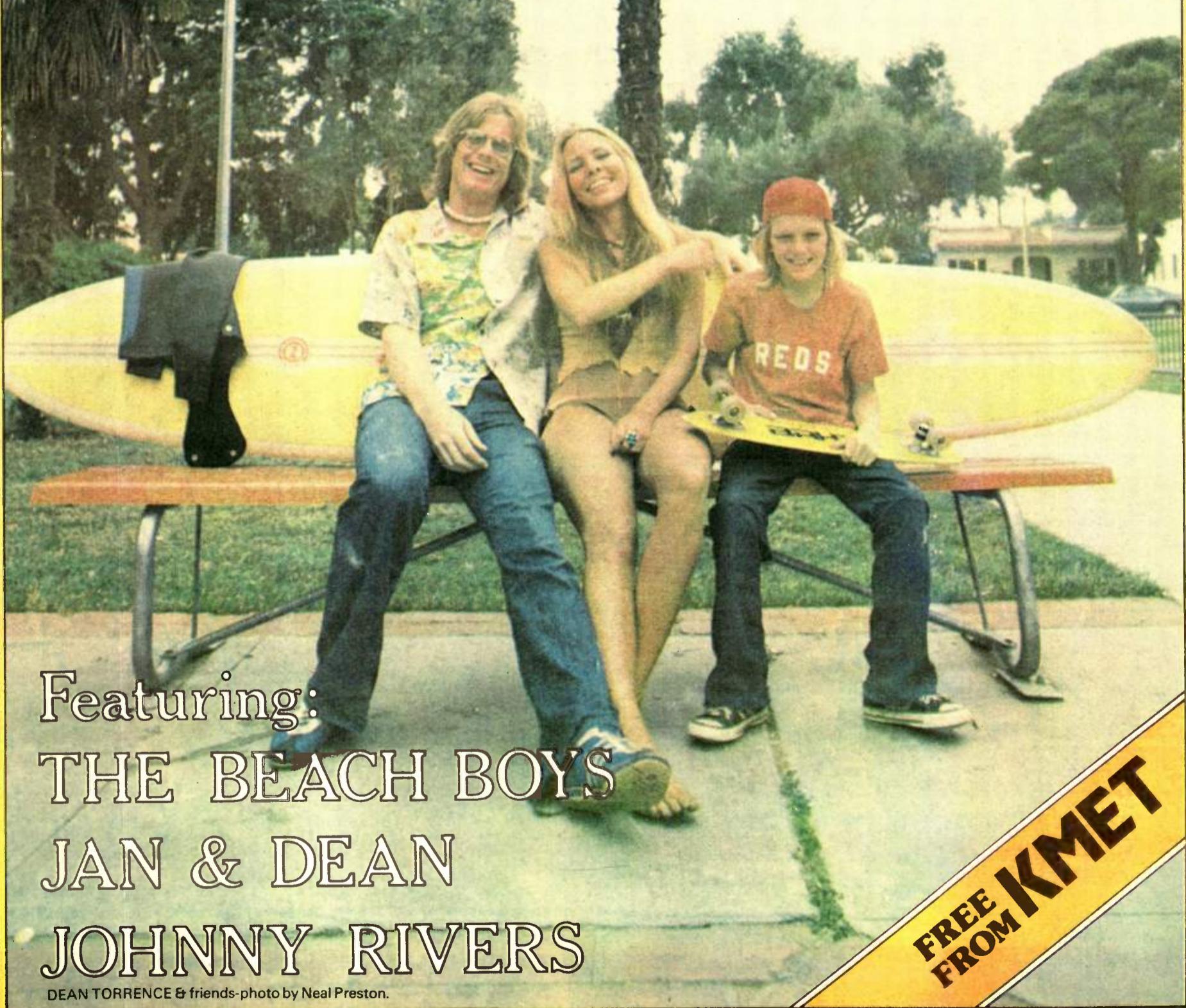


THE LOS ANGELES

# PHOTOGRAPH

RECORD MAGAZINE

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TWO FINE PEOPLE

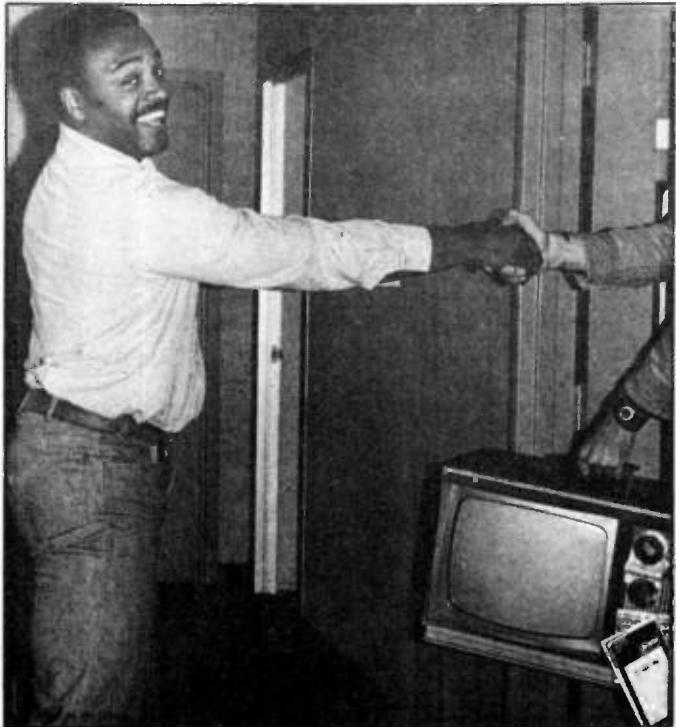
ON A&M RECORDS

Produced by Cat Stevens and Paul Samwell-Smith



# KMET Presents

## BROWSER BENSON CONTEST WINNERS



Grand Prize Winner:  
PHIL MENDEZ, Anaheim, Ca.



Grand Prize Winner: PHIL MENDEZ (above, left) receives his TV set from Browser Benson (right). You'll notice how close Mr. Mendez came to capturing Browser's actual likeness. So that the runners-up don't feel too bad, we hasten to point out that when he arrived at the KMET Studios for the awards presentation, we learned that Mr. Mendez is a character designer for the Disney Studios.



Runner Up: MICHAEL SPIEGLER — Los Angeles, Ca.



Runner Up: ROY WILLIAMS — Venice, Ca.



Runner Up: KIM WILLIAMS — Fullerton, Ca.



Runner Up: BILL LATHROP — Manhattan Beach, Ca.

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# PHONOGRAPH

RECORD MAGAZINE

July, 1975

Volume 5, Number 10

Issue # 59

## THIS MONTH

### THE BEACH IS BACK:

Summer is here and Phonograph investigates the current popularity of skateboards and the attendant revival of surf music, which has made the Beach Boys both a hot chart act and one of the top-grossing live acts. Other artists contributing to this renaissance, like Jan & Dean, Johnny Rivers, the Captain & Tennille, Marilyn Wilson and Diane Rovell, are examined in-depth by several of our best writers.....12

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**ON A&M RECORDS**

# PERFORMANCES

## BOB MARLEY AND THE WAILERS

Wollman Skating Rink  
New York City, New York

By MITCHELLS. COHEN

It was the first one of those muggy nights this season, when the air is so close it cuts down your breathing, that Bob Marley brought his Wailers to town for an outdoor concert. The atmosphere seemed appropriate in many ways: the humidity, the sweat of thousands of bodies brought together, is what the Wailers' brand of reggae feeds on. It's body heat, warm weather music, sensuous and smoldering, with a violent tension just barely hidden beneath the deceptively simple surface. This is a sound that could set inner cities on flame, and the multi-racial, nearly sold-out audience was feeling its strength by the end of the set, chanting in unison, "Don't give up the fight!" as Marley shook his dreadlocks and the

that something special was in the thick New York City air. After a ballad, "Midnight River," the Wailers went into the bulk of their show, which relied on a large percentage of the tracks from their landmark *Natty Dread* album, performing all of side one, starting with an invitation to "Lively Up Yourself." The strength of Marley's music is in its righteous, revolutionary force combined with a recognition that we can dance in the midst of repression, and this strength was communicated in person. The anger of "Them Belly Full" and "3 O'Clock Roadblock" doesn't prevent Marley from celebrating human energy, from telling his listeners to "Forget your troubles and dance," not meaning "forget," of course, but just the opposite: keep them in mind, but don't let them keep you down.

The set ended with "I Shot the Sheriff" in a more harsh, adamant version than we know courtesy of Eric Clapton, and the encore was "Talkin'



CHUCK KRALL

•Is there a Natty Dread in your future?

band kept up that ominously persistent rhythm.

Seeing the Wailers live made one wonder once again why Jamaican reggae is so slow to catch a fire in the States. It's so passionate, so infectious and so unaffected that in some sense it is where rock'n'roll was two decades ago; danceable music with an underlying social comment. Reggae achieves the kind of synthesis that I usually think unsustainable: politically explicit music that also works as body music; and Marley is at its dramatic center. His set built slowly, accumulating power as it went on. The Wailers, consisting of the band that played and including two women singers, make small variations seem like major shifts in direction, and it's the relatively minimal music that allows this to occur: the sparse beat kept so steadily by the Anderson brothers rhythm section, the scratchy chording, the simple keyboard patterns.

By the third or fourth song, "Kinky Reggae," Marley began to loosen up, doing a sloppy, rambling dance across the stage, flapping his arms and moving his head, and the crowd began to sense

Blues" followed by the song that had the crowd up on its feet, singing assertive phrases with Marley. The Wailers play crisp, provocative music, but Marley is an imposing figure, along with Toots Hibbert, reggae's most charismatic vocalist. One wasn't prepared, however, for his stage presence, his shortcuts of language, his uninhibited movement. Marley's music sinks into you, driven by commitment and beat, and it should be heard by the largest possible number of people. If the Wailers visit your area, don't dare miss them. Reggae is the bona fide rebel music, and Bob Marley is a genuine rock hero.

STEPHEN STILLS  
Pine Knob Music Theatre  
Detroit, Michigan

By DAVID FANDRAY

Halfway through the concert, Steve Stills looked up from a banjo he had just picked up and confided to the audience, "This is the best band I ever played with." The veteran of two of this country's most legendary bands then nodded in satisfaction as he caught the

audience's expectedly astonished reaction.

Better than the Buffalo Springfield? Better than Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young? No doubt about it, he confirmed after the show. Referring to bassist George Perry, Stills said ecstatically, "I've never had a bass player who was always there—right where I wanted him to be." And, then, there was guitarist Donnie Dacus. Stills claimed that working with Donnie reminded him of the way it had been with Neil Young back in the Springfield days. His praise for the rest of the band was equally lavish and enthusiastic.

Stills' enthusiasm was not confined to his joy in the Pin Knob bar after the show, it had been in ample evidence throughout the concert. It was this enthusiasm, coupled with the magic aura that quite naturally surrounds the grand old men of rock and roll, that made Stills' performance thoroughly enjoyable. For, in spite of ten days of rehearsal at the celebrated Caribou Ranch, the musical side of this, the summer tour's opening show, was surprisingly ragged and uneven.

Stills and his Stray Gator band opened with a spirited electric set. Upon taking the guitar-strewn stage, they first warmed up the crowd with two familiar numbers, "Love the One You're With" and "Wooden Ships." From there, Stills lead the band through a diverse selection of songs that took in material from all phases of his career—ranging from his new solo LP to the Buffalo Springfield days.

This set climaxed with Neil Young's "The Loner." The completion of this song left the audience in a somewhat dazed state. The combination of three guitars, keyboards, bass, drums, and percussion during the set had seemed very much out-of-control. The overall sound had come out too rough and jumbled; too loud. Stills' guitar work had been a little too piercing and his vocals featured more shouting than singing. The set had been fun for both the band and the audience, but few had the illusion that any momentous music had been played.

This set, however, led into a solo acoustic set featuring Stills and his impressive collection of guitars, banjos, and dobros. The songs themselves were relaxed and smooth compared to the frenzy of the preceding electric set. Stills played a wide variety of traditional folk and blues tunes, but drew the most enthusiastic response for such old favorites as "4 and 20."

Following the acoustic set, the Stray Gators returned for two songs without Stills. These were crisp, refreshing rockers that had the balance and control that were missing during the first electric set.

It went well until the final two songs of the show, during which all hell seemed to break lose. During these, the control that had been established at the beginning of the set was lost. Stills and Dacus began to indulge in screaming guitar antics worthy of Ritchie Blackmore, and the Gators became lost in a muddle of sound reminiscent of an overdriven riff-rock band.

Sloppy as it was, however, the power and enthusiasm on stage fired up the audience enough to make it call for the obligatory encore. Stills and company complied with an electric arrangement of "Suite: Judy Blue Eyes" that was noteworthy only because no one in the band seemed to remember the words to the song.

Despite the difficulties, the show was good, and showed the promise of better performances later in the tour. Both Stills and the band showed moments of brilliance, and their enthusiasm was totally infectious. Few would claim that sheer musical competence is all there is to a good rock and roll show, and the majority of those at Pine Knob that night would undoubtedly agree.

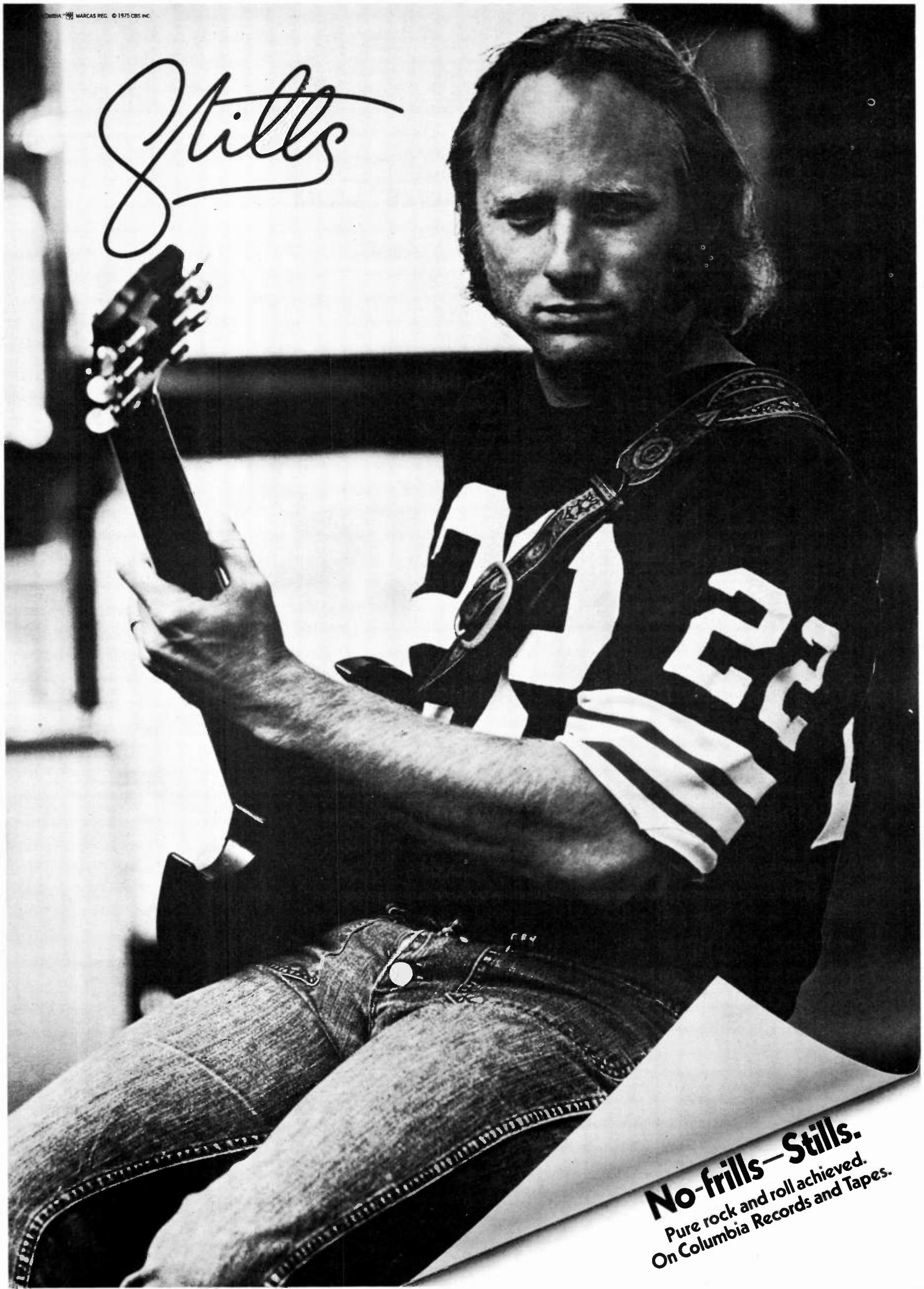
JEFF BECK  
MAHAVISHNU ORCHESTRA  
Music Hall  
Houston, Texas

By MICHAEL POINT

The Beck/Mahavishnu tour, an unusual if not unprecedented venture, ended here with a three hour display of guitar fireworks before a sold-out crowd of over 3,000 instrumental rock fans. It was a solid and eminently enjoyable show from Mahavishnu's shining opening set all the way to the frenzied finish which saw the combined might of both bands racing through something that resembled McLaughlin's "Marbles" from the pre-Mahavishnu days. A lot of end-of-tour energy release was evident both in the final jam and in most of the show preceding it and it definitely made an already exciting evening more interesting.

The Mahavishnu Orchestra continues to amaze with its ability to mutate into new musical organisms that nevertheless remain firmly identifiable through the continuity provided by McLaughlin's machine-gun guitar stylings. The group appears individually weaker than previous editions but emerges as a much more versatile and unified band that is still capable of matching the firepower of the other groups as a whole. McLaughlin is delving into electronic effects fairly often now with considerable success as well as frequently operating with an obviously fun/soul foundation that lends an entirely new aspect to the group's music. Two fine horn players and a three-piece string section provide an almost endless variety of musical possibilities for McLaughlin to explore and he did precisely that during the hour and a half he was on stage at the opening of the show.

Jeff Beck entered to a standing ovation and set about repaying the trust the audience had demonstrated by ripping through most of the material on *Blow by Blow* with an amazing assortment of razor sharp licks. Beck seems to be at his peak as a polished yet powerful guitarist and the *Blow by Blow* material when stripped of the superfluous strings and embellishments on the album is strong stuff indeed. Despite the presence of jazz master Bernard Purdie on drums the sound of Beck's quartet is definitely rock-oriented and Beck's sound on guitar as well as his general stage demeanor remains that of a top gun in the English flash guitar league. "Superstition" was the most rocking moment of the show but Beck neither let up nor slowed down at any point in his set. If he continues to blaze with such a white-hot intensity while Eric the Great opts for doing "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot" and little Jimmy Page confines himself to coasting along with a hit group there will undoubtedly be a re-evaluation of just which Yardbird came out on top. Beck was untouchable here and it will take a good deal of catching up for anyone to keep pace with him in the foreseeable future.



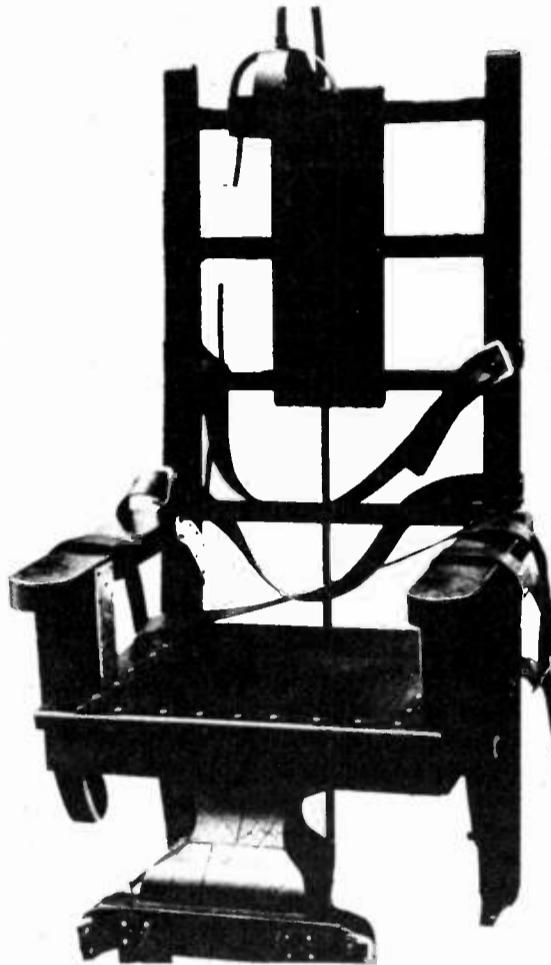
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# KMET Presents

## ELECTRIC CHAIR CONTEST WINNERS



Electrifying Anjanette Comer, who co-stars with Tony Curtis in "LEPKE," presents the lucky ticket to electric chair winner Paul Churnside . . . obviously shocked at his current good fortune.

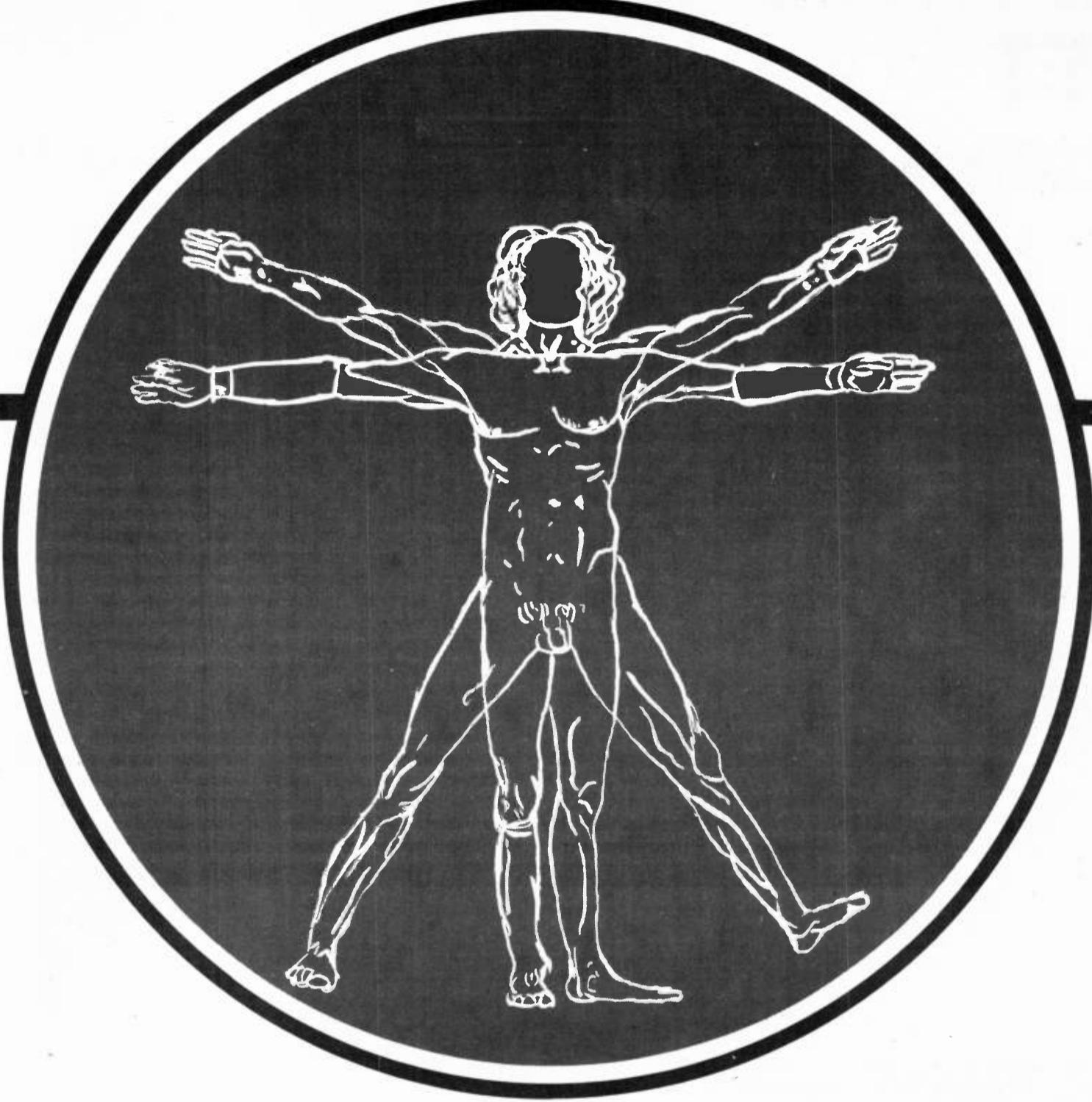


Announcer on "The Great American Rock Album Countdown" (heard every Sunday on KMET 2 PM-5 PM) and world famous disk jockey Johnny Flayme attempts to catch the winning ticket by the stick of his nose.



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7/14 Michigan State University, East Lansing  
7/15 McMorran Auditorium, Port Huron, Mich.  
7/18 Century II Convention Center, Wichita, Kansas  
7/19 Arrowhead Stadium, Kansas City, Mo.  
7/20 Ambassador Theater, St. Louis  
7/23 Civic Center, Amarillo, Tex.  
7/24 Will Rogers Auditorium, Ft. Worth, Tex.  
7/25 Municipal Auditorium, Shreveport, La.  
7/26 Municipal Coliseum, Jackson, Miss.  
7/29 Civic Auditorium, West Palm Beach, Fla.

7/30 Curtis Hixon Hall, Tampa, Fla.  
8/6 Place de Nations, Montreal  
8/9 Maple Leaf Gardens, Toronto  
8/10 National Art Center, Ottawa  
8/12 Pine Knob Theater, Detroit  
8/15 Stamford Catholic High School, Stamford, Conn.  
8/16 Convention Center, Asbury Park, N.J.  
8/17 Temple Music Festival, Ambler, Pa.  
8/25 Shaeffer Festival, Central Park, New York City  
8/27 Calderon Theater, Hempstead, N.Y.  
*Booking by William Morris Agency*



# KRAMER ENTERTAINMENT REVIEW

by EZRA SACKS

## FUNNY LADY

Sequels always worry me . . . they have to fight against either good memories . . . or bad feelings . . . but in either case . . . they come with a history . . . Funny Lady . . . the maturation of Funny Girl . . . is no exception . . . in this case . . . the memories were good . . . and the offspring is the equal if not the better . . . Barbra Streisand . . . star of stars . . . continues her role as Fanny Brice . . . once again . . . she's a standout . . . her acting . . . her comic timing . . . her singing . . . yes, is all Streisand . . . but Streisand and Fanny Brice are perfect for each other . . . and who's who is a mute question . . . what makes Funny Lady the film that Funny Girl wasn't . . . is Jimmy Caan . . . he's sensational . . . and if Caan ain't a superstar already . . . he's certainly a super-talent . . . his Billy Rose is one of the silver screen's truly wonderful characterizations . . . it's his ability to play opposite such a strong talent as Streisand . . . and do more than just hold his own . . . or be a mute foil . . . that makes Streisand's performance itself all the better . . . she needs a strong co-star . . . or the film would have suffered . . . Streisand and Caan . . . what a terrific team . . . Funny Lady . . . even in Hollywood's dream factory . . . sometimes things get better.

## PINK PANTHER

The Return of the Pink Panther is the return of Peter Sellers to one of his best roles ever . . . that of the bumbler without par . . . Inspector Clouseau of the French gendarmes . . . laden with slapstick and running gags . . . the sequel may be, unfortunately five years too late, it doesn't work all together as well as it might have . . . not to say that laughs don't echo in roars from the audience, they certainly do . . . and the lines around the Pacific Cinerama Dome are there to prove . . . lines that bring back remembrance of the movie goers waiting to get into the Exorcist . . . but in this case, I feel what this shows is an audience starved for laughter . . . and not so much Pink Panther's . . . the film is sloppy, very sloppy indeed . . . without much story, and less plot . . . it relies on Sellers basic greatness as a comedian . . . and he certainly has his shining moments . . . but they aren't enough . . . for when he's not on screen . . . there might just as well be nothing there.

## THE MAGIC SHOW

The Magic Show billed as Broadway's and now L.A.'s first musical magic show . . . would do a lot better with more magic and less show . . . the magic is terrific . . . and if you like magic, well, you'll love and be quite astounded by the feats performed . . . this isn't your ordinary everyday livingroom cardtricks and rabbits from the hat . . . no, it's magic in the grand sense . . . illusions in the style and tradition of Houdini . . . complete with levitations . . . disappearances and reappearances . . . sawing of bodies in half . . . escapes from seemingly impossible containers . . . and more . . . much more.

