

PHONOGRAPH

RECORD MAGAZINE

The Band on the Road
**Paul McCartney
& Wings**

Reunion in the Park
**The Dead &
The Starship**

Bruce
Springsteen
in
Los Angeles

**The Sounds
Unsilenced
SIMON &
GARFUNKEL**

Plus Soul & Jazz
Record Magazine

NOV. 1975/VOL.6, ISSUE 3/60 CENTS

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Metromedia stations and personnel received 13 nominations and of these, 6 were declared winners. The nominations are listed by station on the map below.

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WNEW-FM was also named Progressive Radio Station of the Year.

KSAN's Bonnie Simmons was named Progressive Program Director of the Year and, incidentally, is the first woman to receive this accolade from her peers.

KLAC's documentary program, "Tribute to Bob Wills," received the award for Program of the Year.

In the first tie ever awarded in the Air Personality of the Year Competition, KMET's Shadoe Stevens and B. Mitchel Reed were named co-winners.

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SAN FRANCISCO
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Bonnie Simmons
PROGRAM DIRECTOR
OF THE YEAR

MMI
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Nominations:
STATION OF THE YEAR
Scott Muni
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OF THE YEAR

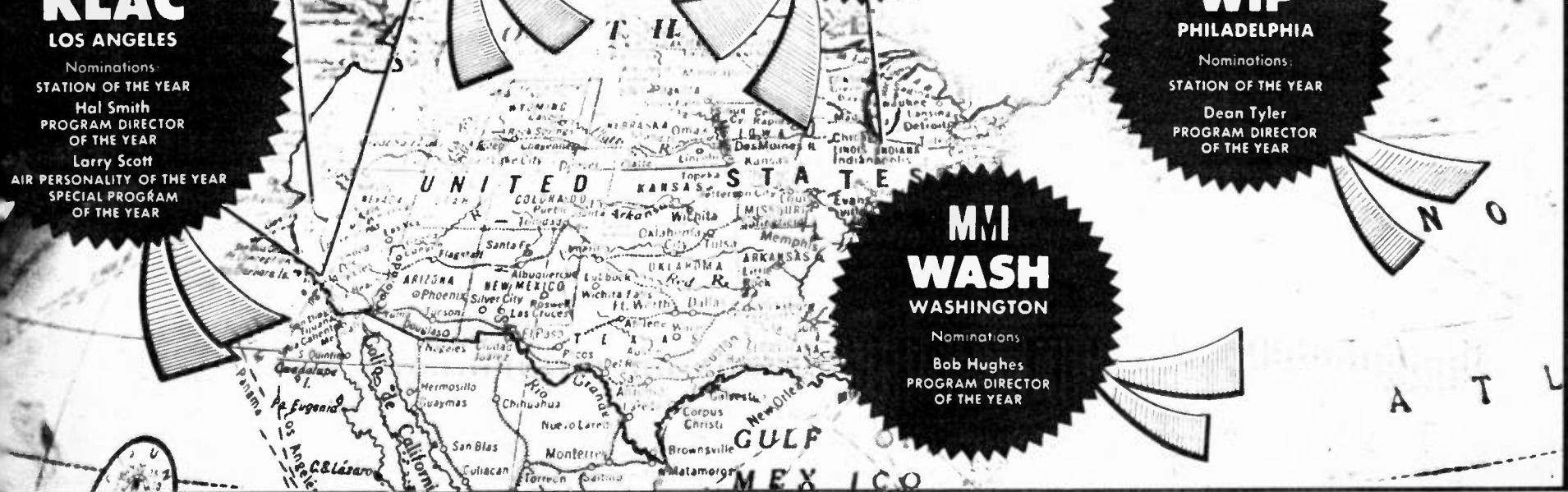
MMI
KMET
LOS ANGELES
Nominations:
Shadoe Stevens
AIR PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR
B. Mitchel Reed
AIR PERSONALITY
OF THE YEAR

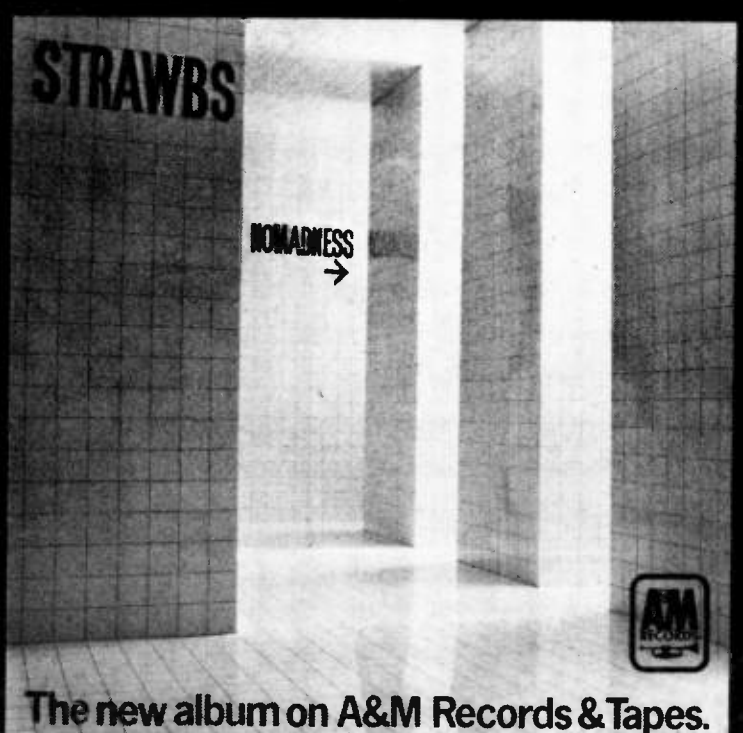
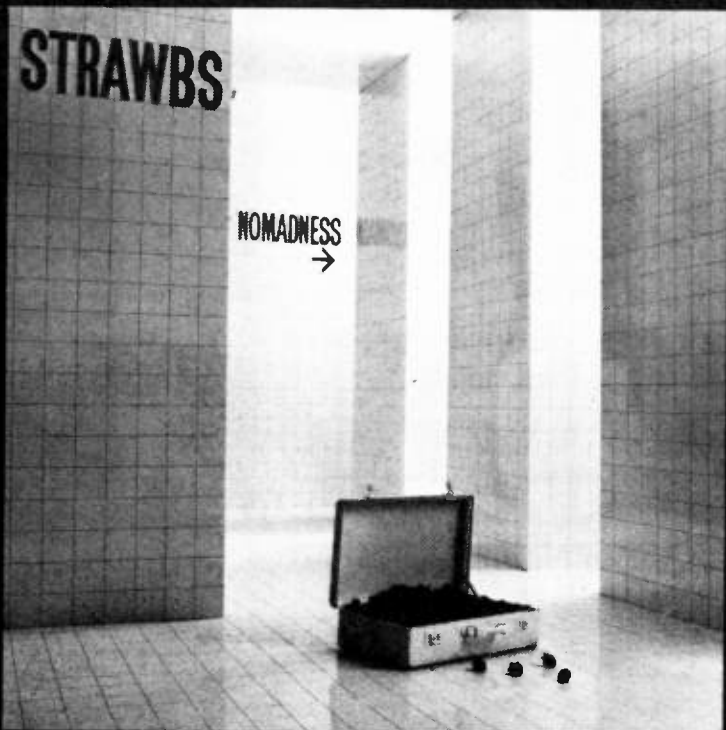
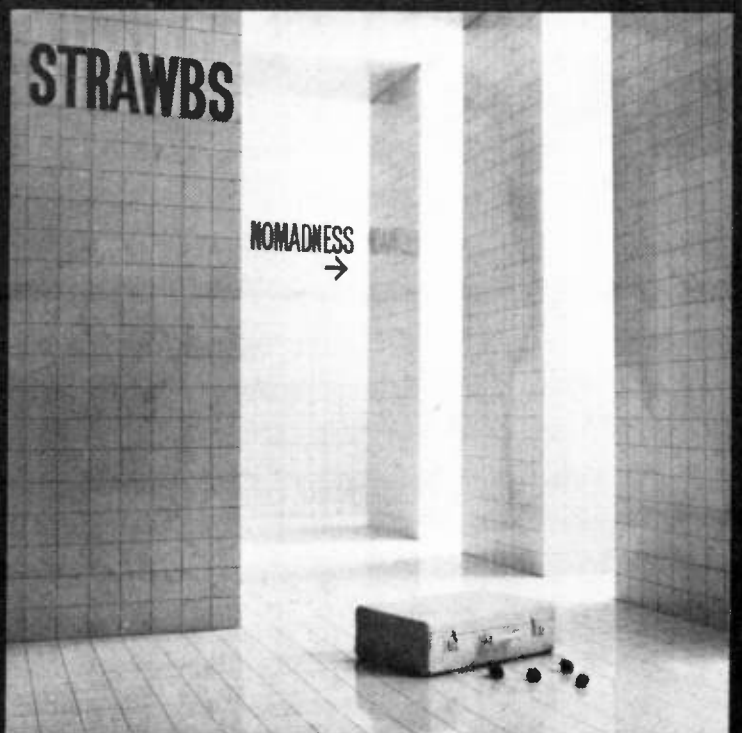
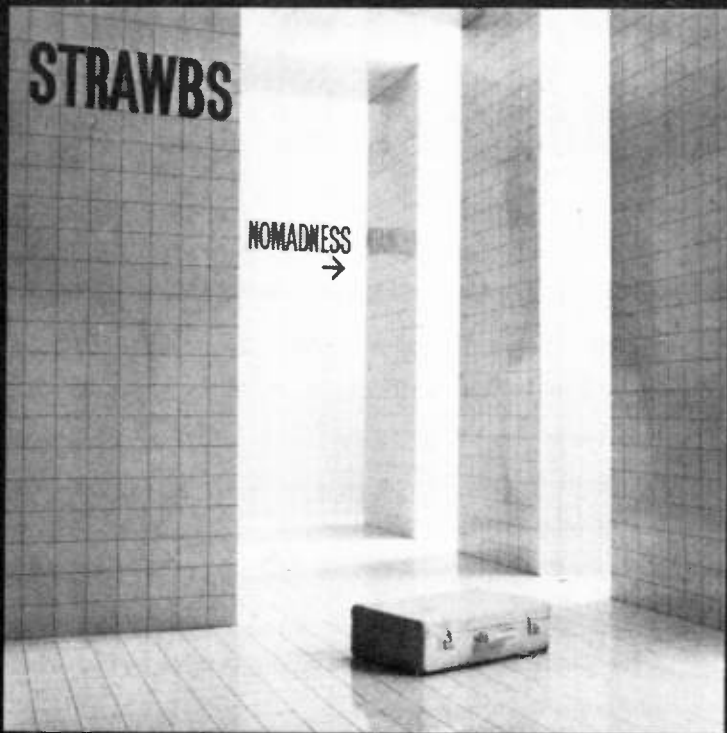
MMI
WDHF
CHICAGO
Nominations:
Jim Channell
AIR PERSONALITY
OF THE YEAR

MMI
WIP
PHILADELPHIA
Nominations:
STATION OF THE YEAR
Dean Tyler
PROGRAM DIRECTOR
OF THE YEAR

MMI
KLAC
LOS ANGELES
Nominations:
STATION OF THE YEAR
Hal Smith
PROGRAM DIRECTOR
OF THE YEAR
Larry Scott
AIR PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR
SPECIAL PROGRAM
OF THE YEAR

MMI
WASH
WASHINGTON
Nominations:
Bob Hughes
PROGRAM DIRECTOR
OF THE YEAR





The new album on A&M Records & Tapes.

THIS MONTH

SIMON & GARFUNKEL, FAKIN' IT: *The Sounds Unsilenced*

In 1970 Simon & Garfunkel amazed the world a first time when their "Bridge Over Troubled Water" (album and single) topped best-seller charts of all demographic and geographic persuasions for an unprecedented number of consecutive weeks. Later that same year, at the zenith of their ten-year career as a duo, Paul Simon & Art Garfunkel called a halt to a sound which had become required listening for millions. Five and a half years later, they've re-grouped for a moment, and at long last followed "Bridge" with "My Little Town". Publicly and privately Art and Paul vow they'll remain solos. But with a taste of fresh Simon & Garfunkel material, the fans are more ravenously impatient than ever for the album they must have. In 1975, more than one act has established a trip back home doesn't have to mean a one-way fare. "There was this guy I used to sing with," --Paul Simon.

By Stan Mises.....15

PAUL MCCARTNEY IN CONCERT: *The Band On The Road*

Paul McCartney recently revealed for the first time, what he and the latest Wings configuration intend to do on stage for hundreds of thousands of Americans, if they're allowed to bring their act to the US this Spring as planned. A sneak preview of the only Beatle to escape live performance in post Beatles America.

By Geoff Deane.....11

DON McLEAN IN SOLITARE: *The Future Is Not Mine To Give*

Clive Davis declares he's "one of the most important poets of the Seventies". His sensational rocket to the top was matched only by his slide back into obscurity. But, whatever happened to the man who sold more than five million American Pie albums just about four years ago to the day?

By Ian Dove.....20

ERIC CARMEN BEYOND RASPBERRIES: *When He says, "Love," you best believe he means "Love, L-U-V."*

The Raspberries single and album releases from 1972-74 have become monuments of their respective release dates for the nation's leading pop-connoisseurs. Essentially The Raspberries were a fantastic figment of Eric Carmen's teenage-technicolor imagination. But with the demise of The Raspberries come even greater pop-fantasies from perhaps the most Cleveland-conscious pop expert ever.

By Ron Ross.....22

NIGEL OLSSON AS A SOLO: *Drummers Can Sing Too!*

The Elton John Band (Nigel Olsson, Dee Murray) as a three piece unit will remain the tightest, richest such assemblage for some years to come. Elton's pre-mature fading of his original band doesn't mean the end of full, crisp, sharp recording. You'll find some of the finest Elton John records ever recorded on the latest Neil Sedaka release, and Nigel Olsson has proven himself twice now with his recent "Only One Woman" and "Some Sweet Day" from his first solo product back in 1972. Details of the last days of the original Elton John Band and Nigel's plans for the future.

By Todd Everett.....11

THE DEAD & THE STARSHIP IN THE PARK: *More Bay Area Freebees*

Five years after the last free concerts were allowed in Golden Gate Park, a group of local non-profit promoters in the Bay Area have convinced city fathers to once again sanction such gatherings. The first to take place saw The Dead & The Starship back where it all began for them some nine years ago. The psychedelic revival as a reality.

