prelude*. These are all good and sound like they have played them for years instead of just on this new album. A lot of them have the country-rock sound that is popular today but *Epilog* and *Prelude* are both instrumentals with a lot of spacey sounds like *Science Fiction* and jazz — another kind of music the Grateful Dead is good at.

favorite Dead songs like *Cumberland Blues*, *China Cat Sunflower*, *I Know You Rider*, and *Sugar Magnolia* and *Truckin'*, besides *Morning Dew* which I have already talked about. Just to give a better value for the money, the Dead has made these songs longer than on the old records, especially *Truckin'* which is now 13 minutes long and flows right into the new song called *Epilog* so you can hardly tell where one ends and begins. These songs all have a mellow sound and are always good to hear again, and some of the guitar playing and piano is fantastic. One thing I don't like about the album though, is that you can't hear the applause from the audience, a group as great as the Dead should have louder applause.

I am really glad to have this new Grateful Dead album, it is a great record and also now I can sit down with my earphones on and put on LIVE DEAD and VINTAGE DEAD and THE GRATEFUL DEAD and HISTORIC DEAD and EUROPE '72 and have a 5-hour Grateful Dead concert with 9 different live records. What other group would do so much for their fans as making so many live albums for them to enjoy their concerts at home? And they put them out at special low prices, too, like only 6 dollars for 3 records of this new album. I'm sure you will agree with me if you go out and buy EUROPE '72.

—Rodney Bingenheimer

THE WORLD IS A GHETTO War United Artists

It was late at night as I strolled down one of the city's

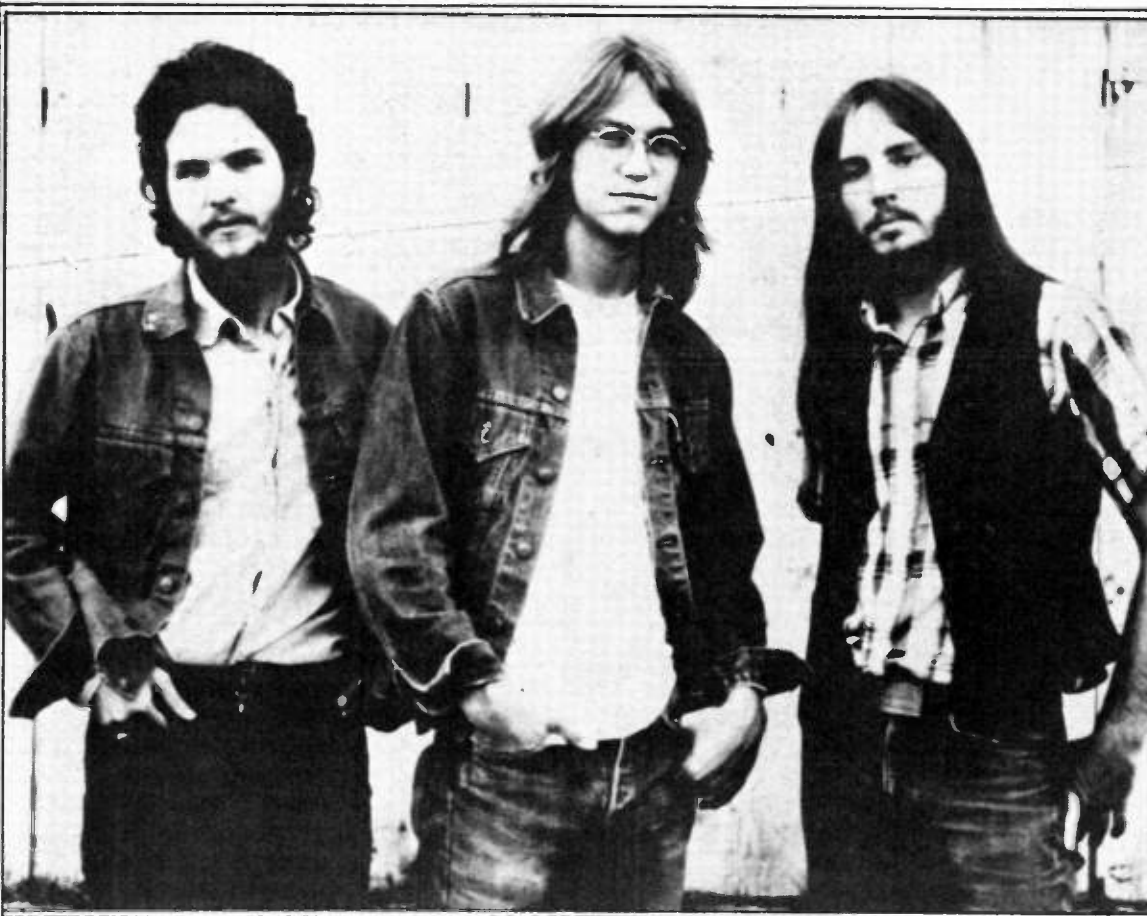
seamier streets in search of a companion for the evening. Suddenly I noticed it was very quiet. I stopped and looked about, abruptly conscious of the gold chain dangling from my watchpocket. Not a soul was to be seen. I continued my way, then halted again. Now I heard in the distance what sounded like tinny bongo drums and a queer sort of jungle moaning. The hackles rose on my back as I quickened my pace. Then I turned a corner and almost dropped in my tracks at the sight of hundreds of dark faces deployed around the street, teeth reflecting the gleams from their loosely held transistor radios and wine bottles. Unobtrusively as possible I began retracing my steps when a deep, drawling voice spat contemptuously, "where you think yo' goin', boy?" from a doorway just behind me. I spun around at the chilling tones and stammered, "Wh-what is this, anyway?"

"This is War, baby," he said, grinning as a blade leapt from its handle at the touch of a button. The last thing I recall is raising my hands and screaming as the knife descended on my face.

If it hadn't been for a passing police car, I'd not be here today to tell the tale. And yet, when the nightmares began, I sometimes wished I had gotten it over with there quickly. It all started when the kid in the next apartment got a new stereo and began playing those records of his at such volume that the walls rumbled and the voices of the singers haunted me in my sleep. In some way this music transported me back to that dark street, and my dreams were filled with slashing knives and leering hoodlums.

I spoke to the young man, but he only laughed in my face. The lousy punk! Next day he bought a drum of his own and began playing along with the records, until I was so driven out of my mind by the insanely repetitive pounding and chanting that I didn't know what I was doing. The songs had become so familiar that I found myself on more than one occasion muttering, "the world is a ghetto, the world is a ghetto..." in the wee hours of sleepless dawn.