Now the music and the story . . . that's another trick all together . . . and a third rate one, at that . . . serving only to distract from the magic itself . . . and, unfortunately, watering down the total experience.

KRAMER » 94.7

# Alice for President

THE BICENTENNIAL HOLLYWOOD OUTRAGE

By BOBBY ABRAMS

It was an evening neither to be believed or missed—Alice Cooper's homecoming party, end of tour, Spring '75, at the world-famous Hollywood Palladium. And what a way to end a tour that may be rock's equivalent to the touring Broadway musicals of yesteryear? Money is never an object with this billion-dollar baby—the cost of his stage show alone runs into the high six-figures—so I was not surprised that this penultimate party of extravagant decadence cost well over \$25,000 to put on. For it was the total show of a renegade society come home. Ofttimes the reflections of our satiric spoofs are the very essence of our fantasies and I was constantly aware of how much this party resembled an ostentatious wedding or bar mitzvah.

In attendance, like moths attracted to a flame, were the regulars of the Hollywood party circuit. Sometimes their presence is the very event itself, a focus for nostalgic memories of bygone days when there were true superstars to worship and dream about. Nowadays we are stuck with paper stars and plastic heroes, whose main accomplishments are the ability to locate all parties held on the Sunset Strip. For those who live on vicarious thrills, busily devouring yesterday's papers, celebs spotted included: Mike Brando, Robert Stack, Marjoe, Sarah Miles, Doc Henry, Jim Stacy, Raquel Welch's children, Shelley Duvall, Michael Murphy, David Crosby, the members of Aerosmith, Buddy Miles, Rick Springfield, Mike Nesmith, Russ and Ron Mael, Flo & Eddy, Davy Jones, Nigel Olszen, Ray Manzarek, Mick Taylor, Dan Peek, Rodney Bingenheimer and his ever present escort Kim Fowley, the Quattro family, Michael Des Barres, Miss Pamela, Bobby Womack, Mike Stewart, Arthur Caine, Bill Graham, Danny Goldberg, Redd Foxx, Tony King, Mo Ostin, Mark Anthony—oh, the list can go on forever as over 3,000 of Hollywood's finest turned out in their best rags. For those of you who may have misplaced your invitation or otherwise couldn't attend, a local radio station brought you the proceedings live over their airwaves. Not even Richard Nixon's coming out party merited so much attention.

For the amusement of those present, Alice bounced out of a big cake in keeping with the Bicentennial theme and Alice's announcement of intent to make a run for the Presidency. We've definitely had worse leaders, with poorer musical taste. Highlights of a show only the late Ed Sullivan could have assembled better were Maureen & Her Animals, and The Royal Cavaliers 110 Piece Marching Band, complete with some awfully shapely majorettes, hailing locally from Van Nuys. Dancing and good-time vibes were provided by Jake Porter's 7-piece Dixieland band and Bob Wilmer's 5-piece Sounds of the 40s combo. The emcee for the evenings entertainment was an out of place Pepe Hernandez, from *El Grande de Coca-Cola*, who couldn't figure out why his stale Desi Arnez act didn't go over.

Soon, the realization that the hour

not numerically), primitive mask fetishists, looming spiders, Everywoman, graveyard habitues, and a 10-foot green Cyclops. Props included a giant toy box, a wheeled bed, outsized spider webbing, and an abusable female dummy. Alice himself was arrayed (for the most part) in a fetching red union suit ensemble with black pseudo-suspenders, and often looked surprisingly like Arthur Brown (and if anyone was ahead of his time rock-spectacle-wise, besides Screamin' Jay Hawkins who was Brown's primary inspiration, it was Arthur—his boggling 1968 L.A. Shrine Auditorium fiery-helmet tableau, utterly baffling an unprepared audience recently numbed into ecstatic submission by a deadly Fleetwood Mac Elmore James revival, remains firmly embedded in memory. Alice and everyone else above the Z.Z. Top level of showmanship still owe Arthur quite a debt).

Tying the preceding array of bizarries together thematically, of course, was a *Welcome to My Nightmare* *leitmotif* (accent on the *leit*), based on Alice's recent so-so solo album. Almost everything on *Nightmare* was performed, with a number of older tracks interspersed early on by means of a protracted "Years Ago" (prologue to the LP's extended "Steven" melotrama) sequence. Along with "Escape" (also the show's visual highlight) and an encored "Department of Youth," these were the music pinnacles, notably "No More Mr. Nice Guy" and of course "Eighteen," Alice's one enduring rock classic (though "School's Out," also encored, comes close in all its inspired contrivance).

Audial specifics: Thanks to the Forum's famed acoustics, which have been favorably compared to those of the choicest open-air venues (like Yasgur's Farm or the Mojave Desert), the sound was rather muddy; and Alice's voice was a trifle undermixed. Still the band, led by Lou Reed graduates Steve Hunter and Dick Wagner on guitars, was definitely hot—a flash flood of duelling guitars during "Black Widow" was a stunner.

Best effect of the evening, though, was "Escape"'s visuals, tightly synchronized shifts between filmed graveyard antics starring Alice and sepulchral dancers, and live onstage cavortations featuring the same. A true technological marvel. Other production numbers varied—the "Black Widow" spider sequences were ludicrously loathsome enough, but Alice's manhandling a dummy on the patly outrageous hard-rock "Cold Ethyl" (sort of a Velvet Underground & Necro effect) was something of a yawn. "Only Women Bleed" demonstrated the limitations of Alice's onstage crooning abilities, while "Billion Dollar Babies" featured Cooper tangled up in balloons.

All in all though, it was a spiffy display of rock showmanship, tumultuously received by a capacity audience. Hard to figure what Alice's next move could be—touring logistics, financial considerations, and the short-term nature of rock engagements would seem to preclude the devising of visual spectacles in rock rivalling the decadent splendors of the vaudevillian 20's and 30's. Yet without a quantum jump of that sort, future Cooper productions run the risk of falling into a rut. Alice's Follies is still the best show in Rockville, but it will be interesting to see how long its run lasts.



Photos by Neal Preston

## visions in wonderland...

was getting late came over the assembled minions. After a nice feed and some forgotten dance steps, it was time to say goodbye to the nightmare and return home to a peaceful sleep.

**ALICE COOPER**  
The Forum  
Inglewood, California

By KEN BARNES

When Alice came back to the Forum, it was an owning-up of sorts. This time there were no pretenses of Rock Band Identity (the backing musicians, tophatted, were relegated far to the stage rear), and the lavish production extravaganza was about as outrageous as *Funny Lady*—some of whose sets might serve as models for

future Cooper creations to emulate. Any remnant grotesquerie was sub-comic book level, and a fully premeditated show-biz gloss pervaded the entire affair.

Unless you were still somehow convinced of Alice's role as a crucial rock & roller (a notion Cooper would probably be the first to dispel), or you were one of those diehard outrage thrillseekers thirsting for the blood of chickens (a poultry thrill at best) this exaggerated stage show made for a diverting and thoroughly entertaining evening.

Getting down to visual specifics: Alice was generally abetted by a quartet of dancers, divided evenly along male-female lines (a pleasingly symmetrical arrangement), who portrayed variously vampire ballerinas, snake dancers, a skeleton chorus line (literally,



# The Beach is Back!

NEAL PRESTON

## California Consciousness & The Sounds of Summer '75

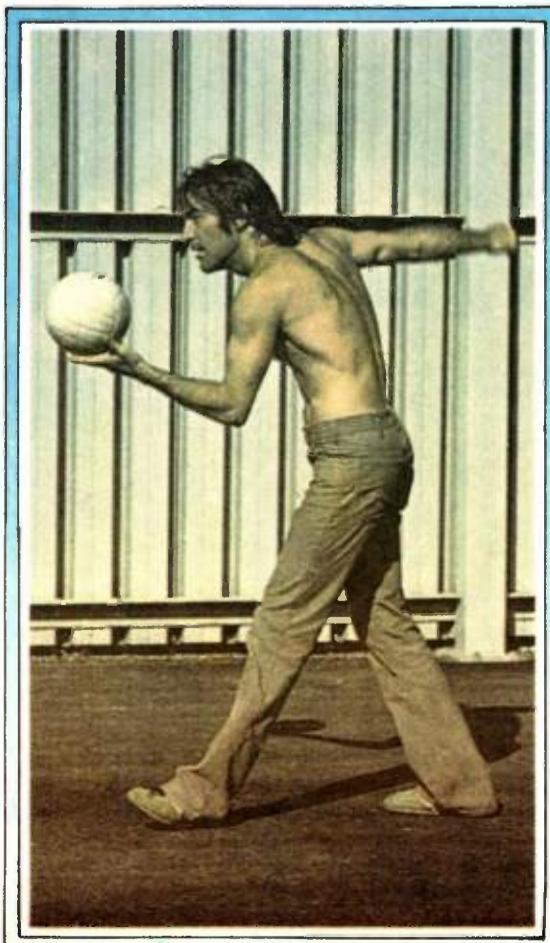
By GREG SHAW

Ecclesiastes might easily have been experiencing a vision of California in the summertime when he wrote that nothing is new under the sun. For indeed, it seems that whenever it gets to be around May in Los Angeles, time stands still as an eternal generation of tanned, surfboard-toting natives comes out of hibernation and heads for the beach; while kids suddenly appear underfoot on skateboards, surf music seems to be emanating from every frequency on the radio dial, and four or five new Beach Boys albums hit the racks.

One could almost say that the more the rest of the world changes, the more summers in California are the same. There is a timeless quality to it all that makes mockery of those who predicted the surfing trend would only last a few months, as they set about manufacturing ski music, assuring themselves it would be an even bigger fad. They were all wrong, of course. Summer music, California surf culture, and the entire aesthetic behind it, which has generated an unpredictably broad affirmation from every corner of the world, lives on with no sign of diminishing. And stranger yet, no one has come up with a more effective musical representation of this tenacious beach-and-sun mentality than the original surfing sound of 1963-65. Beach Boys records still sell in droves, reaching a new generation each year just like *The Wizard of Oz*.

The most astonishing aspect of the whole phenomenon is the fact that this music, whose appeal has proven to be so universal, has always been the almost exclusive product of an amazingly small clique of writers, producers and singers. These people, less than ten of them really, appear each summer with new records,

new projects, and new editions of their past triumphs, and these people alone have been able to do anything new in the genre they created, though others have certainly tried.



We've written about these people before, as previous summers brought out a growing following for their works. This year there's more to report than ever, and encouraging evidence of still more to come. Jan & Dean, separately and together, are finding a new audience for their music, while Brian Wilson is making records for the first time in years, the Beach Boys prepare to unleash their long-awaited new product, and Bruce & Terry (Johnston & Melcher) appear to be becoming one of the industry's most active production teams, with their Equinox label as well as outside productions with everyone from Barry Mann to David Cassidy, whose album is full of Beach Boys gems.

If anything sets the 1975 surf revival apart from those of previous years, it's the extent to which artists outside the inner circle are adapting the music to their own careers. As we go to press, Johnny Rivers is tearing up the charts with "Help Me Rhonda," the Hudson Brothers are moving up with their Beach Boys-derived "Rendezvous," and the Captain and Tennille (former Beach Boys sidepersons) have the 'Number One song in the country.

No one is ever likely to explain, in logical terms, why a style of music that started out as a mere novelty trend in 1963, should have proven to be so eternally relevant or endlessly adaptable—least of all the few geniuses who have been its fountainhead. They have no need to analyze; they just keep on doing what comes naturally, as they have all along. Perhaps it's this very naturalness that accounts for their continuing presence in the industry and our awareness. And for the timeless attraction of California summer music itself.

# THE BEACH BOYS!

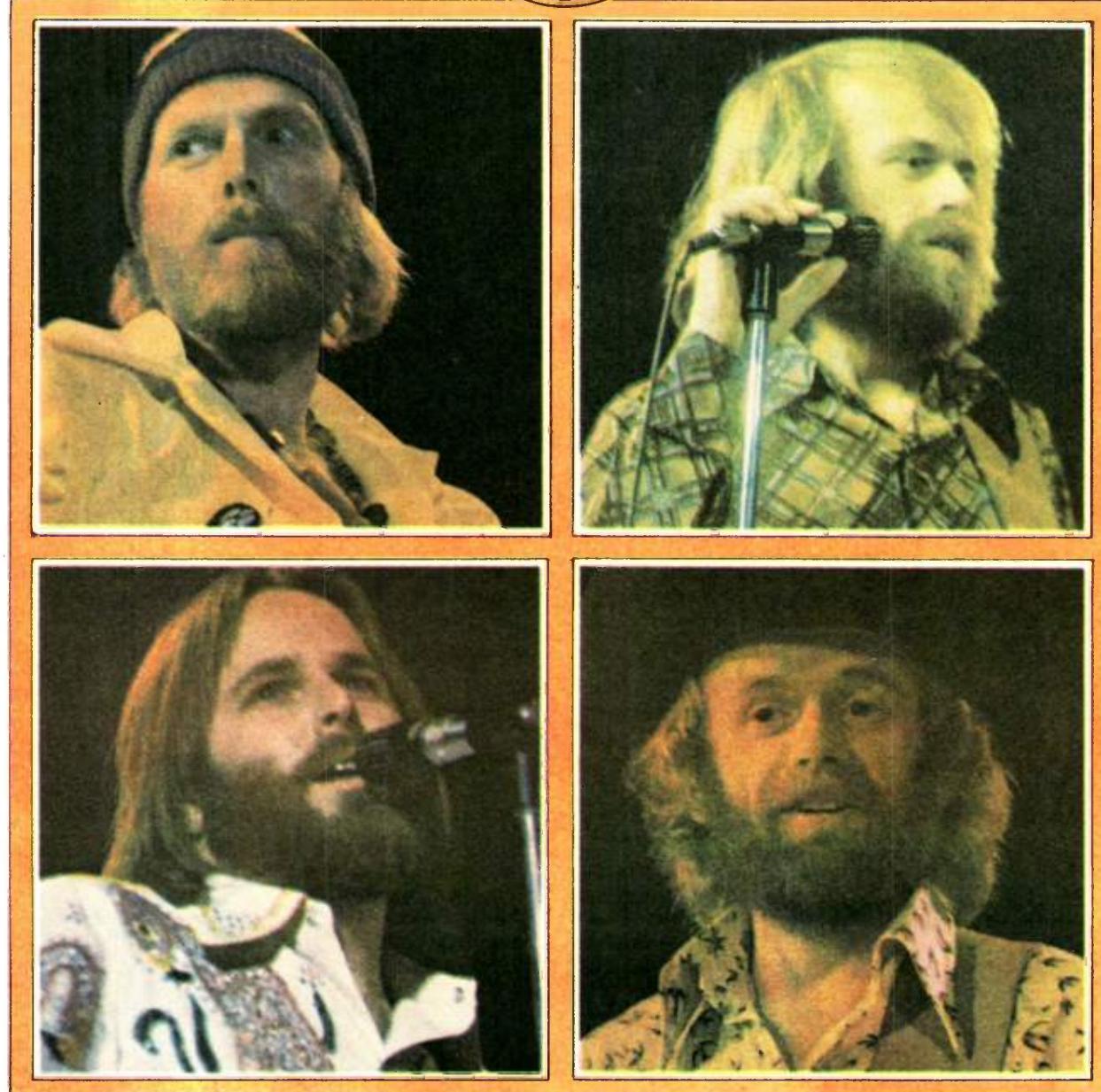


"This is a serious surfing song," Mike Love announces from the stage of Madison Square Garden and the Beach Boys launch into a lively rendition of "Catch a Wave." It's opening line, "Catch a wave and you're sitting on top of the world," prompts an ocean of applause and cheers from close to twenty thousand people, most of whom have only seen surfboards in American-International movies.

You used to be able to mark the coming of summer to New York by the first commercial for Palisades Park on top forty radio. The closing of that gaudy recreation area left few other telltale signs: Coppertone jingles, solid gold weekends; but this year the Beach Boys made seasonal identification simple by coming to town on the 12th of June and officially ushering in the hot-weather months as the

Summer of '75 coast-to-coast juggernaut with Chicago rolled in like a 20-footer cresting at Malibu.

It's different here in the urban east. For us, the summer experience is the temporary escape of "Up On the Roof," the drilling of "Summer in the City," the neon-lit nocturnal adventures of Bruce Springsteen, Nik Cohn's accurately expressed introduction to *Rock Dreams*. Our summer movie is not a technicolor beach-blanket-bingo, but Paul Williams' *Out of It*, a low-budget black and white film with Jon Voight, Barry Gordon and Lada Edmunds about the sexual frustrations of vacation in boring Long Island. Two years ago, *Phonograph Record* ran a long feature, "A California Saga," on the surf music revival, an authoritative and convincing report from a west coast viewpoint on what the sound symbolized, its rise, decline and regeneration. Well, we love the Beach Boys here as well, but if their fantasy is an idyllic one—two girls for every boy; fun, fun, fun—from the opposite coast it is also a remote one, as we watch the meager waves on Jones Beach and flee indoors to get cool.



•Top Left, Mike Love; Bottom Left, Carl Wilson; Top & Bottom Right, Al Jardine.

NEAL PRESTON

By MITCHELL S. COHEN

The Beach Boys are a national treasure, and one would have to be terribly cynical to think them anything but marvelous. The response at the Garden, from a crowd that ranged in age from barely pubescent youngsters born around the time of "Surfin' Safari" to middle-aged suburban types (many in attendance expressly to see Chicago), was nothing short of astounding. Upon hearing the opening notes of the likes of "I Get Around," "Surfer Girl" and "Barbara Ann" mass hysteria ensued: things thrown in the air, girls hugging in the aisles, grown men leaping out of their seats in unrestrained joy. Genuine, sustained Beatlemaniacal shrieks rose out of the audience. I think it's safe to say that the Beach Boys are the recipients of more warmth and all-around good feeling than any other existing group, and it's well deserved. They give the people what they want; the only question is whether that's enough.

Certainly they are exceptional live: Dennis slapping his snare with riveting force, Mike prancing in feather and glitter, Carl and Al harmonizing to perfection, Billy supporting on keyboards and additional vocals. They create a

big, full sound on stage, their incomparable singing backed by a percussion-driven background. No real new territory is traveled—a trio of songs from *Holland* is their only acknowledgement of the '70s—but their enthusiastic performances of their past chart-busters, and the excitement they instigate ("Little Deuce Coupe" results in pandemonium) makes a Beach Boy concert by far the most totally enjoyable show on the planet. When they returned to the stage after Chicago's (competent, overlong and overloud) set wearing N.Y. Ranger hockey shirts, to engage in a can-you-top-this give and take with the boys from Illinois, the playoff was simply no contest.

The Beach Boys are constantly in the air nowadays, in spirit if not in actuality. This season may shape up as an unusually splendid one for

trivial pop, and it couldn't have happened at a better time, being the first summer of the past four that we can devote our full attention to matters cultural and frivolous, with no Presidential campaigning, Watergate or House Judiciary hearings to distract us. The atmosphere is clear, and the sounds are pouring in: Linda Lewis' disco remake of "It's In His Kiss," one of the most delightful, sprightly singles since Red Bird closed its doors; The Captain and Tennille's smash "Love Will Keep Us Together" (The Captain—Daryl Dragon—and his wife Toni are old Beach Boy co-horts, having participated on *Sunflower*. Their LP includes versions of "God Only Knows" and "Disney Girls"); 10cc's Brian Wilson-influenced "I'm Not In Love"; the Carpenters; the posthumous Raspberries. The Troggs have a very weird single of "Good Vibrations," and Johnny Rivers' new single is "Help Me Rhonda," with back-up vocals by none other than Brian himself. Marilyn, Brian's spouse, just signed with Island and is currently cutting with Jackie DeShannon. Jan & Dean have their first new product out since Jan's accident, a

single called "Fun City" and Dean has updated their hit "Sidewalk Surfing" for this summer's skateboard revival. *Shampoo* is still in local theatres, with "Wouldn't It Be Nice" counterpointing the Beverly Hills amorality, and in many places one can still hear "All Summer Long" closing out *American Graffiti* and Mackenzie Phillips, in Dewey Webber Surf Board t-shirt, defending her new musical heroes.

As for the group itself, it is represented by two newly-issued repackages of older material: *Spirit of America*, a sequel to last year's blockbuster *Endless Summer* (perfect titles both), and *Good Vibrations*, a reprise of later period (*Pet Sounds* and forward) selections and not to be confused with a Pickwick LP of the same name. No musical organization is more worthy of having its history unearthed and re-analyzed than the Beach Boys, and all these compilations have a great deal of merit. It's great to see "Break Away," "The Little Girl I Once Knew" and obscure album tracks readily available, and the more recent songs have generally been overlooked in favor of the surfing-hot rod era, but there is something disconcerting about the level of nostalgia involved, especially in the light of no new product or substantial additions to the live act. The Beach Boys are stuck in a bind, and one can't help but sympathize. The cheers they've been hearing from one end of the country to the other have been for their past, which is enough to make anybody queasy about the future. They must be tremendously concerned about what to come up with next. Meanwhile, they act as Caribou back-drop singers for Elton John and Chicago and tour continuously. But where is Brian Wilson, or American Spring (dropped by Columbia after one first-rate single flopped)? What can the Beach Boys whip up to place them in the forefront of contemporary rock?

To dwell on what they might be doing is to undervalue what they are doing, and what they have done. To shout and stomp in a 1975 Beach Boys audience is to marvel at the fact that at the turn of the decade their credibility in the east was at a very low point indeed. Some date the change in direction from the night they shared the Fillmore East stage with the Grateful Dead, others from their entertaining the May Day troops in Washington, both events taking place in 1971. In four years, they've returned to the top. And yet I still have arguments with serious-minded politicos who consider the Beach Boys elitist, sexist, etc., and booed Mike Love for singing "California Girls" at a pro-Allende rally, but these types could never grasp the essence of the group. No doubt the accusations have some objective basis. There is something smug about the image of surf music; it conjures up pictures of a teenage master race of beautiful bodies (muscular or buxom, straight blond hair and materialist affluence in a whiter-than-white environment. The notions of masculinity ("They grit their teeth, they don't back down") and femininity ("The girls on the beach are all within reach if you know what

to do") are strictly defined.

But Brian Wilson and the Beach Boys are the creators and troubadors of youth culture

### "Brian is considering a return to performing."

mythology, of a western romantic vision that is beyond radical criticism. While Californians might see them as a reflection of what they are, the rest of us viewed them as a projection of what we

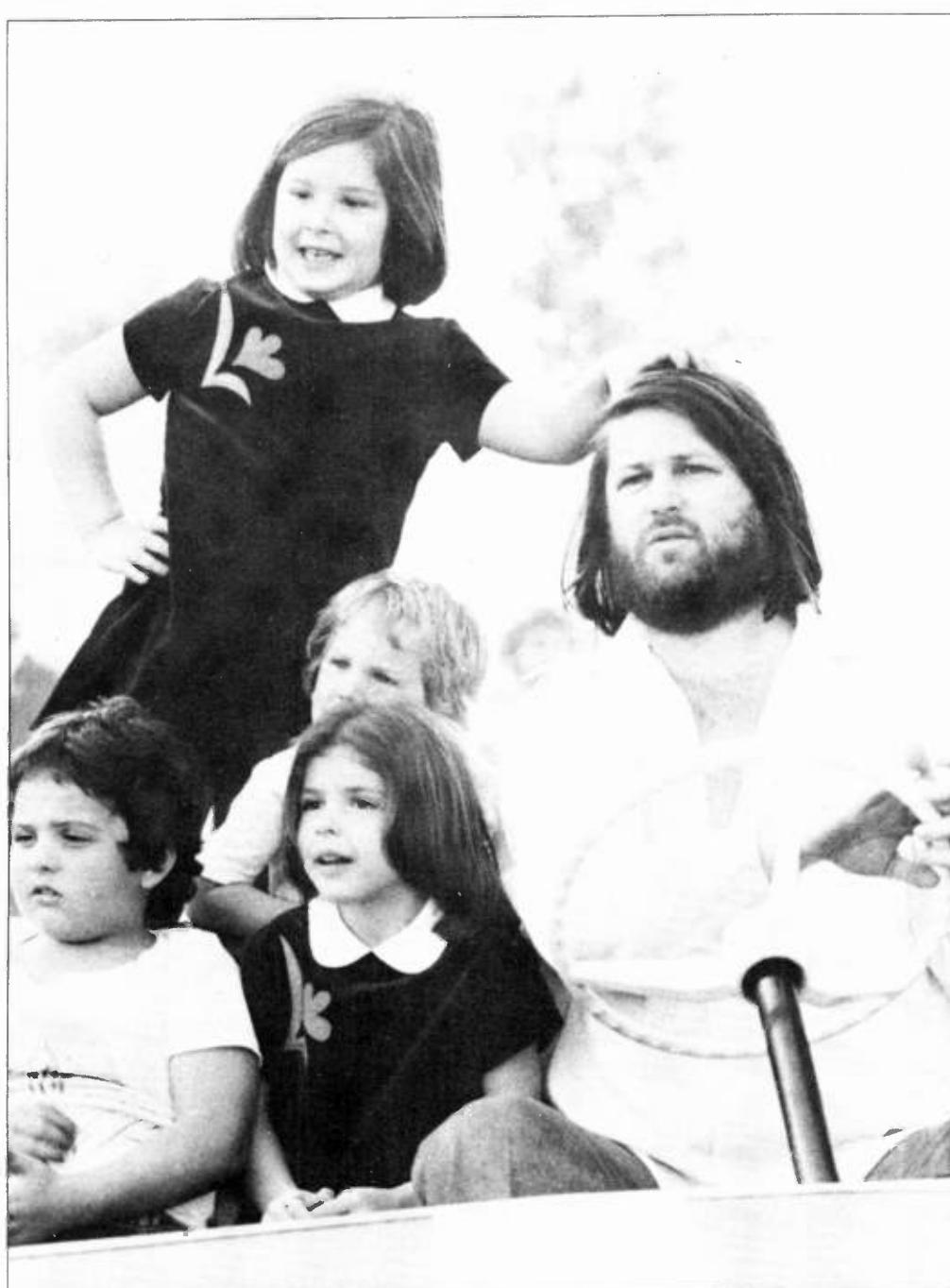
nonetheless recognizes the painful (along with the joyous) realities of male-female relationships.

And like all major artists in the rock pantheon, but to a far greater degree than most, the Beach Boys kept an eye on summer as the time of year that summed up all the implicit and explicit theses of rock philosophy. "We've been having fun all summer long," "Summer means new love." Summer exploited commercially is a staple of rock: The Beatles, in particular, between the years 1964 and 1969 managed to pull a major rabbit out of their hat each time their fans were sprung from school (their Lester films, tours, *Sgt. Pepper*, "Hey Jude"). The Beach Boys made mythology out of economic expediency, making their subject, their *raison de être*, coincident with the extended leisure time of the pop consumer. One feels in their music a heightened sense of the elements: sand and surf, country air; and a thematic release. Even if the period from Memorial Day to Labor Day in New York feels like the Drifters, in the summer of the mind the Beach Boys reign supreme and surfers rule.

It's 1975, and we look at ourselves more critically than before. The vital art of our time is melancholy, if not entirely pessimistic, and still there are positive signs on the horizon regarding the shallow pleasure of pop. There were skateboards in the hills of Los Angeles when I visited this past April, the Stones are barnstorming, the Brummels are back, Flo & Eddie are recording and we should hear the results of the David Cassidy sessions for RCA, on which Bruce Johnston and Carl Wilson played a prominent role. On an FM radio interview in New York, Mike and Carl were very encouraging about the immediate future. Specifically, Brian has slimmed down, is considering a return to performing, and is so anxious to get the boys back in the studio that he suggested a postponement of the joint tour.

"I think the Beach Boys will be the group to represent America during the Bicentennial celebration in 1976...We will be the group...when people want to know what is American music," Mike Love is quoted in *Downbeat* as saying,

and a related rumor has the group recording "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" for their next album. Mike's statement is a simplification; their music hardly pretends to speak for the entire American spectrum, but it does represent a special part of our shared, or imagined, experience. They've captured unique scenes, 60-second snapshots from a Polaroid Swinger, action-shots frozen in motion: riding waves, dancing on the beach, sitting behind the wheel of a speeding machine. Even when the specificity of the subject matter was abandoned, the sound remained unmistakeably Beach Boys: the multi-layered texture of Brian's production, the complex, ethereal fusion of the voices. The masterworks of the "mature" Beach Boys, *Pet Sounds*, *Wild Honey*, *Sunflower*, are as rich in feelings and associations as their earlier successes, and no less wonderful for their relative sophistication.