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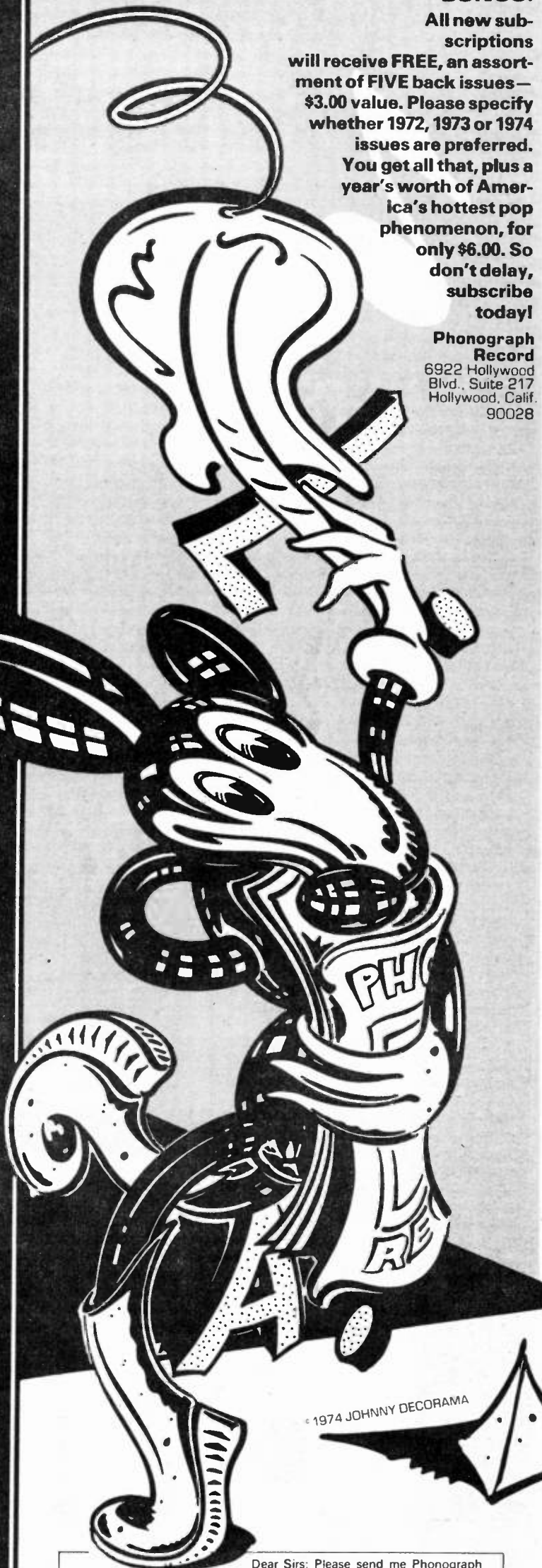
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PERFORMANCES

Bruce Springsteen: Will it Play in L.A.?

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN & THE E STREET BAND
The Roxy
Los Angeles, Calif.

By **BUD SCOPPA**

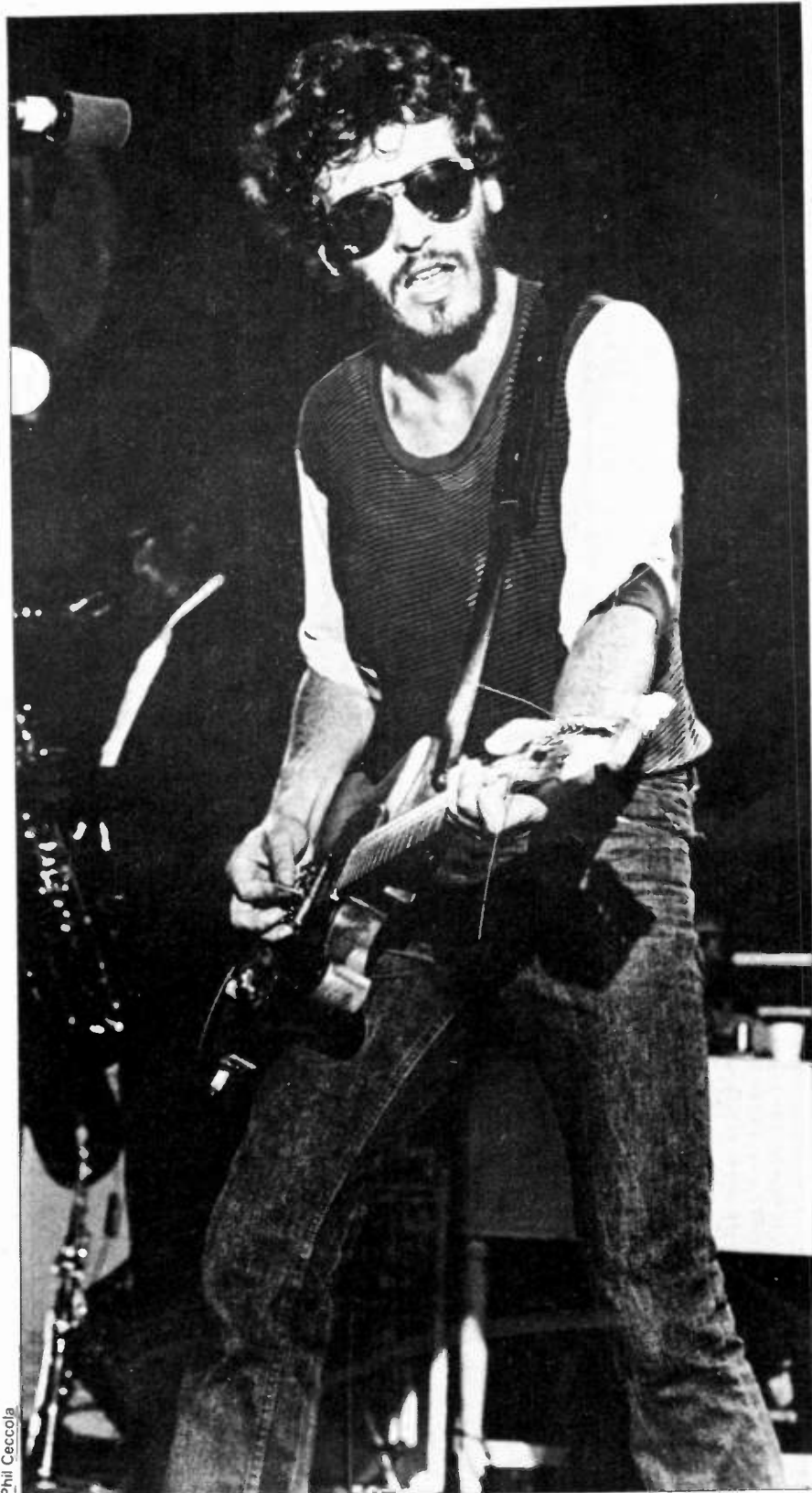
People who were clearly not accustomed to standing in line formed a reluctant column along Sunset Boulevard; hordes of photographers snapped at the famous faces as they chafed in their queue. It wasn't yet eight p.m. Bruce Springsteen was scheduled to play his first Roxy set at nine. He'd be facing a houseful of music-industry and celebrity skeptics who were already ornery at having to wait instead of being waited on. The big question of the day had been: Will it play in L.A.? Now the question seemed more specific: Will this all but surly audience *allow* it to play?

In the traffic on Sunset a Mercedes backed into the VW behind it, then sped to freedom down the left-turn lane. The crowd cheered. Uh-oh. Be wary, Bruce, this ain't Philadelphia.

We had little difficulty, surprisingly enough, sliding into one of the front-center tables, and from that cozy vantage point, we checked out some of the pre-show entertainment: an unself-consciously balding Jack Nicholson bobbing his head to Little Feat's "Dixie Chicken"; Peter Boyle and Robert di Niro huddling at the next table; Jackson Browne, Jim Messina, and Wolfman Jack scuffling for empty seats; the young woman across from me complaining to her date, "It's hurting my neck to look at famous people...oh, do you want your cherry?" In the dim light, old lovers and old rivals spotted each other from across the room. The long tables were lined with tall tequila sunrises.

At about 9:45, finally, the lights went down and the curtain lifted to reveal the silhouette of a harp-playing Springsteen alone on stage. As he began to sing "Thunder Road"—joined now by Roy Bittan's piano—a spot lit him, revealing a small but lionheaded figure in levis rolled-at-the-cuff, motorcycle jacket, and button-down shirt. Perhaps realizing he was outnumbered, Springsteen kept his eyes closed through the song. Even so, he was magnetic: one of my tablemates who'd earlier said he didn't look like much in his photos suddenly stage-whispered, "Gee, he looks like Al Pacino in *Serpico*." By God, she was right. And he sang in a rich, assured baritone, the very voice that has caused reviewers to invoke the name of Elvis. Even without his band, Springsteen was holding them off. It was gonna be a good battle.

As the crowd responded—more than politely—to the first number, the E Street bandmen filed on stage, attired in three broad-brimmed hats, as many left-lobe earrings, a single tank-top (on the drummer, natch), and a half-dozen set jaws—there or not, these guys appeared to be tough customers. They pushed across "Tenth Avenue Freeze-out" while Springsteen turned his back on the crowd and made himself into a windmill before the drums. By "She's the One," the fifth number, Springsteen and the band were in high gear, and the crowd was coming around. The boss was a hero-imp, larger than life but still—especially during "Spirit in the Night" when he threw himself face-



Phil Ceccola

down on a front table and gobbled a french fry—totally accessible. During a roaring "Born to Run," someone shouted in my ear, "He's like an actor playing himself." Right again. If the crowd wasn't responding with the intensity this performance warranted, it was still largely won over by this powerful presence and his similarly powerful band.

Springsteen pulled off his jacket a half hour into the show. His shirt was cursorily tucked in in front, left loose in back. A six-inch thread hung from the rolled-up sleeve of his microphone hand—it was as if the thread were part of the plan. Through "Kitty's Back" and "Rosalita" the E Streeters gathered momentum to a glorious peak while Springsteen—shout-singing, playing vibrato-filled guitar chords and solos, enticing the crowd with his smiles and

grimaces—whirled among them. Will it play in L.A.? What a stupid question.

The crowd—that Columbia-bought decided it wanted an encore, and the band gave them a hushed "Sandy" with a modified final verse:

Sandy, the angels have lost their desire for us

Can't figure out...spoke to 'em just last night—said they won't set themselves on fire for us any more
But every summer, when the weather gets hot, they ride their crazy road down from heaven

On their Harleys they come and go
You see 'em dressed like stars in the little seashore bars and parked with their babies out on the Kokomo...

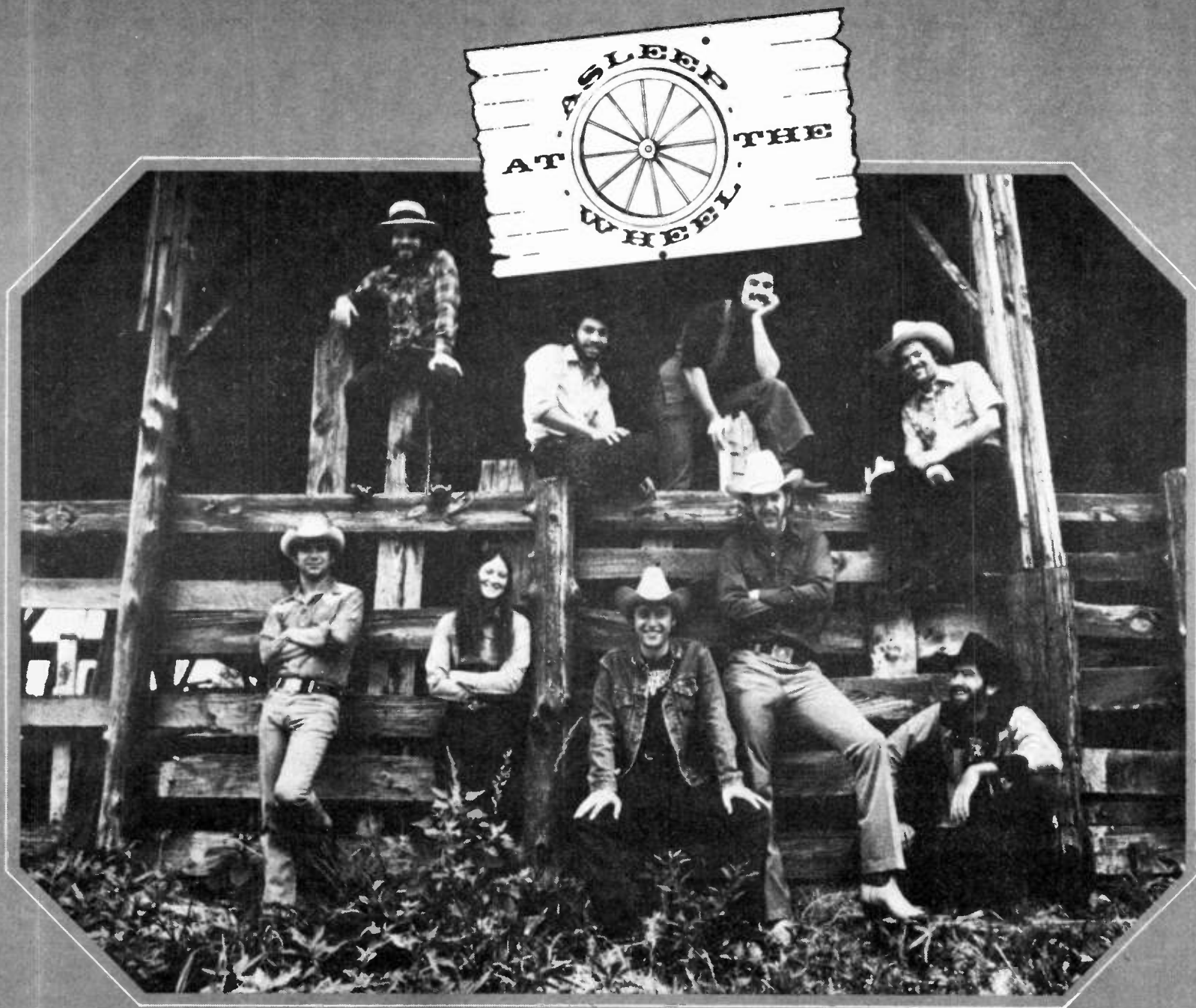
and followed that with a passionate "Dee-troit medley" courtesy of Mitch Ryder: "Devil with a Blue Dress On" into "Good Golly Miss Molly" into "C.C.

Rider" into "Ginny Ginny Ginny" (or is it "Jenny Jenny Jenny"?). Then back to the Sunset Marquis to rest up for the real audiences the next three nights. If this wasn't the Student Prince in Asbury or the Osprey in Manasquan or Dudley's in Orange, it was still an impressive and invigorating performance that turned stiff and sourpusses into fans. Still, a few stiff and sourpusses remained.

The next evening's show before a charged, zealous audience (made up mostly of people who'd awakened before dawn a couple of weeks earlier in order to get a good spot in the ticket line) made opening night seem tame. Thanks to a live radio broadcast, it was captured for posterity by L.A.-area tape recordists and bootleggers (myself among the former group). Great sound and a sensible mix should make this one of the most high-quality bootlegs ever put on sale. Highlights: a solemn, moving performance of "Goin' Back" in tribute to Roger McGuinn and to Springsteen's favorite L.A. band, the Byrds; and a majestic, magnificent rendering of "Backstreets" in a league with the version of "Like a Rolling Stone" from the Dylan-Band '66 Albert Hall bootleg. Am I glad to have a copy.

From a balcony vantage point, the Saturday night crowd took on a distinct character: the front section consisted almost entirely of young, exhilarated males whose hero worship of Springsteen approached—and sometimes went over the line right into—adoration. In the reserved tables farther back, the people were more mixed, gender-wise, and slightly cooler—"Maybe that's why they call them 'reserved,'" someone opined.