It reached a point where, irrational from lack of sleep and brainwashed by this killer music, I kicked in his damned door and began rampaging about the place, screaming and smashing every record in sight, and hurling his record player out the window to the street below in the midst of a song called "Four Cornered Room" that was undoubtedly the most sinister piece of sound ever let loose on an unsuspecting world. I suddenly know that this kind of music, if allowed to proliferate, as it apparently had from the various names like Osibisa, Malo, Azteca and Ungawa on the records I was breaking like so many hideous black potato chips, would cause the downfall of civilization and everything decent Americans held sacred. It would turn our nation's youth into a snarling pack of hooligans who would soon fill all the streets in the land with their smirking, taunting faces and weird tribal chants. This was the undiluted sound of Satan himself and it had to be exorcised!



These guys (Dan Peek, Gerry Beckley and Dewey Bunnell) call themselves America, and according to Mike Saunders they are "incredible, mind-boggling droll." Is this a political statement?

Saliva was dripping from my jaws onto my wrinkled suit as the kid and his gang appeared in the doorway. They grabbed me and held back my arms until I winced with pain. My shaggy-haired neighbor stepped forward and said,

"Why, mister? What'd ya do it for?" I looked him in the eye and spat in his face. Then, in the brief moment before the blows began to fall, I gritted my teeth and wheezed:

"This is War!"

—R. Stigwood

Postscript — I've learned THE WORLD IS A GHETTO is the real thing — and I'm gonna live with it for the rest of my life. If you don't get yerself a copy, yer dead man.

BUDGIE
Kapp

MOTHER
Bang
Capitol

No one wants to be a hodad. That fact, for all its virtues and shortcomings alike, is half the fun of rock 'n' roll, and the latest bandwagon is metal music.

Heavy metal, as they call it in the more eurdite journals. No one knows exactly what heavy metal is or how to describe it, but it's a handy tag to slap on anything over 130 decibels that you happen to like...besides, any time you hear a group that sounds like a runaway Panzer tank in overdrive, that's one. So heavy metal is here to stay, at least till next August.

The cold facts, however: some heavy metal groups stink! Ever hear Sir Lord Baltimore's second? Bull Angus' first? Atomic Rooster's third? The reasons none of these groups ever became as big as Grand Funk were not entirely sociological.

To the groups at hand. Budgie had a decent first LP, but their new album is, I fear, the absolute worst heavy metal album ever recorded. It's not even heavy, and there is no metal anywhere...these dorks should HAVE THEIR ASSES KICKED for wasting fine Kapp

vinyl like this. How can ex-Black Sabbath producer Rodger Bain waste himself this way?

Bang, on the other hand, had a debut album that stunk from here to California. Their new one is a lot better.

The phrase heavy metal was coined by Hapshash & The Coloured Coat way back in 1967, though they had to wait a couple years or so to hear groups who could translate that phrase into music. But one thing's for sure: if Hapshash ever heard the kind of shit Budgie try and get away with on their new LP, they'd kick 'em on their ass! Bang are better, but they'd better watch it too.

—Metal Man Saunders

HOMEcoming
America
Warner Bros

Imagine if you will, a kid that does a soul-wrenching (I mean this literally) job of imitating Neil Young. The whiny little creep down the street who sits on kitchen tables and plunks his guitar for anyone who'll listen.

Said creep joins up with a couple other creeps who do a lame CS&N imitation. The three of them pool their talents and discover that together, through the wonder of collective effort, they can do a *really* lame SNC&Y imitation. They gig around the neighborhood, performing for free at this year's version of mellowed out pot parties. They choose a name for their musical coalition. They call it: America.

What Eddie Cochran, the Seeds, and Grand Funk did for rock 'n' roll — reaffirm that any kid with a guitar and the will to rock could become a rock 'n' roll star — America have done for the placeboized mush of the present. Really, man. It doesn't matter how lame, how dippy you are...you can be as big as James Taylor. The lamer the better, in fact — make Sweet Baby James look like a veritable ivory-towered musical cerebral. I might go further, and say that these guys are what Bread would like to be, but lemme use an

analogy instead: take a piece of bread (no pun intended), drench it in a quart of milk until it's soggy than yesterday's newspaper left out in the rain, and eat it. That's America.

A fair record review is supposed to include some discussion of the music at hand. Well, off fairness, because save for two songs — *Only In Your Heart* and *Till The Sun Comes Up*, decent Bee Gees imitations by the guy without the Neil Young voice — I absolutely refuse to discuss music as incredibly, mind-bogglingly stultifying as this droll is.

You think we rock writers take all our promos down to the record store pronto for cash and trade-ins. Hah! At this moment I am sitting in my favorite chair, slowly grinding America's new album into a million bits onto the living room floor, while repeating to myself the following: "I hate this record. I hate it more than anything I have ever heard before..."

At least, that is, since the last Chicago album. If that doesn't give you some idea of how numbingly offensive America are, I hope someone gives you this album for Christmas. It's records like this one that make me think the world is coming to an end.

—Mike Saunders

BELOW THE SALT
STEELEYE SPAN
CHRYSALIS

For over three years, almost without recognition from American consumers or critical observers, a musical movement involving the adaptation of British traditional folk music to electrified rock stylizations has been flourishing in England. The form was basically introduced by Fairport Convention, and brought to full fruition on their late '69 milestone LP, *LIEGE AND LIFE* with Sandy Denny, Richard Thompson, Dave Swarbrick, and Ashley Hutchings (all of whom, save Swarbrick, have now departed the group). Hutchings, Fairport's founding bassist, left to form an

even more traditionally-oriented band called Steeleye Span, who have gone on to produce four excellent albums in the "trad-rock" genre, despite radical personnel changes (in which, department the traditional-rockers resemble nothing so much as the incessantly incestuous L.A. Country-rock establishment).

Their first LP, *HARD THE VILLAGE WAIT* (British RCA) featured Hutchings along with Gay and Terry Woods (who departed after the album's release to form the Woods Band, who have one LP out so far) on various stringed instruments; and guitarist Tim Hart and lead vocalist Maddy Prior (The only original members remaining in the current lineup). Dave Mattacks (of Fairport) and Gerry Conway (Fotheringay) guested on drums, but subsequent albums eschewed such blatant percussion entirely. *HARK* itself was a brilliantly consistent compilation of arresting traditional melodies rocked up in intriguing fashion, with a rougher feeling than Fairport's efforts, but consequently a more traditional ambience. On the second LP, the Woods were replaced by fiddler Peter Knight and the eminent traditional folk singer Martin Carthy, both of whom immediately assumed prominent roles in the group's sound, which now incorporated various fiddle jigs and a number of Carthy-sung vocals (some of which were excellent, some of which dragged). All this resulted in a more uneven LP, *PLEASE TO SEE THE KING* (released into instant obscurity in the U.S. by Big Tree/Bell), with a bit of tedious material but also with superb highlights (such as *Female Drummer*, a relentless — and drumless — rocker with dynamite riffing).