•Brian Wilson in the drivers seat once again with the next generation of Beach Boys and Girls.



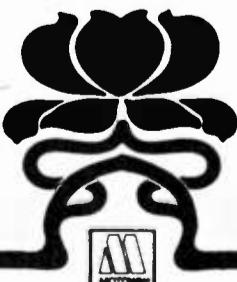
might be. If they are, finally, greater than Chuck Berry (a debatable proposition), it is because their major influence wrote his pungent teenage tales as a wry observer and the Beach Boys were on the inside, and therefore could add first-hand experience and sentiment (Berry never wrote a love song as true as Brian's best ballads) to their adolescent narratives. They formulated the most identifiable and influential vocal sound in all of rock (Brian was the premier singer of tear-jerkers until Gram Parsons), but even more important, an American legend. They stand for something: a point of view, an attitude, a utopian ideal that



## THE SUPREMES

Direct from Motown. The new summer fashions from those famous stylists, The Supremes. The Supremes have topped the musical fashion world for 15 years, and copies of their original masterpieces have sold in the millions. And now they have produced the ultimate in design, in the style that made them famous. Each cut was hand-crafted and tailored to perfection by producers Holland &

Holland, Woodford & Ivey, and Mark Davis. When it comes to haute-couture music, no one tops The Supremes. They are the models for all other female groups, and now you can get their newest and hottest original creation at your favorite record boutique. The Supremes. A line of great cuts from the house of Motown. The first name in musical fashion.



© 1975 Motown Record Corporation



•It's the same old photo, but it's the same old music come alive again this summer.

A new generation is learning about California dreaming from the Beach Boys as they make their way across the continent spreading the word about the delectable species of west coast female, the cool water, beautiful coastline, warm and out-of-sight nights, inviting us to "Do It Again" again and again. The million-and-a-quarter people who purchased *Endless Summer* have bought stock in a durable tradition. I love the Beach Boys' music totally and without reservation: their dopey sense of humor, their ability to turn their limited turf into a powerful metaphor, their capacity for making public fools of themselves, their unflinching romanticism. We need the Beach Boys because they sound so good, of course, but also because they fire our imagination and look eternally forward, capturing the core of our blind optimism with one promise: "One more summer and your dream comes true."

## GOOD VIBRATIONS

**Beach Boys**  
**Reprise MS 2223**

By BOBBY ABRAMS

It's eternally summer when the Beach Boys fill the airwaves, and to be listening to them when the sun is hot and the surf bitchin' is a double mitzvah, a bonus on top of a bonus. Growing up in the dreary bleakness of New York winters, the Beach Boys represented to me what the good life, California-style was all about: fast cars, with sleek bodies, and faster women, with sleeker bodies, golden and long, blonde, WASPY California hair. While such a fantasy may appear vapid, indeed substanceless, as Los Angeles often feels to a stranger, all the requisite pain that an Eastern intellectual requires in his listening pleasure is present, implied in the negative spaces of Brian's art.

But all this is past business, old hat; no longer is there a need to swap mythologies, to justify the Beach Boys as valid rock and roll. This collection is Warners attempt to cash in on the success of the group, and on Capitol's annual repackaging of Beach Boys hits for the summer doldrums. While in no way is it as well-packaged as the two recent Capitol albums, it too will probably go gold in a matter of days, for the demand for Beach Boys music seems nearly insatiable. In a similar vein, there is no quibble with the cuts Warners has chosen to include here: all are readily available on other re-issues and re-packagings, yet it is always interesting to see what someone else picks as their favorites. Listening to one of their greatest hits albums is very much like listening to the radio; sometimes it's a welcome relief to let someone else program one's entertainment.

Yet it is paradoxical that in the space of the greatest success the group has known, there has been no attempt to release new product. Nor has the world more eagerly waited on an acknowledged genius, not even after Dylan's accident, not even after the Beatles broke up. Periodic rumors of Brian's emergence from the sandbox notwithstanding, it seems unlikely that we will be hearing the 1975 version of the American dream. The group has settled into a comfortable groove, accepting the plaudits of past success in their live concerts (it could be reasonably argued that the Beach Boys are the most important touring group today), accepting gold and platinum records for these crassly commercial repackagings. To be fair, many of these records never went gold upon initial release. Yet having built an audience that spans two generations (many of those in attendance at the concerts could hardly remember these classic songs from their initial release date) the group refuses to come to grips with the trauma of debuting new work. It is indeed a shame, nay a sacrilege, and the continued re-issuing of greatest hits albums, instead of building confidence in their abilities as artists seems to have had just the opposite effect and I almost despair of ever hearing any new material. If for this reason alone, it is time to stop the re-packaging parade, or at least make an attempt to bring to the public unreleased or unknown material, cause there sure is no purpose in releasing material that's available on at least a dozen other albums. People in the culture business have a mandate to enrich the culture as well as their pockets, and while these albums may be filling the corporate coffers at Capitol and Warners respectively, they don't add a whit to our appreciation of the masters of a musical expressionism that accurately captured the feelings of America in the sixties as well as any poet has ever portrayed his society.

## The Beach Boys' Girls



•Diane Rovell, Marilyn Wilson

By KEN BARNES

It's not exactly like that, of course. Girls aren't going out and rerecording "Our Surfer Boys" (by the Surf Bunnies, originally), "You Can't Take My Boyfriend's Woodie" (the Powder Puffs), or He's My Blond-Headed Blue-Eyed Whompie Stompie Surfer Boy, Number one in Australia in early '64 by the legendary Li'l Pattie. The beach bunny is not precisely a happening contemporary image for the present-day female performer.

But there's always been a place for women in California music, albeit usually a subsidiary one (ever heard of Carol Connors? Thought not, yet she wrote and sang on dozens of first-rate surf-styled records). That might be changing, though. For an obvious and else-where-noted example, Karen & Richard Carpenter have filtered harmony styles developed during the decade-ago surf boom into a bewitching formula that's



•Toni Tennille (with husband Daryl Dragon).

engendered unlimited success.

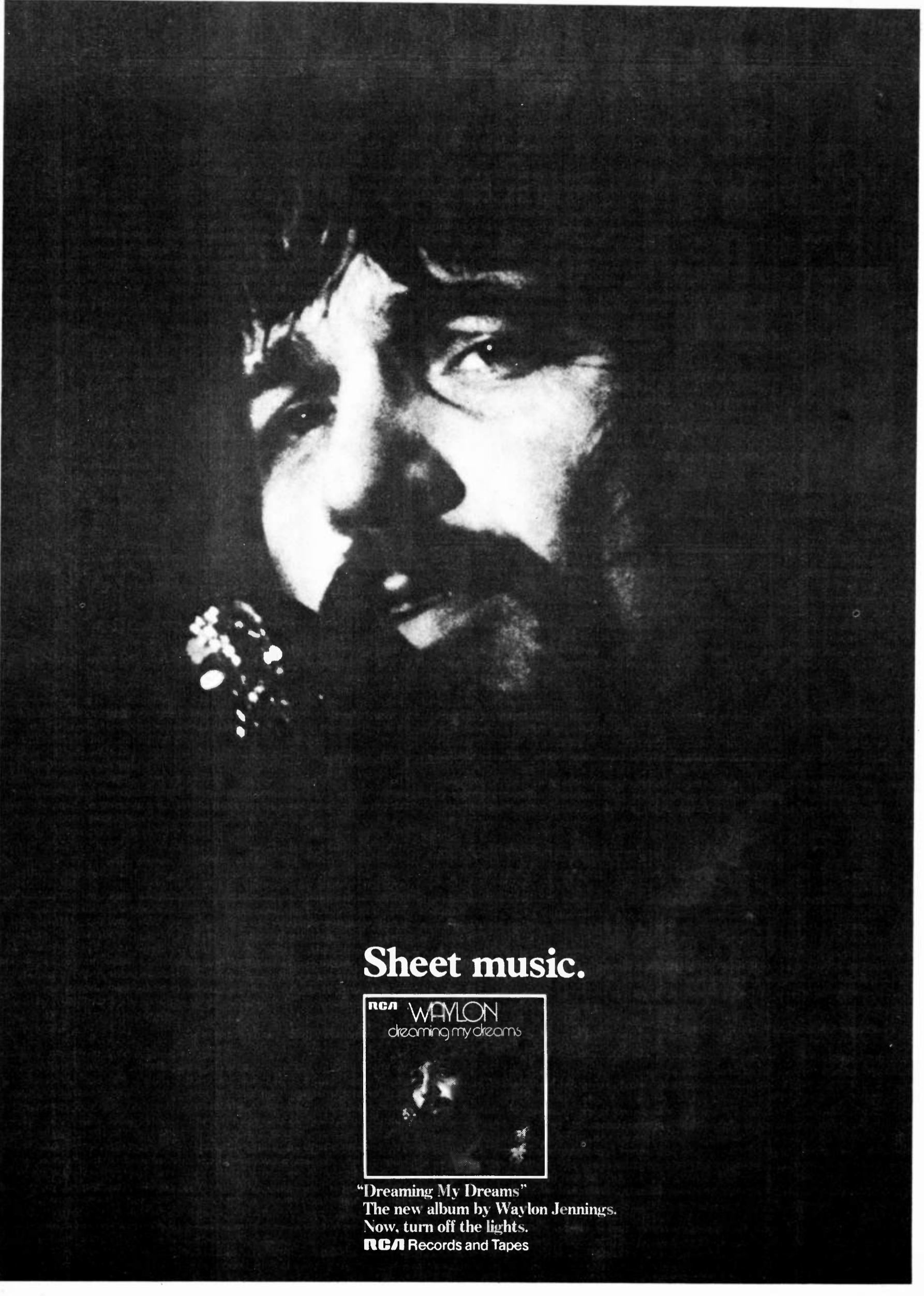
Even more closely tied to the California coastal cliques are the Captain & Tennille. Daryl Dragon used to be Captain Keyboards for the Beach Boys live, wrote "Cuddle Up" and "Make it Good" with Dennis Wilson (*Carl & the Passions*), worked with Bruce Johnston and Terry Melcher and Dean Torrence and on and on. Toni Tennille used to sing background vocals with the Beach Boys (it wasn't *all* falsetto). The B-side of their first single (released first in late 1972 on two obscure labels before A&M picked it up) was Bruce's "Disney Girls." It's on their album, along with "Cuddle Up," "God Only Knows," and a new Bruce Johnston song called "I Write the Songs" which might be the next single. "Love Will Keep Us Together," that brilliantly-arranged, irresistible hit, certainly owes a little to "Heroes and Villains" as far as background vocals go. The whole album is suffused with that warm-Califor-

nia-sun feeling (not in the sense of the Rivieras/Joe Jones/Dictators but in an intangibly reassuring harmonic warmth) and is a delight—though hard-rockers may be put off by its decided MOR leanings.

And don't forget Marilyn Wilson and Diane Rovell, of Honeys/Spring/American Spring fame. Over three years later that long Spring album on UA sounds better than ever, a monument of exquisite arrangements, with some of the tracks quite conceivably ripe for reissue in a more receptive atmosphere ("Now that Everything's Been Said," "Forever," "This Whole World," and "Thinking About You Baby" seem to stand out in commercial terms). Not to mention the sublime Columbia single, "Shyin' Away/Fallin' in Love," now a collectors' item but undeserving of such an obscure fate.

Yeah, I know I said all that two years ago. But it didn't happen then (we like to say, "ahead of its time") and things really do seem different now as far as acceptance for female performers goes. Both Diane and Marilyn are once again active—they've reportedly submitted songs to the Captain & Tennille (another link in the chain). Marilyn has signed to Island with Jackie DeShannon to produce (another artist with countless great records to her credit). Meanwhile, Brian has supposedly lent background vocals to Jackie's Columbia sessions, and everything's looking up again.

I think it would all be great if the trend gets even hotter—I'm overpartial to lush, stacked harmonies, and what a great direction for contemporary female MOR to take, so much more substantive than Olivia's vacuous pseudo-country or Helen's equally washed-out pseudo-showbiz schlock. It's an odd ultimate mutation for the California surf legacy, but maybe women will give the music its greatest relevance in times to come.

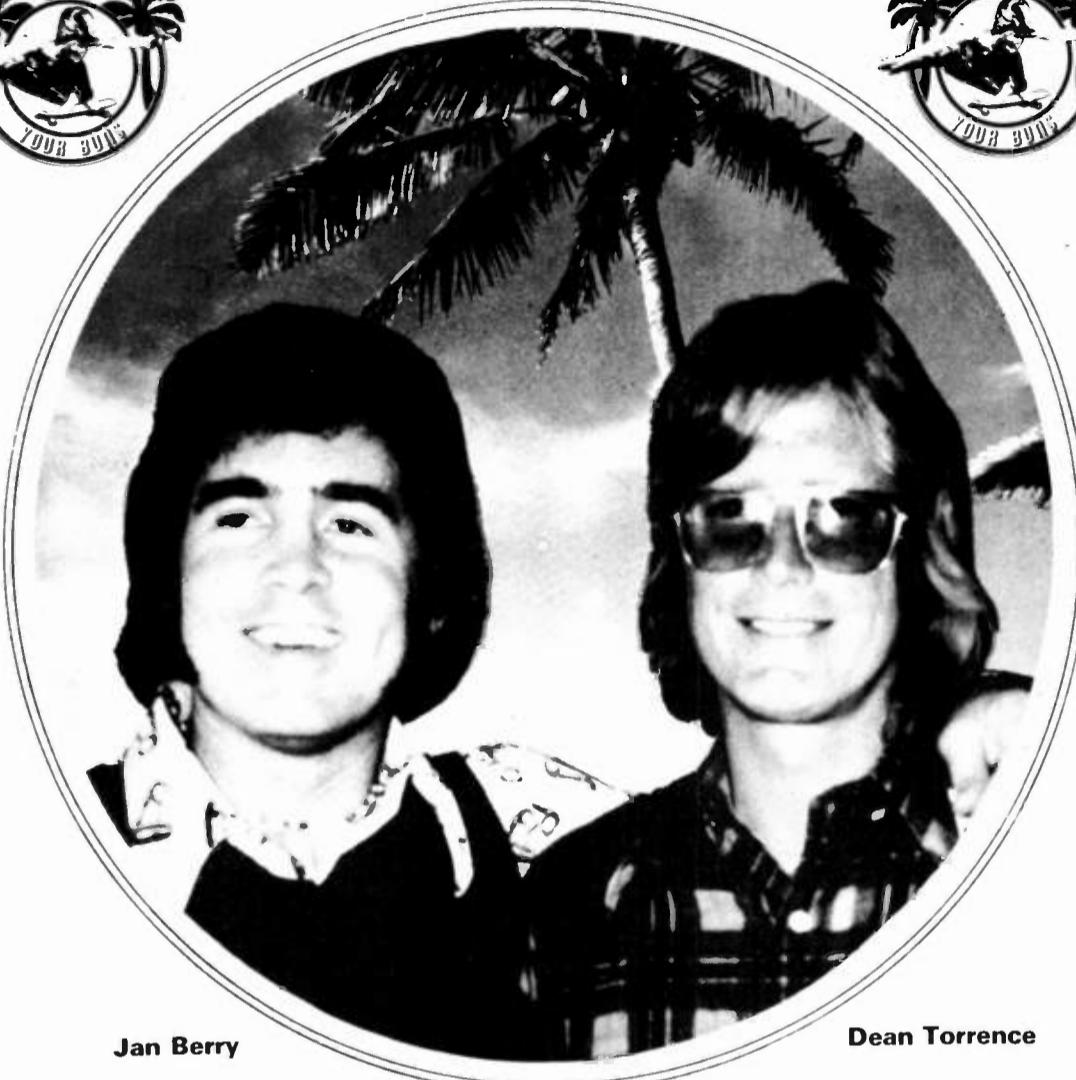


## Sheet music.



“Dreaming My Dreams”  
The new album by Waylon Jennings.  
Now, turn off the lights.  
**RCA** Records and Tapes

# JAN & DEAN



Jan Berry

Dean Torrence

By KEN BARNES

Can you believe it? Third year in a row *Phonograph*'s run a surf revival story, as if it were a current event. Looks pretty suspicious to me, some kind of under-the-pier deal. Well, I want no part of it. I'm going to take up something completely different. Let's talk about...skateboards.

They're hot, all over the sidewalks again, at least in California—but can the rest of the country be far behind? Skateboards are frequently underfoot even in urban Hollywood, while out in the suburbs buns are being busted constantly. In land-locked San Jose (the relative incidence of sidewalks vs. oceans, incidentally, is a significant advantage to the propagation of skateboarding), according to Dean Torrence, "This store called Skateboard City opened up and did \$7000 worth of business the first day."

Why the boom? Back to Dean: "It's right there. Everybody's got a sidewalk. And now the technology has advanced—you've got much better balance and they've got the wheels set up so when you're riding down a bumpy street it doesn't feel like you're rolling over a minefield. Plus the boards are more flexible now. But it's really caught on—I wouldn't be surprised if it's already sweeping the country..."

Dean Torrence should know. He's reasonably adept at skateboarding himself (recall the *T.A.M.I. Show*, during which he executed a modish quasi-quasimodo), and Jan & Dean's "Sidewalk Surfin'", (the Beach Boys' "Catch a Wave" amicably transported inland) is the one enduring classic of the skateboard genre.

Anyway, Dean figured the time was right to capitalize on the new craze, and what better vehicle than "Sidewalk Surfin'"—if 12-year-old Beach Boys re-reads could hit, what was there to

lose? But could the record company (United Artists, whose defunct Liberty division issued Jan & Dean's surfeit of surf hits) be convinced? Not without some effort, apparently.

"I think the record companies are lost these days. They should be picking up on trends, but they're insulated in their own little world and they don't know what to do any more. The music in the 60's developed so fast that the record people went crazy trying to stay on top of it, till they had lost their objectivity. I think the audiences are way ahead of the record companies now."

"These people would drive to work every day and see something moving out of the corner of their eyes and it wouldn't register. I had to tell them that what they'd seen out of the corner of their eyes were skateboards, and that just possibly they could figure out some businesslike thing to do about it. And then it dawned on them and they said, hey, we could put out a record! And I said, Right...good idea!"

The new "Sidewalk Surfin'" single (backed with the Legendary Masked Surfers' "Gonna Hustle You") features a few minor lyric changes and a bit of adjustment on the harmonies, courtesy of a Torrence studio revamp. "I figured if you've got 16 tracks, why not use 'em," a potentially peril-packed dictum which could have led to the dubbing in of a howling moog track or a ten-piece horn section, but in this case just enhanced the original. It sounds brighter than ever, and is already #2 in San Diego (where "Dead Man's Curve" did the same in late 1973).

If it hits nationally it could well lead to an interesting album, possibly including the two California (Dean, Bruce Johnston, Terry Melcher) tracks cut for UA in 1973 (incidentally, Daryl Dragon of Captain & Tennille fame plays

keyboards on these) and other intriguing prospects. Absolutely nothing is settled now, though; Dean, understandably cautious regarding musical projects these days, considers any commitments to be premature.

His cautious demeanor extends to performances, too, but it's worked out quite well. He has a standing arrangement with a Northern California surf band, Pa Pa Du Run Da Run, whereby he can join them live at his discretion. "They've been playing this stuff for four years—at first they had things thrown at them once in a while, but about two years ago audiences started to go wild for it. Anyway, they know all the material; it's not like the pick-up bands everybody had to use in the 50's and early 60's. They gig all the time, so there's no pressure. If I had to keep a band together, well, I don't want to perform that often, and they'd get restless and leave. This way I can call them up and play anytime."

Dean's performed with Pa Pa Du Run Da Run several times now, up in Santa Cruz, in LA's South Bay area, to gratifying response everywhere. "The audiences are really young; I can't figure out where they come from. But I really like the smaller audiences, where people sing along and dance and have a great time. Back in Jan & Dean days, any crowd under 10,000 would have been a disaster, but I've scaled down. In fact I turned down a gig at Palm Springs where 10,000 were coming—too many people."

With the band Dean, entering midway, performs a few Jan & Dean hits and then joins an extended Beach Boys medley. "I enjoy singing the Beach Boys songs better than doing our own, and I can't figure out why. Maybe it's because I expect more from ours, that I'm too personally involved with them."

"A lot of people think I should be doing something new, but I figure if people still like the old songs, why not do them? Other people who were involved with the music in the 60's kept running away from their early records, put them down. But I've always been kinda proud of our records."

One group of those "other people" is enjoying staggering success with their second consecutive anthology of past hits, and Dean is watching with interest the progress of one track in particular. "Barbara Ann" is breaking out in Pittsburgh, and may become a Capitol single soon (currently it's "Little Honda"). Dean sang lead on that track (from *Beach Boys Party*), suggested its performance in the first place and rather wistfully hopes for some official recognition if it hits again.

On the other hand, he will soon be receiving some recognition that he hadn't quite bargained for. Jan Berry's forthcoming single, "Fun City," on which Dean added some harmonies, will apparently be released as a "Jan & Dean" record. "Jan had been calling me up for a year, asking me to do something with him, but I didn't want to do it unless it was right. I sang on 'Fun City,' and I don't mind getting a credit, but Ode hasn't even notified me. Singing on a record is one thing, but when they put my name on the record that becomes a business matter." However the situation is resolved, "Fun City" sounds like a record worth waiting for with anticipation; apparently its Jan's best recent effort, and everything Dean's been involved with has been a high-spirited delight.

Dean Torrence is still fully occupied with his design firm, Kitty Hawk Graphics, and wary of committing himself to music again, but there's no doubt he's avid for a hit ("I'll take a Top 50 record, even something in the eighties," he jokes, sort of). He's convinced of the continuing vitality of the music he and Jan Berry helped pioneer, citing California harmony influences in the Carpenters, Captain & Tennille, some of Bruce Johnston's upcoming productions and many more. And, while definitely not counting on "Sidewalk Surfin'" for a comeback smash, he's got hopes.



# JOHNNY RIVERS

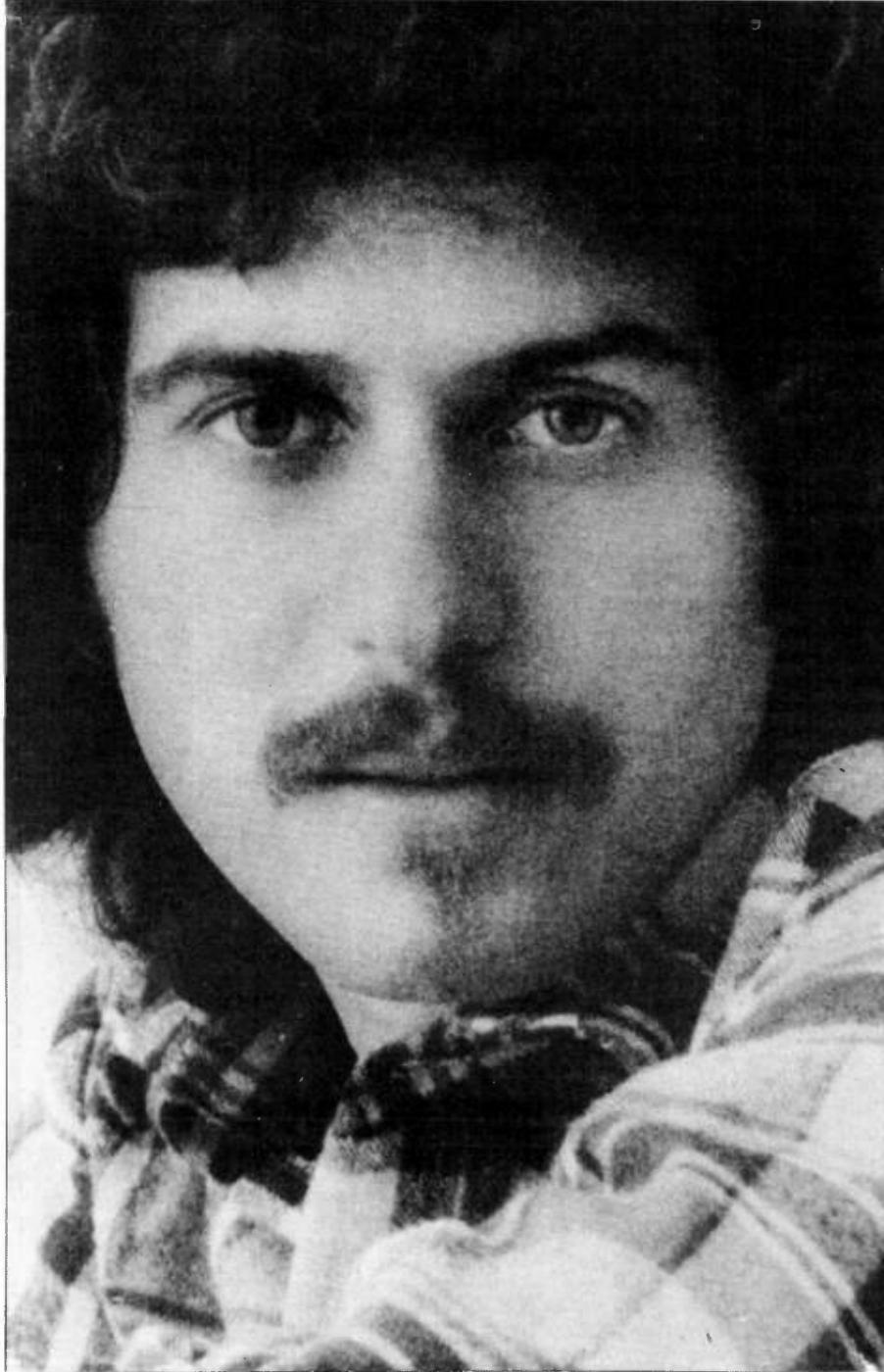
*"California music & The Beach Boys are now an American summertime tradition"*

By MARTIN CERF

Exactly where do you suppose Johnny Rivers fits in the context of an essay on California Music and the sounds of Summer Music? A quick monitoring of your local radio station should produce a prompt answer. "Help Me Rhonda" is back on the air again, almost ten years to the day that it first rose to the peak of national popularity in early 1965.

One of the amazing things about "Help Me Rhonda" succeeding for Rivers, is that it marks the first time a Beach Boys hit has ever been covered by another artist. When you review the vast number of classic hits the Beach Boys have had over the last dozen years it's all the more puzzling that never before have any of these songs been mastered or reinterpreted by anyone else. Certainly there have been countless great versions of titles like "Fun Fun Fun" (The Carpenters); "Don't Worry Baby" (The London Bridge, Keith Moon) etc., but the music of the Beach Boys has remained until now theirs to command exclusively. "It's like covering the Beatles" says Johnny Rivers who religiously professes this music to be California's only real claim to a musical identity.

Perhaps Johnny Rivers has succeeded where no one else has because he was able to harness the vital freshness and authenticity of the original (Brian & Marilyn Wilson sang back-up vocals) while injecting a seventies approach to the track (Tom Scott on sax bridge). Then there's the one aspect of this latest Rivers recording that is uniquely Rivers: the vocal familiarity that is instantly recognizable yet highly



**THE VERY BEST OF JOHNNY RIVERS**  
Johnny Rivers  
United Artists UA-LA444-E

"Help Me Rhonda" is not the only new Johnny Rivers product on the market. Almost as if it were planned this way, United Artists has

just released a 'Very Best Of' volume on Johnny which should sell well in light of his current chart activity.

On *The Very Best of Johnny Rivers*, you'll find twelve of Johnny's most important hits of the past. Most of the tunes were in the top ten at one point and listening to some of the tracks here that are over ten years old now, clearly points up how well-recorded and produced Johnny's records are. Side one consists of the Lou Adler sides from the 1964-1966 period ("Memphis," "Maybelline," "Mountain of Love," "Midnight Special," "Seventh Son" and "Secret Agent Man"), hold up well on re-listening. The side is filled with clean, crisp pop and the work of Joe Osborn, Larry Knechtel, Hal Blaine and Jim Gordon demonstrates their ranking as top LA session men.

Starting off side two is the first

hit Rivers composed. Interestingly enough "Poor Side of Town," the first of a string of slow paced ballad numbers was Johnny's biggest single hit to date, reaching #1 in September of 1966. Others on the side include the Motown-remakes "Baby I Need Your Lovin'" and "Tracks of My Tears," "Summer Rain" and his seventy's hits "Rockin' Pneumonia" and "Blue Suede Shoes." The album is a collection of his ten years on the Imperial/Liberty/UA group of labels and it's the first complete collection of its kind to be made available (a previous 'Best Of' collection, "A Touch of Gold," released in 1969 has recently been certified gold incidentally).