Springsteen was Saturday-night spiffy in jeans, earth shoes, black pullover sweater, and navy blue suspenders (I gotta get a pair). The rest of the band still looked street-tough grungy, but they played throughout the evening with outright splendor. What a band—even without the boss they'd be one of the best in the business; with him they're practically unrivalled (Will it play in L.A.?!). A magically balanced coupling of the rough-neck and the refined, of the cocky and the charming, of gutter-rough and purple majesty, they're right there with Springsteen at every turn, in every sense. In an instant, they can recreate summer of '68 on the Jersey Shore, or 1935 on 125th Street, or they can drop the bottom out and suddenly you're alone in a bedroom with a lover or in an alley with a shadow. On a good night, as this one certainly was, Springsteen and the band invest everything they play—the classic rockers ("Backstreets," "Born to Run," "She's the One"), the rangy, hook-laden performance pieces ("Kitty's Back," "Rosalita"), the panoramas ("Jungleland," "Sandy"), and the old songs ("When You Walk in the Room," "Carol," "Pretty Flamingo")—with the resonance and illumination of greatness. No kidding, when they all came in on the opening of "Backstreets," I thought we'd hit nine on the Richter scale and it was really all over. But (unless you're compulsive, or a chronicler, or both) you don't think of words like "resonance" or "majesty" while it's happening in front of you—you think, "Man, this is fun, and I'm really happy, and I don't ever want it to end." Or, like a promo man and Springsteen fanatic has said to me on several occasions, "It's my life." I know what you mean. It plays in L.A.



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Philip Gould



THE NITTY GRITTY DIRT BAND
The Urban Survival Fair
Dallas, Texas

By LARRY WEEK

In what was described as a "very co-operative crowd" by police and University of Texas (at Arlington) authorities, some 60,000 persons packed their coolers of beer, dogs, kids and other paraphernalia off to the first KZEW Urban Survival Fair (hopefully this will become an annual event). The theme of the fair was patterned after a 32 part, award winning series of news stories/features produced by "The Zoo's" news director Jamie Friar. Some 85 booths were set up by local agencies dispensing information varying from venereal disease (*Zap The Clap*) to citizen's complaints relating to local police (*Buzz The Fuzz*). Urban Survival handbooks were handed out to the first 10,000 persons attending the combination fair and outdoor concert.

KZEW provided entertainment in the form of Calico (a local favorite), Jimmy Spheeris, Eric Quincy Tate, and finally the more established and much revered in these parts, Nitty Gritty Dirt Band.

Playing from a scaffold set up in front of the UTA buildings, Calico, Spheeris and Tate supplied continuous music and pleasure for the people throughout the afternoon preceding the Dirt Band appearance late in the day.

Performing to an audience, seemingly exhausted from dealing with the closeness of a super-crowd, all day drinking and smoking, The Dirt Band was majestically welcomed by the masses gathered. They'd waited more than six hours to see this band.

Opening with "Some Of Shelly's Blues" from the group's 1970 *Uncle Charlie* album, the band switched gears from bluegrass/pop to a more cajun-style with Hank Williams' "Jambalaya". Somewhat out of context after the preceding Mike Nesmith tune perhaps, but none-the-less devoured by the fans.

"The Battle Of New Orleans" from *Dream*, the Dirt Band's latest album (incidentally, one of the most popular records in Dallas currently), continued the momentum but it was John McEuen's incredible fiddle-work on Doug Kershaw's "Diggy Diggy Lo" that really set this audience free.

Jerry Jeff Walker's "Mr. Bojangles" (a hit in 1970 by NGDB) completed a near two-hour set, leaving the crowd

Larry Week is a writer for *Buddy Magazine*, a monthly music publication out of Dallas.

Dirt Band Dazzle 60,000 in Dallas

demanding an encore. The Dirt Band obliged with "Will The Circle Be Unbroken", then the bluegrass standard, "Orange Blossom Special" (now considered a Dirt Band standard by many). Jeff Hanna and Jim Ibbotson are the perfect two-part harmony, combined with the finest harpist in the business, Jimmie Fadden, their presence on stage is clean, tight, and more important than anything else, fun. Recent elimination of facial hair, excess weight and overlong hair for the former three Grittys qualifies the Dirt Band a very competitive pop unit

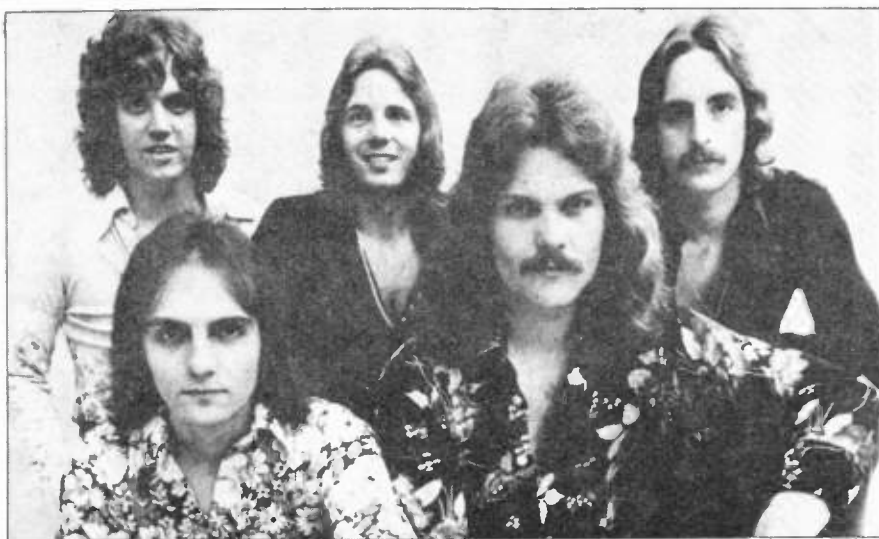
to boot; listen-up *Tiger Beat* fans.

The group's performance this day was proof-positive that this act unquestionably heads the list of an aggregation of country-rock musicians dispensing a musical form which basically started in the Austin and Dallas areas (others would include Michael Murphy, Jerry Jeff Walker, and Willie Nelson).

As the band left the stage, still thousands of diehards wanted more, but the concert now 7 hours old, was over. Finally all 60,000 fans exited quietly, contented -- each returning to their own

individual urban existences. It was indeed the event of the season for Northern Texas, especially considering the fact KZEW, The Dirt Band and the other talent devoted their time and/or dollars to make it all possible. It was entertaining, and quite frankly (due to the Urban Survival factor,) educational and useful at the same time.

For those of us in the 17-26ish group, KZEW fulfilled the most relevant public-service we've ever known a broadcasting outlet to provide here. We're impressed. Greatful.



MORE ANGLO POP FROM CLEVELAND

WINDFALL
The Cleveland Agora
Cleveland, Ohio

By ANASTASIA PANTSIOS

The fact that Windfall, essentially a 6 month old band, is so assured and polished is no surprise, given the background of the group's members. Keyboard player Kevin Raleigh and guitarist Dennis Stredney came from Freeport, the cream of Cleveland underground bands. Freeport was steeped in Led Zeppelin and known for its lengthy, dazzling instrumental jams and displays of guitar wizardry.

Windfall's drummer and main brain,

Jim Bonfanti, came from the opposition camp. He was a co-founder of the cream of Cleveland pop groups, nay, of pop groups everywhere: the Raspberries.

These three, and ex-Raspberries bassist David Smalley formed Dynamite in November, 1973, and Dynamite evolved into Windfall. Smalley departed to concentrate on songwriting, and was replaced by Tom Hunter, whose previous band, Reign, was a Cleveland bar band which in its longest lasting incarnation was devoted to classicosmicoid music of the Yes and Moody Blues variety. Pete Hewlitt, singer-guitarist from Sweet Lightning out of Pittsburgh, was brought in to complete the band in June.

Added up, the sum of these five could be just about anything. What Windfall came up with after a year and a half of

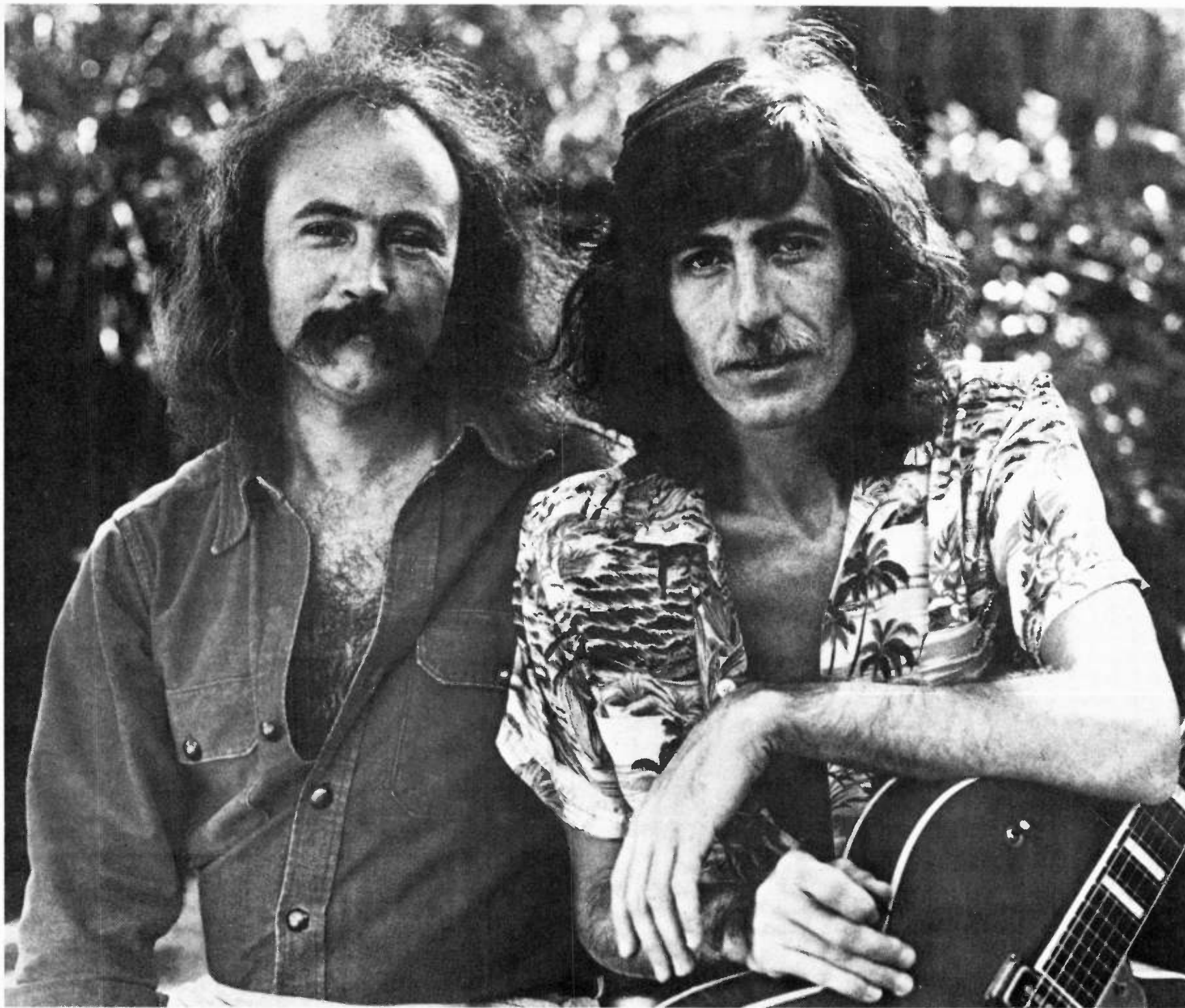
exploration and experimentation is a rock sound heavily inflected with the current r&b from which they draw a bulk of their repertoire. The Isley Brothers, AWB, Rufus, and Stevie Wonder, in addition to such rock sources as Paul McCartney, Todd Rundgren and Led Zeppelin.

But Windfall is hardly another AWB. A dynamic, unblinking rock'n'roll pulse drives all the material, removing it far from the trendy disco scene (which I can proudly state is not trendy in Cleveland). At this point, Windfall mostly covers other people's stuff, but they don't bend to their material. It bends to them in arrangements that are stamped all over with the group's unique sound.

The Windfall sound is marked by Bonfanti's steady drumming, Raleigh's bubbly, jazzish keyboards and Stredney's pointed, economical solos that bely his roots in an indulgent jam band.

The group's strongest point is its vocals: the clean, utterly flexible voice of Pete Hewlitt that winds like a pretzel around almost every song, occasionally spelled by Raleigh's biting leads. And in back of them always, the exquisite, meticulous multi-part harmonies (anywhere up to five voices) which are the trademark of Cleveland bands if they, in their diversity, could be said to have a unifying trait.

The band's own songs, like "So Sad" and "Roll with the Punch" are sound, hard-driving pieces that could use more structural clarification, but are as yet in the formative stages. With the band's combined experience (all have had albums out with previous bands except Hunter) and former Raspberries producer Jimmy Ienner looking over their shoulder with friendly advice, Windfall have every reason to face the future with confidence.



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Oct. 15/Western Illinois University/Macomb, Ill.
Oct. 17/University of Illinois/Champaign, Ill.
Oct. 18/Miami University/Oxford, Ohio
Oct. 21/Music Hall/Boston, Mass.
Oct. 22/Springfield Civic Center/Springfield, Mass.

Oct. 24/Purdue University/Lafayette, Ind.
Oct. 25/Southern Illinois University/Carbondale, Ill.
Oct. 29/Auditorium/New Orleans, La.
Oct. 31/Jai Alai Fronton/Miami, Fla.
Nov. 1/Bay Front Center/St. Petersburg, Fla.
Nov. 2/University of Florida/Gainesville, Fla.
Nov. 5/Civic Center/Atlanta, Ga.
Nov. 7/Erie County Fieldhouse/Erie, Pa.
Nov. 8/Notre Dame University/South Bend, Ind.

Nov. 9/Eastern Michigan University/Ypsilanti, Mich.
Nov. 11/Stanley Theatre/Pittsburgh, Pa.
Nov. 13/Bowling Green State University/Bowling Green, Ohio
Nov. 14/Central Michigan University/Mt. Pleasant, Mich.
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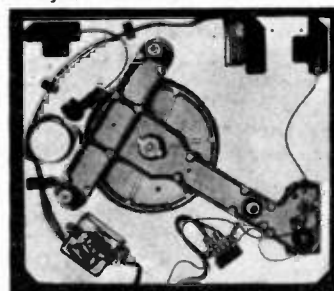
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By TODD EVERETT

"It was entirely Elton's decision," Nigel Olsson affirmed flatly, with no taste of malice immediately apparent. "He called from England, and said that he was going to split the band; that he thought we'd gone as far as we could take it.

"A transatlantic call is weird anyway." Perhaps a glimmer of pain entered Olsson's earnest expression. He was making the story clear, for once and for all time. It clearly wasn't something he particularly enjoyed recalling, let alone talking about. "There's all of that echo and static on the line; it's almost like the conversation isn't really happening. What he was saying didn't come through to me right away. I'd just seen him two days before here in L.A., and he was raving about all of the great things that were happening."

It's a period of rapid transition for Olsson, drummer with Elton John's band for the last five years. Before that, in the remote past, were periods with Plastic Penny and a Spencer Davis Group. Five years, all but the first months of them at the absolute top, creates patterns; attitudes. Many of which would have to be reassessed and likely changed in the next phase of Olsson's career.

Nigel and his girlfriend, Jozy Pollock, were enjoying the last days of a stay in their friend Richard Chamberlain's plush Hollywood Hills digs. Chamberlain was returning from Europe that weekend; the house that Nigel and Jozy had bought was nearly ready to be moved into.

Jozy, wearing a t-shirt printed "Nigel Olsson: Drummers can sing, too," busied herself answering telephones, placing calls, and generally seeing to business matters.