The third album, *TEN MAN MOP OR MR. RESERVOIR BUTLER RIDES AGAIN*, was not picked up for American release (available on Pegasus, U.K.). It featured the same personnel as the last album, and is even more dramatically uneven, hitting new lows of exhaustive tedium, but spotlighting the eerie and powerful *When I Was On Horseback*, with haunting electric fiddle by Peter Knight, every bit as mesmerizing and other-worldly as John Cale's viola on *Venus In Furs* and other Velvet Underground classics.

Both Carthy and Hutchings departed the group early this year (Carthy to go solo again, Hutchings to marry traditional singer Shirley Collins and help form the Albion Country Band to back her, which they did on a superb LP called *NO ROSES*), leaving Knight, Hart, and Prior (whose sometimes harsh but very effective lead vocals have remained the one linking Steeleye constant) temporarily adrift. However, they added guitarist Bob Johnson and bassist Rick Kemp, signed with their fourth consecutive different label in England, and have now, under the auspices of the new Chrysalis/Reprise transactions, had their fourth LP, *BELOW THE SALT*, released simultaneously in both countries.

BELOW THE SALT is a fine album. My citations of and comparisons to previous

(Continued on Page 30)

JAZZ

"Jazz," as a word, is a good old word. Not everybody thinks so, though. Not by any means. First of all, these days, about the fastest way I know of to send a host of assorted record producers, managers, agents, and promotional and publicity personnel into paroxysms of panic is to mention that very word. Jazz.

"Jazz? No! Absolutely not! My client doesn't play jazz. Jazz is old-fashioned. Jazz is non-commercial. Jazz is...well, it's weird." Right?

Record company spokesmen insist "Ours is not a jazz label," or "We have no jazz in our catalogue." No matter what a man's background, musical preferences, or playing style would seem to indicate, if he's signed now to a major record label, you can bet that few of his new associates will allow that particular four-letter word to be applied to his music.

This linguistic reticence is especially apparent in the case — an increasingly common case today — of new rock or Latin groups taking into their folds musicians who have made substantial names for themselves already in good old jazz circles. I've written bios for some of these groups. One member might, for instance, have played with everyone from Earl Hines to Archie Shepp, have recorded several dozen lps under his own name on formerly-jazz-only labels like Blue Note or Prestige, have gained a page or two to himself in Leonard Feather's *Encyclopedia of Jazz*. It doesn't matter. The minute he joins Macho or Gumbo or Little Arnold and the Arrivists, by god, he ain't got *nothin'* to do with that (ugh!) jazz stuff. And don't forget it when you're writing that bio, boy.

Then there's the opposite side. The musicians themselves who object to the word because it is a musical label and they like to think of themselves as being above or outside of such identification, and also because — as Miles Davis has said — "It's a white man's word."

The two main arguments, the two main objections to the use of the word "jazz," then, seem to be (a) that it is not commercial and (b) that it is too commercial and, in fact, exploitative.

Stuff and nonsense.

First of all, let me say that — like any sensible person, I would imagine — I have no quarrel (I have no *right* to have any quarrel) with a musician calling or not calling his own music whatever he pleases. I mean, Miles can tell me he's playing *polkas*, for chrissake, and it'll be the same to me. The music that comes forth will still be as strong and rhythmic as hell.

But, beyond that, I happen to think that this whole anti-"jazz" thing is a bit ridiculous. It may not be the best possible combination of letters to describe the kind of music it purports to, but on the other hand, I don't care much for the carelessly self-serving pop etymology which tells us that "jazz" is "a white man's word." (Or that it had sexual connotations originally, or that it was a corruption of a man's nickname, "Chass," or...) One or more of these explanations of the word's origin may be correct. But I've yet to see anyone conclusively prove it. And etymology can be a fairly exact science, even in dealing with terms which are primarily folkloristic. (It might also be interesting to point out that, three or four years ago, a one-time-only black jazz magazine called *The Cricket* militantly suggested — with a straight face — that, since "jazz" was a white man's word, the type of music it used to refer to ought now to be labeled as "tripping"! Really!)

The point about language, the point that commonly gets forgotten these days by various newly self-aware minority groups, is that it is above all a utilitarian mode of communication. A term somehow begins to be applied to a certain act or fact or concept. Whatever the origins of the term and its application,

however grounded these origins might once have been in racism, sexism, or whatever, the fact remains that — unless a racist or sexist meaning is still, *currently* suggested by the term — there is no earthly reason to disregard it now. If "jazz," in other words, did indeed (for the sake of argument) originate as "a white man's word" and hence if it did once suggest an anti-black perjorative, that is certainly reprehensible. But surely it has been cleansed by now. Surely it now means something that is, more or less, commonly understood, mutually understandable.

As for the idea that "jazz" is death commercially, I would respectfully suggest that those who believe that to be so stick to bubblegum and blues and such. Jazz, as a word or as a kind of music, needs no apologies and no apologists. It is a vivid, vibrant, resilient musical form that will very likely survive as long as there is music of any kind at all. Jazz mixed with rock is still jazz. Jazz with an R&B rhythm track is still jazz. Jazz with strings and syrupy choirs is still (well...almost still) jazz.

And what, when all is said and done, is jazz? You all know the Louis Armstrong quote, of course, about "you ain't never gonna know." Beyond that, I can say only that I know what is and what isn't jazz. And I can't say exactly how. Sometimes it's the people playing the music; sometimes it's the music they're playing. Ornette's *Skies of America* is jazz to me (though some of his other orchestral and string writing is not); Gershwin is *not* jazz — this despite the fact that elements of *Rhapsody in Blue* might sound, momentarily, far more "jazzy" than elements of *Skies of America*. Chris Wood and Larry Willis, to pick two men at random, are jazz musicians to me, though they both work with ensembles that are only occasionally truly jazz groups. Jerry Garcia and Phil Lesh and Joe Bauer and such are *not* jazz musicians to me (neither is Frank Zappa), try as they might.

It's all incredibly arbitrary, subjective, probably bullheaded of me. All I can say, ultimately, is that I know jazz when I hear it. And so do you.