Unlike others in the series, this package features graphics of its own, and isn't quite the punched-out design the 40-plus other titles have been reduced to. Further, there are

adaptable. Not unlike Elton John, in the sense that he straddles the fence between ballads and disco, pop and MOR, folk and country; and he gets away with it. "Johnny Rivers records always feature the finest music beds in the business" says Dean Torrence, "His ability to assemble LA's great session men is part of the magic. They don't play that way for everyone—on records like "Help Me Rhonda" it's obvious these guys believe in Johnny."

"Help Me Rhonda" is not the first such 'California' track for Johnny. Where Brian Wilson spoke of hot rods and the beach, Rivers was on the dance floor, but they both reflected the white, Southern California search for a seven day weekend. On the next Rivers LP "New Lovers and Old Friends" a series of sixties greatness has been re-introduced to seventies thrill seekers to relive once again. The Four Tops "It's the Same Old Song," Arthur Alexander's "You Better Move On," Tyrone Davis' "Can I Change My Mind" and Buffalongo's "Dancing In The Moonlight" (a hit for King Harvest) are all treated to the Rivers alchemy. "It's the Same Old Song" in particular exemplifies Rivers' vision of the entire city of Huntington Beach dancing in the streets. The hand-clapping relentless over-powering rhythms abound and even the most sensitive, serious souls among us are commanded to have a good time whether they like it or not.

Johnny Rivers—he's part of that small circle of artists who produce the kind of teen-age pop dreams we call California Music. When you start to count the ones who brought it all to us, count him in.

twelve tracks on the record, not ten and that makes this a more complete release (some five track 'Best of' LPs have spiral times of just over ten minutes). The record has a suggested retail list price of \$4.98, which makes this and all the LPs in the line a real bargain. List prices are usually cut about 30% in stores, so you should add this collection for just over 3 bucks in many of your more complete discount record stores.

Johnny Rivers is a mainstay in the pop-music world. He makes the kind of music radio stations like to program repeatedly, that consumers enjoy playing time and again and in my book that makes this artist one of a select order. He deserves closer examination than most of us have granted him in the past, and this anthology should give many an opportunity to correct an unnecessary neglect.

# HEAD

By MARTIN CERF

Inevitably every few years there appears a geographic music catalyst. A musical community whose local talent combines with the social climate of the times to yield what is loosely termed "a sound" or trend in popular music. There was a time when Memphis was just such an exponent with Elvis and Jerry Lee Lewis at the top of the charts. New Orleans had its influence in the fifties as well with Huey "Piano" Smith and Fats Domino dictating the hits. In the early sixties the protest/folk-rock sound that flowered first in New York's Greenwich Village and reached ultimate fruition in 1965-66 Los Angeles with the Mamas and The Papas, Barry McGuire, The Byrds and all the other Dylan variations was the order of the day. 1967, and what seemed a millennium since Eddie Cochran's "Summertime Blues," San Francisco set the pop world on a road from which there was to be no return. "I never got into the psychedelic stuff" recalled pop purveyor Dick Clark during a 1972 interview, "I think that for music to be vital and moving it must have a lyrical and musical base. And it has to be, more than anything, fun."

Dick Clark's concept of what is "fun" or what is "entertainment" may or may not differ from what today's youth perceives to be digestable. What it boils down to really is the audience must be able to identify with their entertainment. The folkies of the late sixties and early seventies created of music a statement too personal for a prolonged reaction from the masses. That David Crosby-James Taylor concept of music seems almost MOR now. American teenagers are looking once more for the new heroes. And they are forthcoming, even while the audiences in New York and Los Angeles remain ignorant of the 70's music revolution, it's happening, and it's all happening in the Mid-West.

There are several territories contributing to the mammoth movements going on in the pop music world of the Mid-West. There's Kansas City with its Cowtown Productions, a combination promoter-management company. They book all the big shows in the area and manage such locals as the Ozark Mountain Daredevils, Brewer & Shipley, and one of the finest guitarists in the nation, Danny Cox. Another key region is the Cleveland-Akron area. If Kansas City is the center of country/folk-pop, then certainly Cleveland is the mondo-pop capital of the States today. Aside from breaking such outsiders as Alex Harvey, Kraftwerk and Lucifer's Friend, they have a crop of their own home-grown successes, Michael Stanley, Joe Vitale, Eric Carmen and of course Joe Walsh...there's many more.

But in between Cleveland and Kansas City there lies perhaps the real pop commonwealth, St. Louis, Missouri. It's yet to be realized nationally, and even those living in the area may not be aware of their new cultural status, but there is a community so utterly vibrant and alive here as to approach even that of San Francisco in its hey-day. Venues like Kiel Auditorium and Opera House, The Arena, Fox Theatre and The Ambassador Theatre are weekend sites of wholesale music mania when such acts as Ted Nugent, REO Speedwagon or Nektar take the stage. It's not easy to place a name-tag on the sound, but someone once said, "The Detroit sound has moved to St. Louis," and there is some truth to the fact that the 'heavy

## Making it in the Pop Commonwealth of St. Louis

metal' soundings of Detroit circa 1969 can be found here. They've taken on a mutated likeness: it's loud, but lyrical—it rocks, but musically. Most certainly many of the top names, big draws here are virtually unknown elsewhere. What are on the nation's best seller charts, and promoters A booking lists don't necessarily have control of this area.

St. Louis (and surrounding areas like Edwardsville, a college community across the Mississippi in Illinois) are setting their own musical priorities; they have been for almost five years now. And I can't help but feel this is the area that will be setting the pop stride of the Nation in the months to come where successful new talent is concerned.

the show and said, 'You guys are going to be signed to A&M Records' recalls Head East leader Roger Boyd. Ross Gentile, the stranger in question, is a regional promotion man from A&M Records who aspires to evolve into the A&R area. He was one of the first to realize the potential of the act, and the effect they had on the local audiences. "The people seem to come alive when Head East are on stage, their music is absolutely refreshing and the band can do just about everything," Gentile enthusiastically exclaims. "There are those sides with meaningful lyric lines and five-part harmonies and yet other numbers are incredibly musical featuring some of the finest keyboard and

# EAST

press our own record," Boyd says in retrospect, "the capitol investment and distribution hassles people told us it would be too much for the group to handle. But we wanted to do it ourselves, we know we had a market out there and we proved it." Thus A&M was obliged to pick up not only a hot new group, but a product that was currently moving in the stores.

There are only a few cities in the nation whose local medias have such a liberal attitude as St. Louis. In this city you have radio outlets like KADI and KSHE who believe in and support good local talent. There are promoters/managers like Irv Zuckerman (Contemporary Productions & AV Ltd.) and Ron Powell (Panther Productions: Pavlov's Dog, Nektar & Man) who are foresighted enough to promote and invest in new and local talent. These are the reasons why a group like Head East most assuredly have the chance to be a big factor in 1975-6 pop. Not forgetting of course this is an act of superior talent. For vocally and compositionally, Head East is an exciting band. They reach the bristling crystal harmonies found on Doobie Bros. recordings while adding a healthy innocence to their lyrics. Their first LP, *Flat As A Pancake* [A&M 4537] is a thoroughly playable release. Sides like "Love Me Tonight," "City Of Gold" and "Jefftown Creek" are in the strictest riff-rock tradition, with production affectations that may appear hackneyed on the surface, but repeated play reveals their product to be the work of inspired artisans.

Reviewing the record in total, there are amazingly few flaws, and considering the creation of the product was solely in the hands of what otherwise must be termed tyro entertainers, a recording of such a high standard must be met with the most effusive praise.

Head East is a rock band, different from others because they seem to portray a real concept of what a record should be and what a live performance should approximate in an effort to achieve the respective proper results from the listener. Reared in the Mid-West and allowed to carve out a creative niche for themselves without the heartbreak and disappointment of competing on Tin Pan Alley, this act is obviously at the threshold of what should be a real success story.

They will need to remember a few things if they are to remain exempt from the usual pitfalls and failures that greet most new groups. First and foremost, there needs to remain an identity for the band, a pivotal base of operations that provides all the right incentives and motivations for repeated creative output. That base is St. Louis, and the people who have supported the act up till now. "In St. Louis people are open to more things, differences in style and such. They like music they can have a good time to," Boyd outlines. Another important St. Louis musical fact of life is that the people are loyal to their talent. It might be said that the mid-west audiences are naive, and to an extent maybe haven't been exposed to endless amounts of music. Hence it can also be projectile that people in this part of the country are not jaded or burned out on pop music, and it's from the existence of this attitude and receptive atmosphere that an honest new approach to seventies music will be created. Head East are first in line.



•Head East: John Schlitt, Roger Boyd, Michael Somerville, Dan Birney and Steve Huston.

All that remains now is for the children of this musical mecca to catapult a few of their own acts to national status, and before the year is out we may well have two or three St. Louis stars to identify this elusive sound with.

The first 70's St. Louis band annexed by a major label, achieving some degree of success was Pavlov's Dog. Discovered by the same team which conjured forth The Blue Oyster Cult from the streets of New York (Sandy Pearlman and Murry Krugman), Pavlov's Dog first LP "Pampered Menial" was released on ABC/Dunhill. "They paid six-figures to get the group and that record" a spokesman for the group recalls, "and they totally lost it. We sold tremendous amounts of product in the mid-west, but ABC was unable to spread the excitement elsewhere." After a short time with the label, the group moved over to BOC's home, Columbia where the label re-released the act's first LP just months after the initial national failing. The results of this second incarnation are yet to be determined.

St. Louis has other acts worthy of national acceptance. In the near future you can expect to hear from Starcastle (currently negotiating with Epic Records), The Road Apples (a blue-grass group out of the main-stream St. Louis pop mold) and more specifically Head East. According to most observers Head East appear on a roller-coaster adventure that has rifled them to the forefront of the St. Louis music scene nationally, and it's happening even faster than the act can measure.

"Last August we were playing Kiel with the Ozarks and this guy I'd never seen before came up to me on stage after

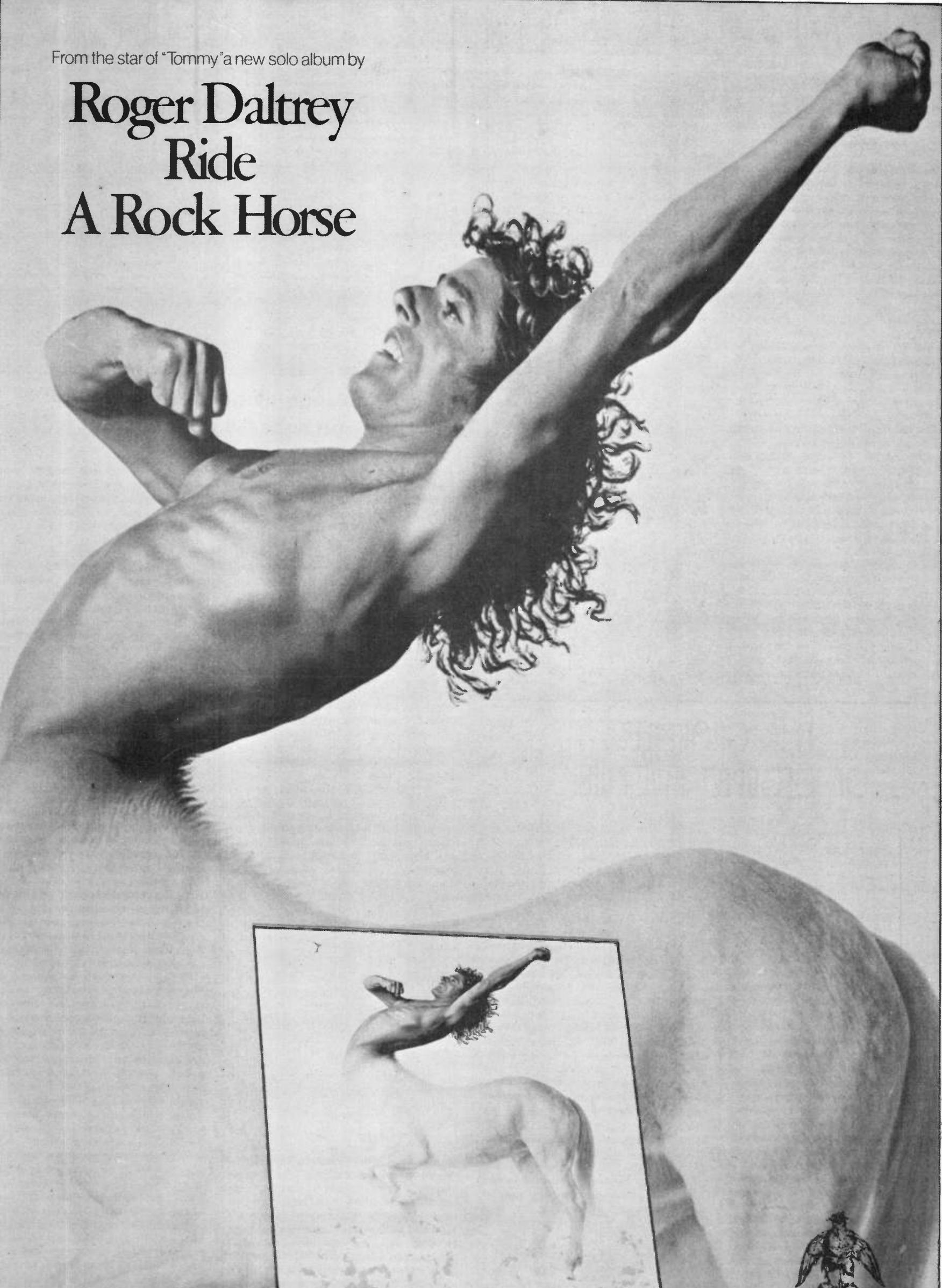
guitar-work anywhere."

But the evolution of this band originally from the flatlands of central Illinois (from which the title of the group's first record was inspired), was to assume a most atypical pattern. Rather than seeking out the normal heavy advance from a major manufacturer most locally successful bands do in order to record a first LP, Head East together with the help of their management firm (Artistic Visions of St. Louis) shipped off to Golden Voice Studios in Pekin Illinois (Dan Fogelberg, Styx, REO and others record here regularly) where with their own dollars they completed their debut release *Flat As A Pancake*. It's not so unusual a group should front their own money to record, but what was different about Head East's early career was the fact that after the completion of the production of their LP, they proceeded to press up, distribute and promote the record themselves. It was initially pressed under the Pyramid label and made available to retailers through an independent record distributor in the St. Louis area.

"We asked the people at KADI and KSHE radio here in town to listen to the group. They did and both stations were knocked out with the LP and went on it right away" says Irv Zuckerman, administrator of AV. "The orders came in almost immediately and the first 5,000 LPs we pressed were sold out in just a few weeks," Zuckerman informs. Meanwhile, A&M's Gentile had sent the Pyramid release to Jerry Moss who soon directed A&M to move the group post-haste and in the last week of June, *Flat As A Pancake* was to see a renovated cover and a new national distributor. "Everybody told us not to

From the star of "Tommy" a new solo album by

# Roger Daltrey Ride A Rock Horse



Produced by Russ Ballard

MCA-2147



# TIM MOORE



## THE CHARMER OF SECOND AVENUE

The history of rock and roll as poetry is a tale of myriad parallels and paradigms, twisting and as convoluted as every critic's attempts to define the state of the art. Often, especially in the beginning, the poesy dealt with revolution and adolescent ripples of power (cf. Chuck Berry, Leiber and Stoller, et. al.). Donny Kirchner's Brill Building staff extended the craft, if not the range.

Concurrent was the lyric statement of bathetic teen-age tragedy (in this vein, there is no greater master of the genre than Paul Anka). Music then changed radically in the early sixties, with the advent of Dylan, the Beatles, and the Rolling Stones...An entire generation responded to their respective calls, trying to imitate the masters in both lifestyle and ambition. Tim Moore, at this time, was an alienated young man, studying art, with no clear idea of what he wanted to do. Like so many his age, he dropped his books and started strumming a guitar. Initially it was in a vein similar to Dylan's—topical songs about war and civil rights, the real traditional stuff. Songs to Woody and Cisco Houston. Like the other folkies, he would write the words first, and then rip-off some Childe ballad for the melody. Then the explosion of Beatlemania and the realization that one could write meaningful, melodic works within the structure of the pop music format and it was off to the

races—almost. As Tim confesses, "Originally I thought I wrote some pretty good lyrics, with rather lame melodies. After the Beatles, I started writing the melodies first, and god, I wrote some real awful lyrics at that time."

Oddly enough, he never got into the flourishing East Coast folk scene landing a job in the same building as Sigma Sound, doing all-purpose production work, in 1968. "I'd go in, write the song, write the lyrics, arrange the session, and engineer the date. It was quite hectic." But it was very productive, for how else can a young man get his chops in this business? To learn more about production techniques, he sat at the foot of the experts, Gamble and Huff. Not only did he get to watch two of the biggest pros in action, but also got helpful hints about his own career, at the same time. Primarily a session guitarist, he had briefly played in a band with Todd Rundgren, Woody's Truckstop, around 1967, and never lost the yearning to be a performer. It was not enough to be an accomplished studio hand, Tim wanted to be showcasing his own extensive material.

He played one of his songs, "Second Avenue," in 1970 for Gamble and Huff, and they instantly flipped. They started to talk all at once about how they would produce it, how many units it would sell ("it'll easily do a million...").

Only one hitch—he was under contract as a performer and artist as well as a producer with the production company for which he worked. So, on the advice of his friends at Sigma, he decided to sit out his contract and moved to Woodstock, for the business of serious woodshedding, to see what he could get together, if he really got serious about his artistry. Ultimately, he was released (after about a year or so, when it became obvious he was never going to record with his original company) but then, Gamble and Huff had moved onto other projects and were less interested in this white, suburban singer-songwriter from a Philadelphia suburb.

He wound up on ABC-Dunhill, who were signing some strange (for them) acts at that time, such as Daniel Moore (no relation) and Emmitt Rhodes. He was most often mentioned along with two young and unknown West Coast singer-songwriters, Jackson Browne and Emmitt Rhodes. Indeed, like the younger Jackson, he has quite a rock and

Elektra decided to re-release this debut album, which was a rather good album. It contained an updated version of "Fool Like You," authentic versions of "Second Avenue" and "Charmer" along with some solid material like "Sister Lilac" and "Love Enough." There is a classical, baroque feel to much of the material, not unlike the earliest recordings of Elton John. Tim had always had the secret ambition of being a classical composer. "I settled for writing sensitive music for people who haven't been exposed to the classics," he says, in a self-deprecating manner.

Concurrent with Elektra picking up his debut album, a freaky thing happened. "Some people called up from an organization called the American Song Festival, and they wanted to enter some of my songs in their competition. I knew nothing about it, but I said sure, go ahead. Lo and behold, some months later, I find out I won the grand prize for 'Charmer'." This sparked some interest in the song and for a real down version of

### "Tim Moore is going to sneak up on success unnoticed"

roll feel about his sensitive material. Like Emmitt, he got buried on ABC. They released a great single, "Fool Like You," which had all the right ingredients to be a hit and launch Tim's career, but unfortunately, it never took off. For reasons related to this marketing failure, and a lack of communication with the A&R department, Moore sought and obtained his release. Hanging around New York's Greenwich Village (a haven for songwriters at that time) he ran into Zappa who wanted him for his Straight Records label. Some may quibble about Frank's talent, but one thing is for sure: he has a rare and uncanny ability to spot genius, even if he can't predict commercial success. And already it was apparent that Tim was a budding genius, just waiting for the right circumstances to bring it out. Nothing came of these discussions, so he then headed back home to Woodstock for some more woodshedding. Moore felt positive about his music, felt it was getting better all the time, but the business side of things kept getting worse. Woodstock has that appeal for many musicians—a well-sheltered community with an organic ambience that allows a person to really touch base with himself.

Towards the end of 1973, he was approached by Johanna Vigoda, Stevie Wonder's lawyer, who was starting a new label, called appropriately, A Small Record Company. To digress, it is interesting to note the appeal Moore has had for people whose background is solid R&B. I think the reason for this is that there has always been a healthy respect in the R&B field for solid material and good productions, talents which Moore has in abundance. Vigoda signed an agreement with Paramount for distribution of his new label and Tim was once again back in the studios. The result of this was a debut album and single ("Second Avenue") which went nowhere.

Ostensibly then it seemed like Tim's career had run into a dead end. But a series of odd events was put into motion in mid-1974 that had tremendous ramifications for the young artist. Gulf & Western decided to get out of the record business and sold their label to ABC. Because of some intricate sub-clause, A Small Record Company was then able to get out of their deal and Vigoda took the label, whose main assets are Moore, to Elektra/Asylum.

this number, check out the Etta James rendition. Also, Art Garfunkle decided to cover "Second Avenue" and that revived interest in Moore's original version. The two records battled it out on the charts for a while, with Garfunkle getting the edge in sales and airplay, though many, myself included find Moore's version more appealing and satisfying.

For the past year, Tim has been in the studios working on a follow-up album, comprising mostly new compositions. "One of the attendant problems of having been on the scene so long is mixing the backlog of material I've stored away for the future, with the current stuff that you're just dying to hear recorded. I think both in my stage show and on this album, I've got a good blend." His recently released album, entitled *Behind the Eyes* includes several potential singles that should catapult him into the playlists of various radio configurations. "Rock and Roll Love Letter" is my favorite, the hottest song on the album. It's a cute song, with really banal, trashy lyrics and some heavy power-chording. It's the type of song no one writes anymore with the exception of Ian Hunter—real pop masterpieces. For his hard-core cadre of fans who expect sensitive, gentle melodies and lyrics, there is "Lay Down a Line to Me," complete with strings and as good as any of the Elton John—Bernie Taupin songs in that vein. Others of this genre include: "The Night We First Sailed Away," and "For the Minute." The latter two are full-production numbers and remind the listener of Rupert Holmes, which is not surprising, for both are well-schooled in studio techniques and the intricate possibilities of the arrangement of sound. Two other compositions worth mentioning are "If Somebody Needs It," a light-hearted ditty in the manner of those which Nilsson has made so popular, and "Kaptain Kidd" which is classic Leiber-Stoller nonsense of the sort which they recorded with the Coasters. What is impressive about Tim Moore is his absolute range, his refusal to be pigeon-holed into the singer-songwriter stereotype and all that categorization implies. He is definitely a comer, as they say in the trades, and I have the feeling that he's going to sneak up on success unnoticed until after the fact, like many of today's superstars.

By BOBBY ABRAMS

# WAR

## *Why can't we be friends?*

UA-LA441-G



**A NEW ALBUM FROM WAR**



A FAR OUT PRODUCTION ON UNITED ARTISTS RECORDS & TAPES



By GREG SHAW

*Who put the bomp in the bomp-a-bomp-a-bomp?  
Who put the ram in the rama-lama-ding-dong?  
Who put the bop in the bop-shoobop-shoobop?  
Who put the dit in the dit-didit-didit?  
Who was that man?  
I'd like to shake his hand  
He made my baby fall in love with me...\**

That Barry Mann might ultimately be best remembered for this rather silly novelty song, rather than as one of the foremost songwriters of the Sixties, and that his gifted wife and collaborator Cynthia Weil probably won't be remembered at all outside the industry and a small cult of fans, is one of the great ironies of pop history.

For the sake of those not accustomed to reading the fine print on record labels, here are some of the more than 50 hits written by Mann & Weil: "Uptown," "He's Sure the Boy I Love" (Crystals), "On Broadway," "Saturday Night at the Movies" (Drifters), "Magic Town" (Vogues), "We Gotta Get Out of This Place" (Animals), "Soul and Inspiration," "You've Lost That Lovin' Feeling" (Righteous Bros), "Walking in the Rain," "Born to Be Together" (Ronettes), "Home of the Brave" (Bonnie & the Treasures), "I'm Gonna Be Strong," "Looking Through the Eyes of Love," (Gene Pitney), "I Love How You Love Me" (Paris Sisters), "Kicks," "Hungry" (Raiders), "Rock 'n' Roll Lullabye" (B.J. Thomas), "Make Your Own Kind of Music," "It's Getting Better," (Mama Cass), "Only in America" (Jay & Americans) and "Blame It On the Bossa Nova" (Eydie Gorme).

Their songs have also been done by countless artists, including Slade, Johnny Crawford, Shelley Fabares, Frankie Laine, Jackie DeShannon, the Searchers, Johnny Burnette, Steve Lawrence, Ray Peterson, Isaac Hayes, Leroy Van Dyke, Dusty Springfield, Brenda Lee, Cliff Richard, Bobby Rydell, the Turtles, Glenn Yarbrough, the Monkees, Cher, Dion, the Grass Roots and Max Frost & the Troopers.

With that in mind, the significance of "Who Put the Bomp" tends to fade. Yet all the same, it was a good record to have started a career with, and certainly nothing to regret. It shows us that, even then, Barry Mann felt a need to do something about the essential stupidity of rock & roll, to point out to its listeners how inane most of it was. The fact that most people took it seriously only added to the song's satiric worth.

Barry Mann was born in Brooklyn in 1939. His parents, who were musically inclined, gave him piano lessons. He learned fast, and by age 12 was composing small pieces. He went to Madison High along with Carole King (his neighborhood also produced Neil Sedaka, Gerry Goffin, and Neil Diamond). After graduating, he studied architecture at Pratt Institute, spending summers as a bus boy in the various Borsht Belt resorts of the Catskills. It was here that he began doing a bit of singing, and soon decided on a career in show business. He dropped out of college in 1958, and by 1959 had made a good start for himself.

In the course of writing songs and making the rounds of publishing companies, Mann soon ended up in the employ of Don Kirshner and Al Nevins at Aldon Music—as did virtually every promising songwriter in New York in those days. At the time he became a staff writer there, he had already written a Top 20 hit for the Diamonds, "She Say (Oom Dooby Doom)" and released a single of his own on the JDS label. He soon became one of the hottest writers in Kirshner's stable, which also included Gerry Goffin & Carole King, Neil Sedaka & Howard Greenfield, Jerry Keller, Tony Orlando and others. Of 31 Mann songs recorded between 1960 and 1963, all but four were hits; and all but 8 of those made the Top 40.

His early hits, mostly written in collaboration with either Larry Kolber or Howard Greenfield, included "Sweet Little You" (Neil Sedaka), "Footsteps" (Steve Lawrence), "I'll Never Dance Again" (Bobby Rydell), "Patches" (Dickie Lee), "Come Back Silly Girl (Letterman)," "I Love How You Love Me" (Paris Sisters), and "The Way of a Clown" (Teddy Randazzo).

By a fateful coincidence, the flip side of that Randazzo record was co-written by a struggling novice, Cynthia Weil. Born in Manhattan in 1942, Weil studied acting at Sarah Lawrence, and appeared briefly on TV's "Goldberg" series. From there she got a job writing song lyrics, and eventually landed as a junior staff writer at Aldon. One day she happened to meet Barry Mann. "I'm not sure if it was love at first sight," she says "but I certainly wanted to see him again." To bring about a second 'accidental' encounter, she spent several days waiting around the reception room for him to show up



## BARRY MANN ROCK & ROLL SURVIVOR

again. When Mann finally arrived, they began dating and in late 1961 ultimately married.

Immediately, Mann & Weil became New York's most prolific songwriting team, next to Goffin & King who were also entering their prime. Barry & Greenwich wouldn't start writing together until 1963, and in the meantime Mann & Weil had started a steady stream of about ten hits a year, which would continue until 1967. Their first success was Tony Orlando's "Bless You," followed by the Crystals' first two hits, "Uptown" and "He's Sure the Boy I Love" in 1962.

Yet despite this auspicious start and their proven hit-writing ability, Mann & Weil seldom received the special treatment Kirshner reserved for his favorites. As Mann explains, Kirshner was "like a father figure to those who worked for him. Everyone's first thought, as we sat in those cubicles working out tunes on a battered old piano, was whether Donny would be pleased." And like most fathers, Kirshner seemed to favor his first-born: Neil Sedaka and Carole King. Barry and Cynthia won't acknowledge it, but the choicest assignments usually went to Goffin & King; Kirshner even gave them their own label in 1962. Dimension, though owned by Kirshner and Nevins, functioned mainly as an outlet for Goffin & King's songs and productions; Mann & Weil, as Aldon's other top duo, were relegated to writing follow-ups for the likes of Johnny Crawford, and providing songs for the Colpix label, owned by Screen Gems, for which Kirshner was also responsible. Here again they were successful, with "My Dad" by Paul Peterson, "Johnny Loves Me" and "Telephone" by Shelley Fabares, and "Conscience" by James Darren.