Though the timing was abrupt, says Olsson, the split itself was not entirely unexpected. "It was when we were a three-piece that we were really a band; back in the beginning and for three years after that. It was when the big money people stepped in; they ripped the band apart. It was during the last tour that it all came to a head. We were all tired, really overworked. At first I was the only one in the band who wanted to go out on the tour, but then I convinced the others that it was the right thing. But by the time we were actually out on the road, it was the guys who were up for it and me that was down. I'm really glad that I don't have to go through that kind of pressure again."

By "the big money guys," did he mean management? MCA Records? Olsson smiles ruefully. "Everybody."

The first step on a solo career was a step that had already begun: a second album. One released three years ago, *Nigel Olsson's Drum Orchestra and Chorus*, died ignominiously on its way to the record racks. "I was really pleased with it when it came out. I'd always wanted to go into the studio to produce. But it's hard to produce and play at the same time--you have to keep running from the studio to the control room. We did that album by recording the piano and guitar tracks first--the last instruments to be recorded were the bass and drums, which are usually the first."

For the second album, released in September as simply *Nigel Olsson*, the drummer ("I can sing, too. I was singing backgrounds and some leads as far back as Plastic Penny. But it's hard to do and play drums at the same time!") worked with engineer-producer Robert Appere, now a director of Elton John's Rocket Records label. "Robert is very quick. For the Elton albums, we'd be sitting in the studio for six hours banging at each drum to get the right sound. It was very boring. With Robert, within the first hour of being in the studio, we'd be laying down tracks. We did four in the first session. We never did more than five takes of any song. The hardest part of doing the



Kathy Clary

album was getting the material."

Olsson had come prepared with a dozen selections of his own choosing; favorite songs by such songwriters as the Bee Gees, John Lennon, and Nigel's brother, Kai. "Robert hated all of them except one; he made me throw them all out." Fortunately, the resourceful Appere had a drawerful of demo tapes by his friends, though Olsson denies that any were forced upon him. "Certainly we had to agree that everything was right before recording it." Another Appere contribution involved persuading Olsson to begin writing again; something he hadn't been doing since the *Drum Orchestra* album.

"I'd just forgotten about writing. I can't play any other instruments than drums--I can sort of pick a few chords on guitar, but not enough to really write with."

"But Robert suggested that I really should try. Then Jackie DeShannon came by the house one night. When I told her that I was doing an album, she said that she had a good song for me to do. I asked her to play it on Richard's piano, and she said that she couldn't. I asked her how she writes; she told me that she just sits down at the piano, picks out some chords that sound good, puts them down on tape and works from that."

"The next night I came in from having dinner, sat at the piano, hit a chord and liked it. I came up with a line, and Jozy heard me from upstairs. Five minutes later, she had the rest of the verse. We took it from there."

Currently, Olsson and Pollock collaborate with David Foster, the keyboard player formerly with Skylark. Foster and the rest of the featured musicians--Steve Cropper, Lee Sklar and Jim Horn--on Olsson's album had all worked together with the drummer on Neil Sedaka's *The Hungry Years*. "We played so well on that album that we were just dying to get back into the studio together. Lee Sklar and I would play like I'd been playing with Dee Murray for five years! When Robert asked me what musicians I'd like playing on my album, I just told him that I wanted the whole band from Neil's. Now, I'm trying to get us all together for a tour sometime early next year."

In addition to recording and promoting his own album, a consciously commercial effort of tunes he rates as ranging from "big romantic ballads" to

"bubblegum," Olsson is producing three tracks by actress Susan George, whose previous credits as a singer have been contributions to her then-boyfriend, Jack Jones', albums. He's also become a busy session drummer in Los Angeles, working on albums by acts including Rod Stewart, Linda Ronstadt, Carole King and Randy Edelman. "My financial arrangement with EJ was a great deal; percentages on records and performances. I'm very secure. I could give up the music business and become a farmer in England, but I feel that I have to go out and prove myself."

"I've found out since the split that there are a whole lot of guys behind me--a whole lot of respect for me that I didn't know I had. When Rod Stewart asked me to play, he told Tom Dowd, who produced the album, that he wanted a rock-steady drummer. He felt that my time never moved. Everyone thinks of me as a metronome. It's a great compliment. That's what I am--a timekeeper. I can't even do a roll. I've modeled myself on Ringo. To me, he's just the best."

"There was one track on my album where we were going to get all of the drummers we could--Russ Kunkel, Jim Keltner, Ringo, myself, and..." A smile? "...Karen Carpenter. No, really. I think that she's a very good drummer. But Ringo was out of town, and Karen was in Las Vegas. It was a great idea, though. Maybe next time."

There's also a film in line for Olsson, in which he portrays a roadie ("which I was for two weeks, with the Troggs. It was during the time I was between Spencer and Elton.") amongst such company as Marjoe Gortner, and Elke Sommer. "It's called *The Exterminators*. Sort of a rock and roll adventure-martial arts movie." Olsson is a natural for films, with long, dark hair, deep-hued skin (I was asked to play an Indian once!) and classic features. Director Bryan Forbes, says Jozy, refers to Nigel as "Elizabeth Taylor."

In the meantime, all seems in line between Olsson, ruffled feathers smoothed, and the management of Rocket Records. "When he let me go, EJ told me that he knew that I had my own career to pursue, and that he'd try to help as much as he could."

Jozy interjects, "He said that if Nigel ever needed a piano player for a TV

appearance, he'd be happy to do it."

"The album wasn't done to satisfy any contract with Rocket. There's no paper between me and the label; never was. They released the album because they wanted to. I gave it to Rocket because I like the people there. It's not like the big companies, where the only time you see Mr. Big is when the financial negotiations are being made."

Olsson, Pollock and Foster have refined their songwriting to a system of sorts: Pollock writes the lyrics, with Olsson and Foster fitting them to a melody. "Elton's heard them, says that he was knocked out by Jozy's lyrics." Though, evidently, he hasn't considered breaking forces with Bernie Taupin in favor of a Pollock-John writing team.

Of all of the upcoming activities, it seems to be work as a producer that excites Olsson most. After finishing with George and placing the masters with a company, he has scheduled work with a friend new to recording, and a "project" for Rocket involving pianist Foster. Plus, Olsson tried to involve himself, in a friendly way, in others' work. "I was looking for some songs, and got a demo record of some of the tunes published by Motown. There wasn't anything on the album for me, but I heard one that sounded just right for Kiki Dee. So I sent the album to her, with a note advising her to listen to the third cut on the second side."

"It couldn't have been more than fifteen minutes after she'd received the record, Kiki called me up. 'What was that you wanted me to hear?' she asked. I told her, third cut on the second side."

"Yeah?" she said. "Well, that is me singing!"

"The label was using a cut from her old Motown album being used by the label to demonstrate the song."

"At least it shows that I've got a good ear!"

As the PRM photographer and I headed for the door, Jozy took us aside. "Nigel was worried about leaving the band. He thought that a lot of people wouldn't have any idea who he was. The reaction of his fans, and the fact that he has as many of them as he does, came as a nice surprise. I remember one of the letters coming in to Elton, saying 'without Nigel and Dee, you're back to just being Reginald Dwight!'"

Reunion in the Park

THE DEAD & THE STARSHIP BACK TO BASICS



Janice Belson



Janice Belson



Doug Metzler



Janice Belson

Shown clockwise are Marty Balin, latter day hippie/urban mass, The Dead (with Garcia appearing deader than ever), and finally, a trimmer, bitchier looking Grace Slick gets even further down as her three children look on.

By TODD EVERETT

SAN FRANCISCO--Here it is September 28, ten years past the renaissance, and the San Francisco Sound is back, full-blown. Within the last few months, new recording contracts have been signed by such pioneers of the scene as the Beau Brummels, Cold Blood and even the Sons of Champlin. Quicksilver Messenger Service has reunited to cut a commemorative album, and, over in Berkeley, Country Joe McDonald has just released a bright, commercial new offering.

And, perhaps best of all, both the Grateful Dead and the Jefferson Airplane have long-players in the national Top Ten. The Airplane, these days calling themselves Jefferson Starship (a minor indulgence, compared to some of the past) have a high-ranking single on their hands, as well.

To celebrate all of this, and to make an already-pleasant Sunday afternoon even nicer, the Dead and Starship performed today a free concert in Golden Gate Park; the site of many such events in the distant past. It's the first major free concert in the park in some time, though. It's the first time that the Airplane and the Dead have appeared together in almost five years to the day (historians and ghouls note that the exact date was October 5, 1970--the night Janis Joplin died in Hollywood while the two bands were playing at San Francisco's Winterland).

The present event was organized by an outfit known as People's Ballroom, a

group of loosely-organized street folk given to getting such concerts together. By the time of the "free" concert, the Ballroom people were in debt to the tune of some \$8,000, and were seeing the result of four days' worth of full-time, otherwise-unpaid labor (the affair was purposely a last-minute one, with announcements largely word-of-mouth, so that the gathered crowd wouldn't be too huge to be contained by the park).

Trouble with city officials had kept the Ballroom from organizing large-scale free concerts on previous occasions; this time, permission was granted reluctantly, and with stipulations of time--the show was to, and did, end promptly at six o'clock--and place--the large polo field, which would have been an ideal site, was nixed in favor of a smaller, grassy field.

As usual for such affairs, there were rumors of guest performers. Crosby and Nash, Eric Clapton and George Harrison were the names most frequently mentioned. Fortunately, in light of the time problem, none showed. Such a success was the program that none were needed in any event.

In contrast to San Francisco's sometime image as a haven for hairy hippies, the large portion of the audience were clean-cut and bedenimed--a very collegiate-looking crowd. Children, perhaps conceived in the bushes during a similar years-ago event, were seen wearing face makeup that caused them to look like a cross between an American Indian and a circus clown. Some of the women dressed in medieval drag; some of the men came as cosmic cowboys. The

only announced medical emergency turned out to be a false alarm; a common drunk. Lots of Olympia and Budweiser were being consumed; less nonalcoholic drugs. The several Hell's Angels gathered around the stage and backstage areas appeared to be onlookers, rather than security personnel. One baby was born during the course of the afternoon.

Though the music may well have been of secondary importance to the event itself, the music was there. And it was plentiful, and it was well-played.

The Jefferson Starship opened the show, with what may be as fine a performance as they've ever given. All members seemed to be enjoying the program and, more important, each other. A brisk reading of "Ride the Tiger" opened the set, followed by a public address system failure that provided the afternoon's low spot--and a thirty minute one, at that. The remaining selections covered most of the Airplane/Starship history, the earliest tune performed being Grace Slick's "White Rabbitt", with guitarist Craig Chaquico embellishing departed member Jorma Kaukonen's original lead-in and extending it into various psychedelic-Latin flights. From the latest album, the Top Ten *Red Octopus*, came "Play on Love"; and "Sweeter than Honey." From the remote past came a version of Fred Neil's "Other Side of this Life," and from the band's middle period was drawn Paul Kantner's "Have You Seen the Saucers" this version featuring a lengthy bass solo by Pete Sears.

The Starship's set closed with a version of "Volunteers" so rousing that there was no way to follow it; a bit of sloppy planning that caused Marty Balin's languorous "Miracles," the band's current hit, to be unperformed.

The current edition of the Jefferson Whatever is probably the finest aggregation, musically speaking, to appear under any of the group's names. Though one member, violinist Papa John Creach, has recently dropped out, the loss is hardly noticed. On a good show, and this was a very good show, the Starship has one of the sharpest, most unique and still most original sounds to be heard from any rock and roll band.

In San Francisco, no local band would be foolish enough to follow the Grateful Dead on stage: though their merits as a band can be questioned, their status as the best-known and best-loved of all San Francisco groups cannot. Even when the band's playing is merely pleasantly adequate, the Dead have an uncanny ability to get their audience up and dancing; an ability far exceeding that of the Starship.

Their Sunday afternoon set was--for them--remarkably brief; clocking in at something like two hours and ending promptly at six o'clock. The set would have started earlier, were it not for the late arrival of drummer Bill Kreutzmann ("Bill late?" questioned an aide. "He showed up before the first note was struck. For Bill, that's early. He wonders why everyone's on his case!").

Currently, the Dead include founding members Jerry Garcia and Bob Weir on guitar, bassist Phil Lesh, drummers Kreutzmann and Mickey Hart (back for several months after a long absence), Keith Godchaux on keyboards and his wife, Donna, on background vocals. Their selection of material showed a heavier emphasis on the new album than had the Starship's; opening with "Franklin's Tower" and "The Music Never Stopped." Most areas of the Dead's progress and influences were touched, including a version of "Beat It On Down The Line" from their first album, a lengthy dance-inducing "Truckin'" from their San Francisco country period, and even "One More Saturday Night" from Weir's solo album. Also played were Johnny Cash's "Big River," and Buddy Holly's "Not Fade Away."

The overall effect of the concert, which attracted somewhere between 30-50,000 people, depending upon the reliability of various estimates, was excellent. Bands and crowd alike were in good, but not rowdy, spirits. The playing was for the most part excellent (or, at least as close to excellence as the Dead are likely to get); the listeners for the most part attentive.

Before the concert, a Dead representative told me that the band intends to work more such "free" events, throughout the country--providing that they can get somebody to pick up a couple of hundred thousand dollars' worth of expenses for each date. The Starship, too, have expressed an interest in doing free concerts from time to time, in the tradition created by themselves, the Dead and other San Francisco bands.

The free events years ago drew to a near-halt almost entirely due to the lack of support from public authorities, who were afraid (many from practical experience) of the havoc wrought by huge crowds of--relatively--young people; wary of the consequences of closeness and irresponsibility, not to mention poor advance planning, that included everything from littering to violence.

Perhaps now, ten years later, the audiences (though their average age seems to have stayed pretty much the same) have grown up sufficiently. The Golden Gate Park concert did much to indicate that that may be true.

Gentle Giant

FREE HAND

Phonograph Record/Nov. 75/ Page 13



The new
Gentle Giant
album is on
Capitol Records
and Tapes



Premiere

PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL O'NEILL

Though he has been performing in public with various editions of his band, Wings, for some time, Paul McCartney is the only one of the former Beatles to have made no personal appearance to date in the United States. In trying to explain this abstinence from what would be [at the very least] an enormously profitable venture for The Cute One, a number of possible explanations have been raised.

Some suggest that there is a possible legal problem. Others venture that McCartney simply doesn't want to play the States until he's sure that he will make a positive impression [proponents of that theory will point to George Harrison's tour as an example of what happens when you go for too much, too early]. There's even a cynic or two who will suggest that Mc Cartney's policy is the Queen's way of getting even with Elvis Presley, who has never performed in England: we send them Elvis, she'll send us McCartney.

In any event, the possibility of McCartney, McCartney, Laine, English, and McCullough making any Stateside appearances before the end of Spring is extremely remote, though they will be playing in Australia and Japan during the next several months.

Wings have been performing in Europe and Great Britain, however, and Phonograph Record was on the spot this September as the band played London's Hammersmith Odeon theatre.

By GEOFF DEANE

Chief among the questions raised prior to a Wings performance is that of the attitude to be taken by Paul McCartney. Certainly he is the main source of creative energy within the band, as he is its most well-known member. He might, then, choose to take for his the role of archetypal rock superstar; perhaps with Eltonish stage antics and costume, with the band simply taking the back-seat, accompanists' position. Or instead, Paul might choose to concentrate on the songs, allowing himself to be just one of the band.