REVIEWS: NEVER LET IT END by the Albert Mangelsdorff Quartet (MPS 15274, distributed in the U.S. by BASF, who, for some reason, have given it an additional catalogue number: CRM 733), a fine, sometimes brilliant set by Europe's leading avant-garde trombonist — assisted by Heinz Sauer (a perfect tonal match for Mangelsdorff) on tenor and alto, Gunter Lenz on bass, and Rolf Hubner on drums — which manages to be surprisingly lyrical and restrained at times; MOVIN' ON by Oscar Brown, Jr. (Atlantic SD 1629), which is neither more nor less than one would expect from Brown, even after his six-year absence from recording, with plenty of chunky, sly songs about youth and bad, foxy ladies and funky streetcorners, all sung as ably as ever Brown has sung; WESTERING HOME by John Surman (Island HELP 10, in England only, thus far), whereon that superlative British reedman has composed and played, by himself, a variety of entertaining musical sequences (some percussion and some harmonica here and there, some leaping, taunting, unaccompanied reed lines, some electronic enhancement and enchantment, a good sense of dramatic counterpoint in places, a fine sense of reed textures almost everywhere, and — the very best parts — some songs which pit a solo reed voice against a riffing reed rhythm section, causing this listener, for one, to wonder what Surman would should like playing with Jimmy Giuffrè; MOUNTAIN IN THE CLOUDS by Miroslav Vitous (Atlantic SD 1622), which is an "altered form" of Vitous' previous solo lp, INFINITE SEARCH (Embryo SD 524), with one additional short track added, and which features John McLaughlin, Herbie Hancock, Joe Henderson, Joe Chambers, and Jack deJohnette, plus the leader's bass, playing

exactly as one would expect them all to play — which is very, very nicely; NEW VIOLIN SUMMIT (MPS 33 21286-8, this time with no additional BASF number attached), which features a quartet of violinists — Sugarcane Harris, Jean-Luc Ponty, an Austrian Gypsy called Nipso Brantner, and the Polish avant-garde stringman Michael Urbaniak — playing with a top-flight rhythm section including the remarkable guitar of Terje Rypdal and Wolfgang Dauner's keyboards and "electronic devices" (the title of the lp refers to a Ponty/Stephane Grappelly/Svend Asmussen/Stuff Smith concert in Basle in 1966, released on Prestige some years ago; *this* one was recorded at the 1971 Berlin Jazz Festival), the highlights of which are Ponty's 12½ minute unaccompanied *Flipping*, and the numbers on which all four violinists play against and for one

another, usually breaking down into Ponty's and Urbaniak's sophistication vs. Harris' and Brantner's raw, bluesy power; and SUN ROTATION by Association P.C. (MPS 21 21329-3, again with no BASF number), which might be called — in the best possible sense — good avant-garde European jazz for people who have, as yet had very little exposure to good avant-garde European jazz, since it is light without being frivolous (when was the last time you heard a drummer of the New Jazz using brushes?), at times positively festive, and nearly always well thought out (the personnel, none of them familiar to me but for the drummer, who once played with Gunther Hampel, includes Toto Blanke on guitars, Siggi Busch on electric and acoustic bass, Jasper van't Hof on electric piano and organ and drummer Pierre Courbois).

—Colman Andrews

DECEMBER'S BEST

1. Garden Party
2. Whistle Rymes
3. Pass The Chicken And Listen
4. They Only Come Out At Night
5. Don McLean
6. Flash Cadillac

Rick Nelson
John Entwistle
The Everly Bros.
Edgar Winter
Don McLean
Flash Cadillac

Decca
Decca
RCA
Epic
United Artists
Epic

DECEMBER'S HO-HUMS

1. The Magician's Birthday
2. Tommy
3. In The Can
4. Creedence Gold
5. Journey Through the Past
6. Transformer

Uriah Heep
Various Artists
Flash
Creedence Clearwater
Neil Young
Lou Reed

Mercury
Ode
Capitol
Fantasy
Warner Bros.
RCA

DECEMBER'S WORST

1. Sloppy Seconds
2. The O'Jays' Greatest Hits
3. I Am Woman
4. The Grand Wazoo
5. Europe '72
6. Batdorf And Rodney

Dr. Hook
The O'Jays
Helen Reddy
Frank Zappa
The Greatful Dead
Batdorf And Rodney

Columbia
United Artists
Capitol
Bizarre/Reprise
Warner Bros.
Asylum

Singles (From Page 10)

the material he sends is second rate (which is only natural as quality, innovative stuff numbers few)...Ron said "Ya know who these cats are don't cha? It's Vanda and Young, and they made a lot of money for United Artists back in 1968." Sure, Vanda and Young, they were to the Easybeats what Wood and Lynne are to the Move. And in some ways they're a better combination (since they have been able to stick together for so long).

Eyre said Capitol Records had turned down the master, wasn't interested in another foreign act...You see Capitol has first option on all EMI material in the States. Then it comes to UA. Well, I asked Ron to send out the single to Bill Roberts (my partner) or myself and we would listen close up.

It was about fourteen days later when one of the faces from the UA A&R Dept. plodded into my office with the single and expounded lazily, "Ah, say, here's that Marcus record from England you wanted to listen to..." Our A&R wizz-kid wasn't keen on this record, "Take a listen to it and see if it's any good." To say he wasn't motivated is to say little.

So, I call trusty ol' Greg Shaw, anglophile expert that he is, into my domain. With the A&R hopeful still present, I inform Greg who we were gonna listen to then dropped the cartridge. Hearing that repetitive fender staccato chording intro, Greg and I were, fifteen seconds in, jumpin' up and down to the music of the Easybeats reincarnated. All the promise Vander and Young implied with *Gonna Have A Good Time Tonight* in 1969 they live up to here. If you can imagine what the Easybeats would have sounded like four years on should they have stayed together, then you know what *Natural Man* is all about.

Wazit sound like? It's got a snare that tears speakers. It's got protest lyrics. It demands you dance. It's got Beatle

harmonies. It's got a riff the best this side of the Hollies' *Long Cool Woman* and *Heaven Knows* by the Grass Roots, and a hook, well, now I know the reason for the group's name...Towards the end of the record the riff slows, then stops, then builds through the use of: (1) a nasal lyric, (2) Cow 'Bell, (3) Sizzlin' guitar progression and, and, and...Then it leads into the most inherent repetitive verse: "In-it to the rhythm, in it to the top, everybody's talkin' to ya never gonna stop, well don't cha worry bout me, I'm a Natural Man...in it to the rhythm, in it to the top..." etc.

As is obvious, Greg and I beseeched the A&R people to jump on the side immediately, pick it up for our heroes, United Artists...Well, I'm not about to categorically list all the events that followed, all that matters is UA don't have it. And those folks who originally turned the side down, Capitol, they have decided to exercise their option after all...

But something real curious happened the other day though. Capitol's greatest asset, Ken Sasano, told me they reversed their decision once more and they didn't want the record after all. So I put in a call to the head of International A&R at the Tower and lightly queried him as to the company's position on the recording...*"Where the hell did you hear we weren't releasing the record. I heard Natural Man in July while in England and decided then to release it on Capitol. So whoever said we weren't puttin' it out, is crazy"*...My, my so defensive...The cat seemed really pissed there was any question at all...Why he was so adamant that I absolutely freaked when I found out the record still isn't released and it's now three months since they picked up the master. Rumor has it the record is comin' out sometime in January. Such priority.