But this type of song, though popular at the time, was far from what Mann & Weil wanted to be doing. They considered themselves serious composers working within the rock idiom, and always tried to put across some sort of message in their songs. "Uptown" was one of the first pop songs to deal with racial alienation, and "On Broadway" had a disturbing undercurrent of reality as well.

They were given few outlets for this sort of material, however. "A lot of the things we wrote," explains Mann, "Donny didn't understand. He'd say, 'We're ready for another 'Little Darlin'. Write me one of those...'" Their reluctance to write standard teen fodder didn't help their career, nor did their avoidance of the fast-paced social scene that occupied most of the other young writers and producers in New York.

As a consequence, Mann & Weil were never really given the opportunity to exploit their own ideas and talents. After those first two Crystals hits, Spector didn't use them again until 1964, relying instead on the Barry-Greenwich team. Their hit string continued, but without much focus. They gave Leroy Van Dyke one of his biggest country hits with "If A Woman Answers," at the same time writing hits for Arthur Alexander ("Where Have You Been," also done by the Searchers) and Frankie Laine ("Don't Make My Baby Blue"). The diversity of artists who did their songs was amazing, as was the fact that their songs were rarely placed with the same artist more than once, and they were almost never involved in the actual production of the records, although they put great effort into producing and singing their own demos, which were often simply copied on the finished product.



•Barry Mann with his lovely and talented wife, Cynthia Weil.

One song they had particularly strong feelings about was "Only in America," a big hit for Jay & the Americans in the fall of 1963. As written, it was a barbed social commentary with lyrics like "Only in America...do they make you sit in the back of the bus." By the time Jay & the Americans were finished with it, though, it had been whitewashed into something more like a Coke commercial. Infuriated, Mann & Weil began to long for the day when they could exert complete control over every phase of their songs' recording. Soon after, Barry began producing, though it would be years before his goal of total freedom would be realized. One of his first productions was a single on Red Bird under his own name, which entered the charts for two weeks before dropping off. A second single, a Righteous Brothers-styled "We Gotta Get Out of This Place," was scrapped when the Animals came out with their version.

Despite his initial success with "Who Put the Bomp" and a certain amount of performing that occurred subsequently, Mann had always resisted thinking of himself as an artist, preferring his behind-the-scenes role of writing and producing. Cynthia felt the same way, although she had an excellent voice, within limits, and was strikingly attractive. All the same, he liked singing, and from 1966 his own career began to occupy an ever greater amount of his energy.

The years 1964-66 had been the summit of Mann & Weil's career as writers. In addition to hits with Gene Pitney, Kenny Chandler, the Drifters, Glenn Yarbrough, the Vogues and others, they were responsible for some of the most powerful, classic songs of the era. Almost alone among their colleagues, they found themselves able to write for the new generation of electrified groups; the Animals did "We Gotta Get Out of This Place," the Turtles did "Glitter & Gold," and Paul Revere & the Raiders had their first two Top 10 hits with "Kicks" and "Hungry." At the same time, they had written "Walking in the Rain," "You Baby" and "Born to Be Together" for the Ronettes, "Home of the Brave" which was a hit for Bonnie & the Treasures and Jody Miller, and two No. 1 hits for the Righteous Brothers, "You've Lost That Lovin' Feeling" and "Soul & Inspiration." At one time in 1966, they had 3 songs in the Top Ten simultaneously.

This was, of course, the era of protest and teenage rebellion. While they never fell into the stylized formula employed by such 'protest' writers as Sloan & Barr, they welcomed the new freedom of expression in pop. Their most overt message song, and one of the most awesomely produced melodramatic records of its type was "Home of the Brave" by Bonnie & the Treasures, on one of Spector's subsidiary labels. Inspired by an actual occurrence reported in a newspaper, its lyrics included the following:

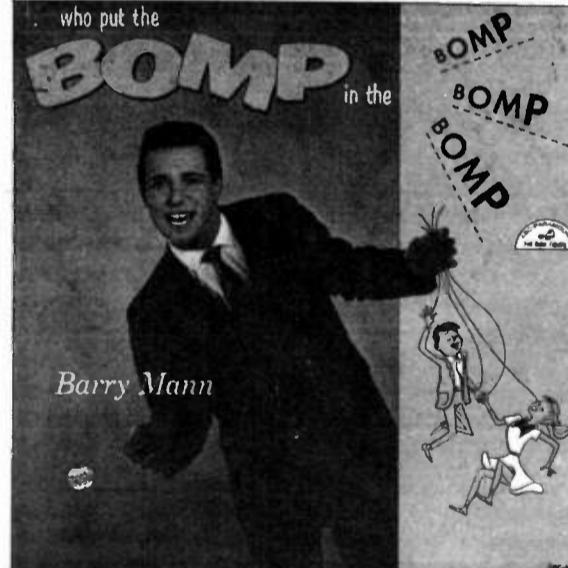
"The school board won't let him come to school no more  
Unless he wears his hair like he wore it before  
The kids all laugh at his hair and his funny clothes  
More than once he's gone home with a bloody nose  
He's not like them and they can't ignore it  
So they all hate him for it.  
Home of the brave, land of the free  
Why won't they let him be what he wants to be?" \*

Soon after this, Time Magazine hailed Mann & Weil as the hottest songwriting team in the business, while the New York Times cited them as leaders of the protest trend. They didn't write a lot of topical songs, but the ones they wrote tended to affect people deeply. "It's important to believe what you're writing," Barry said at the time. "We don't start out just to write a 'message song'. There must first be a subject about which we have strong feelings and an idea of how it can be translated into exciting music."

Looking back today, Mann muses, "You know, I really wanted to change the world. We both did." Mann believes firmly in the power of music to change people's thinking, at the same time admitting the enormous difficulty this goal represents. As far back as 1962, he might have been the only one who thought so. By 1966 there were all too many rock proselytizers, but even then Mann & Weil were displeased with the growing number of 'drug' songs that were affecting young people. They were among the first to see the dangers inherent in the 'drug culture,' and their "Kicks" was probably the best anti-drug statement of its time. Later, they wrote Bill Medley's moving "Peace, Brother, Peace."

In 1967, like most of the Screen Gems stable, they contributed a couple of songs to the Monkees—"Shades of Gray" and "Love is Only Sleeping." By and large, however, this period marked Mann & Weil's withdrawal from the songwriting mill, and an effort to find a more rewarding direction for their lives. Barry had signed a long-term recording contract with Capitol, and released four singles over the next two years, which he and Cynthia wrote and produced. They were all good; one, "Angelica" was a hit for Oliver, another, "I Just Can't Help Believin'" was a 1970 hit for B.J. Thomas. The best of the lot was a scathing look at the phony pretenses of the hippie movement, called "The Young Electric Psychedelic Hippie Flippy Folk & Funky Philosophic Turned On Groovy 12 String Band."

The following year, Mann & Weil became involved in writing the musical score for *Wild in the Streets*, one of the better American International pictures, in which a youth revolution results in a voting age of 14 and compulsory retirement at 30. Several songs from the picture, including "52%", "14 or Fight" and "Shape of Things to Come" were hits for Max Frost & the Troopers; the latter song was also done by Slade on



their second album. Mann has continued doing occasional film work—most notably the score he and Al Gorgoni wrote for *I Never Sang For My Father*.

With their taste for the theatre whetted, the Manns spent most of 1969 working on a Broadway adaptation of *Face in the Crowd*. It was an experience that taught them a lot about writing songs for the stage, which turned out to be entirely different from writing rock & roll, but an education was about all they got out of it. Production troubles eventually killed the show before it could even open.

During this time they'd had only two songs in the charts, Mama Cass' "It's Getting Better" and "Make Your Own King of Music." In 1970, Barry had a minor hit with "Feelings," a song he wrote for the film *Getting Straight*. At this point, writing was not as easy for him as it had once been. Not only had the musical styles changed to the point where everything seemed to be either overbearing guitars or middle-of-the-road plumb, and not only were most artists writing their own material, but Mann himself no longer found themes as clear-cut as they had been in the Sixties. He felt the need to develop a style of writing based on his own inner feelings and personal experiences, as opposed to outside events and stimuli. This period of

development was chronicled on an album done for the New Design label, about which Mann will only admit that it was "transitional." His most impressive song during this period was "Rock and Roll Lullabye," an enormous hit for B.J. Thomas.

By 1972, Mann was beginning to listen to friends who were urging him to put everything into his own career. "I'd always been told that something great happens when I sit at the piano, and gradually I was coming to believe in myself as a performer." While visiting California, he was asked by Carole King to make a guest appearance at her upcoming Greek Theatre concert. After a long introduction in which she told the audience about the old Brill Building days when Barry and Cynthia had been turning out hits in the next cubicle over from her and Gerry, Barry came out and sang a few songs to an overwhelming reception. One reviewer said, "he has all the individualistic ingredients to be the next composer to make it big as a performer."

This proved to be a turning point, at least in his own mind. He and Cynthia moved to California shortly thereafter, and began working with producer Richard Podolor, who like them had been a behind-the-scenes legend in the record business for over 15 years. He had just ended his tenure as Three Dog Night's producer, and Barry spent some 7 months in Podolor's studio, where they worked out several songs, including a demo for Steppenwolf that could have been done by Alice Cooper—an unsuspected hard rock side to Barry Mann. In all, he was feeling more confident and creative than ever, and when the deal with Podolor came to a dead end, Mann looked up his old friend Terry Melcher, whose Equinox deal with RCA had just been announced.

Melcher heard a demo of "Nobody But You," loved it, and turned Barry loose in the studio to cut it. In short order, Mann had signed a production deal with Melcher and Bruce Johnston, and a recording deal with RCA. Before being signed, he was asked to give an audition, in which he demonstrated that his days of protest were far from over by performing a song dedicated to the overthrow of RCA's greatest source of profits: John Denver.

"I'm tired of your wonders and I'm tired of  
Your Rocky Mountain high  
If I wanna get high just give me some scotch,  
and I'll get by  
I'm tired of your scenery, and Lord I'm tired of  
your view  
But most of all I'm tired of every goddamn  
song written about you!  
Oh f--- you Colorado  
Screw the outhouse and the dog  
Give me New York or LA  
All the muggings and the smog...." \*

Though never meant as anything more than a joke (not unlike "Who Put the Bomp") this song reveals Mann's innate qualities of taste, humor, and outspokenness. The rest of his new material, while more subtle, is equally impressive. His melodies are strong, and his gospel-tinged piano style works well with his voice and Melcher & Johnston's production. On his album, he's backed by the Bill House band, along with some of the same geniuses that played on the records Mann wrote for Spector: Hal Blaine, Earl Palmer, Larry Knechtel, Steve Douglas, plus the Captain and Tennille, Spooky McFarlane and other respected names that, though there are a lot of them, don't seem to clutter up the record. There's a very positive, harmonious, almost celebratory atmosphere that speaks well for Barry Mann's emergence as an artist for the Seventies.

The best song by far is "I'm a Survivor" which, paradoxically, isn't on the album—though it's the title song. It was completed after the album was done, and is now out as a single. It's strong, moving, a bit nostalgic but with a sort of universal, anthemic approach to the years of rock & roll and where they've taken all of us. It could also serve, loosely, as a portrait of Mann himself:

"I'm a survivor, and I've watched it all go down  
You can change the times, you can change  
the rhymes, you can even change the sound  
You can change the keys and harmonies; I'll  
always be around" \*

Hard to argue with a statement like that, when Barry Mann is a living testimony to his own staying power. And most significantly of all, he's a living answer to his own rhetorical question, which has occupied thousands of teenage minds these past 15 years: "Who was that man? I'd like to shake his hand, he made my baby fall in love with me..." Thanks, Barry, I knew it was you all along.

\* © 1975, Summerhill Songs Inc./Screen Gems, BMI

# A WARNING TO PARENTS:

## HERE COMES THE VILE, THE HORRIFYING, THE AMAZING, THE FABULOUS...

### THE TUBES

The Roxy  
Hollywood, California

By Mr. & Mrs. ROLAND CROMELIN

Dear Editor:

As our son Richard was ill with the flu the night that the group called the Tubes opened at the Roxy, he asked us to attend the performance and send along a little report.

Although we had visited the Roxy once before (when some out-of-town relatives insisted on seeing *The Rocky Horror Show*), we were again flabbergasted by the great difference between the Sunset Strip of today and the one which we frequented in younger days. We had read in *People* that glamour was making a comeback, and anticipated perhaps a partial return to the spirit of the Trocadero era.

But although we observed avidly and conscientiously, not a hint of the old excitement could we find. True, some of the cars which deposited young men and women (and Richard says that if we want to get paid for this there must be no cracks about telling one from the other) in front of the restaurant next door were imposing in their length and sheen, but that's as far as it went. The flash of the photographer's bulb was infrequent, and then halfhearted.

When we reached the Roxy's box-office window and asked for our tickets, the young lady scowled and said, "You're not Richard Cromelin." She was as sure of this as we were, to judge from her manner, so there was no point in maintaining the argument along those lines. But every new tack produced another impasse, and the situation was aggravated by the presence behind us of several husky, hirsute men in black t-shirts with "Uriah Heep" across the front (how Dickens entered this scene is beyond us), whose English-accented growling grew nastier as the moments passed.

Finally, after several explanations and conferences, we were given what they called a "tab," and were told that we must wait for the first house to clear. In the following 30 minutes, the sidewalk became congested with a motley assortment of people, some of whom might have been celebrities, most of whom certainly were not. The tedium was broken by the emergence from the club of a few who had apparently had enough of Tubes. No advance clues were to be gained here. They all wore studiously blank expressions, showing neither shock, outrage, humility nor approval, but they did, every one of them, exude a certain tension which promised to explode into some sort of display as soon as they turned the corner and left our sight.

At one point a young man in a white shirt bolted through the door, galloped along the sidewalk and disappeared around the side of the building. Ah, we thought, action! a drug-crazed rock fan driven to the brink and beyond by some incomprehensible manifestation of every fear of rock 'n' roll we held. Or, better, a man of breeding and taste terrified and repulsed into retreat by some tasteless, offensive, outrageous—

Our bubble burst when the gentleman in question strolled back the way he had come and re-entered the



## HERE COME THE TUBES

club, only to repeat his run again a few minutes later. Clearly, we realized, the fellow was employed by the Roxy in some Sisyphean capacity, which we presumed was either lucrative or prestigious enough to make this nonsense worthwhile.

When the first house finally did empty, we eavesdropped on the clusters of conversation that drifted past us. In with the vulgarities were words such as "fabulous" and "amazing," but the remark that caught our attention most tenaciously floated our way during a brief lull: "It's the same old garbage, really."

We pondered this pronouncement as we were admitted and led to our table by an attractive young lady, and contemplated the fact that what was the same old garbage to the speaker would not be the same old garbage to us.

Having ordered a tom collins and a banana daquiri, we sat back and listened to Lon & Derrek. Richard also told us we oughtn't dwell on how loud this music is, so we won't. Of Lon & Derrek, he once wrote, "their spirit is that of a junior league Steely Dan," whatever that means. The little fellow who sang appeared to suffer from hemorrhoids or worse, but we did enjoy his brother's saxophone and clarinet playing, and some of the songs were what we'd call catchy.

During intermission we talked with our neighbors, who told us that we

would enjoy the Manhattan Transfer. Before the Tubes began their show I excused myself, carefully followed the signs indicating the way to the men's room, and walked into a large kitchen, interrupting the busy Spanish conversation of several men in red jackets, their trays at the ready, who gave me a look that transcended the barriers of language. When I returned to the table, the Mrs. told me that her search for her restroom had taken her into some sort of low-ceilinged janitorial chamber. We ordered another round, doubles this time.

The first thing that impressed us about the Tubes was the five television sets on the stage. We've never had more than one at any given time, so just the very sight was a thrill. The Tubes' tubes alternately showed live shots of their onstage activities, pre-taped scenes of prior but similar activities, and various images intended to illustrate or enhance the meanings of the songs—the first being, "What Do You Want From Life," a question we should all ask ourselves periodically.

The next segment began with the unmistakable face of Patty Hearst on the screens. Her situation always affects us profoundly because we went through a similar, though certainly less monumental, experience when Richard was kidnapped by a Coptic sect that roamed the Southwest in the early 50s. Though not everyone in the room could identify

so immediately, all seemed to be responding—some with knowing smiles, nodding their largely bearded heads in approval, some radical-looking types exulting in the powerful Tanya image, and others looking almost embarrassed, as if they were friends of the family.

This sequence marked the first appearance of the troupe of dancers which added such vitality to the Tubes' show. Fetching in their fatigues, they slapped their rifles around and set the stage for Fee Waybill (the Tubes' singer and play-actor) to enter, (as a Castro figure) pass out cigars, sing "Malaguena Salerosa" and be assassinated.

Now mind you, we don't pretend to understand this music, but judging from the tapping toes all around us it was acceptable. Having enjoyed the guerilla sketch and ordered another round, we leaned back and had a laugh as the Tubes played the theme music from *Perry Mason* and *Peter Gunn*. Then, we thought, it all became very tedious.

This impression continued through "Mondo Bondage," which appeared to be left over from *The Rocky Horror Show*, a commercial (for the tubes) read by a chorus line of scantily-clad dancers, a Dr. Strangelove routine featuring even more-scantily-clad (in Polynesian togs) dancers, and a song to a recording of which the group pretended to sing while executing a sloppy dance routine.

This whole portion of the show seemed interminable, despite those dancers and a fine tribute to Tom Jones, and indeed we soon were forced to order two rounds simultaneously against the impending closing of the bar. Whereupon our spirits were revived by the final apparition of the Tubes, in which Fee paraded around in a garish, shimmering silver costume and platinum wig, on shoes at least two feet high. (He or she? How the hell do you tell them apart?) had a funny cardboard guitar, and tried to swallow some pills which instead spilled all over the floor. The music, which must have been very, very loud now, had a numbing, soothing effect on us, and in something of a reverie we watched delighted as the dancers joined in with breathtaking acrobatics, and a man dashed around shooting ping-pong balls from his mouth high into the air, and a tower collapsed onto Fee and someone else ran around squirting a fire extinguisher every which way. It reminded us of Mack Sennett, and we enjoyed it immensely.

Outside, the late-night air was bracing. We got up and tried again, making our way along the sidewalk and reflecting on the evening's experience. We had been amused and entertained, yes, and had also been bored to tears, which seemed only fair. We were discussing whether or not our limited exposure to modern music had colored our reaction when a bald kid approached with several copies of the same book in a pouch slung over his shoulder and packets of incense in his hand.

"How was the show Hare Krishna?" he asked, apparently sensing where we had been but getting our name wrong.

"The same old garbage," we replied in unison, and ambled on toward the Garden of Allah.

Richard's fever has gone down and he should be back at work on Monday. Sincerely...

# STRANGE UNIVERSE MAHOGANY RUSH

T-482

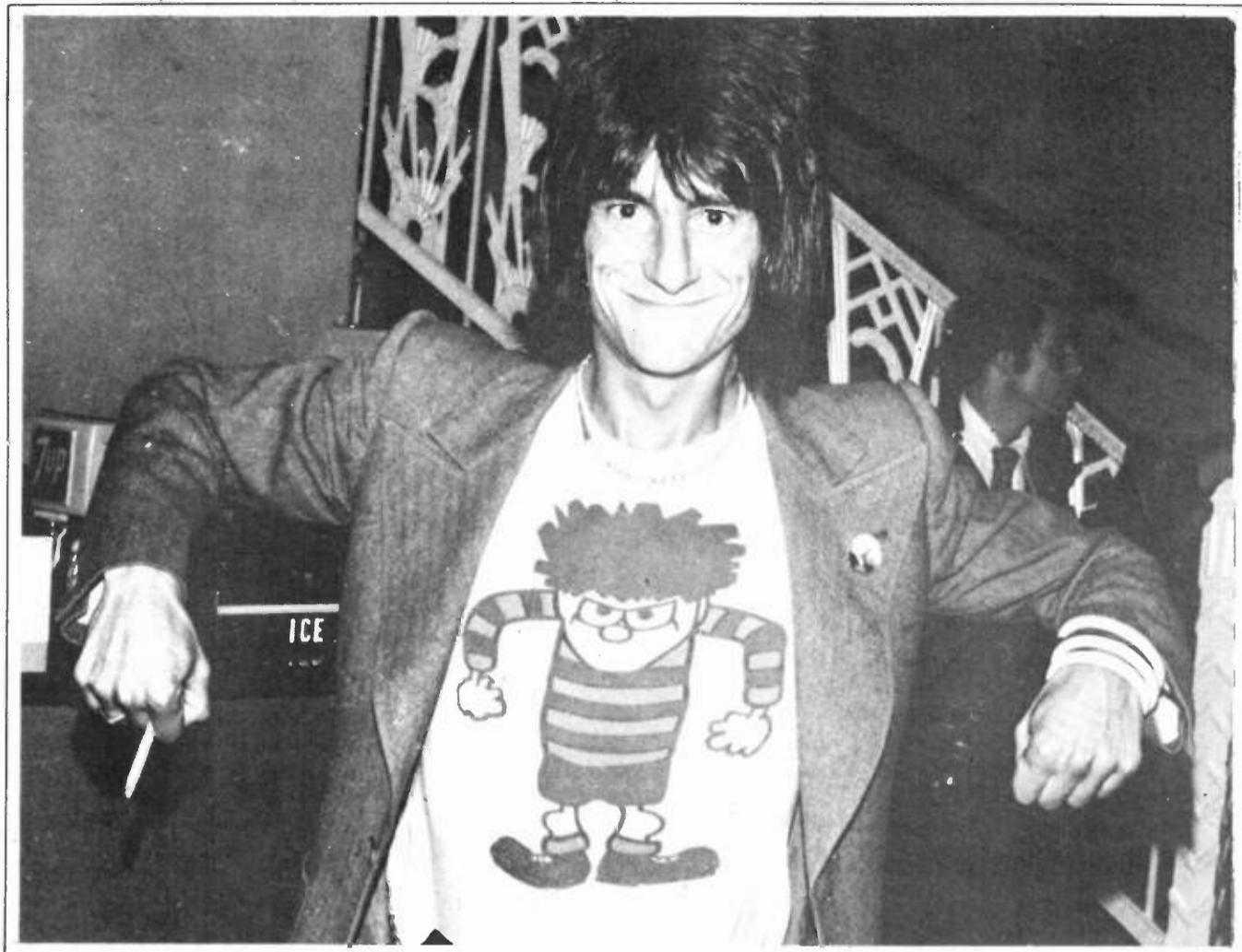


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# PHONOGRAPH RECORD REVIEWS



## Woody's psychological shuffle...

**NOW LOOK**  
Ronnie Wood  
Warner Bros. BS 2872

By BUD SCOPPA

Hey, this is good. Not good-despite sloppiness like Wood's earlier solo album, but unreservedly good. Wood's recording band—the Newmark-Weeks rhythm section, Ian McLagan on keyboards, and Keith Richard and Bobby Womack on guitars and/or vocals here and there—is marked by economy, bite, and a sensed rapport that has nothing in common with the interaction of session men. But what ultimately makes the album an improvement over the last is Woody himself: the songs on *Now Look* give evidence of a consistent point of view, and as sung with assurance and intensity by Wood they form a touching and intriguing psychological study.

The album's about a man and a woman who are attached to one another, but things have long ago begun to unravel, and the man (it's his side of the dialogue we're hearing) is trying to figure out what's going on, what he really wants, and how to get a grip on something solid. "Now look," he's telling her, but he isn't sure what it is he wants to say. Because there's bitterness, anger and confusion running through the songs, Woody and the band tend to go not for the full, pretty musical effect, but for a tight, jittery approach full of choppy chords and sighing slides.

Woody is clearly involved with both the sense and the feelings of these songs (nine of 11 written by him and/or Womack): he's singing with such

confidence that his vocals have an almost abandoned quality to them. And the fact that he has no more actual voice than his buddy Keith matters not a bit when he's wailing, because Woody has just discovered within himself The Edge, that rough, precognitive revelatory tool (the specialty of great rock & rollers) that enables people without much command of formal technique to deliver themselves directly, whole and exposed, in their expression.

Rage and longing intertwined rip harshly out of Wood's throat—there's no doubt he means what he's shouting. He's clawing for a getaway with one hand while the other hangs on desperately to a hold that once seemed firm—the man is struggling to get a grip on something—anything within reach. A friend commented that they're all the same song here on *Now Look*, just different ways of expressing the same ambivalence, the same vagueness. That's a good way of saying it, and Woody explains it himself in the opening song (co-written with Womack), "I Got Lost When I Found You": "It's all about accepting what you need out of life," he whines, repeatedly but not too confidently, and his uncertainty is manifested incisively in lines like "We're both playin' games, but who's foolin' who?" If I can't trust you, and I can't trust me, he seems to be saying, who can I trust? Still, he makes the best of the situation, determined to at least have a good time.

The songs on the album explore ramifications of the vague paradoxes and free-floating emotional debris described in the first track. Through the whole album, you never once get the feeling of contact actually made or a promise

actually kept—nothing is delivered.

That isn't quite right. The music delivers, time and again: in the heartbreaking Wood-Richard duet on "Breathe on Me"; in the celebratory road anthem, "I Can Say She's All Right"; in the utter poignancy of "Now Look"; in the stark turbulence of "I Can't Stand the Rain"; in the way the music holds and projects an acerbic aspect that is uncompromising but still strangely attractive. The songs, singing, and playing are all driving the same hard lesson home. Woody's album hangs together.

**OUTLAWS**  
Outlaws  
Arista AL 4042

By KEN BARNES

Good new rock & roll bands, without frills, excesses, or hyphenated stylistic cross-pollinations are getting scarcer all the time. That's why discovering the Outlaws is a cause for excitement. Not that they completely qualify—material concerns still persist—but their overall hard-rock impact is undeniable.

They're from the South, and they've got three guitars (like Moby Grape, Buffalo Springfield, or Lynyrd Skynyrd), good singing (both lead and harmonies), and a gift for pretty, fast songs (a lot of people come up with nice slow numbers, but melodic hard-rockers sometimes seem on the verge of extinction). The first side of their debut LP is a knockout, with three quick tuneful rockers, something like Lynyrd Skynyrd meet the Eagles. A pretty ballad and a more typical Southern rocker (i.e., spirited but unmelodic) round it out in

more than acceptable style.

Side two first appears a serious letdown, with a pointless countrified instrumental, a hackneyed boogie shuffle and two pleasant but ordinary country-rockers. But all that is quickly obliterated by the nearly 10-minute "Green Grass & High Tides" (courtesy A. Oldham?). A great menacing multi-guitar intro, compelling vocal segments, and electrifying guitar duels strongly reminiscent of Neil Young & Crazy Horse's "Cowgirl in the Sand" are thoroughly riveting. But its wild, riff-mad climax, which sounds like Love's "7 & 7 is" crossed with "Little Girl" by the Syndicate of Sound underneath with frantic, screaming guitar on top, leaves you breathless.

What impresses me most about the Outlaws (aside from the rather astonishing feat of recording a consistently exciting 10-minute song) is their unbounded vitality. They convey the impression that they could hardly wait to get everything on record, a quality difficult to capture. On "Green Grass" they seem to be constantly rushing the beat, barely able to restrain a headlong dive into sheer chaos. That's exciting, that's the mark of the very best kind of rock bands, and the Outlaws just could turn out to be that kind.

**THE TROGGS**  
The Troggs  
Pye 12112

By BOBBY ABRAMS

This is it, my friends. If, like myself, you've been missing that good old-fashioned, rock and roll, weep no more. Here, on one mere sliver of vinyl are ten great rock tunes, guaranteed to make you shake your thing or whatever you do when you get excited.

Often in talking about music, a lot of groups are bandied about, few of them exciting. I mean, I like my rock and roll hot, intrinsically so, not like the latest Jimmy Page and Co. studio production or Mick Jagger's pallid imitations of his glorified past. Well, this is the real thing. The Troggs haven't forgotten that after their smash hit of "Wild Thing" in 1966, they had four songs in a row banned from most commercial radio stations ("Give It to Me," "I Can't Control Myself," "Gonna Make You" and the best "Come Now"). Not since Creedence churned out great single after great single has there been anything like this album. It's raw, primitive, classic—like a Charles Bronson movie.

Nor is there one song on this album that couldn't have been cut in their heyday, halycon period. Their cover of "Satisfaction" could've been cut the day after the Stones' released their version. Progressive? These guys never, even heard of the word. There are a few other covers on the album, done in their patented understated, monotonic manner: the Chuck Berry classics, "Memphis" and "No Particular Place to Go"; "Peggy Sue"; Slim Harpo's "I Got Lovin' If You Want It"; and a particularly bizarre version of "Good Vibrations," which, if nothing else, will force you to see this classic in a different light.