McCartney has chosen the latter plan, allowing Wings to perform as a group rather than an anonymous back-up unit -- though, of course, there isn't for a moment any doubt as to who the audience came to see. The apparent humility shown by Paul strengthens the impact of the other band members onstage, and probably helps keep tempers cooled offstage as well; Denny Laine and Jimmy McCullough being well-known enough in their own right to have developed reasonably sensitive egos, one might expect.

Not that the show is lacking in visual aids. For the opening number, "Venus and Mars," the band appears ankle-deep in a cloud of smoke, tinted by variously colored lights. Wings hit their stride immediately, blazing through the song and on into "Jet." The sound balance is superb -- no distortion; no one drowned out; and above all, like a warm and friendly blessing, the lyrics are actually discernable. Not because everyone in the hall has already memorized the songs (which is itself probably true), but because equipment and acoustics are in perfect harmony, making the words audible and clear.

As the show continues, Wings' flexibility is demonstrated, with Paul switching to grand piano or keyboard ensemble; Denny Laine singing, playing piano or alternating with Paul on bass guitar; and Linda McCartney firmly enclosed by an impressive-looking three banks of keyboards. McCullough sticks to guitar, ripping out scorchingly hot little lead breaks, while drummer Joe English lays down a solid, steady and efficient beat. It might be noted that Linda performs well in her designated area, in sharp contrast to the image - of being the band's weak side - that has been assigned her by many fans (and,



A Report from England on Mc Cartney's New Stage Show

PAUL MC CARTNEY & WINGS The Band on the Road

perhaps, disgruntled Paul groupies) in the past.

Augmenting the five-piece group is an excellent four-horn brass section, whose work lend a splendid big band sound and clear studio production feel to such songs as "What the Man Said," "Long and Winding Road," and "Band on the Run."

After about five fast numbers, a change of pace is in order. McCartney retreats to the grand piano, pin-pointed by a solitary spotlight, to sing "Maybe I'm Amazed." A real crowd-pleaser it is, and a fine vehicle to demonstrate his fine, personal and very English-sounding voice. His vocal maturity and style shine forth here and, even more so, on "The Long and Winding Road," where the horns move in with rich waves of brass to embellish Paul's sad and slightly forlorn lyrics. A great number.

A sort of Wings family singalong follows, where all pull up chairs and strap on acoustic guitars for a set of songs written by Paul while in a non-electric mood -- a very fast strumming of "I've Just Seen a Face," and then a soft and gentle "Bluebird" before Paul is left seated alone to sing his great classic "Yesterday."

At this stage of the program, he either maintains too much control in adhering to the established mood and pace of the show, or he entirely overlooks an opportunity to create an emotional, nostalgic holocaust in the partisan audience. He fails to achieve an emotional climax because the songs

were too brief; only sounding sad and lacking in real conviction -- like he is singing someone else's song, and not his own. The advisability of banter between the numbers might also be questioned; certainly so McCartney's request for the audience to join in on birdcalls during "Bluebird." Instead and more effective would have been a quiet pause to let the emotional impact be felt. Considering his self-assigned low profile, a mild burst of self-indulgence would have been welcomed as he vastly increased the feeling lying in two such beautiful and personal songs. A possible emotional high point is lost; the three-song mini-set remaining in memory as being just another spot in an all-around excellent performance.

Denny Laine's turn, to sing his classic version of "Go Now," from his Moody Blues days, is heart-breakingly lamentable; the only time that Wings lose flight. Paul and Linda's backing vocals are strained and fluttery, while Laine's singing is feeble and indecisive -- a real embarrassment compared to Paul's steady and sure lead vocals on other songs. Laine's piano tinkering is no better. The song, so infectiously simple on record, sounds underrehearsed and dies a squirming death; I along with it.

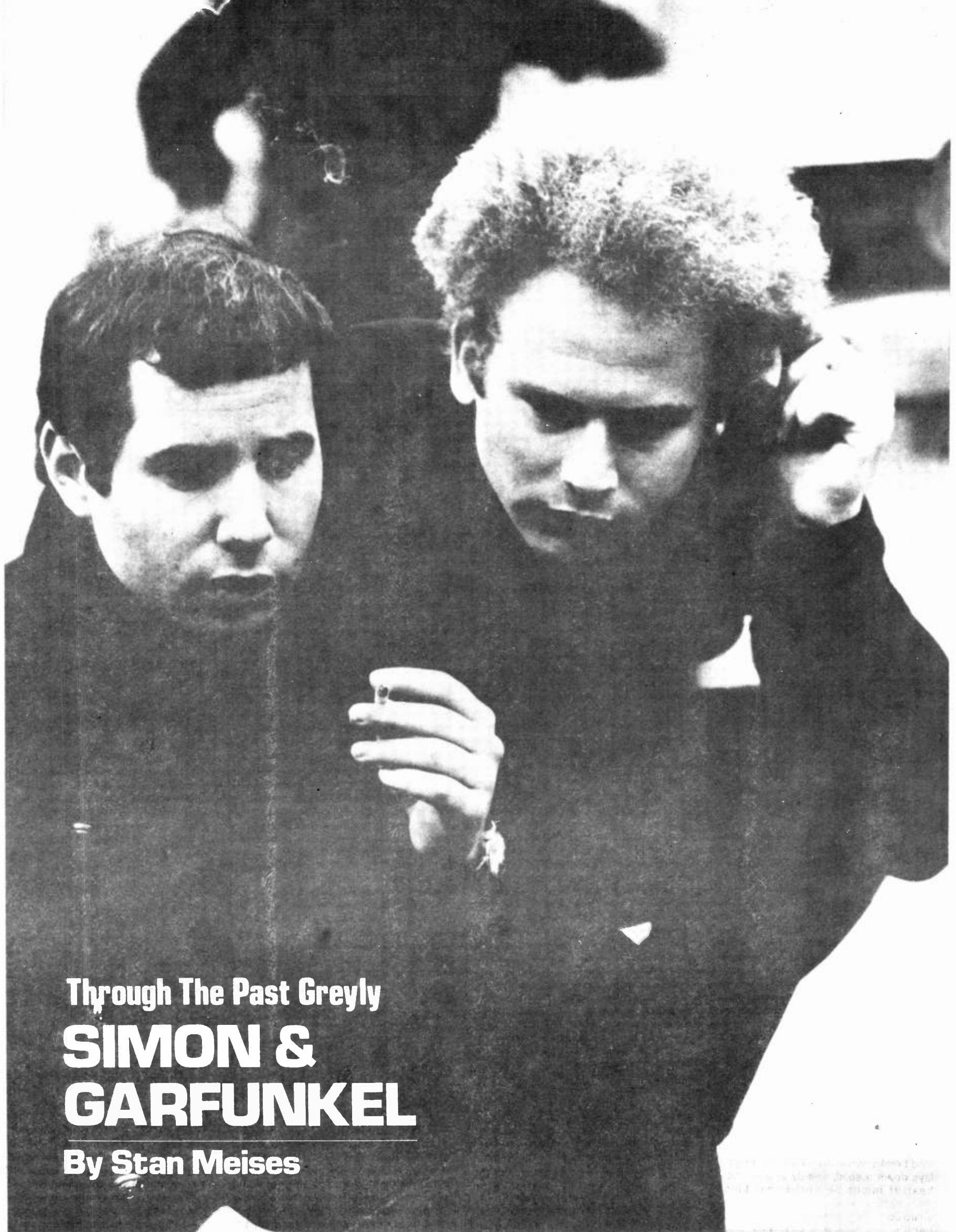
With the solo spots and flashbacks to the roots (such as they were) fully acknowledged, a fast, energetic race to the climax commences with "Listen to What the Man Said," "Letting Go," and then onto "Junior's Farm," the crowd clapping and singing in joyous unison until finally the clincher, "Band on the Run."

An encore to surpass a buildup of hot tunes like those is hard to come by -- or at least it is for McCartney. Anyone expecting a rush on the order of "Long Tall Sally" or "I'm Down" as he announced "A little bit of rock and roll" must feel at least a little let down as the band encores instead with "Hi, Hi, Hi" and another, similar, rocker which set snugly into the slick Wings concert formula.

Which concludes two hours of fave songs, no hitches, all solid family entertainment -- a little bit of everything to please everyone. But it's this definite adherence to mass popular music that constitutes, to a degree, a waste of Wings' respective talents. It's an unnecessary limitation. Allow a spot or two where Laine, McCullough, and for that matter McCartney can open up, improvise, jam, really rock on and explode. Those quick, ferocious lead breaks so often interjected into various numbers are frustrating in their brevity to the fans of heavier rock, and I should think to the musicians, as well. To remain fixed to the three-minute, commercial rock song is a waste of precious talent. Further, it ignores another important side of rock that is currently suffering for lack of fresh, invigorating new blood.

Considering the broad new horizons that the Beatles opened for rock and then to find McCartney so determined to play safe, and consequently growing even less adventurous, shows his attitude to be a slap in the face to his fans, an insult to his past, and an injustice to himself.

The Sounds Unsilenced



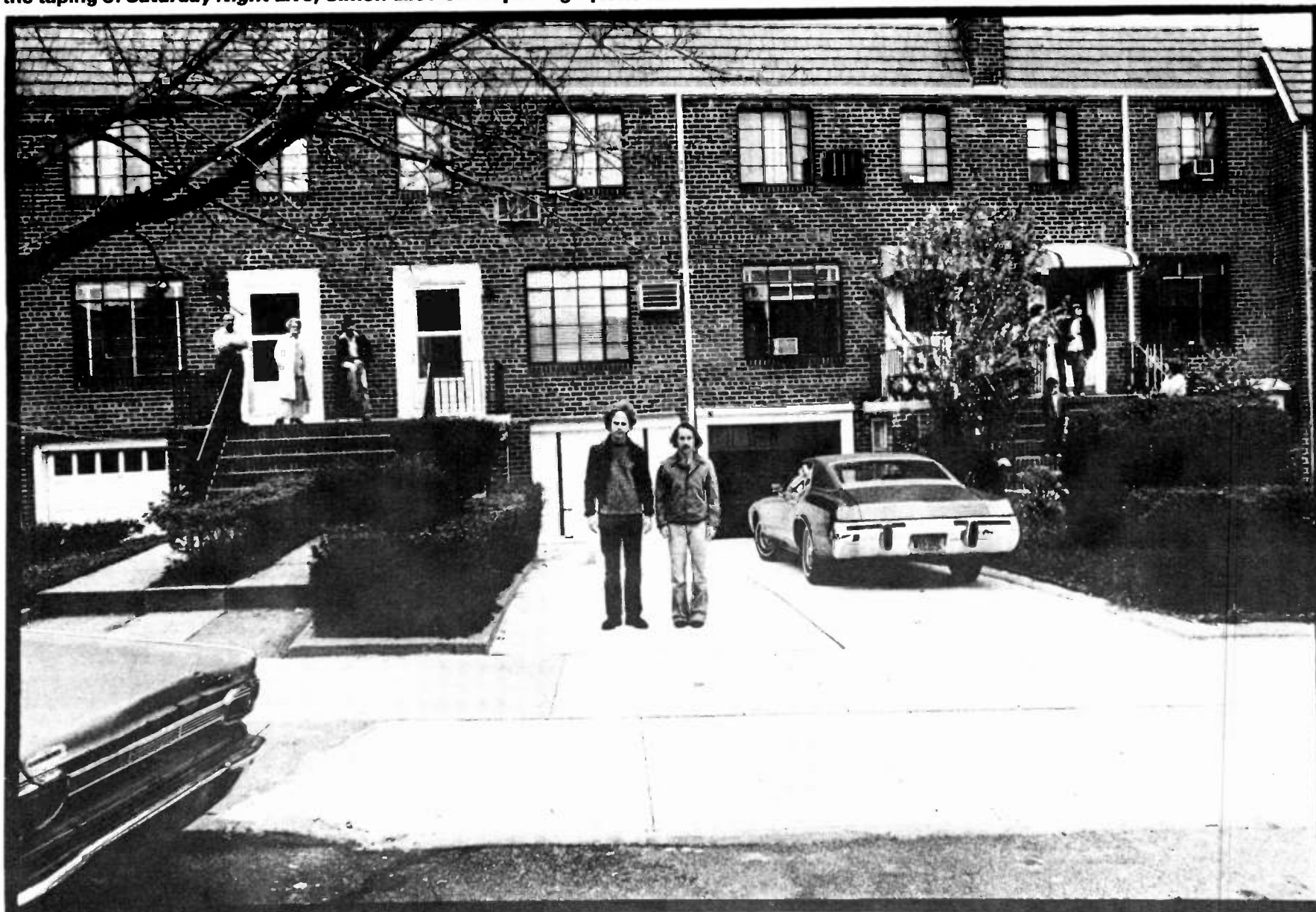
Through The Past Greyly

SIMON & GARFUNKEL

By Stan Meises

Art and Paul are shown in a rare recent still together. This shot for a trade ad on the single "My Little Town." During the taping of *Saturday Night Live*, Simon allowed no photographers near him while Garfunkel was within shutter range.

Photo by Edie Baskin



Are They Both Happy They Can't Go Home Again?

On the heels of the most exciting World Series played in the last fifteen years, we hear that one of pop music's steadiest pitchers is ready to hang up his spikes. Maybe the rumors of "last tour" and all that "this is it" stuff is a way for Paul Simon to get his face plastered on a national magazine cover. Maybe he's just curious to see how many will show up at the shiva.

One thing is clear from listening to Simon's third (fourth, if you count the rehashed 'Live Rhymin') solo album since splitting from Garfunkel in 1970: the rock is in great pain, and the island is drowning in sorrow.

Still Crazy After All These Years is a collection of deep, mournful sighs that amount to a what-do-you-want-from-me shrug--after all these years. No answers, no explanation. Frightfully human, in stark contrast to the glib, slick positivism that candy coats the popular airwaves, *Still Crazy*...is nonetheless a very difficult album to listen to, unless you happen to revel in dismal Sunday morning greyness that only follows godawful Saturday nights. Joltin Joe is not me, Simon says: woe is me. But will everyone sit on their hands and wait for Joltin Joe's return, or is someone going to cover out there in centerfield?

If the title of ex-partner Art Garfunkel's second solo album, *Breakaway*, is meant to convince us that the arrow points to Artie,

well, on first listening it might. But scrape the high gloss patina, chip away the coatings of painted-on production, and you clearly have a wrong way arrow.

A collection of carefully selected and produced sides, *Breakaway* is less departure than it is rip-off; of old Simon & Garfunkel modes, its familiar elements and density leave you with that mock-milk plastic taste in your mouth. Like that cup of coffee, the color is right, the texture is right, but it ain't the real thing, baby, and a few swallows will bring cries of "Enough!"

If Paul Simon, our pitcher, is frustrated and without the edge to serve up the big pitch, then Garfunkel, our catcher, has laid down his glove and equipment squarely on home plate.

...There were two men down
and the score tied
in the bottom of the eighth
when the pitcher dies...

goes the lyric from Simon's haunting "Night Game," and it is through his lyrics we see that Paul Simon has settled for a window seat within his powerfully constructed citadel of self-pity. While Simon's raw nerve is beginning to grate, Garfunkel has decided to sand his act down, and cover it with polyurethane. One man's ceiling is another man's floor.

Despite the different courses they've pursued since their split in

1970--Garfunkel taking the high road, Simon the low--they have reached one accord here. "My Little Town," Simon's brooding condemnation of things and places past, in its way as powerful (and as petulant) as Thomas Wolfe's *You Can't Go Home Again*, appears on both *Still Crazy*...and *Breakaway*.