So, in the meantime, you can only get *Natural Man* as an import on the EMI sub label *Regal Zonophone*. And it's worth the 2 bucks you'll have to lay down for it...The B side, *Boogalooing Is For Wooing* is a whole other subject...It's so great, I might just save it for the next column. (89 points, both sides.)

—Martin R. Cerf

**YOUR NOT A KID ANY MORE
RICK NELSON**

(Continued from page 21)

I found myself there one afternoon, not too long ago. The story on Rick Nelson had been brewing for some time — preliminary interviews, in fact, had been conducted in his canyon home several months before. *Garden Party* had come along, and was edging into the Top 10. Pressure for the story was building. Rick, happy with his success, was working on a follow-up album. This would be his first Top 10 single in eight years and eleven months. He didn't want to blow it.

Also, there were personal appearances to be considered. The hit wasn't a fluke; Rick and the Stone Canyon Band have been working a long string of first-nighters. And there was a country music convention in Nashville to be attended. Meet the jocks. Get your record played. Get your next record played. Record biz is at least half politics.

Interview time, then, was scarce. I had been asking for a couple of hours for several weeks; it just couldn't be arranged. Finally came the deadline. One last chance. "Well," said one of Rick's representatives, "He'll be talking to some guy from Rolling Stone this afternoon. If you want to, you can come down and sit in on that. Rick's finishing up the album, and then taking off to Nashville tomorrow morning."

And so there I was, in United's Studio B. There were Rick, his cousin and manager Willie, engineer "Captain" Mike Nemo, and one of the strangest excuses for a reporter I've ever seen. Far be it from me to pass judgment on another writer, but try to imagine a six-foot, 220-pound fellow, decked out in Levi's, scruffy high-top boots, and a plaid shirt and a straw cowboy hat: this right in the middle of Hollywood! The foul cigar didn't help much either; it couldn't have cost him more than 9 cents — that is, if he didn't pick it up in some gutter. It smelled of burning oil.

The interviewer, who called himself Del Porter (it figures!) was legit, all right. The regular *Rolling Stone* person had come down with a case of the rockin' pneumonia and couldn't make it. Unfortunately, ol' Del hadn't been doing his homework. Probably too busy listening to his Gene Autry records. Consequently, I would up asking most of

the questions, while Del scratched behind his ears and let the tape roll. And puffed on that cigar. Whew!

While Del ambled around the studio, checking out the lights and dials and looking for a paper cup, I asked the first question: what was the history of the Stone Canyon Band?

"Well, I'd gotten together with some outside producers, Koppelman and Rubin. They's been having a lot of success at the time, and I hadn't been. We figured that perhaps I should try something new. Through them, I got introduced to a lot of songwriters, like Tim Hardin, that I hadn't been familiar with before. Working with them was a good experience, but we didn't seem to be hitting anything that went down right with the public."

"So I decided to try again what I had in the very beginning — get together with some musicians that I liked, work things out with them, and form a regular band. We did that a couple of years ago. Randy Meisner had been working with Poco, and a couple of the others were in another group with him before then, the Poor. Tom Brumley, our steel player, had been with Buck Owens for quite a while, and then sort of dropped out to manufacture steel guitars."

Porter, having found a styrofoam cup, proceeded to spit into it before sitting down on the bench with us. Somehow, the conversation continued uninterrupted.

"The first version of the Stone Canyon Band had Alan Kemp and Pat Shanahan on lead guitar and drums, Meisner on bass and Tom on steel. We played the Troubadour in L.A., and recorded an album there. At about the same time, we put together the single *She Belongs to Me*. They both hit pretty well; it seemed to be a start in the right direction."

"Randy left the band a while back; he's been replaced by Steve Love. Otherwise, we're the same band. For three years, it was like starting all over again. We began in small clubs, and got going slowly; building a following among people who had discovered what we did. A lot of the people who like us now aren't familiar with the old records — that's ten to fifteen years ago, you know. And it's really only now, with the success of *Garden Party* that we're able to play the kind of places that we like. It's much more rewarding to me now than it was when I started...I can't really say that; it was a different thing then. But it's much more substantial now."

Porter got up and headed for a candy machine in the hall. I asked him for a

Rally bar. Rick continued.

"The reason I'm so happy that *Garden Party* is the record that really made it is because it's such a personal thing. I didn't think that many people would be able to relate to the song, because it was something that had happened to me."

"What happens, I think, is that people start by listening to the music. It's a pleasant tune, and catchy. After the people have heard it a few times, they begin to listen more to the words and discover what it's about. Some people, though, think that the song is about some desire I might have to return to the Fifties. It's really just the opposite, of course — I'm trying to put a stop to all that."

Porter came in just in time to hear the last couple of sentences. He scribbled a note on the back of a recording log, and handed me a Rolo roll. I wondered how his story would turn out. Suddenly, Porter surprised everybody in the room — enough so that Nemo dropped a reel of tape he'd been filing — by actually asking a question.

"What did you play the Madison Square Garden concert?"

"I never did like the idea of rock and roll revivals; it's too much like living in the past. I've never tried to run away from the past. I'm glad that I was around during that time. But it's not anything that I feel that I have to recapture. If it's taken in the right perspective, I think that doing old songs is fine. But I don't do a whole show of old songs — it's a sign of people just stopping."

"I'd been asked a lot to do that kind of show, but always turned them down. But I talked myself into doing that particular one by saying that it would be good to be seen by that many people, and that I could sneak in some new material. I'd never been to one of those shows. I didn't know anything about them, really, and what the people expected. If I'd been to one before, I wouldn't have done it."

"I couldn't have done it any differently than I did. What should I do — get my hair cut and put braces on my teeth? But I tried. We went back, and I relearned some songs that I hadn't done in years. We opened up with *Be-Bop Baby*."

"After a while, we did *She Belongs to Me*. There was a lot of grumbling in the audience. Then we did *Honky Tonk Woman*. The reaction was downright hostile. I didn't even consider doing any more new material after that."

"The audience there was a strange mixture of people. It's like they're true Fifties people, who wear their sweaters

and really believe. I think that they're people who would like to be thought of as bikers; sort of like weekend freaks, only in Fifties drag."

"I think that a lot of the audience is made up of people who missed it when it was all happening. There were a lot of people then who put rock and roll down and spent all their time listening to straight-ahead jazz. Now, they're trying to recapture what you just can't recapture."

Porter pulled out another cigar. He struck his match on his boot-heel and it lit. A neat trick; we were all quite impressed until we noticed the strip of sandpaper stapled to the rim of his heel. Rick's cousin snorted disapproval. Rick, undaunted by the gaucherie of the pseudo-cowboy, continued.