The best song on the album is "Summertime" an original tune complete with lots of sibilant sounds and risqué double-entendres that suggest their past string of hits. Rounding out the album is an updated, pseudo-reggae version of "Wild Thing" showing that no musical genre is safe from their satiric needles.

I guarantee you there will not be a similar album out for years.

# REVIEWS



**METAMORPHOSIS**  
The Rolling Stones  
Abkco ANA 1

By MITCHELLS. COHEN

The fascination of *Metamorphosis*, basically a collection of outtakes, oddities and alternate versions, lies in what it adds to our experience and knowledge of the Stones. Not in terms of factual data—the dates, specific personnel, individual production credits are left unclarified, a definite flaw with this type of album, basically an historical

and Richard as composers.

Three tracks that we already own in different versions from a triangular starting point from which *Metamorphosis* can be discussed. The album opens with a full string section playing the familiar introduction to "Out of Time," and the rendition of the song that follows is a more ornate angle on what was approached straight-on in its well-known form. As on a large percentage of the album's cuts there is a dominance of acoustic guitar (in this case Spanish-influenced, most likely strummed by Brian Jones) and tambourine filling the spaces in lieu of a fully-realized Stones arrangement. By the same token, this is the fourth time "Out of Time" has been on a London album and we've yet to get the full five minute and fifteen second version the English *Aftermath* album contained. "Heart of Stone" is no improvement over the hit, has an extra verse and points out that one major value of the album is hearing Keith run off his patented rock solos. The Stones hurry through a poorly mixed "Memo From Turner" as a "Foxy Lady"-based blueprint distinguished by Charlie's drumming and the concluding line, "You schmucks all work for me."

Of the remaining eleven songs there are no astounding discoveries, although we would have rather heard them at the time they were recorded than the multiple re-cycles of "Lady Jane" and "Ruby Tuesday" that became so

others are Jagger/Richards) and noteworthy for its lyrical content: a petulant celebration of men in groups sung to an evil female ("I'd much rather be with the boys/Than be with you").

Side two of *Metamorphosis* contains the more ambitious tracks, including the chilling "Family," a menacing tale of parents and children trapped in a self-destructive rut, featuring stinging guitar lines, a mysterious piano accompaniment (by Nicky Hopkins) and some of Jagger's scathing lyrics: "What exactly's gonna happen/When her father finds out/That his virgin daughter has bordello dreams/And that he's the one she wants to try out." "If You Let Me," a thin execution (it sounds like a lead instrument is missing) of an *Aftermath*-type ballad contains some humorous couplets, and there is a trio of archetypical rock and roll Stones cuts: "I Don't Know Why"—an intense dramatization of slight material, "Jiving Sister Fanny"—the album's Chuck Berry track; no more, no less; Keith shines, as usual, and Mick babbles winningly over it all, and the closer: a muddy, exciting "I'm Going Down."

The Stones might not want *Metamorphosis* haunting them as they tour the hemisphere in 1975, but in its casual, half-baked way, this hodgepodge is truer to the real spirit of the world's greatest rock and roll band (when they really were, and there was no need to announce it) than much of their work done in the past few years. They were at the top of their game during the half-decade represented on this album and described in typical fashion by Andrew Oldham's liner notes. *Metamorphosis* is minor Stones, to be sure, but these were the best years of their, and our, lives, and no one who was around will want to do without it.

**HORIZON**  
Carpenters  
A&M SP 4530

By KEN BARNES

It's certainly less than revolutionary to admit you like the Carpenters these days (in "rock" circles, if you recall, it formerly bordered on heresy). Everybody must be won over by now. How could anyone fail to be captivated by a single like "Only Yesterday," with its light castanet Spector undertones and unabashedly pretty melody? Or "Please Mr. Postman"—of course, it obviously lacks the unpolished charm of the Marvelettes', but it substitutes a brisker, smoother, and equally irresistible appeal of its own. With those modified Beach Boys harmonies, it's as good as those superb girl-group re-creations on *Now and Then*.



There's no question of their supremacy at this point. The combination of Karen's low-pitched vocals and compressed, multi-tracked, mutated Californian harmonies with immaculate instrumentation (particularly Tony Peluso's guitar) and production is

unbeatable for starters. When you add top-notch material, as on *Horizon*, it's soft-rock Nirvana.

Two outside compositions, the Eagles' "Desperado" and Neil Sedaka's "Solitaire", are covered in velvet perfection, with "Solitaire" getting the edge as the stronger song. Even better, though, are the in-house songs. "Happy" is an upbeat delight, while "Goodbye and I Love You" and "Love Me for What I Am," both slower numbers, feature gorgeous choruses. Add the aforementioned singles and two lovely linked 90-second aural bookends, and you have an exquisite album.

My only conceivable complaint concerns the rather hoary "I Can Dream Can't I" (1937 vintage), which is just too slushy for me and seems dull in comparison. But small matter. If all MOR were this good, one might not resent its all-out appropriation of the airwaves (however, with a Newton-John, a Denver, or a Roger Whittaker for every promising Captain & Tennille, rancor persists). As for the Carpenters, they've transcended the genre and stand in a class by themselves.

## JEFFERSON STARSHIP



## RED OCTOPUS

**RED OCTOPUS**  
Jefferson Starship  
Grunt BFL1-0999

By ED SCIAKY

Jefferson Starship's follow-up to their successful *Dragonfly* is, amazingly, an even better album, in content and consistency. The full-time return of old Airplaner Marty Balin (present in *Dragonfly* only on the knockout "Caroline") is a catalytic and unifying force in *Red Octopus*. Balin contributes another beauty called "Miracles" (this album's "Caroline"), shares co-authorship on four more of the album's ten tracks, including a close runner-up to "Miracles" called "Tumblin," and maybe most importantly, adds a familiar textural facet to the Kantner-Slick-Freiberg vocal combo.

This is not to downgrade the continuing importance of the other Starship members, who shine individually more than ever, with none of their occasional past excesses, uniting into the tight and powerful band they have right to be. Gracie sings like she means it, contributes a pretty solo composition "Ai Garimasu (There Is Love)," and co-authors three others, among them one of the album's best songs, "Play on Love" (written with Pete Sears, who himself stands out with a beautiful, jazzy keyboard-based instrumental called "Sandalphon"). Violinmaster Papa John Creach plays it right throughout, and gets a great solo shot on an instrumental rocker called "Git Fiddler."

Possibly *Octopus'* best song (and most like old Airplane) is the closer, "There Will Be Love." The "heaviest" track on the album is "I Want to See Another World," which is a quite respectable rocker, as are the more typical "Fast Buck Freddie" and "Sweeter Than Honey." *Red Octopus* shows the Starship solid and tasty, and one-up on the *septopus* of yore.

Ken Regan



\*Corduroy pants, tennis shoes & white sweat socks. Can Mick be hiding a skateboard in his closet?

momento—but in the way of small illuminations regarding what the band was up to during their peak period. This first cousin to *Odds and Sods* invites a great deal of guesswork, or rather, educated speculation as to who, where or when, and beyond our desire for historical completeness, reveals a good share of musical rewards.

Word has it that the Stones would have preferred that these scraps had never seen the racks at Sam Goody's, and you can understand why: the performances are in formative stages, the ideas aren't worked out to completion in many cases, and artists don't like to have their rough sketches put on display. Still, we can be greedily grateful for this release. In spite of its faults, there are passages that display the tough, crude brilliance that was the Stones c. 1965-69, and conceptual experiments that trace the development of the band, and specifically of Jagger

weariness. Most of side one has its interest in the manner in which Jagger and Richard were finding their own style of songwriting within the guidelines of rhythm and blues ("Don't Lie to Me" is a primitive blues-based rocker of the sort that the Stones did so well at the time of *Now and Out Of Our Heads*, falsely credited to Jagger/Richard, when Fats Domino wrote and cut this very song in 1954, and was later covered by the group's idol Chuck Berry in 1956) and pop. Most of the original songs are heavily influenced by the Brill Building school. "Each and Everyday of the Year" is a production-heavy ballad with bullfight horns and Roy Orbison chord progressions; "(Walkin' Thru the) Sleepy City" is filled with telltale Spector touches, and the major curiosity of the side is "I'd Much Rather Be With the Boys," an early-60s B-side formula construction credited to Oldham/Richards (but for one Wyman number, all

# REVIEWS

MIRABAI  
Mirabai  
Atlantic SD 18144

By BOBBY ABRAMS

Mirabai was an ancient queen of India, devoted to the worship and adoration of Krishna. After the death of her husband, here heretic ideas were put to the test by the new king. Surviving an ordeal of poison and snakes, she spent the rest of her life wandering around India writing love songs to Krishna.

Mirabai nee Karla Major is the latest underground cult singer to emerge from the subterranean depths of New York's fabled Greenwich Village. Signed as the first American artist to Swan Song (the highly successful label of Led Zeppelin, whose other acts include Bad Company and Maggie Bell) an all-star cast has been assembled for her debut album, which was produced by Bob "Is it rolling?" Johnson, and includes Tommy Cogbill,



•Mirabi has the capability to emerge from the crowded confused field of fillies.

Ron Cornelius, Leon Pendarvis, Richard Tee and others. So then, one is assured that technically the album is well-produced, and it is. I'm a little troubled by the changes she puts her voice through (one might almost call it directionless) but then I never liked Joni Mitchell's patented octave-skipping or the undisciplined technique of Janis Joplin, of whom I'm most reminded of by Mirabai, because of the sheer vocal power both ladies demonstrate on record. This despite the fact that most of the material seems to be as optimistic as any John Denver composition. To be fair though, she is inspirational but never preachy.

The album opens with "Determination" her *tour-de-force*, which is rapidly becoming a chic classic. Her abilities are most evident on this number; my only objection is she exposes her entire bag of moves, sometimes inappropriately, throughout the over seven minutes of this composition. Her real strength (for me) is her fine acoustic guitar playing, in ample evidence on the next cut, a light-hearted ditty which at times seems a parody of Joni Mitchell, "Exactly What You Are." She's a fine gospel singer, as "Strength of My Soul" or "Stairway to Heaven" demonstrate, while "Cosmic Overload" will remind the listener of the time when Gracie Slick could *really* deliver. Two very pretty songs, "Schumann's Song" and "Magical Time" are my favorites. She's a singer who grows on you, and she

certainly has the capability to emerge from a crowded and confused field of fillies.

INITIATION  
Todd Rundgren  
Bearsville BR 6957

By KEN BARNES

*Initiation* is a record in two senses of the word. That is to say, it's a world record, as Todd Rundgren has been at pains to point out—the longest duration of any single LP, 68:11. Todd hopes this dubious distinction (I can think of albums less than one-third its length—*More Greatest Hits* by the Dave Clark Five, for one—with more musical impact; it's all in how you use it) will qualify it for the Guinness Book.

I could go for the cheap shot and cite other potential world records, such as most pronounced headache induced by an extended instrumental suite (the 36-minute "Treatise" isn't anywhere near that bad anyway—to create 36 minutes of absolutely unlistenable music you'd have to be the Brecker Brothers or German. There are segments of "Treatise," in between the frenetic guitars and squirrelly electronics, that I liked.

But it's somewhat ironic that Todd has gone to great lengths to decry "The Death of Rock & Roll," at one point even

ascribing some of the responsibility to critics (a flattering overestimation of the written word's rock impact). My own simple tastes lead me to think that half-hour-plus instrumental treatises on cosmic fire and the like have more to do with any such impending demise than almost anything else, except maybe radio programmers. Not to mention the conceptual arrogance of Rundgren's "Born to Synthesize," 3:40 of *acapella* echolalia full of cosmodynamic garble like "Pyramids, spheres and obelisks are the patterns of all creation/But the red polygon's only desire/Is to get to the blue triangle."

But I find it impossible to give up entirely on Todd Rundgren—he's always come up with intermittent pleasantries and one absolute gem, "Couldn't I Just Tell You," a coruscating failed single that ranks among my all-timers. And there are plenty of positive elements on *Initiation's* vocal side—as well as matters of extreme indifference (the title track is comparable to above-average Yes, if you're interested, and "Eastern Intrigue" sounds like fourth-rate 10cc). "Fair Warning," though, a frankly confessional *opus*, melodramatic and messianic yet oddly disarming, has one of those neat Rundgren Philly-soul voices (he's got hundreds of 'em) and some even more entrancing lush harmonies. And "Real Man," the most recent single, sounds like the Beach Boys meet Ace, an ethereal delight. I realize it's a reactionary

and often-belabored observation, but I wish someone would force Rundgren to make some more 3-minute singles before it's too late and he follows up with a three-dimensional record album impregnated with essences of inorganic mescaline, dealing with subatomic particulation, solar flux and the Manichean heresy all at once.

SUBTLE AS A FLYING MALLET  
Dave Edmunds  
RCA/Rockfield RRL 101

By BUD SCOPPA

This album is a less unified work by this individualistic Welsh musician-producer than a gathering of tracks in varying modes that Edmunds has recorded since his wonderful *Rockpile* album of 1972. Because of its scattered nature, *Subtle as a Flying Mallet* makes for a less than smooth over-all listening experience. But if it doesn't hang together as an entity, the 12 tracks at least clearly reflect the singular propensities of their author.

Edmunds has worked in three main idioms since abandoning the flamboyant blues-guitar style he exhibited in *Love Sculpture*: classic rock & roll (with a centering on Chuck Berry and rockabilly), Phil Spector-style pop productions, and rustic-sounding songs derived from American folk forms. Edmunds is a replicator, not an innovator, but his best genre pieces are charged with such strong feeling and prepared with such technical facility they take on the spirit of their author as well as sounding authentic; in this sense, he can be likened to John Fogerty. (It's too bad Edmunds doesn't have Fogerty's discipline).

There are four big-bore pop numbers: remakes of "Maybe" and "Baby I Love You" that sound like exercises in production craft and lack Edmunds' usual spirit; his own genre piece, "Born to Be with You," a more inspired effort, and a rendition of "Da Doo Ron Ron" recorded with Brinsley Schwarz for the film *Stardust*. Two other *Stardust* tracks, "Let It Be Me" and "Shot of Rhythm and Blues," are also included; all three movie tracks sound a bit flat compared to Edmunds' usual sharp-edged sound, with "Shot of Rhythm and Blues" paling next to the Flamin' Groovies' Edmunds-produced version of the same tune.

A rendition of "Billy the Kid" that closely follows the Ry Cooder performance is the album's lone bit of *arcana* and the track that seems most out of place in this albeit vague context. Edmunds takes a similar tack with "I Ain't Never," a Mel Tillis tune previously updated by John Fogerty on his *Blue Ridge Rangers* album. Again, one gets the feeling that Edmunds recorded these tracks primarily to see how close he could get to the feel of the earlier versions, although the latter song benefits from the presence of Brinsley member Nick Lowe.

The hottest and most exciting tracks are "No Money Down" and "Let It Rock," both recorded during last year's Edmunds-Brinsley Schwarz tour. Although they're rather standard performances, the band sizzles and stomps sufficiently so that they're rejuvenated. Two Brinsleys, Lowe and Bob Andrews, accompany Edmunds on the album's best track, a never-before-recorded Lowe love song called "She's My Baby." The song itself is lovely, and Edmunds gives by far the most touching vocal performance he's ever put on record. In a sense, then, the album is more valuable for devotees of the Brinsleys than it is for Edmunds fans, who most likely already have the bulk of these tracks on singles and on the *Stardust* soundtrack album.

Although impressive craftsmanship

and devotion to form are evident on *Mallet*, the album lacks the cohesiveness and reckless spirit of *Rockpile*, which was recorded as an entity. Hopefully, there'll be another inspired and consistent Dave Edmunds album someday. But considering that it took him three years to assemble this collection, I won't hold my breath.



ROGER MC GUINN & BAND  
Columbia PC33541

By MICHAEL TEARSON

*Roger McGuinn & Band* finds Roger in a solid band context for the first time since the final abandoning of the Byrds. He's had the band of this album out on the road since the release of *Peace on You* nearly a year ago, and it is the band's cohesiveness that marks the difference between the two albums.

*Peace on You* was a very textured, thickly-layered, Byrd production of an album. It had thematic roots leaking backward to the past and colliding with the present. The wistful "Gate of Horn" about Roger's old Folkie days in Chicago; "Same Old Song" about how audiences won't let you grow; and Dan Fogelberg's "Better Change" delineate that album's dilemma.

The new album, on the other hand, lacks lyrical significance completely. Instead it focuses on the development of the band as a unit. The production is no-nonsense and straightforward, and the sound sleek and economic. The band is solid and tight, well-oiled. The songs are hardly spaced apart on the disc at all, just as they are in the band's live performance, and the pacing is similar to the live show, too, soft ones buffered by rockers.

Of the songs, the obvious grabbers have both been stalwarts of this band live, Dylan's "Knockin' on Heaven's Door" and "Lover of the Bayou" finally given a studio treatment 5 years after it first appeared on the live half of the Byrds' *(Untitled)* LP. In fact "Knockin'" and "Bayou" load the first side of the record that it takes time to even notice the other three songs. Beside these and "I Was Born to Rock and Roll," previously on the lackluster reunion album of the original Byrds, there are seven new tunes, 2 by McGuinn and five by the various band members. None is likely to enter the Valhalla of Rock & Roll, but they display some fine songsmithing, certainly stuff well suited for the basic approach McGuinn is obviously looking for. Guitarist Richard Bowden's "Bull-dog" makes a wry counterpoint to "Knockin' on Heaven's Door" which precedes it. David Lovelace's gentle "Circle Song" is laden with peaceful, easy hooks. The album opener "Somebody Loves You" is a fine chugger by Steve Love. McGuinn's new pair, "Easy Does It" and the calypso "Lisa," are added confections. Still the meaty "Lover of the Bayou" stands proud as a master stroke.

With *McGuinn & Band* Roger has left behind him the Byrds sound which haunted his first 2 solos, opting for the stripped-down sound of a fine-tuned road-tested band. He took everything he needed and the look back is for fun.

# REVIEWS



**YOU BREAK IT, YOU BOUGHT IT**  
The Michael Stanley Band  
*Epic*

By ANASTASIA PANTSIOS

This album represents a victory for rock'n'roll over the stealthy forces of creeping folkiness. Michael Stanley, for those of you who do not keep a loose-leaf notebook of singer-songwriters, is an artist from Cleveland, Ohio who released a pair of solo albums in 1972 and 1973, the first on the ill-fated Tumbleweed label, the second on MCA.

Those albums were very mellow. The rock'n'roll tracks, on which Stanley was assisted by the likes of Joe Walsh, Joe Vitale, Ken Passarelli and Paul Harris, were sort of mellow. Even the cover photos were mellow.

Following an all-star television jam session early last year on which musicians such as those listed above backed him up, Stanley got the bug to do some live performing, something he hadn't done since he quit Silk, a Cleveland bar band, way back in 1969. He spent much of the rest of the past year assembling a band and this band made the new Michael Stanley album and I am happy to report that it is not mellow.

The music of the Michael Stanley Band is by turns strong and driving, and tender and touching, but it is never anything quite so indifferent as mellow. Where the folkie roots poke out, they are tempered by intense arrangements and vocal harmonies.

The influence of the band is immeasurable. Stanley originally conceived of the band as merely a touring unit, planning to continue to record with the help of "famous friends." The album evolved into a band project as the band proved just how much it could contribute. The only outside assistance is from Paul Harris on keyboards. Drummer Tom Dobeck, bassist Daniel Pecchio and guitarist Jonah Coslin are all hitherto little-known Cleveland musicians and all are top-notch.

Pecchio and Dobeck contribute mainly their sensitive playing and their devotion to rock'n'roll. Guitarist Coslin also contributed half the songs on the album and it is he who is the real "find." His "Gypsy Eyes" is the emotional masterpiece of the album, very moving as it builds from a gentle beginning to its rolling climax. His rockers like "Step the Way" and "Lost in a Funhouse" lack neither power nor melodic beauty.

Stanley's tracks such as "Dancing in the Dark" and "Sweet Refrain" do reveal a singer-songwriter past, but the band kicks them right along. And Stanley penned the band's showstopper, an infectious rocker, entitled (not too originally) "I'm Gonna Love you."

This album is a perfectly balanced non-boogie rock album, and this band is one of the most middle-American of

bands, even more so than, say, the Eagles, who are just a little more country than most of us are. The Michael Stanley Band has the fresh, breezy quality of the Eagles, but its country influences are minimal. The folk-acoustic leanings are there, but seldom degenerate into mushiness (my only gripe is ending the album, anti-climactically, with a sentimental production ballad about childhood) and the rock'n'roll is almost pop, never metallic. The band writes good songs and plays and sings them with cheerful energy. What more could anyone want?



**THE DEADLY NIGHTSHADE**  
The Deadly Nightshade  
*Phantom BPL1-0955*

By RONNI BALTER

The Deadly Nightshade are a three-piece rock and roll jugband. Their first album bursts forth with life and spirit. With Helen Hooke on electric violin, fiddle and piano, Anne Bowen on guitar, washboard, jug and vocals and Pamela Brandt playing bass plus vocals this band exudes smiles and foot stomping. As the band made its way from Smith College to club dates and benefits in the Northeast, their following grew and grew. The release of this first album will insure a cross country following, for The Deadly Nightshade has given us goodtime music once again.

There's more here than just a good time. We have rock & roll feminism delivered with humor and passion. It's terrific. From the opening cut of the album the listener has something important to listen to. "High Flying Woman" asks the question:

*"Did you ever think you lived in a cage?"*

*"Well, they're calling you a chick and the name just seems to stick you still don't think you're living in a cage?"*

While the words bite, the jugband sound keeps the feelings light. As your mind gathers answers and questions from each song, your body dances to fast stepping rhythms emanating from their collective musical talents. Every song on the album is seriously dedicated to having a good time, as their lively musical attitudes flow from one cut to the next. The fine fiddling by Ms. Hooke adds spirit to each song while the sounds of Ms. Bowen's washboard gives authentic funk to the strong beat of Ms. Brandt's electric bass.

The Deadly Nightshade is a band of women concerned with woman. This band has taken a chance; opting for serious sensitivities as opposed to happy lyrics for happy melodies. Viewing the following they've acquired so far, I believe the gamble plus the excellent sound of their first album has been won.

The album was produced by former Rascal, Felix Cavaliere. Other musicians sitting in on The Deadly Nightshade's first album are Eric Weissberg on banjo and pedal steel, Leslie West adding his guitar to "Sweet Music" and "Losing At Love" and Felix Cavaliere on organ and synthesizers.

As long as The Deadly Nightshade

give us their songs, we will be the beneficiaries of one of the most versatile and complete musical experiences here today—good time music with a message!

**MAIN COURSE**  
Bee Gees  
*RSO SO 4807*

By KEN BARNES

For the Bee Gees, "change is now," as the Byrds expressed it on the backside of their 1967 mid-charter "Goin' Back" (Columbia 44362). Teamed up with Atlantic staffer Arif "Glass Onion" Mardin, they've added some standard disco techniques and a "little bit o' soul," per the Music Explosion dictum (Laurie 3380), to their harmonic, emotion-charged trademark style. Result: an impressive new album combining the best of the old with a strong rhythmic base allowing the Brothers Gibb to really, as Gilbert O'Sullivan (MAM 3629) or alternatively Joe Simon, who said it twice for good measure (Spring 156), put it, "get down" (and "get with it," Slade might well have added on Cotillion 44128).

The "brand new bag," in James Brown's immortal (King 5999) phrase, started for the Bee Gees on last year's *Mr. Natural* opus, a spirited LP which eclipsed three bland predecessors. But *Main Course* turns the Bee Gees into regular "dancin' fools," as the Guess Who submitted (RCA 10075). Prime evidence is that chartbusting disco deck "Jive Talkin'," featuring the catchiest synthesizer riff since Dick Hyman's "Minotaur" (Command 4126). It gets "just a little bit" (cf. Rosco Gordon, VJ 332) excessive at times, "but it's alright," as J.J. Jackson so masterfully maintained (Calla 119 and WB 7276).

But is this sudden transformation to jive talkers, as Tina Britt (Eastern 604) and Russell Morris (Diamond 263) independently posited, "the real thing"? Not exactly, disco trekkers, but it's a solid, synthetic, ready-made, right for tripping the light plastic fantastic (as the Jefferson Airplane didn't quite say—RCA 0150). Plus you get a classic Bee Gees ballad, "Country Lanes," a vaguely surreal rocker, "Edge of the Universe," and a raft of bouncy Bee Gees bombast to make you "clap your hands and stomp your feet," as Bonnie St. Claire & Unit Gloria admonished most of the Western world (excepting the U.S. and U.K.) in 1973 (Polydor 15075). Admittedly it might be more enjoyable spinning the platters so eruditely cited above, but *Main Course* is an enjoyable album. The Bee Gees, as the Capitols predicted as far back as 1966 (Karen 1526) "got a thing that's in the groove."



**SNEAKIN' SALLY THROUGH THE ALLEY**  
Robert Palmer  
*Island ILPS 9294*

By SAM SUTHERLAND

English reverence for rhythm & blues hasn't stopped with urban and country models of past decades, and as

increasing numbers of Britons emulate contemporary r&b styles, new source points are being defined. Among them is New Orleans' musical community and its most celebrated proponents, Allen Toussaint and The Meters, who've taken the process a step further by recording with English and Scottish musicians. In the past year, Island has released three of these collaborations overseas, starting with Frankie Miller and continuing with albums by Jess Roden and now Robert Palmer. Import action for the last of these has prompted its release, and a single listen explains why.

Produced by Muscle Shoals graduate Steve Smith, Palmer's new solo album, *Sneakin' Sally Through The Alley*, is a polished and energetic primer in sophisticated body rhythms. Palmer's earlier singing with the promising but uneven Vinegar Joe has developed into a lissome, controlled style that slips neatly through the album's percolating rhythms. If his vocal models become apparent on first listen, Palmer's confidence and ebullience help him hold his own in the company of an extraordinary array of New Orleans and New York musicians peppered with L.A. and London blues specialists.

In addition to The Meters, Smith and Palmer have added Lowell George, himself a Toussaint admirer, on slide guitar; on other songs, the basic rhythm section is Atlantic's crack New York crew, including Richard Tee and Cornell Dupree. George in particular functions as both sideman and avatar, his presence measured more by Palmer's frank assimilation of George's vocal phrasing than by the trademark shimmer of his slide playing, which is more submerged here than with Little Feat.

George's "Sailin' Shoes" opens the first side, highlighted by the sly crosstalk between George's slide and Meter's Leo Neocenelli on guitar and Art Neville on clavinet. The song bobs along against this syncopated push and pull of instrumental elements, and Palmer stacks his deck by carrying this momentum through a striking medley. Just as "Sailin' Shoes" seems ready to wind down, the band drops out as Palmer, double-tracking bass and marimbas, slides into his own "Hey Julia," a sexy and rather surreal come-on with playful vocal backing and an infectious stop-and-go pulse; the teasing continues when The Meters and George re-enter to pick up the energy level for the title song, a wry Toussaint chestnut, given a boiling energy by the band.

This spirit of playfulness and underlying structural economy prevail throughout, with most of the remaining songs approaching the breathless energy of that medley. "Go Outside" is a slow, grinding blues with spectral female voices behind the lead vocal; "From A Whisper To A Scream," another Toussaint song, shift's the mood of the second side from its uptempo beginnings, and sets a more feverish slow blues format for the final song, "Through It All There's You," which breaks from the album's general tightness and emphasis on ensemble playing to explore a looser, more free form blues. That choice is perhaps the one weak spot, for the song is somewhat without focus.

Even with that minor lapse and Palmer's role as more of an assimilator than a pioneer, this album proves practically irresistible. The one sore point—the omission of musician's credits, which seems almost unthinkable given the high calibre of playing that persists throughout—tempted me to vent my spleen on paper, but late bulletins suggest that this was an oversight to be corrected with Palmer's next one. That excursion will reportedly use Little Feat itself as part of the attack force. And I can't wait.

# BLIND DATE

WITH FLOW & EDDE

Edited by KEN BARNES

Every month Mark Volman & Howard Kaylan [Flo & Eddie] take time out from their demanding schedule to submit to a blindfold test in which they're required to identify and respond to selections from several new albums. The results are often interesting, often funny and always offensive.