What does this mean? Are they both happy that they can't go home again? Or in the light of the simultaneous release, coupled with "special guest star" TV appearances together, and the reunification rumors, are Tom and Jerry playing a cat and mouse game with us?

Nostalgia is a very easy and cheap emotion to cash in on, and it certainly behooves Simon and Garfunkel not to try it. Always sentimental, these "old friends" must now face their own prophetic lyric:

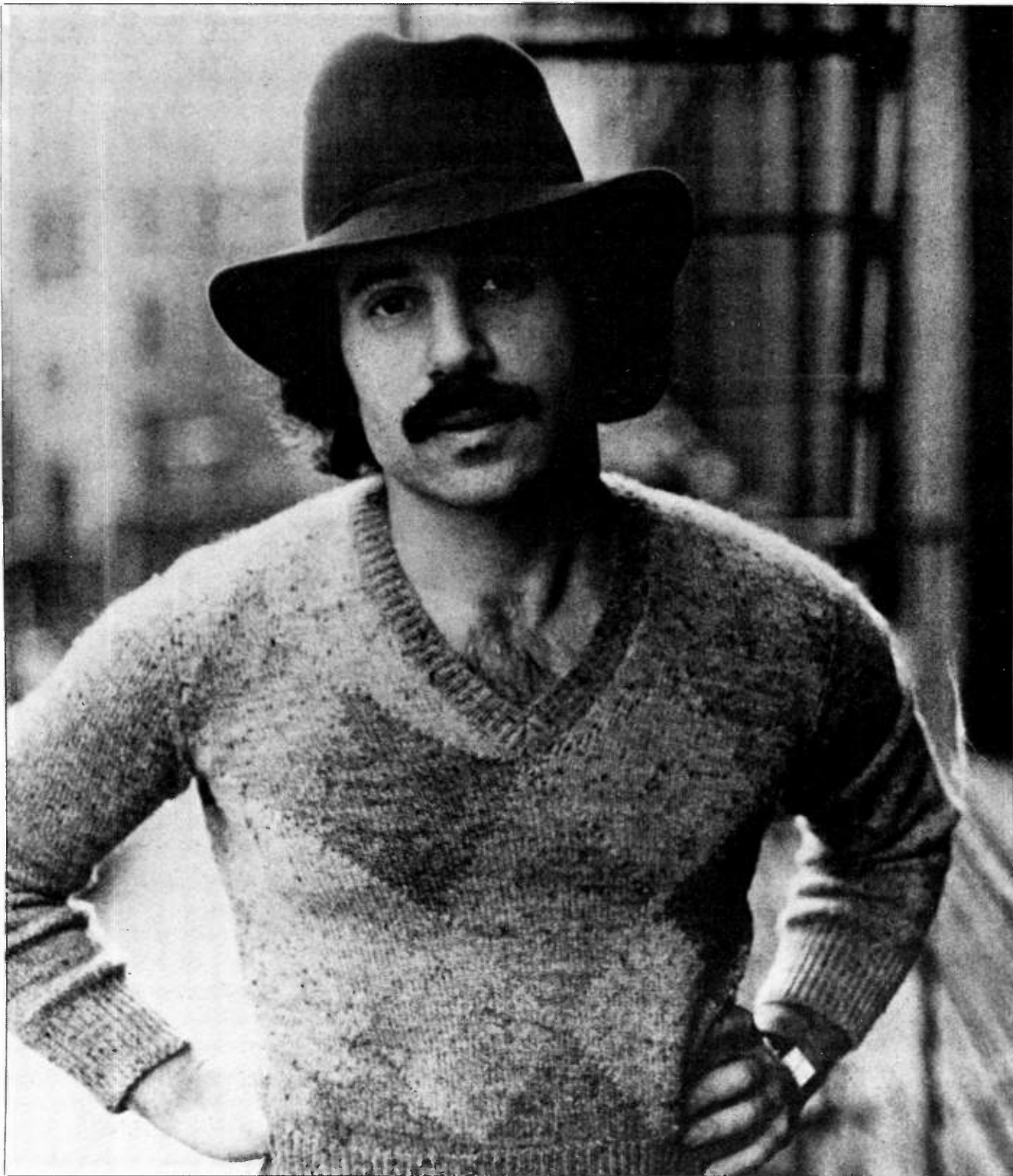
Memory brushes the same years
Silently sharing the same fear...

It goes back a fer piece. Born only three weeks apart in 1941, and having grown up less than three blocks apart in the middle-class, Jewish dominated section of Forest Hills, Queens, New York City, Paul Simon and Art Garfunkel naturally gravitated towards each other, as smart Jewish boys usually do. Their first celebrated encounter dates back to sixth grade of P.S. 164, when they were both cast in the big graduation play--"Alice In Wonderland." Simon

played the White Rabbit, and Garfunkel assumed the role of Chesire Cat. In between rehearsals, they both discovered their love for singing, and in between school and play, they were fired up by the middle-class Jewish success ethic, not unlike the melodramatically played out theme of the Jolson Story.

But then baseball supplanted bar-mitzvah, rock and roll temporarily blew them both out. Their professional partnership began to gel during detention periods in Forest Hills High School. Garfunkel was turned on by Simon's impish sense of humor, but also dug his guitar playing and singing, and likewise. Soon, along with other neighborhood talents, they began to get together in apartments and garages, and work out Kingston Trio material. When "Scotch and Soda" wasn't getting Simon high enough, he experimented with his own material.

One day, he and Garfunkel made the trip into Manhattan, guitar and lead sheets in hand, to record two demos of Simon originals. A small outfit named Big Records listened and liked, and renamed them Tom and Jerry, after the cartoon characters. One of the songs from their first release clicked: "Hey, Schoolgirl," a simple, three-chord rock 'n' roller. It attracted enough attention to earn them a Dick Clark-American Bandstand shot, and a booking on a rock 'n' roll tour.



Paul Simon's *Still Crazy* suffers from too much personality. It's a private album, full of songs about a spirit as near death as his little town.

But none of Tom & Jerry's follow-ups hit, and finally, Big Records went bankrupt. At 16, their recording career seemed over.

Garfunkel, at this point, headed off to Columbia College, where he spent two years as a liberal arts major before switching to architecture school, motivated he claims, by Ayn Rand's *The Fountainhead*. Simon glided through Queens College undergraduate school, and fit neatly into Brooklyn Law School.

Art drifted around for several years, finding drafting work in New York, and construction carpentry in San Francisco. His only connection with music through the college years was an occasional stint in Berkeley folk clubs. (He finally got a degree in art history from Columbia in 1965, and a Master's degree in math education.)

Simon, in the meanwhile, stayed closer to the music scene, having become friendly with record company officials from the Tom & Jerry days. Through his connections, he picked up studio dates, overdubbing guitar or cutting demos of songs. His

own material still wasn't clicking.

Together again in New York, Simon and Garfunkel drifted down to Washington Square Park, to small Village pass-the-hat clubs, Gerde's Folk City, and the like. Simon recalls: "I had just about reached the point of knowing I couldn't write dumb teen-age lyrics. And I had just about finally decided that if I was going to be a failure as a song writer, I would be a proud failure. That's when I learned of the death of Andrew Goodman in Mississippi."

Simon, attempting to establish himself as an American folksinger in Europe at the time (1963), was hit hard by that news.

"Andy had been in an acting class with me at Queens College. That's when I wrote, I guess, my first serious song: 'He Was My Brother.' And Garfunkel recalls: "When I heard 'He Was My Brother,' I knew that was a song I had to sing."

Towards the end of 1964, Simon approached Columbia Records producer Tom Wilson with some original material, and Wilson, impressed by the little man's prodigious talent,

immediately suggested he cut an album. "I have a friend who sings with me," said Simon, and that winter, Simon & Garfunkel cut their first album together--*Wednesday Morning, 3 A.M.*, a potpourri of Dylan, semi-spirituals, and a half-dozen Simon originals. Promoted as folk music, the album flopped.

They both took off for England, where Simon's following had earned him a shot on the BBC, and played that circuit out. Upon his return, Garfunkel stopped in at Columbia to discover that a Miami based hard rock deejay had reported a positive response to one track off the album, and during their absence, Columbia had added an electric 12-string guitar, drums, and bass to the previously recorded acoustic side. It slowly became a big hit. "The Sounds of Silence" marked Simon & Garfunkel's debut as important singer-songwriters on the American pop scene.

They hired a manager to maneuver their careers, and with a little bit of help from the tube, S&G began their

ascent to pop stardom. Still, it was Mike Nichols' *The Graduate*, a heavily media-hyped "statement of our generation" that brought Simon and Garfunkel into the national limelight. On the basis of "The Sounds of Silence," Nichols commissioned them to score the *Graduate*, and it was sheer accident that the now-classic "Mrs. Robinson" came to light.

"Punky's Dilemma" and "Overs", written by Simon for Nichols' film were both rejected, in favor of "Sounds of Silence" and the ethereal "Scarborough Fair." But a third song was needed.

"Paul had been working on what is now 'Mrs. Robinson' as a possible single for us," recalls Garfunkel, "but there was no name in it, and we'd just fill it in with any three-syllable name. And just because of the character in the picture we just began using the name Mrs. Robinson."

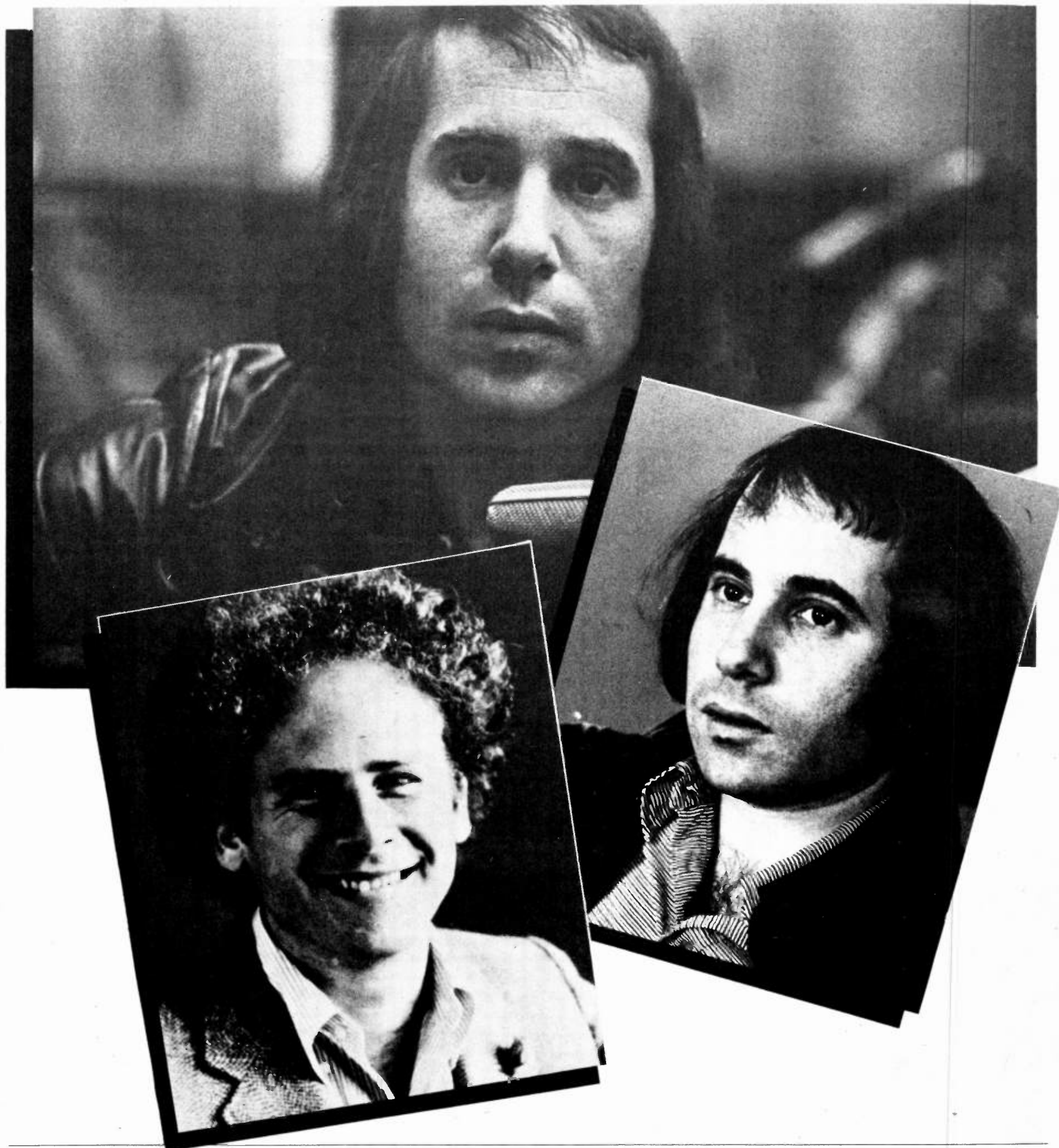
"One day we were sitting around with Mike talking about ideas for another song. And I said: 'What about Mrs. Robinson?' Mike shot to his feet: 'You haven't even shown it to me?' So we explained the working title and sang it for him. And then Mike froze it for the picture as 'Mrs. Robinson.'"

Buttressed by the success of that movie, and the growing interest in their first three albums, (*Parsley, Sage Rosemary and Thyme*, released October 1966 was the third), the duo launched their most ambitious album in 1968, *Bookends*, containing what still stands as close to a pop anthem ever written: "America." While songs like "Homeward Bound," pointed his new direction, "America" proved to many that, as a songwriter and surveyor of a shaky young American landscape, Paul Simon had arrived. It also placed Simon and Garfunkel into the under-30 millionaire bracket, eliciting this comment from Simon in 1968: "You see, I'm 26 years old, and already I've won a game--the money game or success game, or whatever you want to call it. I mean, I'm fixed for life if that's all I want out of life. But man, I know there are other things than being successful. I just hope I have enough drive to leave off being successful."

There were more games to be won. With the release of *Bridge Over Troubled Water*, (1970) one of the best-selling albums of all time, behind Carole King's *Tapestry*, S&G scored 6 Grammy awards, and the prestige that "artists" on the pop scene crave. It also spelled the demise of this dynamic duo.

No great headlines, no recriminations. Simon proved he had effective enough stuff, dazzling with songs like "Duncan", "Me and Julio Down By the Schoolyard", "Kodachrome," and "Loves Me Like A Rock." Yet, the combination of anger and wistfulness that provided inspiration (to those moved by sentiment) was being supplanted by a creeping paranoia in his lyrics, an uncomfortable, squirming feeling. Continually looking back, and more than often, over his shoulder, things began to look bleaker: "Everything looks worse in black and white," he

PAUL SIMON NEEDS A FRIEND



wrote in "Kodachrome." That game, that intangible, shadowy metaphor, loomed larger, and seemed harder to win.

Garfunkel launched his own solo career, with much fanfare, and the result was a pretty, and pretty slick album, *Angel Clare*. The line between the "song I had to sing"--in deep protest and sorrow for the memory of Andrew Goodman, was stretched thin, evidenced by "I Shall

Sing." His strength of conviction, to sing the song, be it right or wrong, was reduced to a string of silly, glossy la la las. Still, his honey-toned tenor intact, it made for pleasant listening.