"It was kind of a depressing evening, but in a way it was good. It renewed my opinion of myself and what I should be doing, because it was obviously the wrong thing to do. You can't take something wrong and make it right."

Somehow I didn't feel like pointing out that people pay premium prices at oldies shows for, quite naturally, the purpose of hearing oldies. They may be living in the past, but that's their problem. They were entitled to their money's worth of oldies, and like many other artists currently playing the revival circuit, Rick had in a way cheated them. But this didn't seem the time for a philosophical discussion.

Porter excused himself. One last spit in the cup and it was off for the Aces Club.

There was time to listen to some cuts from the new album. Four were cut at the same sessions as *Garden Party*, the rest done since. The album's sound is a lot harder than we might expect of Rick; certainly more so than we might have expected after the single. Six of the ten songs are Nelson compositions, two are by Stone Canyon Band members and one is by Richard Stekol. The remaining tune, leading off side two, is Chuck Berry's *Talking About You*. Recording tricks are kept pretty subliminal; the most noticeable being an odd double-track-with-echo on the pretty *Are You Really Real*. Rick, who started by recording on one track, cut this album on 24. But he's still not a victim of overproduction.

Like it or not, though, Rick does maintain his links with the past. United's Studio B is the same studio — exactly — where he cut most of his Imperial hits.

And the magic still seems to work. It'd better. There are still eleven years to go on that Decca contract!

**THE INCREDIBLE
STRING BAND**

(Continued from page 12)

introduced the idea on his earlier solo album, but it hadn't hit the group yet), a rock novella called *Darling Belle*, which is perhaps their most effective extended work to date and the first noticeable limitation on excessive numbers of instruments. The album's title perhaps provided some significant notions: the ISB had collectively become the liquid acrobats, capable of doing surprising new tricks. Prior to this, they had remained true to their image as "troubadours of the global village." The album's title does not refer to any of the album's songs, and the ISB don't waste words. It is not unreasonable to assume a possible reference to themselves.

Between ACROBAT and EARTHSPAN, the development went further. Mike Heron began scoring arrangements for ISB tracks in earnest. Robin improved his fiddle playing to an accomplished level, Malcolm and Licorice raised their composing to admirable standards. The String Band's creativity was group-wide, though still dominated by Robin and Mike (now referring to

himself mostly as Heron). Their new album exhibits this creativity quite well. Malcolm's *My Father Was A Lighthouse Keeper* is a stunning, impressive opener; the nicely premediated arrangement creates a perfect oceanic feeling for this song about a tryst on the beach and a father's symbolic omniscience. Robin's work shows an increasing interest in jazz as well as in the use of bowed instruments. Mike and Licorice collaborate on a semi-epic view of people's understanding of religion. The instrumental performances are as good as ever but much better integrated, making the band sound almost tight at times (their ability to keep things loose, typified especially by the group's individual and ensemble vocals, has, until EARTHSPAN, been a dominating force in their ethos). In England, a rousing re-recording of Heron's oldie, *Black Jack Davy*, will be a single record. In America, Reprise leans towards *Lighthouse Keeper*. Elektra never had such a luxury.

Since EARTHSPAN, Licorice went on what appears to be an extended vacation, missing a North American tour and perhaps some European dates. Robin expects her back early in 1973. In the meantime, an old friend, jazz reed player Gerard Dott, joined to further permutate the group. Gerard had been a friend of both Robin and Heron's from way back, and his joining continues the tradition set by Rose, Licorice and Malcolm. When, and if, Likky returns, the ISB will officially be five, but on stage on tour in America, 1972, they were already more amorphous than even that.

"When we need someone extra to play an instrument," explains Robin, "they

come on stage and play."

Those extras include Jacko-the-equipment-manager, another alumnus of Stone Monkey who is constantly on stage and occasionally plays anything from bass to guitar to reeds. And Janet Shankman Williamson, who plays flute and sings. And Susan Watson-Taylor, from their management wing, who sings. And Stan-the-roadie, a former Bill Graham employee who now handles sound and technical aspects, plays bass on stage occasionally and has also recorded the ISB.

The group's on-stage arsenal of exotic instruments has certainly calmed down: guitars, basses, drums, organs, pianos and amplifiers now dominate, plus Gerard's reeds, and occasional mandolins and what-have-you still cropping up here and there.

Now, all this new-fangled complication/simplification for the ISB may not seem so startling in the ever-quickenning pace of the world of big money pop music, but there's an interesting punch line. The Incredible String Band, once partners in elfin rock with Tyrannosaurus Rex, now have the same manager as T. Rex: Mr. Tony Howard. Mr. Howard coordinated the fall '72 T. Rex and ISB American tours so he could be in the States with both groups simultaneously, taking care of details as required.

Recent developments indicate that whatever similar attractions T. Rex and the String Band might have for someone like Howard should not be such a surprise to long-time ISB devotees, who otherwise would probably dread to compare the two artistically. It is not strange that the

ISB should seek to communicate with more people. That's how Marc Bolan explains his own transition. It is definitely no mistake that the ISB should take considerably more time effecting their transition. Bolan's was rather abrupt, subsequently serving to further cast doubt on an artistic reputation which already suffered by comparison to that of the ISB. If the Incredible String Band succeed in gaining any amount of commercial acceptance, they will stamp themselves as one of the first bands to truly parlay their own steady natural growth into commercial growth. The ISB have over a dozen albums out. For various reasons, they have and always will sound like the ISB, no matter how many new liquid acrobatics they learn to perform.

DISCOGRAPHY

The Incredible String Band (Elektra)
The 5000 Spirits or Layers of the Onion (Elektra)
The Hangman's Beautiful Daughter (Elektra)
Wee Tam (Elektra)
The Big Huge (Elektra)
Changing Horses (Elektra)
I Looked Up (Elektra)
U (Elektra)
Smiling Men With Bad Reputations — Mike Heron (Elektra)
Be Glad For the Song Has No End (Island-UK)
Liquid Acrobat As Regards The Air (Elektra)
Myrrh — Robin Williamson (Island-UK)
Earthspan (Reprise)

Rock Culture (From page 18)

kind of noise, but lines will be drawn nevertheless. Also, leader Ted Nugent has a reputation as one of the most pompously egotistical assholes in the music business (although the one time I talked to him he just seemed like a nice, quiet dude), anti-dope to the point of "punishing" members of his band for indulging in the killer weed, that kind of schmuckoid malarkey. Certifiable fact is that when it comes to guitar playing he ain't Jimi Hendrix even though it's obvious he thinks he is. Last time I saw the Dukes they was with Brownsville Station down in Macon, Georgia and it was the last night for their most recent lead singer, one John Angelos who gained some measure of notoriety as leading light of Mighty Quick, a band so gross they managed to offend large segments of the tastemaking elite of our counterculture at the Alternative Media Conference in Vermont way back in '70. Well, Mighty Quick wuz done in by the bad publicity off that event, but I talked to Angelos and got a chance to leaf through the Mighty Quick songbook in the spring of '71, and surprisingly or not those "offensive" songs were some of the best hardass verbal jive to come out of the whole Detroit boom. *Damn* them politicos for not seeing the truth and beauty of lines like:

**You're crusin' for a brusin' baby
I'm goin' upside your head
With a tuna sandwich club baseball bat!**

Ostracism apparently took its toll on John Angelos, too, because by the time I saw him with the Dukes he was reduced to a third rate Rod Stewart parody, pure Sunset Strip Whisky A Go Go hangout in his shag haircut and the way he hobbled and clutched his lapels while he sang.