"I Do I Do I Do I Do I Do" — Abba (British Epic)

New single? It sounds eight years old on this set. This is great—we may have to transport this Hi-Fi everywhere. It's the lowest Fi I've heard. Dusty Springfield? British? Close...that means it's either Italian or Greek. Connie Francis. This isn't that new hype from England? Oh, an old hype...I keep wanting to say Bay City Rollers 'cause I haven't heard them. 10cc? I know this group? Probably the new Bjorn & Benny record. It's Abba! And it is inferior! MOR. Watch it, Bjorn. Watch it, Benny. You know what's happened to them—obviously they've gotten into a swapping situation, and it shows. They're underproduced now and they're going for a cross between Connie Francis and Carole King. We've tried and tried—no one could deny that, but you're just not listening to us, Bjorn.

"Real Man," others—Todd Rundgren (Bearsville)

Rick Wakeman. Mike Quattro. There's only one guy who sounds like that. Does he have an old-lady who bends in the middle—sort of staples? Does he have green hair, red hair, orange hair? Is he short, confused, and ill at ease with the world around him? Does he weigh less than 80 pounds? It's Todd Rundgren! Let's hear the instrumental side. How dare he? He thinks he's off on John McLaughlin. He has the capability of putting a hit single together in one minute. Then why doesn't he? His record should've been "Jackie Blue."

Excerpts from *The Amine b Music*—Lou Reed (RCA)

This guy is on the verge of making it? Mothers, do something! It's easy to see why this guy's a big one. Larry Coryell. Yeah! Louder! Melodic son-of-a-bitch, isn't he? Jeff Beck. Known for his lyric abilities? You're not kidding, are you...Michael Quattro. Eno. Is there a skip on this? No, it just keeps making this awful noise. Does it do anything else *but* this? Is this progressive? *Four sides*? Sure it's not Al Kooper? I've never heard anything this awful. Move it up. C'mon, get serious now, move it up! Well, play another another side. Move it up. *What?*

OK, I want to say something right here: This might be the last *Blind Date* for us. This is absolutely the *worst*—there has never been a lower piece of product released *ever* under any circumstances. Whatever label had the nerve to put this out should be banned from releasing records! (At this point Flo reared up in all his Leviathan might, ripped the record from the turntable, and in one agonized convulsion shattered it against the bannister). Who was that? What do you mean, Lou Reed? I just don't understand any more. What does he mean by that? This is music to commit pederasty by. Lou, quit now and go blow a dog.

Excerpt from *The Troggs* (Pye)

Dictators! Troggs! All right! The difference between Reg Presley and Lou Reed staggers and boggles even at 10 AM. That Lou Reed made me shiver. Listen to Reg awhile. The Troggs are right there, man. This could've been cut the day after the Stones record came out ("Satisfaction"), it's that progressive. I love the Troggs. This is not unlike the way Chip Taylor performs "Wild Thing" now, semi-reggae, country-oriented. What kind of cover is this? "Good Vibrations" is on this album—worth having just for that. Great stuttering record! Thank you, Reg.



Excerpts from the Live Side of *Fandango*—ZZ Top (London)

Mitch Ryder. Osibisa. Malo. Santana. War. That's not the cut! That wasn't exactly the right cut to play, either! Uh...Z.Z. Top? Right? I knew it! When I'm in Austin I tell people I like them. They're an OK boogie band. But they're still trying to be as hip as Canned Heat. Think about it. They have a following that won't quit—except here.

Excerpts from *Trouble in Paradise*—Souther, Hillman & Furay (Asylum)

Typesetter: here's a group where each member is more sensitive than the other....

(Immediately, without a note of music) Souther, Hillman, Furay. Only one group like that. First of all, the cover doesn't make it, but the Art Deco printing is very nice. There's not one song on that album that stands out like any Eagles song, and when you get to that point, better cash it in. When Poco starts to sound good, look out. I'm just about ready to put on a Chris Montez record. What happened to the pop heart of music? What happened to the *Notorious Byrd Brothers*? Boy, Triumvirat—what gall!

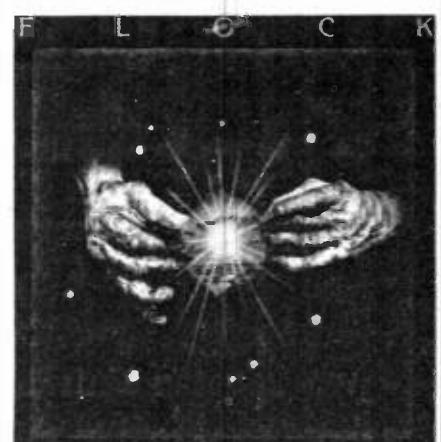
Excerpts from *Stephen Stills* (Columbia)

Wait a minute. Let me hear some of that vocal again. Stephen! That's for sure. He sounds better here than he did in any of the Manassas days. So if you're looking for the Stephen you lost before, he's back, but you're not sure now. He knows the price of freedom. Find the cost, he knows the price now. Buy it, pay for it, put it on time. Voice sounds good. They have marvelous machines in Hollywood, though—they can make you sound like anything you want. This is good, though. Why aren't we listening to Track #6, "The Myth of Sisyphus"? Cold Blood. That's where he loses me. Fortunately, his music is not receding with his hairline.

Excerpts from *Roger McGuinn* (Columbia)

Eagles. Pure Prairie League. Ahh—you think we don't buy records? You think we don't know what a *voice* sounds like? You think we don't know what it's like to work with Bill Halverson? McGuinn makes good records. And no one cares. He always manages to find good songs, in my opinion, and manages to just miss the mark in production. Almost God—maybe an Apostle. This ("Knocking on Heaven's Door") isn't a very good song cut to play. You can only go on doing that so long, face it. What if I were to tell you our next album featured 10 minutes of "Lay Lady Lay" just because we could still identify with Bobby? The Happy Organ, Dave "Baby" Cortez is back. This Belafonte image...Look for the great cut. It isn't there—but we know it's gotta be somewhere. I could listen to this. I know it's a little sickeningly mellow. In fact, it's saccharine. In fact, I can't listen to it any more. He sings pretty, he sings really good.

you're gaining weight. Put that shirt away and go on the Stillman diet. Stillman should produce your next album. "Special thanks to Clive Davis"—uh-oh, check out this group! The way I look at it the more people indicted the more room there is for us, so let's start investigating. Start with Lou Reed—indict him for something, illicit sex acts with hydrants.

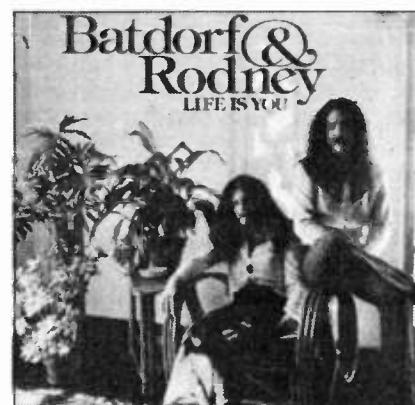


Excerpts from *The Flock* (Mercury)

ELO sings the Jimmy Cliff Songbook. From Chicago? New Colony Six. Shadows of Knight. It doesn't have anything to do with Carmen Appice, does it? The Mob. The Flock! They used to have a violin player. We worked with them a year, two years ago. When I can guess a Flock record...They decided to bleach out the Ray Manzarek cover and use it again. They were into some good stuff. That is the same cover. *It All Started with Flock & Roll*.

Excerpts from *The Snow Goose*—Camel (Janus)

Another British concept album? What's the Quest this time? Fairy tale? Cinderella. Sleeping Beauty. Princess and the Pea. The Barter and His Bride. The Rat & the Lightbulb. All instrumental? If? Let's keep going for the fairy tale. Black Beauty. Hans Brinker. The Wind in the Willows. That would be great for Rick Wakeman. He could play Mr. Toad at the same time. He is Mr. Toad. It must be a matter of people putting this stuff on while they paint their house. I can't believe there are record companies who keep putting these out. Animal name? Ox. Dog. Parakeet. Camel! *The Snow Goose*. This is not my bag, as they say. I think anyone who's painting geese could paint well to that. I'm gonna have to listen to the Rat album again—it might go up on my priority list.



Excerpts from *Batdorf & Rodney* (Arista)

Slowing down the pace? Barry Manilow. Slowing down the pace is one thing, but Don McLean is another! This could be Mentor. Zoltar. It could be any of the O'Keefe brothers. America harmonies. Lanquid Stupor. Captain & Tennille. Lon & Derrek. This is terrible.

It could have been Viggrass & Osborne—there's only a few of...us who haven't made it yet. That guy's shirt doesn't fit him on the cover. Now is that Batdorf or is that Rodney? Whichever one of you is on the left, take it from us,

Excerpts from *Rising Sun*—Yvonne Elliman (RSO)

Female protege of a famous artist? Jessi Colter. Becky—uh...Joni—uh...Melissa...Marianne...Linda...Maggie...Dinky...Melba...Mandy...Roberta...no, Syd...Odetta...Coates...Lesley...Chris...Wendy...Marsha...Shirley...Lynn...Tracy...Reparata...Karen...Janis...Way down in the alphabet? Goldie Zelkowitz. Yolanda? *From Superstar*? Yvonne Elliman. We would've got to it. I think she's up against too stiff competition to put out that stuff. It seemed to be produced real smoothly but her voice isn't that distinctive. Not if it took that long to guess her. I know my teeth hurt when Minnie Riperton sings. I don't know if that's good or bad, but at least I know who it is.

# Alexis Korner: If only for helping bring the Rolling Stones together, Alexis should be carried round London in a sedan chair for the rest of his life.

—Peter Townshend

Alexis Korner is the blues. He has been called "The Father of British Blues," "The Father of White Blues," and perhaps most appropriately, "The Father of Us All." Since the formation of Blues Incorporated in the early 1950's, the roster of musicians that Alexis has played with reads like a "Who's Who" of rock music—Mick Jagger, Brian Jones, Eric Burdon, John Mayall, Keith Richard (who plays and sings on this album)—the list goes on and on.

Alexis himself is a consummate performer, who sings the blues with a depth of feeling and style that transforms any song into a self-contained scenario. For example, his performance of the classic "You Are My Sunshine" is not the usual lilting treatment—for all its bright, rhythmic tunefulness, the song becomes a desperate appeal not to be left alone ("please don't take my sunshine away") when Alexis sings it.

On "Get Off of My Cloud" Alexis sings the blues as only he can. Backed by a superb assemblage of musicians, Alexis' deep voice is perfectly showcased as he expresses all the joy, pain and humor of his music.

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# JUKEBOXURY

## PAPER LACE—"So What If I Am"—Mercury 73694

It's a good thing somebody else is making Paper Lace records because Paper Lace are now making Sweet records! That's right, you won't believe the same guys who warbled "The Night Chicago Died" could be responsible for this roaring teen anthem, replete with protest lyrics and glitter chauvinism. I didn't think Mitch Murray had it in him...

## ABBA—"S.O.S.—Atlantic 3265

Someday, people will go nuts trying to unravel this group's recording history. To bring us up to date, "Ring Ring" (Atlantic 3240) was a relative flop, so Atlantic declined to issue the follow-up, "So Long," which just happened to be their most amazing *tour-de-force* ever, and still a hot contender for best record of the year. It was so monumental, in fact, that it taxed even European audiences, who rejected it. So that was followed by a tasty but far more conventional ballad, "I Do, I Do, I Do, I Do," which did well overseas but still hasn't been released here. Instead we get "S.O.S.," which I don't think has come out anywhere else yet. It will, though, because it's a natural smash. Still more restrained than previous ravers, but with that incredibly clear, crystalline sound, a little hint of Olivia in the vocals, and a powerpuk chorus that should please the group's staunchest fans. Also a melody that refuses to be dislodged from your mind. Let's hope Polly Brown doesn't decide to cover it; Abba need, and deserve, the hit.



## LESLEY GORE—"Immortality"—A&M 1710

Reunited with Quincy Jones, who produced all her previous hits, Lesley's got a strong, self-written, summery sound that makes for a most impressive comeback. Her voice still has that crybaby edge and little-girl petulance. There's also a great beat and super production that reminds me oddly of some of Chicory Tip's better efforts. Anyway you look at it, a fine sound from one of the true talents of our age.

## BOBBY VEE—"I'm Lovin' You"—Shady Brook

It's not the old Bobby Vee, and it's not Robert Velline either. At last Bobby has achieved the kind of modern pop, as irresistible as "Rubber Ball" but with

somewhat more meaningful lyrics, that he's been wanting to do these past few years. In the end he had to produce and record it himself, but the investment has paid off because this is everything he was shooting for; a smooth, insinuating sound, with good hooks and every reason to be a hit.

## JOHNNY RIVERS—"Help Me Rhonda"—Epic 50121

This could turn out to be the summer smash of '75. Johnny's lost none of his knack for transforming untouchable, classic oldies into his own personal style; if anyone else had the presumption to stick a Buster Brown harmonica riff into a Beach Boys song, they'd probably be banished from Southern California and sent back to Louisiana on the next bus. But as always, Rivers can do no wrong.

## JAN & DEAN—"Sidewalk Surfin'"—UA 670

A lot of classic summer records are reissued each time June rolls around, but never has one been so radically and successfully updated. Noting the tremendous resurgence of skateboards (at least in LA where 9 out of 10 pre-16ers seem to be on them at all times), Dean went back and added new vocals, and more important new lyrics, to make the song more relevant to today's generation of sidewalk surfers. No longer will they prob'ly "wipe out" when they try to shoot the curb; instead, they'll "eat it." Pretty nifty, huh? A number of new tricks and maneuvers are also mentioned, and if you don't recognize them, it's obvious you're simply not as up-to-date on what's happening as Jan & Dean still are.

## RICK NELSON—"Try (Try to Fall in Love)"—MCA 40392

I have to admit I hated this song when Cocker did it, mainly because when I heard that voice I could only think of those "Dirty Sally" commercials on TV. All of which blinded me to the fact that it really is a nice tune, and thanks to Rick it's finally done justice.

## PETER NOONE—"Something Old, Something New"—Casablanca 824

You've just gotta love ol' Herman. Everything he does is so honest, so positive, so unfailingly pop. I preferred him in the days of "Right On Mothers" and even more in the days of "Can't You Hear My Heartbeat" but this stuff, clearly aimed at the MOR market, goes down easy and, as you'd expect from the Greenaway-Cook-Macaulay team, is always palatable. However, this is the second single he's put "Pony Express" on the back of, and to my ears it's still the A-side.

## THE RIGHTEOUS BROTHERS—"Substitute"/"Young Blood"—Haven 7014

Both sides of this record have been issued separately, which may prevent either one from hitting, but I can understand the company's uncertainty; both sides are great. "Substitute" would be my choice; a new song that, to me, is their best since "Soul and Inspiration." It reminds me a bit of "Rhinestone Cowboy" too, which incidentally isn't a bad record, and welcome back Glen.

Whew, look at that list of names, Peter Noone, Lesley Gore, Bobby Vee, Johnny Rivers, Jan & Dean, Righteous Brothers, Glen Campbell...what year is this again? Of course I could have rigged

## PICK TO CLICK

### DANIEL BOONE—"Run Tell the People"—Pye 71011

He's been off the charts for awhile, but who could forget "Beautiful Sunday" or the delightful "Annabelle?" This one, his first on Pye in America, is his most interesting to date, a Larry Page adaptation of the Phil Spector sound, and a song out of the Paper Lace bag, all about a guy who gets into a fight over his girl at a high school dance. A strong hook and a wise avoidance of the overproduction Spector copyists usually fall into add up to a good shot at the top.



it to look that way, there always seem to be enough oldies around, but the impressive thing is that these actually are the standout records for June, everyone a tip for the top. It's great that these people are making commercially competitive recordings, it all contributes toward exorcising the oldie prejudice that still haunts a lot of people in this industry.

Follow-ups: Freddy Fender now has two records in the Hot 100. His newest, "Wasted Days and Wasted Nights" (Dot 17558) is a remake of his classic early '60s Tex-Mex hit, more countryish but still a good song. To tell the truth, I'm as surprised by his success as I am by that of *Chico & the Man*, but unlike the latter I'm glad to see it happening. I had high hopes for Andy Kim, but it's been downhill since "Rock Me Gently" and his latest, "Mary Ann" (Capitol 4086) is such a blatant copy of that former hit that I don't think anyone will be able to stomach it. Come on Andy, you can do better. Remember "Rainbow Ride"? "Baby I Love You"? Maybe all that's needed is a stiff dose of Jeff Barry...

Thank god Lobo, as always, is there to cleanse my ears. "Would I Still Have You" (Big Tree 16040) is his usual low-keyed, insecure romanticism, and it hasn't failed him yet. Olivia Newton-John has been taking a lotta flak lately from some sources, but not me. My faith is redeemed when she does something like "Please Mr. Please" (MCA 40418), a song I've been fond of ever since Cliff Richard did it awhile back.

In the new beginnings category, we have Ian Hunter with "Once Bitten Twice Shy" (Columbia 3-10161), the obvious single choice and an enthralling rocker that, if the charts were ruled by a panel of qualified judges as I almost believe it should be, would without hesitation be awarded Bowie's chart position and bullet. The Grass Roots are sounding fine with "Mamacita" (Haven 7015), a Mann-Weil song previously done by Mark Lindsay. It's a diverting story about some luscious little spic honey who's saving it all for Mr. Right (or Freddie Prinze, whichever comes along first...), rendered with all the excellence one expects from the Grass Roots. David Cassidy, meanwhile, is about the 23rd person to cut "Get It Up For Love" (RCA JH-10321), and though I think I preferred Johnny Rivers version, this isn't bad. He's actually trying to sing, and even succeeding at times. Check out his version of "Be-Bop-a-Lula" on the album, too.

The latest Chinn-Chapman product to come out here is "You Think You Know How to Love Me" by Smokey (MCA 40429). Smokey is their newest

sensation, and for once they're trying a new sound, like some Texas Lobo with a taste of Eagles and a trace of Arlo Guthrie. It's exactly the sort of thing American audiences go wild for, which shows that C&C have finally learned to develop different formulas for each country. Took them long enough...

Some promising debuts, headed up by Thomas Dean with "Oh Babe" (Privilege 7001), the first on a label that is, in effect, the reincarnation of Ardent Records. Dean's is a new name, but the same people are involved as were behind Big Star, Cargoe and the Hot Dogs, so you know you can expect good things. And "Oh Babe" is no disappointment. As learnedly Angloid as these Memphis misfits have ever gotten, it's redolent of the old Bowie sound and should warm the cockles of anyone still wearing platform shoes.

I never heard of Tony Conigliaro, but his record company claims he's a famous baseball player, which makes it all the more remarkable that his "Poetry" (Magna-Glide 326) is so good. If he wanted, he could probably be another Terry Jacks, but he'll no doubt throw it all away for another go at the old Astroturf, giving up a chance to be the best baseball singing star since Arthur Lee Maye.

The last thing Mars Bonfire wrote for Steppenwolf was "Born to Be Wild," which some say was the last good song they did. He also wrote their latest, "Caroline (Are You Ready For the Outlaw World)" (Mums 6040) and it may be their best since then, with a strong guitar line and a real melody too. Travis Wammack, about whom I've been telling you to these many years, has hit the charts for the first time since 1964 with "Love Being Your Fool" (Capricorn 239), his first for the label and hopefully the first of many hits for this superb singer/guitarist.

Hollywood High jinx: I couldn't leave you without the usual quota of off-the-wall local items, so here goes: the New Hollywood Argyles, yet another return to the womb for Gary Paxton, do a sci-fi novelty dedicated to the space people, complete with Capt. Marvel sound effects (RCA 10312). Hammerhead, a new L.A. group, debuts with "Summer Nites" (GNP 499), a Kim Fowley song (of course) that's not at all bad. Sort of Hendrix-influenced. You might want to send a buck to Smokey at S&M Records, 1214 N. Lodi, Hollywood, CA 90028 for a copy of "Leather" before they're all gone. This relic of Rodney's Hollywood nites won't be around long, especially with the British Smokey usurping the name. Besides, no collection is complete without something on S&M Records (it even has a tattooed bicep on the label...).

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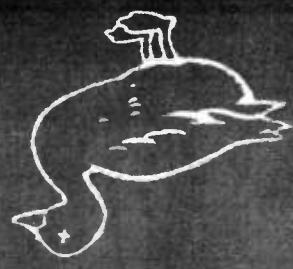


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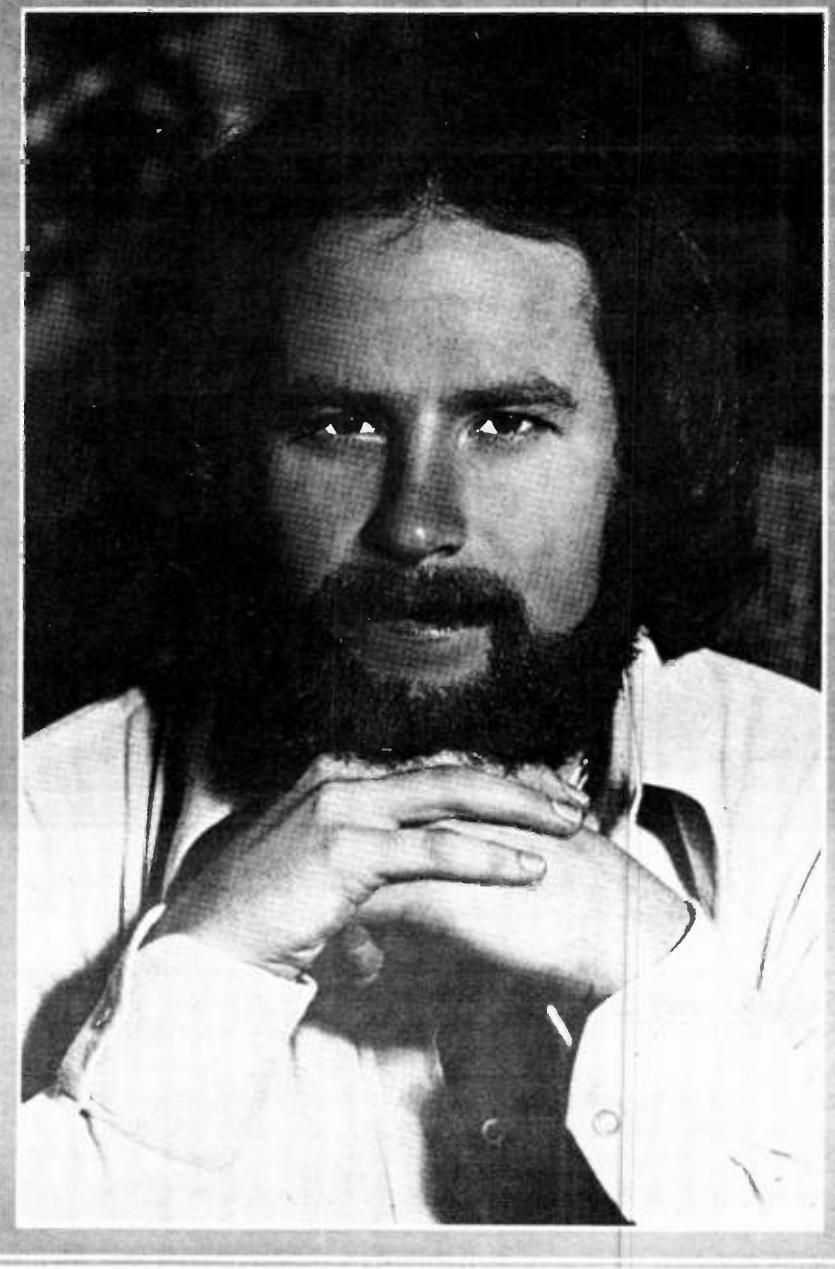
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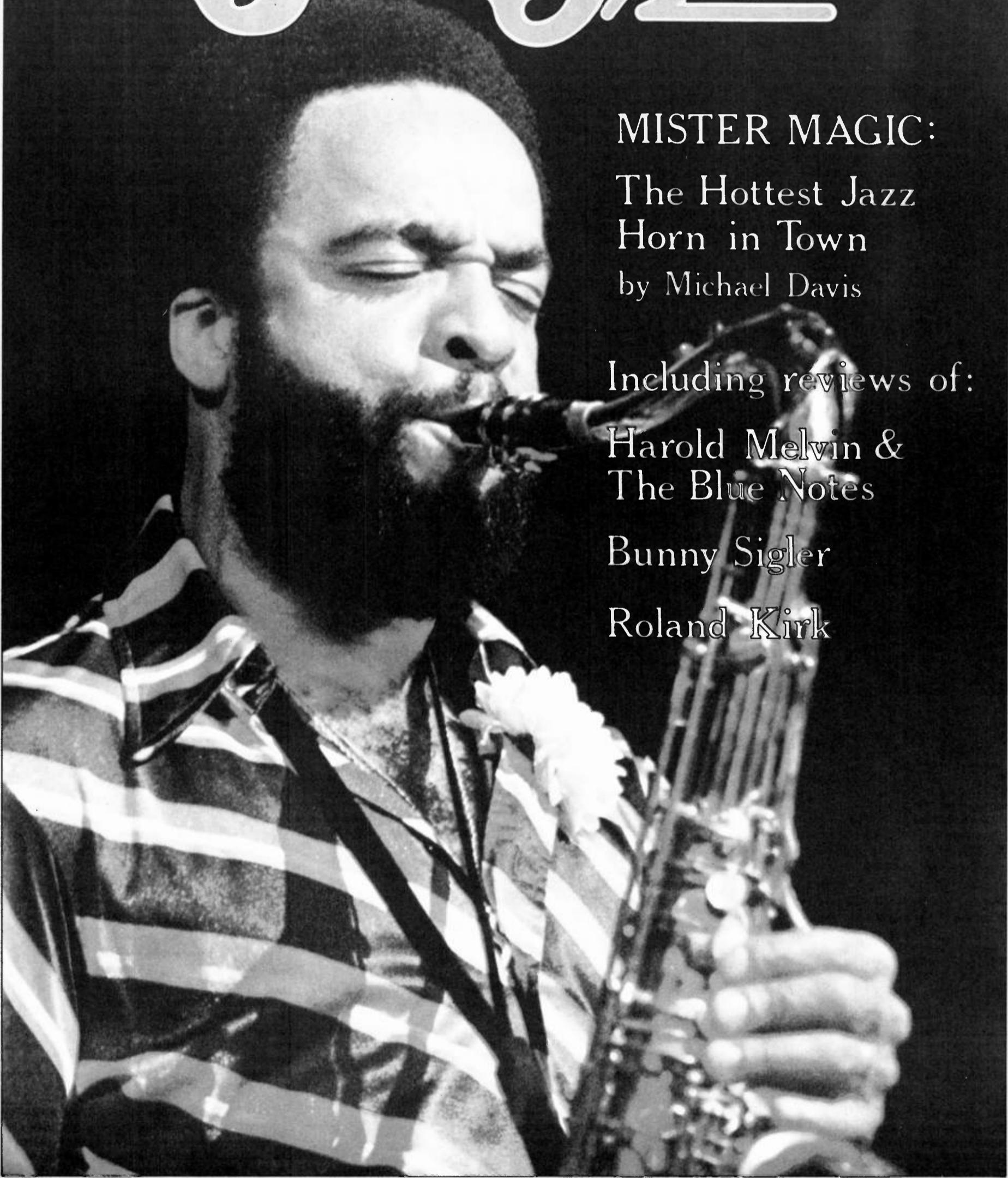
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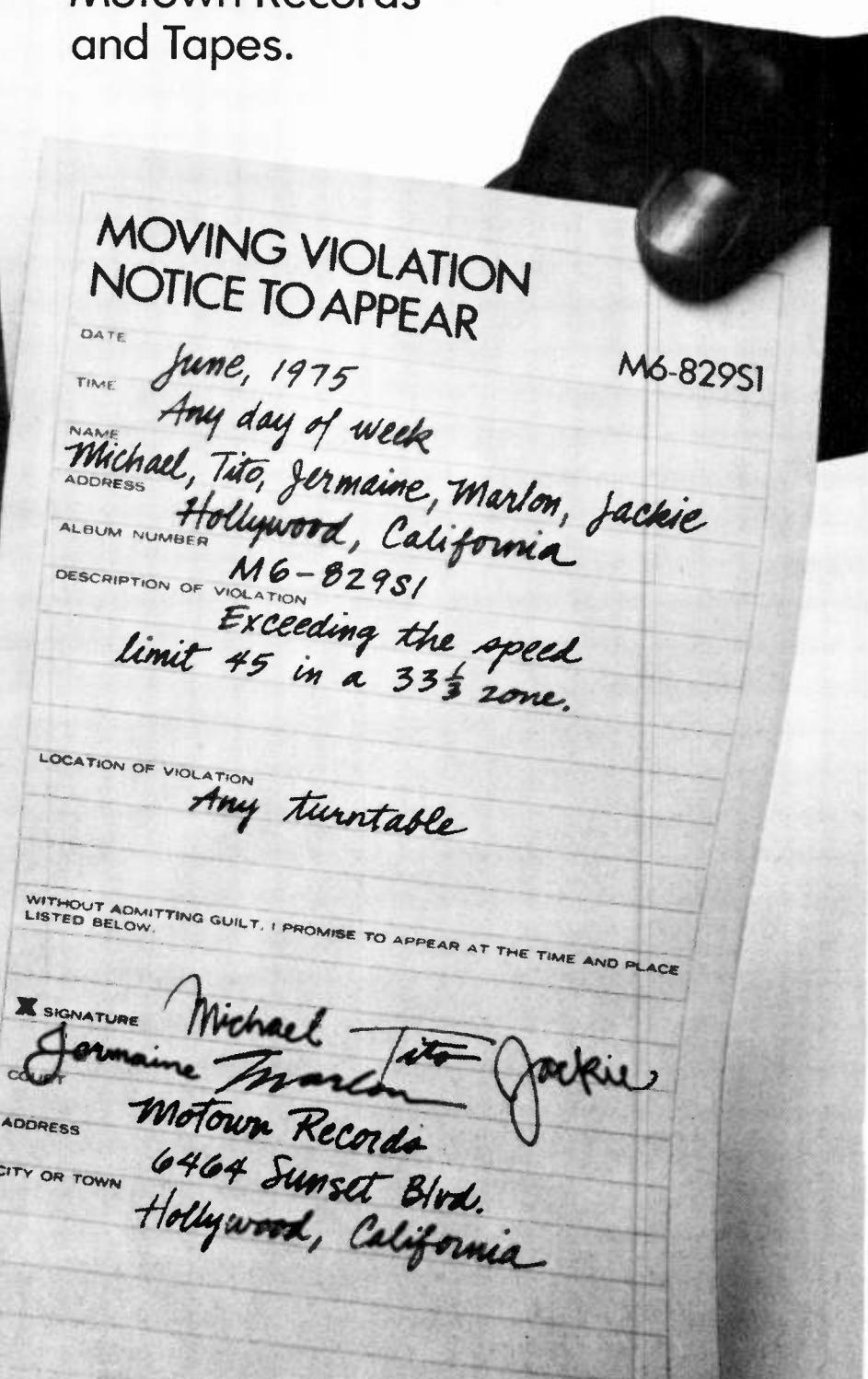
Grover Washington photo by Bruce Talamon

JULY 75/VOL 2, ISSUE 4 Y. 116

# When is a moving violation not a moving violation?



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# KMET GASTROLOGICAL FORECAST

One of the places in KAYMETVILLE  
which was reviewed by your friendly local gluttons is . . .