Which brings us back to the current crop. Choosing to play it safe on his own, Art Garfunkel has again cleverly selected the right songs for the right mood. Stevie Wonder's "I Believe When I Fall in Love It Will Be

Forever," "Looking For The Right One," and a reworking of the Flamingos' "I Only Have Eyes For You", sans shoo-bops, are perfect examples of perfect programming, Richard Perry's music to make out by. But, as we've said before, they are devoid of personality.

While Simon's *Still Crazy After All These Years* suffers from just the opposite--too much personality. It's a private album, full of songs about a

spirit as near death as his little town, or the pitcher in "Night Game." Hopefully it's cathartic. There's no solace to be found in flying over emptiness, in blackness, like Ted Hughes' *Crow*, quoted on the inside sleeve. There aren't even shadows to hide in.

Paul Simon needs a friend. A battery mate to temper the selection of his pitches. There's this guy he used to sing with....

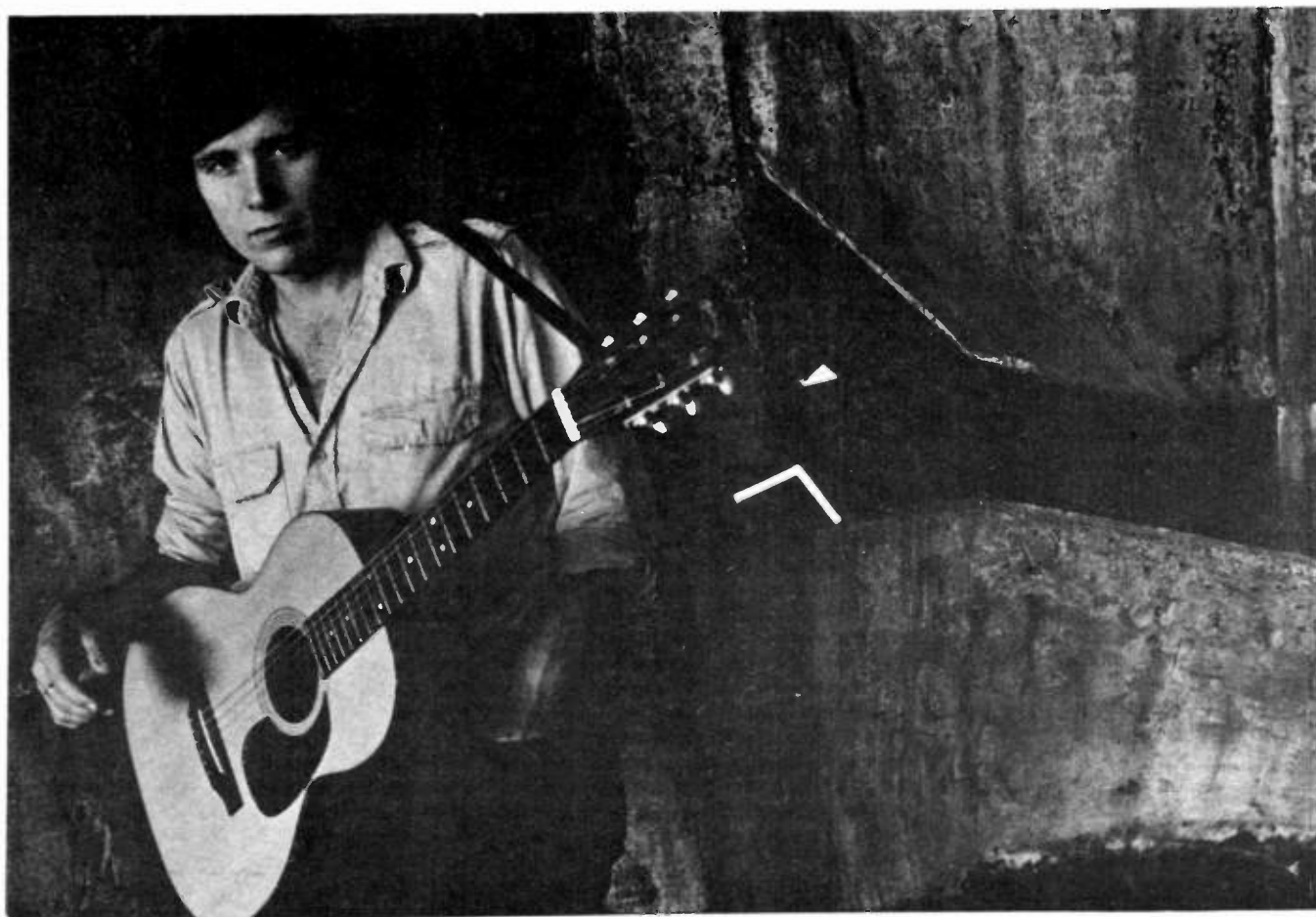
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Whatever Happened to Don McLean?



"I'm not part of this system--the hit record business--and don't want to be"

By IAN DOVE

"I'm trying now in the United States to do more work because I realize that there's another way to keep my audience healthy. It has nothing to do with hits. It has to do with just being out there. For a long time I was a big recording artist and nobody knew what I did and now many more people know what I do and I don't really make hit records any more -- at least I haven't in a long time. And I really would prefer this to the other thing, the hit records."

Don McLean, speaking from his home in upstate New York is once again working it out. *Homeless Brother* his last recording was a critical success and did well but not brilliantly over the store counters. Now he is trying to put together a live album--a double record--and get together some songs for a new album in the middle of some legal troubles with his record company, United Artists.

And, as he puts it, "getting around a little bit. All of a sudden I realized that I just wanted to work. I felt like there was nothing really going on on the home scene so I decided the best thing to do was just get out and go back to work, and work hard."

The McLean schedule has him working an average of three college dates a week, plus some club work. It enabled him to get out to the extent of about 60 dates in this country, plus a month tour of Europe and a month tour of New Zealand and Australia.

"I haven't exactly been sitting around doing nothing," he says. Actually McLean always managed to do around 100 live concerts a year. "But I'm doing more now because I just want to. Makes me feel good, makes the audience feel good and I'm amazed at the amount of people that still come out," he comments. "I always felt that however much you can have a deep relationship with your audience, you still can never know if you'll wake up one morning and

-- she's gone. I don't think any performer can feel secure about the audience. I mean, I ain't Mick Jagger."

Apart from the live side of his career, out of which he is obviously deriving great satisfaction, was McLean happy about the reaction to his last album, *Homeless Brother*?

His reply was quick: "I don't care about the reactions to albums. Now, you don't believe that, I'm sure, but that's the truth. My kicks come in writing the tunes, recording the tunes, doing the tours and the performing."

"I don't like all the other stuff -- I don't like the parties and interviews and appearances of one sort or another that don't relate to the performances."

"I'm not part of this system -- the hit record business -- and don't want to be. So the only thing I can do is sort of zip in and out, do the best I can with what I've got."

It is not generally known that McLean and his label, United Artists are feuding but this is a fact and, as McLean bluntly states -- "it bothers the shit out of me."

He added: "I don't know what the future holds "(regarding any label change) "all I know is that UA has got me all tangled up in certain legal disputes. And I've got them tangled up in certain other legal disputes."

"So I feel that our relationship will continue for a while."

According to McLean, United Artists insist that he owes them a studio album of his own material. He is however suing them for \$326,000 in monies that he considers the label owes him. He is on suspension although his contract was up four months ago. The dispute and legal action has extended his contract until the matter is settled.

Comments McLean: "I don't like sitting around because of this. Because I want to go in and work on this live record and then after that I want to know that I can stay with UA or go anywhere that I want to go."

McLean's live album will be from his 1974-75 European tour and he wants it to

include the best material from all of his previous five albums, plus some special material, some 27-28 songs in all.

McLean considers that his future is, legal hassles apart, predictable. "The reason I don't put out a lot of records, like two albums a year, which I could do if I wanted to slacken my own standards a bit and write two songs for every one I write, is that my attitude has always been to try and experiment and invent and come up with stuff that I've never heard anywhere before. Hopefully if one or two or three songs come out of an album that feel special to me, they are really special. They don't sound like what's around."

From the comfort of his new awareness of his career needs, McLean can view objectively his "re-acclimation" after "American Pie" was such a monster hit for him.

"It's just that I didn't like it at all," he reflects. "I didn't like fame and fortune, didn't want it. I just wanted to just make my little contributions here and there. You've got to taste it once to know how it tastes, but that's it. If I wished to go after being a celebrity as hard as I go after being a songwriter, there wouldn't be any trouble at all."

"But it's just not something that I feel is beneficial to leading a well-adjusted, peaceful life. But I also realize that it is something that will always remain a conflict because I gotta make music, and I gotta perform and I gotta meet my audience and I love to do that. But, you know, if I do it too good...?"

For a renegade folkie Don McLean has catholic tastes -- he is knocked out that Fred Astaire, for instance, chose "Wonderful Baby" as one of the titles of an album he cut earlier this year in Britain, an album that marks the dancer's return to recording after 20 years.

"Apparently he heard it on the radio somewhere and just picked it out like that," says McLean. "The point is if you look at the old timers, those guys know what they are doing. They have come up in show business over a period of five or six decades. The hard way. They have genuine stage chops, performing ability."

That's why it is such a thrill when a guy like Astaire records one of my songs.

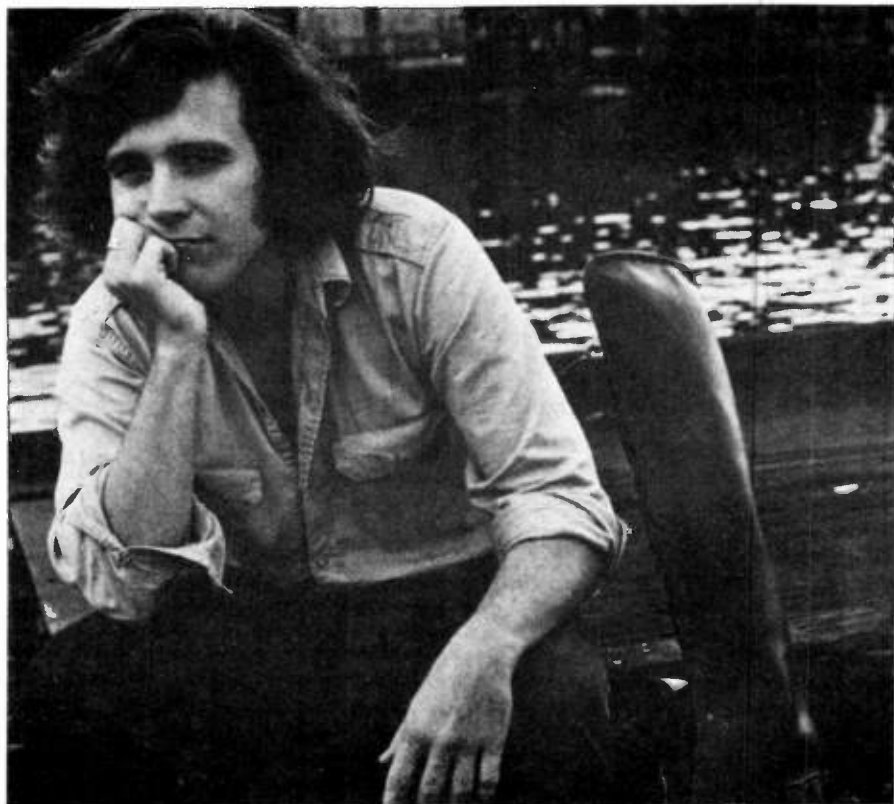
"That is what's lacking in most of the people that I see around these days. They can make a good record but that's technology. A guy can go into the studio and come out with a good album but he still can't go on stage and perform that way."

"I don't think I've overdubbed two vocals in my entire recording life. My principles with regard to making records extend to the notion that I've got to make a live performance and then if I do other things to it, that's all right. But the core of it all exists -- I can recreate it with a guitar and a banjo any time I want to, and you really don't miss the other stuff."

"In the recording business today, the producer's role has grown and grown. I like producers, the ones that I've worked with, but they see their roles as ever growing and I see their roles as ever shrinking."

In other areas, McLean is providing the music for a television show on William Faulkner which will be shown on the PBS network, to be completed in about eight months. McLean thinks, "Some reading and writing on Faulkner but not singing." In December, he will do two concerts in Dublin that will be televised.

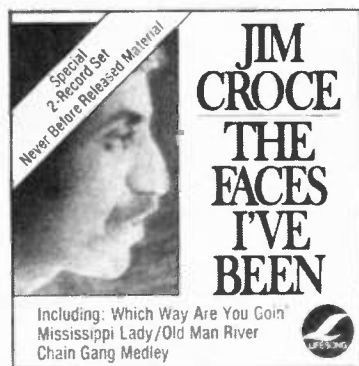
"I've got some pretty constant work ahead of me."



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A LABOR OF LOVE
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By RON ROSS

Eric Carmen isn't sorry that he asked us to go all the way with the Raspberries, but real life has its own way of intruding itself between those breathless nights on the beach and those sunny afternoons drivin' around. Although to their thousands of fans, the Raspberries were everything that the Bay City Rollers will never be, being in the band got to be like breakin' out in hives after sex. For Eric, who wrote most of the Raspberries' hits like "Tonight," "I Wanna Be With You," and "Let's Pretend," living and writing within the concept of the band finally became something less than ecstasy, and when the group split up last year, Eric promptly began getting used to the idea of himself as a solo artist. As his Arista Records debut proves, though Carmen's stance may have changed, his musical stature remains unique in the seventies.

Because Eric seems to have finally realized (a little to his regret, one imagines) that this is indeed the seventies, he's sure now that the Raspberries were a doomed means to the only end he's ever envisioned for his music. "The original objective of the Raspberries," he said recently, "was to be the first American band of the seventies to bring quality back to AM while still remaining progressive enough to be FM. In 1970, when the Raspberries were formed, there was the biggest barrier between AM and FM there had ever been. If you were being played on one kind of station you couldn't be played on the other." Yet with every Top 40 hit the Raspberries made, the group got farther from the universal appeal they were aiming for. "The Raspberries had a pre-destined image," Eric admits, and what turned on critics who had felt it all the first time around, turned off those album buying teens who preferred to get off one of these nights rather than tonight. "Just from the fact that we

Cleveland Consciousness as an Art Form

ERIC CARMEN: Brian Wilson with Strings Attached

looked the way we looked, we almost had to sound a certain way," Eric notes. "In the end that became very restricting because the only thing that people seemed to relate to were the singles. The public had a pre-conceived idea of what kind of records we ought to be making.

Everytime we departed from that expectation, it wasn't as successful as our 'typical' singles. If we'd stuck to them, we might have been very big on a Grassroots level." But the Grassroots were never the Beatles, and the difference was all the difference in the

world to the Raspberries.

"The group concept doesn't work anymore on the level it once did," Eric's been forced to conclude. "Rock has become such a boom business that people that get involved in it are always thinking about the business aspect as well as the creative aspect. When the Raspberries weren't overly successful as a business, the musical concept began to look less attractive. At first we didn't so much believe we *were* cool, as we hoped that if the four people involved had that ultimate belief that it would work, we could suck other people into wanting to become part of it. Unfortunately, after a while not even the group believed in it."