When his warble chores stopped and time came for Nugent's guitar forays, John A. would walk right off the bandstand and straight to the dressing room, which didn't say much for Duke solidarity. But then neither did their sound. I wish both John and the Nugent crew the best. Not that they give two farts.

Brownsville Station are another band who have survived the initial Midwestern hype and being tossed about by record companies to hold their own on the national scene. Like Seger, they have had their ups and downs and persevered for what seems like centuries without ever quite becoming a household word. This year they have come back especially strong, being one of the supreme moments of the Mar y Sol Festival in Puerto Rico and establishing themselves everywhere they go as one of the most thoroughly entertaining stage show bands on the venue. They may triumph yet.

That's about it, though. The scene has declined to the point that nobody really expects much more than the absolute perfunctories anymore, and all that talk about "high energy" seems to have gotten sidetracked somewhere. To live in Detroit or the Midwest today is to bide your time, cognizant and sensate of the utter mediocrity which currently dominates, aware also that the story's largely the same on both coasts and across the pond. If only you don't let those endless wastes of flat dead land get to you, if only the rubbly beyond-pollution *drabness* of the Midwest doesn't do you in, if you pull the reigns in shy of that one too many Quaalude (and Crumb was never more right on than when he sed: "*Motown is trunk city*") that'll cancel your subscription to any resurrection at all, if you hold out and hang in there and keep socking back that wine and playing your Stones and Five and Stooges and Mott the Hoople and David Bowie and Brownsville Station and Bob Seger and Amboy Dukes and Velvet Underground and Magic Terry and the Universe and

Blue Oyster Cult and Stalk Forrest Group and Soft White Underbelly and Autosalvage and Slade and Deep Purple and Black Sabbath and Grand Funk and Dust albums, just maybe you'll weather the drought. I've been here for the better part of the past 18 months, and I'm beginning to learn not to mind it half as much. Then again, you might not have that much patience.

DUNCED-OUT: POST-CULTURAL DETROIT

Detroit's a nice place to be from. If you teethed in this burgh and made it out at a reasonable age you can cop a degree of macho charisma, because Detroit still means that to a lot of people. If you're still stuck here, though, you just have to bear with it. Because it's no place to live. San Francisco is still running on the myth of its mid Sixties rock 'n' roll renaissance, which is only one of the things that makes it a constant pain in the ass, but Detroit, even though it went through something similar a couple of years later, doesn't even try to justify itself with those crippled nostalgias. Because everybody in Detroit knows this is nowhere. There's some people who'll actually claim that they're proud of this muck, even defend these lousy below zero winters against the Coast state of constant spring, as if endless ice was some kind of forge you proved yourself on. But they're only justifying themselves. Why did you sit in the pit so long? Because I didn't know how to move.

My car is a perfect metaphor for how I feel about Detroit. I bought it for \$300 between Tuinals last spring, and it's never worked good since. Not that I expected it to. I went to California for awhile, and when I came back there was a new battery in there. Brand: Motor City Batteries. Still didn't run. Got it charged up, went

to this station and that garage, different story every stop: You need a new battery. No it ain't the battery, you need a new alternator. Generator, Regulator. Points. Plugs. Wait. Found some mechanics I trusted, let 'em put in new gizmos all around that Motown jewel, shiny new regulator alternator 40 50 dollars, still didn't run. Dunced out and broke, finally hit big on freelance checks and went out and got a new battery and lordy me it do run. Meanwhile no muffler, got stopped one night in Ann Arbor last month and now there's a warrant out for my arrest there. Guy that sold me the car took off for Europe before he could pass the registration papers on, so I stole license plates off a Ford station wagon he left in somebody's driveway which later burned up. Tonite I blitzed my brain with noise to cap the weekend and took off just in time for the Late Late Show to the office to type these rants. Blasting up the street and straight into a vast puddle, new laid with the Sunday evening fall rains that hit suddenly enough they warned us special on TV. Board 'em up, folks. I plowed right into the water and doused my engine, so I pulled over and waited. Trusting in that brannew battery to get me rolling again in no flat time. And it did. I just kept turning that ignition all the way over, grinding the engine against the wet, and at length the beast came around just like I knew it would, and I got here. That's Detroit. Vast rusty machinery with a torpid beauty of its own but if you wait long enough it always gets you there on time. And you tolerate more than you forgive.

Even people who grew up here will admit it's the drabest place in the world, but then they sock their weirdo pride in it straight to your befuddlement, and what can you say? Obviously they're even more dunced out than you are. But then again if you're gonna live in Detroit, especially these days, it's the only way to be.

Performances (From Page 5)

sidewalk. "Move." "Go Home." The few longhairs seems to be the special targets of the officers' pushes. "You better move or you're getting gassed." A student comes up to the band and urges "you guys better be off to play somewhere else." Flash to the Sunset Strip, 1966.

Kristina has been on the road for three years "paying dues." The road is arduous. Kristina plays four hours a night at Market West. At times, it's 7 hours week-nights and 10 hours weekends. "If it don't happen soon," starts Kristina... "it ain't gonna happen" replies Jim (bass player). But, they don't really believe that. They climb into their well-traveled cars to return again Sunday night for another round. In two weeks it's the Angora in Cleveland, a step up on the ladder to success, a recording contract, and maybe just maybe, fame. Until then, the bars, small stages, and audience noise will continue.

—R. Serge Denisoff

Hollywood (From Page 8)

documentary (including footage of their Jamaica recording sessions), half performance with FM stereo simulcast...Tough, ain't it Doug? By the time you read this you may have heard of the Roxie Theater, but remember that as of press time it's a *scoop*. It used to be the Largo burlesque house, but Peter Asher, Lou Adler, Whisky owner Elmer Valentine and Darling David Geffen have turned it into a Troubadour-type club. Has Weston got somebody on option who can match a bill of James Taylor and Carole King?...