## THE RESTAURANT OF THE MONTH

The favorite place for birthday parties and entertaining out-of-towners for the KMET staff the past couple of months is The Mayfair Music Hall, a block from the seaside in sunny Santa Monica . . . live vaudeville performances with various artists set in a turn of the century English music hall . . . with drinks (booze and soft) and snacks served at your seats by wenches with well-turned ankles.

If you prefer a formal sit-down dinner, the Mayfair has the Crystal Palace dining room and balcony for before or after the show dinners, with a selection of chicken, trout and prime rib. The prices range from \$6 to \$8.50, with Alexandre Sylvestre wines featured, at \$5 a bottle, \$3 a half-bottle.

The Mayfair Music Hall was built in 1911 by Charles A. Tegner and was to become the Santa Monica Opera House, but by the time it opened, it had become the Majestic Theatre, "the home of refined vaudeville and the finest photoplays." In the teens and twenties you could expect to see silent movies accompanied by a two manual, 12-rank Wurlitzer organ. Today . . . Wednesday through Sunday, the Mayfair Music Hall offers that entertainment best described as "an adult show for the entire family." Showtimes are 8:00 p.m. with a second show Friday and Saturday at 9:45 p.m. Prices are \$3.50 nightly, except Friday and Saturday when they are \$4.50. All seats are reserved.

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Other restaurants to be reviewed in coming months . . . LaScala (4 tongues) . . . Scandia (5) . . . Chez Jay (2) . . . Charthouse (2) . . . Casa Caulderon (1) . . . Shanghai (3) . . . Pink's (2 \$).

# KMET • 7.24.7

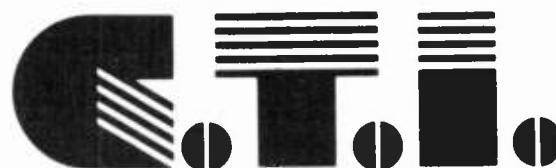
CTI. To the initiated, those three letters together stand for Creed Taylor, Inc. a jazz record label founded and managed by, you guessed it, Creed Taylor. They stand for flawless execution and production, controlled improvisation sweetened with overlays of brass and strings. They stand for one of the most financially successful approaches to making jazz music on the market today.

There are those, however, who look at CTI in a less favorable light. Who think, for example, that CTI stands for Compromised Tastes, Inevitably. Who point out that innovations are impossible in such controlled circumstances and that the instrumental interplay that makes jazz worthwhile is largely absent on CTI albums. Who insists that CTI's artists would be better served if they recorded their own tunes with their own bands and eliminated the orchestrations altogether.

"I think that there is a hard core purist jazz audience that relates more strongly to total improvisation and totally non-structured arranged music but it's a very small audience. There's a much broader audience who enjoy improvisation within a more structured musical environment. I think that basic philosophy is what is behind the intensity of the music while enhancing it with arranged elements. Most of that is a direct result of Creed Taylor's genius for finding a way to bring jazz performers to a larger audience."

Thus spoke Bob James. James is one of those people responsible for CTI's "arranged elements"; he has done orchestral arrangements for many CTI artists, as well as artists like Roberta Flack and Phoebe Snow, who record for other labels. He's a session keyboard player too and cooks pretty well when he wants to. He also has a

T. H. E.



S.T.O.R.Y

BY MICHAEL DAVIS

couple of CTI albums out under his own name, entitled *One* and *Two*. Both are heavily orchestrated; *One* succeeds because of its diversity but *Two* concentrates primarily on melodic content. Muzak, if you like.

But Bob James is not your run-of-the-mill muzak maker. Sure, some of his background points in that direction—being into classical music since the age of four, getting into jazz in high school, studying composition at Michigan State—but the only thing the music he made in the mid-sixties has in common with his present work is the combining of techniques associated with serious music and jazz.

At that time, he had a trio whose primary concern was improvising to taped electronic music. Early on, they made their own tapes by altering live recordings of instruments but later, they collaborated with several electronic music composers. One session with Cordon Mumma

and Robert Ashley was released by ESP under the title, *Explosions*; ten years later, it retains its startling freshness of ideas.

Over the long run, though, this direction didn't work out for James. The feeling he got from his audience was that they thought him a freak act and there were other considerations as well.

"Nobody really wanted to hire us to play the music we were playing," he remembers. "I was married and wanted to make a living so I ended up shifting into other areas."

Other areas included stints with Maynard Ferguson and Sarah Vaughan, writing for Broadway shows, and studio gigs. Eventually, he accepted the role of sideman, getting off on the different challenges his job presented to him.

"I had an insecure, negative attitude," he says, "thinking it was a bad thing to be a jack-of-all-trades instead of working really hard in one area. Suddenly, I decided to treat the ability to do a lot of different things well as an asset."

Like most musicians, James values direct communication with an audience highly and in his business, pleasing an audience is obviously foremost in his mind. But he also likes showing off his compositional abilities and cites the relatively adventurous "Valley of the Shadows" as his favorite piece on *One*.

"There are some things there that aren't as easy to grasp on the first hearing," he acknowledges. "It's almost like cheating in a way to sneak things in while the commercial listeners aren't...that's an unnecessary rationalization, I guess. The music either speaks for itself or it doesn't and when it does, anything goes."

Which is fine for his own projects but you may well ask how a musician who plays and arranges for other people day in and day out can



• Grover Washington, *Mister Magic*.

Cover and other photos by Bruce Talaman



•Hank Crawford.

fail to fall into the trap of reproducing clichés on command. Bob says he does this by using an intuitive approach.

"I try not to go in with a preconceived idea," he states. "That's the kind of commercial writer or player I wouldn't want to be, one who has all the stylistic tricks down."

"What I try to do most of the time is to stay open, just to let the input react in an instinctive way rather than in a programmed way. And when that works at its best, you might bring something to the artist's music that he or she hasn't heard before. The instinct of a memory of a performance with Grover Washington might carry over to, say, Aretha. I think that's why the best artists are always looking for new people to collaborate with, to freshen their thing."

That James might carry around memories of Grover Washington, Jr. dates in his head is hardly surprising. He's worked with Grover on all four of his CTI/KUDU albums, the latest of which, *Mister Magic*, is the biggest seller in CTI history. Grover is hot!

No, it's not his technique that Grover overwhelms people with, it's his personality. He was clearly gassed to be working with "giants," as he called them and his joy was evident to everyone in the audience every time he came on stage. Those weren't just notes spilling out of the bell of his horn, they were pieces of the man himself and the crowd dug it and showed their appreciation throughout the evening.

Although Grover's formal music education didn't last as long as James' did, he too began with the classics.

"I was mainly playing classical music in grammar school and most of high school," he recalls, "saxophone quartets and stuff like that. Then I heard 'Trane one day and I started really

•Grover Washington.



listening to what the guys were doing. That's the way it's been ever since, almost like playing catch-up to the older cats and trying to get what I could from each of the players I happened to meet on the road."

For Grover, the road consisted primarily of blues gigs and he paid his dues in corner bars in and around his native Buffalo. Eventually, things began to fall into place and he began doing a few sideman recording dates. He started playing with Johnny Hammond and shortly thereafter, the organist signed a KUDU contract and invited Grover to play on his debut KUDU LP. Then came The Big Break.

"*Inner City Blues* was supposed to be Hank Crawford's album," he notes, with just a trace of wonder in his voice. "I was called to the date to play tenor in the background horn section. They didn't find out until after the first day that Hank wouldn't be able to do it. So they asked me if I'd played much alto and I said, no. But I came up the next day and finished the album on a rented horn."

And on to stardom. But questions remain. Like how much of Grover's albums are Grover and how much are actually the work of CTI session crews. He explains it this way:

"Before we go into the studio, I'll meet with Bob or whoever is going to do the arranging maybe five or six times to try out material. It's a constant trial and error, trying tunes in different time signatures and different tempos. We get the tunes together and decide what the format is going to be for the whole album. Then we go about finding the right musicians to do the album.

"It's a fairly open affair; we all give our suggestions and there's always some give and take there. First, it's just Bob and I, then Creed meets with us and listens to what we've gotten together. Sometimes Creed will have a suggestion or an alteration but usually, we just go straight ahead."

Grover seems happy, if not ecstatic, with this way of operating but he is also looking to record his own band in the near future, an idea that will probably be welcomed by those who would like to hear him stretch out a bit more on record.

"I think a live date would be the answer," he says. "I think that would be better for the band and better for the whole feeling of the album. They're used to playing clubs and when you go into the studio, everyone gets all tense and they either rush or make silly mistakes, which we all do, by the way."

Sounds reasonable. It shouldn't be too difficult to allow Grover this modicum of freedom, especially since the concerts he's been doing with his band have been selling out so fast he's had to add second shows to them.

This is not to say I favor breaking up the working relationship of Grover and Bob James, however. After all, the most interesting track on *Mister Magic* is James' own "Earth Tones," where Grover responds especially well to the slightly spaced funk groove set up for him. Certainly, a little "give and take" is all that should be necessary to insure Grover's artistic growth without leaving his already-substantial audience behind.

One should not get the impression though, that CTI is only a two-artist operation. In point of fact, they are probably the most important jazz label of contemporary artists at the moment. Though not as avant-garde as Arista or ECM, their artists are making new music. Most of these other labels are operating as sort of an historical society bringing out material that should have been released years ago, but wasn't. Besides, Grover, and Bob James, they have a fairly solid stable of accomplished players, among them Hubert Laws, Ron Carter, Hank Crawford, Don Sebesky, Jim Hall, George Benson, Joe Beck, Phil Upchurch, Tennyson Stevens and Joe Farrell. All have considerable reputations, both as session



•Backstage at the spring CTI concert in Los Angeles.

performers and as soloists in their own right.

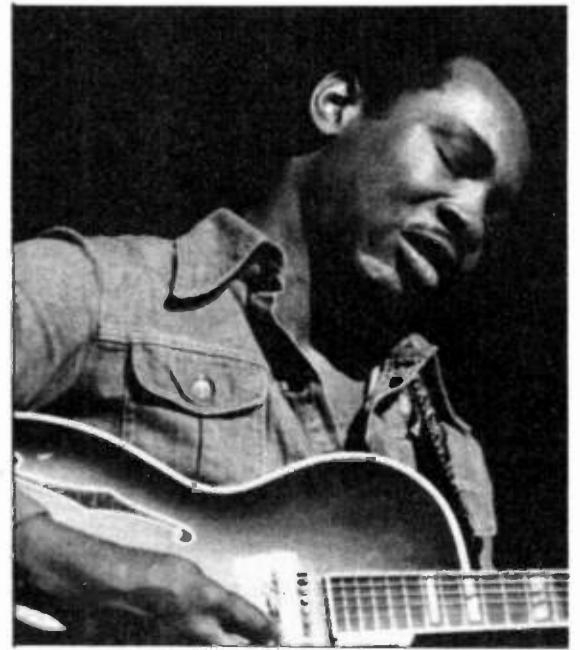
Ron Carter, a member of the New York Jazz Quartet, is probably the most sought after bass player in America. Proficient at both the electric bass and the stand-up variety, he also plays piccolo bass. He has released a few solo albums also on CTI and all are among the most consistent sellers in the company's catalog.

Hubert Laws has distinguished himself as a flautist, probably the most original on the jazz scene since the emergence of Yusef Lateef in the sixties. Likewise, George Benson is the widely heralded successor to the late Wes Montgomery as a melodic guitar player. In more of a rock bag is his fellow guitarist, Joe Beck.

In a radical departure from the other artists on the label is Esther Phillips. She began her career as a church singer where she was discovered by Johnny Otis and signed up to his revue. She had a hit back in those days (1965) with an answer song, "When a Woman Loves a Man" and the original version of "Release Me." She is considered the champion blues singer, a fact acknowledged at the 1973 Grammy Awards, when Aretha Franklin turned her own Grammy over to Esther. Currently she's riding the charts with a disco remake of the old Dinah Washington song, "What a Difference a Day Makes."

Creed Taylor has taken a lot of knocks from the jazz purists about his conception of jazz, but one thing is for sure: he has earned the respect of many of the marketing men in the industry for his ability to produce top-selling jazz albums. Furthermore, he has made jazz accessible to the masses and brought a renewed interest in instrumental virtuosity to the consumer, a feat for which all jazz lovers should salute him.

•George Benson.



# KMET Personality Page

## MONDAY THRU FRIDAY

6:00 AM-10:00 AM  
10:00 AM-2:00 PM  
2:00 PM-7:00 PM  
7:00 PM-12 MIDNIGHT  
12 MIDNIGHT -6:00 AM

**B. MITCHEL REED**  
**SHADOE STEVENS**  
**STEVEN CLEAN**  
**MARY TURNER**  
**DOYLE**

## SATURDAY

2:00 AM-6:00 AM  
6:00 AM-8:00 AM  
8:00 AM-1:00 PM  
1:00 PM-4:00 PM  
4:00 PM-7:00 PM  
7:00 PM-11:00 PM  
11:00 PM-MIDNIGHT

**DOYLE**  
**PUBLIC SERVICE PROGRAMS**  
**ZIRN HAYDEN**  
**STEVEN CLEAN**  
**MARY TURNER**  
**JOE COLLINS**  
**KING BISCUIT OR BBC CONCERT**

## SUNDAY

MIDNIGHT-3:00 AM  
3:00 AM-4:00 AM  
4:00 AM-8:00 AM  
8:00 AM-11:00 AM  
  
11:00 AM-NOON  
NOON-2:00 PM  
2:00 PM-5:00 PM  
  
5:00 PM-9:00 PM  
9:00 PM-11:00 PM  
11:00 PM-MIDNIGHT

**JIMMY WITHERSPOON**  
**DOYLE**  
**PUBLIC SERVICE PROGRAMS**  
**NAWANA DAVIS / MUSIC BLACK & WHITE**  
**ROCK AROUND THE WORLD**  
**HARRY SHEARER / BRUNCH**  
**GREAT AMERICAN ROCK ALBUM COUNTDOWN**  
**DR. DEMENTO**  
**SPACE AVAILABLE**  
**YOUR OPINION / MANGLE THE MANAGER**

# KMET '94.7

# KMET Concert Calendar

## SAT. JULY 5:

NO KING BISCUIT OR BBC CONCERT

11:00 PM DAVID BROMBERG CONCERT — RECORDED LIVE AT THE CHEROKEE STUDIOS.

## SAT. JULY 12:

11:00 PM KING BISCUIT FLOWER HOUR WITH SLADE AND RUFUS.

## SAT. JULY 19

11:00 PM BBC PRESENTS GENESIS AND RENAISSANCE.

## SAT. JULY 26:

10:00 PM 90-MINUTE ALICE COOPER SPECIAL  
RECORDED LIVE AT THE FORUM IN  
LOS ANGELES JUNE 17th.

### KMET SPECIAL PROGRAM... “THE ROLLING STONES STORY”

TUESDAY, JULY 1st ..... 9:00 to 10:00 PM

WEDNESDAY, JULY 2nd ..... 8:00 to 10:00 PM

THURSDAY, JULY 3rd ..... 8:00 to 10:00 PM

FRIDAY, JULY 4th ..... 8:00 to 10:00 PM

SEVEN HOUR HISTORY OF THE ROLLING STONES  
... WITH CONCERT EXCERPT INTERVIEWS WITH  
GROUP MEMBERS AND FRIENDS, ETC.

# KMET 94.7

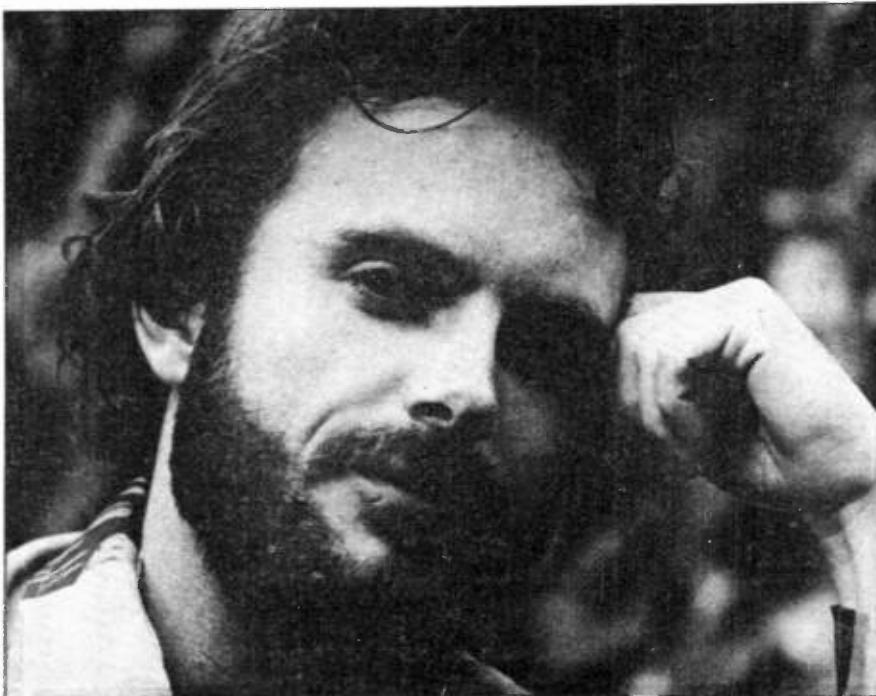
# SOUL & JAZZ REVIEWS

## UPON THE WINGS OF MUSIC

Jean-Luc Ponty  
Atlantic SD 18138

By MICHAEL POINT

Ponty exited the Mahavishnu Orchestra several months ago in order to pursue a solo career and *Upon the Wings of Music* is his latest attempt at establishing his name and music among a wider audience. His slicing electric violin work has been a standard of quality



•Jean-Luc Ponty—Soloing after Mothers madness.

in the jazz/rock field for many years but it has been his collaboration with the likes of Frank Zappa and John McLaughlin that has advanced his cause the most. The new album, all instrumental, offers a wide selection of styles and should serve as a good introduction for many music fans to the diversity and talent Ponty possesses. Most of the tracks are broken down into comparatively short songs that enable Ponty to show his stuff without overexposing his distinctive sound.

"Echoes of the Future" is the most experimental cut as Ponty piles layers of multi-tracked violin solos on top of each other to produce a shifting, shimmering sound collage. Several of the songs, most notably the title cut and "Fight for Life," are obviously lineal descendants of Ponty's days in the employ of folks like Zappa as a solid rock-oriented sound dominates the music. Ponty's violin stylings are consistently classy whatever the style might be and his sound is easily recognizable through its finely-honed clarity and technical expertise. Fortunately, Ponty offers considerably more than technique in his music as there are many moments of sheer blazing artistry contained on what is essentially a low-key album.

Ponty even manages to create a couple of infectious melodies of the sort usually associated with much more commercial forms of music and "Question With No Answer" is as likely a candidate as any for a crossover hit single that could put a jazz artist on the pop charts. Despite the quality and

attractions of *Upon the Wings of Music* it would be nice to see Ponty put his considerable improvisational abilities on vinyl next time around now that the introduction is out of the way. An equally good introduction to Ponty can be found with some effort if you can scrounge up a copy of *King Kong*, on which Ponty performs some Zappa hits with help from various Mothers, but the new album more than serves its purpose. With the flowering of Ponty and Michal Urbaniak the electric violin is being brought back

with arousing harmonic chorus blending the girls voices. A re-working of Marvin Gaye's "Distant Lover" gets the same treatment emerging softer, yet as powerful as the Gaye original.

On the upbeat side "Take Good Care Of Yourself" is this album's hit. Bright production with a lively chorus and a terrific lyrical hook guarantee this song's hit potential. The sexy "Loving Cup" is more upbeat and should keep the bumpers in the crowd satisfied.

The weakest cuts, "Long Lost Love" and "TSOP" are standards from the Gamble-Huff bag and don't really serve as anything more than a re-hash of older, proven productions. Aside from these cuts, however, the album is Gamble-Huff's finest work with female vocalists to date.

The Three Degrees should not be slighted for their role. Though their voices don't soar with the vibrancy of Labelle on the Laura Nyro album, the Degrees are masters of ensemble singing. Their exquisite harmonic blend matches with the cleansing lushness of the production. After kicking around the music business for over ten years this album proves the Degrees have talent. It took Gamble-Huff team to tap it, but now the Three Degrees are ready to follow along with the rest of the Philly team, and this album marks their turning point.

## THE HIT MAN

Eddie Kendricks

Tamla T6-33851

By BOB FUKUYAMA

On *The Hit Man*, slick production, far less syrupy than that which made his previous LP, *Boogie Down*, so sweet and superficial, provides Eddie Kendricks with the kind of funky support especially suited to his silken falsetto. *Boogie Down* failed because producers/arrangers Wilson and Caston divided the album into a danceable side of contrived "Boogie Down" and "Keep On Trucking" styled disco romps and a ridiculously strained side of emotionless ballads; *The Hit Man* succeeds because said producers allow Kendrick's vocals to be danceable and highly sensual, simultaneously, and with effect.



Although two ballads sport muzak type trappings ("Skippin' Work Today" and "You Loved Me Then"), most of the eight songs are spirited, inspiring one to high-step to the beat. With energy and feeling, the ex-Temp shifts and glides through the uptempo and uplifting "If Anyone Can," "Happy," "Get The Cream Off the Top" and "Body Talk," all

sexually suggestive. When Kendricks sings of his "magic wand" (in "If Anyone Can"), you know there's something beyond its black magic connotations; when he offers "a mouthful of love" (in "Get The Cream Off the Top"), with his marvelous finesse and calculated passion, you forget the fact that this is a somewhat crude sexual allusion. Delivering such images in his soothing tenor, Kendricks is subtly assertive; his "body music" is totally unlike that of Barry White's more aggressive ilk. Make mine the streamlined Kendricks model; after all, when it comes to love songs, it's the substance, not the substantial, that matters.

## SURFIN'

Embryo

BASF BC 22385

By MICHAEL DAVIS

No, Embryo are not the latest band to musically express their quest for the perfect wave, as the title of this album might suggest. Instead, they're another eclectic European group that has been kicking around Germany for some time now, going through stylistic and personnel changes while trying to find their own sound. That they haven't totally succeeded gives this LP an unfinished quality but many of the things they come up with are interesting and occasionally, even startling.

The nucleus of Embryo is the trio of Roman Bunka, Vwe Mullrich, and Christiano, who take care of the basic instrumentation: guitars, keyboards, percussion, and bass. Augmenting them on this album are Edgar Hofman, who used to be a full-time member, on sax and violin, and former Mingus sideman Charlie Mariano on saxes and flute.

The rhythmic orientation of the group is funk-based in the dry European manner—it sounds funky but it shoo' don't feel it. In this respect, they resemble their countrymen in Can and they also sing inobtrusively here and there. But Can's music has more of a sense of continuity to it where Embryo regards logical development as less of a necessity. I mean, any band that would stick a sitar solo in the middle of a basic funk piece either have a corrupt sense of logic or a strange sense of humor.

Most of the tracks here contain interesting music but rarely do they hold together as distinct entities. On "Secret," for instance, Christiano's organ provides a nice backdrop for sax and guitar solos but when it is brought up front, the cut begins to die of neglect. Similarly, "Dance of Some Broken Glasses" creates a percussion-heavy Middle-Eastern feeling that is chopped off abruptly by the entrance of a violin and more esoteric instruments. Only "Music of Today" really maintains its unique identity, merging wah-wahed Fender-Rhodes and ring modulated guitar with a starkly acoustic marimba.

After listening to Embryo for awhile, I got the impression that they're fearless enough to try anything. Commonplace combinations of instruments and accepted ways of playing them are avoided for the most part here; the resulting music may rarely be of perfect proportions but it never fails to jar a jaded ear. Somebody has to break the rules, right?

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Less Purchases Return  
Net Purchases  
Total Cost of Merchandise  
Less Merchandise Inventory  
Cost of Merchandise

Profit on Sales

ing Expenses

Selling Expenses  
Advertising  
Delivery Expense  
Sales Salaries  
Total Selling

Administrative Expenses  
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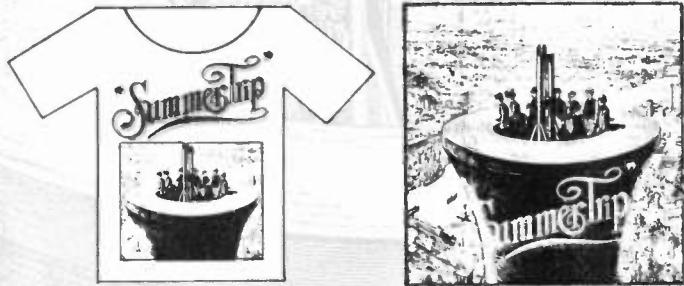
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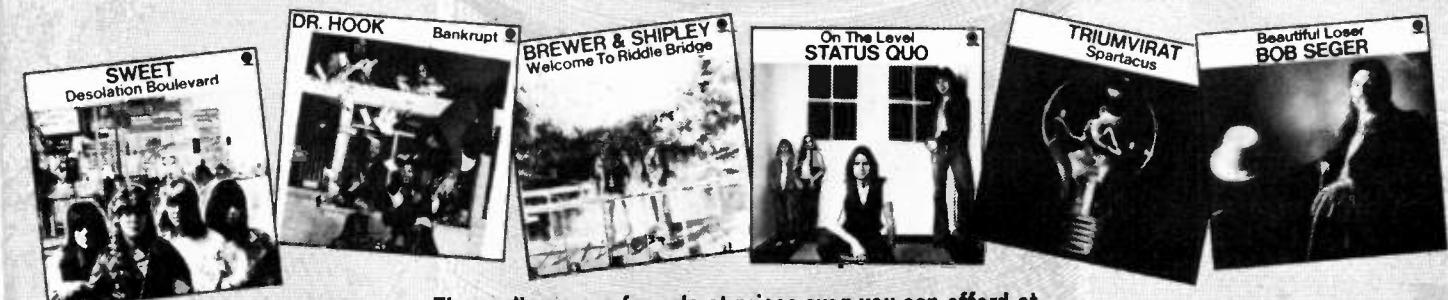
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