I Am Wealthy: Is it true that the reason Helen Reddy went into the studio to record her smash single and album is that her hubby/manager told her that if she wanted that new Mercedes she'd just have to get it herself?...Being Scene:

Those dreamy little Williams Bros., Andy and Dave, at the Forum with Dad (that's big Andy's brother) for concerts by the Jackson 5 and Elton John. Chris Thomas producer of Procol Harum and Christopher Milk, and at the moment of John Cale, guzzling at the bar of the Imperial Gardens, in the shadow of the Chateau Marmont. Members of Captain Beyond at the Whisky for Little Richard and Sylvester. Luscious Mark Warner, best known so far for his Cover Girl Makeup theme, at the Bistro with Cybil Shepherd. Seems there was a bit of a tiff, though, and Mark showed up later at Rodney Bingenheimer's E Club, sans his cover girl. Finally, Ziggy Stardust, upstairs at the Rainbow, drinking alone behind three bodyguards. Ah, the price of fame...

Don't you think there should be more double bills (that's d.b.) with attention paid to the initials of the groups? Like a d.b. of D.B. (the Doobie Brothers) and D.B. (David Bowie). They were just a week apart at the Santa Monica Civic, but the Doobies got stuck playing with that horrendous little cretin M.B. and his T.R...Speaking of initials, Lisa suggests that Christopher Milk move into the Chateau Marmont and reports that the Bee Gees have been in the Record Plant recording an album for next August release. Also in the works for the Brothers Bigg is a soundtrack for the new film version of Peter Pan, with the title role to be filled by Miss Incomparable, Liza — with a Z...

Keith Moon was reached by phone in a London pub by his buddies in Sha Na Na and flew out here a day later to MC their Santa Monica concert and then carry on afterwards at the group's shipboard party in picturesque San Pedro Harbor. Just in case, luscious host Bob Gibson (yum) made sure there was a bottle of 200 Dramamine aboard. He should have supplied them to the homebound buses, where they would have really come in handy, if you know what I mean. It was

quite a bash, with those bizarre boys from Sha Na Na completely ignoring their manager's memo warning them not to rock the boat...

Yes, rock and roll is here to stay, and so, dears, is Lisa. With an S.

—Miss Lisa Rococo

Britain (From Page 6)

paying the doorman two pounds each which was our bus fare back home! We almost made it to the elevator but then some official noticed Terrie's green satin Mr. Freedom baseball jacket which she had written DONNY across the back in diamantes (which looks terrific). So this official threw us out, but while he was hassling with us about a skillion kids crashed through the doors and it was really crazy for a while. Suddenly there was screaming outside in the street, so me and Ter ran out and guess what? Right up there on the 5th floor, Donny was waving from his personal window. I thought I'd die. Everybody was jumping up and down.

The Jackson Five fans were real mad I think, cause Michael didn't wave to them from his personal window, so they started shouting for the 5. And guess what happened???Well, right up there on the roof of the Churchill Hotel the Jackson 5 put on a concert for their fans. They were singing and dancing and so was everybody out on the street. I couldn't believe it! I looked up to the window to where Donny was, but he wasn't there anymore. But I didn't even care cause I was having such a good time dancing to the Jackson 5. Terrie got real excited and gave away her Donny baseball jacket and we both sold our tickets to the Osmond's concert at the Rainbow for a lot of bread which paid our bus fare home that night, with enough left over to buy Jackson 5 concert tickets at Wembley, Nov. 12.

The very next day me and Terrie went to this ticket agency on Shaftesbury Avenue to get our J5 tickets and there was this lady of about 25 in line in front

of us who bought 7(!) J5 tickets. The lady got very excited when the guy behind the counter told her that somebody named Junior Walker and the All Stars was gonna be with the Jacksons. She turned around to us and shouted "Shot gun!" and then walked out of the ticket agency singing Michael's record, "Ole rockin' robin, we're really gonna rock tonight." We'll probably sit next to her at the concert cause we bought tickets right after her, so maybe she'll tell us who this Junior Walker is anyway.

Well, Marty and Greg, I've got to go now. Me and Terrie are making our best banner yet for the J5 concert. It's 12 feet long and 7 feet high and we're gonna write "ROCK AROUND THE TIMEX" (after that famous film I've heard about).

Love always,
Lady Bangla Boom

Letters (From Page 3)

All this was said in your write-up of their concert. It is too bad you are fooling so many people into believing your fabrications. Can't you face up to the truth Adny, or Andy, or whatever your phony name is??

Sandra Warren
Maple Heights, Ohio

Are you kidding?!? — Ed.

Reviews (From Page 27)

Steeleye Span albums are a convert means of urging you to pick up on all four LP's, which constitute a body of traditional rock second only to Fairport's, qualitatively speaking, and even more extensive. since BELOW THE SALT is readily available for the nonce, it can be used as a convenient introduction, but if you like it, you should waste no time in tracking down the others.

—Ken Barnes

THE NEW ALBUM

DON MCLEAN



THE RAINBOW COLLECTION



United Artists Records and Tapes

SPLIT ENDS/THE MOVE



There's a lot to say about the Move, which is one reason why everybody seems to be talking about them.

There's Do Ya of course, that amazing single which may just be the record industry's all-time fluke of a non-hit. Do Ya has made legitimate underdogs of the Move, and aroused their faithful fans in righteous wrath. Their next record won't escape the charts so easily.

Next record? What an understatement. A veritable barrage of releases from the prolific Wood/Lynne/Bevan team is about to descend, the biggest English Invasion since the Beatles had eight records on the charts. Coming in January is the second album by Jeff Lynne's Electric Light Orchestra, an incredible affair that makes the first sound like SWITCHED-ON BACH. Then there's the first LP by Roy Wood's new group, Wizzard. Then in March Roy's famous unreleased solo album, BOULDERS is coming out, and the critics had better start storing up superlatives for the day they hear it.

That's plenty to talk about right there, but we're not done. Any day now, as you read this, stores will begin receiving copies of the new Move album — the same stores that frustrated you by not stocking Do Ya.

SPLIT ENDS is not strictly a new album. It includes five songs from their last album, MESSAGE FROM THE COUNTRY, and is filled out with all the odd singles released since then. Tonight and Chinatown, unheard by all but the most diligent Move fans, are included, as well as Down on the Bay, California Man and, of course, Do Ya.

Furthermore, SPLIT ENDS contains not one, but two complete sets of liner notes. Ben Edmonds of Creem gives a thorough and entertaining history of the group, and Richard Cromelin adds a diverting essay on their recent doings and general significance. With the addition of vintage photos and a snazzy cover, SPLIT ENDS becomes the most ambitious Move album yet, and a fitting caper to the first phase of their career.

What comes next promises to be even more exciting, but we'll leave that for you to tell us about. We're excited enough by SPLIT ENDS.

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