So ego conflicts prevented the image so requisite to their pop political platform, and eventually led to the band's demise. While Eric has found a superior quintet of musicians to work with in the Cleveland band Magic (whom he found playing "Overnight Sensation" in a club one night), he insists, "This isn't a group group, and that frees me from the bonds of having to write to accomodate a specific pre-conceived sound. Magic are tasteful, egoless, musicians, which strikes some people as a backhanded compliment. But egoless to me is one of the nicest things you can call a musician. An egoless musician plays what the arrangement requires. When I write a song and conceive an arrangement at the same time, it's very difficult for me to write solos to soothe egos.

"What I see myself as primarily is a songwriter/idea man," Eric suggests, "not unlike a Brian Wilson. I don't see myself as the world's greatest performer, but I'm beginning to know how to get the sounds I want in the studio and that's my forte. As a singer and instrumentalist, I'm O.K., but that's not what I'm proudest of. My idea for this first solo album was to make a record as full, complex, and interesting arrangement-wise as an *Abbey Road* or *Pet Sounds*, with a Phil Spector bigness to the sound."

Eric Carmen's sound is still the epitome of ultra-pop, but his style has shifted



THE THREE FACES OF ERIC: POOF-TAH POP, (1973) ALCOHOLIC POP, (1974) MONDO-DECO POP-(1975)

L. to R.: Dave Smalley, Eric Carmen and Jim Bonfanti



deliberately. What has made the Raspberries so exciting, as much as their music itself, was the sense of confrontation each of their songs projected so intensely. When Eric and the boys crooned "Let's Pretend," they were basically saying "I Want To Hold Your Hand" or "Please Please Me" to the audience as well as to the girl in the song. But just as the Beatles evolved to a less teenage and urgent romanticism with songs like "Let It Be" and "Something," Eric's solo work avoids the kind of "you'd better make up your mind" aggressiveness that marked the Raspberries' best. It's impossible to fault his new songs for melody, production, or vocal dexterity, but with emphasis on large scale ballads rather than hard rock, the overall effect is a little like being showered by feathers instead of being brought to climax by a thousand angry guitars. Since Magic's drummer D. Dwight Kreuger is reinforced by powerful ex-Razz percussionist Michael McBride, and since the new band has three keyboardists in Carmen, Richard Reising, and George Sipl, Eric's wall of sound is more fully realized than ever, but the de-emphasis of guitar and teen-ego lyrics detracts a little from the immediacy of the material. Although Eric is rapidly becoming as mature a pop craftsman as McCartney, Wilson, or Elton John, Raspberries fans may initially miss the all stops out ego assault that made Carmen's old band so thrilling.

This isn't to say that his solo debut is anything less than most impressive. "Sunrise," the album's opener, takes the lessons of *Abbey Road* and *Pet Sounds*

to heart, and though Eric's nature-loving optimism is more sunny than sexy, the shifting layers of percussion and the startling array of keyboards make "Sunrise" as unforgettable a song in the Beach Boys vein as Eric has ever recorded, definitely a step beyond "Cruisin' Music."

Of the album's five best original tunes, two are completely positive love songs in the Wilson manner, while three are love-lost weepers, heavily keyboard oriented. "My Girl" swings from an effortless McCartney-like falsetto on the verse to a full-fledged Beach Boys chorus, while "Never Gonna Fall In Love Again," is equally hummable, but an even better single, because it's straight down the middle of the road like a Carpenter's hit, yet more believable. Like McCartney, Eric Carmen has an almost disturbing ability to be mainstream and rock 'n' roll at the same time, and this is nowhere better demonstrated than in "All By Myself," Eric's pride and joy. With a lyric along "Help"/"I'm a Loser" lines but a melody like Tchaikovsky, "All by Myself," for seven minutes threatens to become coyly sentimental, but never does, because Eric is so essentially a credible singer. "All By Myself" may resemble "The Long and Winding Road" more than "All My Loving," but how you react to it depends on your personal taste, since the song is of undisputable quality.

"Last Night" is the kind of tune I wish the ex-Beatles were writing. The lyric goes through some deceptively subtle changes of attitude along with an

arrangement that shows Eric and producer Jimmy Ienner's faultless sense of dynamics. While complex arrangements and truly breath-taking production have supplanted the irresistible energy that was the Raspberries' trademark, Eric insists that the song is still the thing. "I've always felt you must start with a good song," he says. "If the song is good, you should be able to put it across with just one instrument and your voice. Arrangements are the icing on the cake. Being brought up in the *Abbey Road* school of arranging, there's always a strong temptation if you write a ballad to add 200 strings to it to make it pretty. But what the Beach Boys always did was use off the wall instruments and do the interesting thing rather than the obvious thing.

"Most of the arrangements on the album could have been more flowing, but what I was trying to do is take 'Overnight Sensation' a step further, to explore contrasting textures. The melody will remain pretty but that can't be the only aim in recording."

Eric has deliberately altered his approach to lyrics as well. "As a songwriter, I wrote more truth this time," he feels. "Go All the Way" was totally not true. I wasn't writing from experience; I was fictionalizing. This is more of a non-fiction album." In keeping with this new "objectivity," the album's best rocker, "No Hard Feelings," is almost a documentary on the Raspberries. "Jimmy listened to my demo tapes and said, 'there's one title that keeps occurring to me that I think needs

to have a song written around it,' so he suggested 'No Hard Feelings,' and asked me to write a song about the Raspberries. He wanted me to clear it up once and for all. I wrote the lyrics in about 20 minutes and it's one of the truest I ever wrote." The finale is also as true to the spirit of the Who as the Raspberries' "I Don't Know What I Want." Lead guitarist Dan Hrdlicke slashes some absolutely archetypal chords over Steve Knill's elegantly Entwistish bass, as Eric's raving vocal revs up to a pitch somewhere between a stutter and a scream, fading into a wonderful version of "On Broadway," Eric's maiden interpretation on record. Like the rest of the album, Eric's approach to the Mann-Weil-Stroller-Leiber classic is timelessly right, transcending the trendiness and nostalgia we cherished in the Raspberries.

If *Eric Carmen* doesn't exactly squeeze your lemon until the juice runs all over the back seat, it does take the current definition of a rock 'n' roll singer/songwriter to a new plateau. The mania of the Raspberries has given way, perhaps inevitably, to a more mature mellowness which may be less x sensational, but is just as special on its own terms. In fact, Eric's solo debut may just be the great Beach Boys' studio album we've all been hoping for. If it gets America's greatest romantic rocker across to the millions who've only glimpsed his talent in the Raspberries' hits, then who could complain that there's more romance here than rock? When Eric Carmen says "love," you best believe he means "love: L-U-V."



L to R-Redmond "Red" Symons, Freddie Kaboodleschnitzer, Graeme "Shirley" Strachan, Bob "Bongo" Starkie, Greg Macainish.

First the Easybeats, then Daddy Cool, and in 1976 Australia will attempt yet a third American Invasion of pop legions from Down Under.

By MARTIN CERF

"In Melbourne last Friday afternoon, Anzac Day, while the old diggers played two-up on street corners and tossed back the odd beer with all their mates, and St. Kilda trounced Melbourne - at the MCG, Festival Hall was witnessing scenes of hysteria and adulation that have no been see there since the days of Beatlemania".

July 3, 1975
The Daily Mirror
Melbourne, Victoria

Americans still haven't bought the Bay City Rollermania that's "sweeping the country" and at this juncture it's questionable the band will ever be successful here. Certainly not beyond an Addrisi Brothers level. Regardless, yet another *Next Beatles* campaign is scheduled to hit these shores early in December. This time it's imported from Australia rather than the UK, and Skyhooks will find more than a few cynics here, hardened and indifferent from the last Australian pop blitz, Daddy Cool in 1972.

Australia has long threatened to make it's mark on the American music scene. Those few native Aussies who have achieved a respectable sales pattern here have done so by way of England (Lulu, Olivia Newton-John, The Bee Gees, The Easybeats.) Thus Australian pop-identity was lost in the transition, that is if you presume this nation of thirteen million to foster an indigenous music form.

Almost by definition, the Continent has been isolated from the outside contemporary music world, at least through the late sixties. But all that's changed in the last five years. Uprooted American radio

SKYHOOKS WON'T BE PUSHED AROUND

programmers have developed the government-owned pop air, while the once limited concert scene now flourishes year round.

In the early days, most of the headline talent was imported, but now, well into a second generation of rock and roll youth culture, The Aussies have created their own heroes. Mushroom Records "Australia's Progressive Music Company" is almost solely responsible for the domestic talent accent Down Under. While Skyhooks is the labels most important act, Mushroom is also successful with Ayres Rock (released in the States on A&M) and Split Ends (from New Zealand) and dozens more.

Skyhooks may just sidetrack the bad images *Next Beatles* campaigns have meant for yesterday's Bugaloos or Bay Rollers. Unlike England's rather contrived pop androids, Skyhooks-mania is based on what's commonly known as schtick. Viable schtick, they have something to sell that the people want. And, apparently can't get anywhere else. Elton John agrees. Returning from a recent tour of Australia, he announced over a Los Angeles radio station; "In my opinion, Skyhooks are most definitely 'living in the seventies'. They will succeed over groups of the '50s and '60s who tried to make their names on the international music scene. Like in the early '60s when a place called Liverpool turned the eyes and ears of the world with The Beatles, the '70's could very well see Melbourne become the city of

tomorrow's music world".

In the personality department, Skyhooks includes a Mick Jagger equivalent in lead singer Graham "Shirley" (so nicknamed for resembling Shirley Temple) Strachan. His eerie, high-pitched crooning sets young girls drooling en masse. During this past Summer he traveled to England for a brief visit with a former teenage sweetie, every daily paper in Australia carried headlines the following day which read: "SHIRLEY LEAVES AUSTRALIA; WILL HE EVER RETURN?"

Skyhooks mondo stage presence, camp theatrics, and above all, "offensive" record content (i.e. "Smut", all about masturbation) has caused unending controversy throughout Australia in a very short time. Only a year and a half since the first Skyhooks' LP *Living In The Seventies*, and the results have been mind-boggling. The record has sold some 150,000 units (in proportion to America, the equivalent of ten gold records). Their second release, *Ego Is Not A Dirty Word*, released in July has nearly matched the first sales figures already.

Skyhooks concerts are, of course, riot scenes now. Ex-carpenter, shark-hunter and 'beach-bum' Shirley explains: "None of us has been caught by the mobs that wait for us after each concert, but each of us know that if they get their hands on us they'll rip us to shreds.

As for Skyhooks music, without the camp get-up images and reduced to a

one-dimensional, plastic form, they can best be described as a shamelessly derivative of such neo-perverto satire groups as Roxy Music. But where Roxy is hopelessly uncommercial, however, there is a strain of melodic pop that runs through all of Skyhooks material. "Sure, they're sensational", announce Flo & Eddie who recently were treated to a full injection of Skyhooks while touring Australia. "It's Spanky & Our Gang, Eno and Bjorn & Benny all in one".

The first American release for Skyhooks will be a slightly abridged version of *Ego Is Not A Dirty Word* on Mercury. Two tracks were eliminated from the original release, replaced by a couple from the first LP. The music on both packages does have real, raw personality, and character. Shirley's whiney vocal leads on bassists Greg Macainish lyrics weave tales of decadence we'd assume could not even be conceptualized by the remote Aussie teens. The LP liner for 'Ego', reveals their maximum freak action starkly: In dazzling color, red, a bleeding detached finger taped onto a fan letter declaring "a little part of me will always be with Skyhooks" is reproduced in life like fashion.

We've only touched on the Skyhooks story here, there's more violence, more pop, more teenage involved and the sum of all this data leaves me more than interested. Whether it will *play* in the States, we'll soon know. Shortly after the American release of 'Ego', the band will do a number of selected concert dates in various cities throughout the nation. I can't imagine how the country's going to react to this Skyhooks routine, but there's at least a couple hands full of monofans I know of in the Cleveland-Akron-Canton area already salivating.

"RUNDGREN LEAVES YOU BREATHLESS"

"A performance which must rank as one of the very best I have been privileged to witness."

—Niall Cluley, *Sounds* 10·11·75

"Not since the winter of 1966, when the late Jimi Hendrix arrived in Britain, has an American made quite such an explosively entertaining debut as that of Todd Rundgren when he played his first London concert at the Odeon, Hammersmith."

—*Daily Telegraph* 10·10·75

"Why Todd Rundgren is not as big as say, Alice Cooper, is one of those mysteries because he has an equal amount of presence and an absurd amount of musical ability."

—David Hancock,
Disc & Record Mirror 10·10·75

"During his two and a half hour show Todd Rundgren scales peaks of both the sublime and the ridiculous with the kind of endearing goofiness that makes you want to rush up and give him a great big reassuring hug."

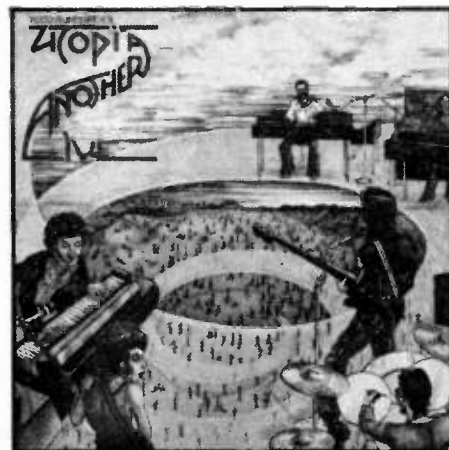
—Pete Erskine,
New Musical Express 10·18·75

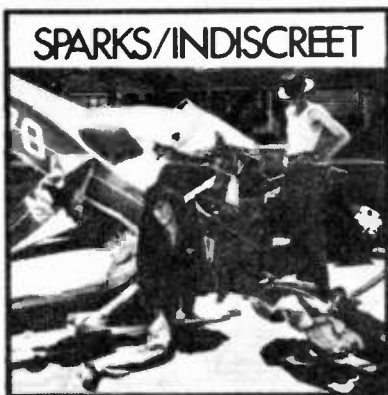
TODD RUNDGREN'S UTOPIA ANOTHER LIVE

ON TOUR NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER



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LISZTOMANIA



ROGER DALTREY



FIONA LEWIS



RINGO STARR

PAUL NICHOLAS



SARA KESTELMAN



RICK WAKEMAN



by Richard Cromelin

In his five or so minutes on the screen, Rick Wakeman chugs a stein of beer, belches loudly and pisses into a fireplace. In two hours, Roger Daltrey conveys considerably less. If this were the way he behaved on stage, the Who would be America. *Lisztomania*'s lavish castration scene might serve as a handy symbol for the film's own insistence on presenting a thoroughly disemboweled and lifeless hero.

We all know this golden-haired little punk has charisma-- lord knows, we've been seeing and hearing it for a decade -- but he must have left it in a haystack back on the farm, which, incidentally, is where he appears to wish he were through the course of the film.

Ken Russell was remiss in failing to take his leading man aside during a break and give him a little advice: "Roger, m'boy, we're through with *Tommy*, remember? You're not supposed to be blind in this one, Roger. Roger? Are you listening? Roger can you hear me? Say something, damn it! Look, you're Franz Liszt -- You're decadent, brilliant, flashy, sensual, a driven genius plunging to the depths of your soul. Now get in there, take off your clothes and let's see some *Moxie!*"

Since Daltrey, Wakeman and Ringo

Starr (playing the Pope, he displays the least appealing deadpan since Harry Morgan) constitute the only reasons a rock 'n' roller would have for viewing *Lisztomania*, it's best left to the dwindling legion of Russell fans and the sundry people stumbling into the theatre off the streets (at L.A.'s Fox Wilshire Theatre that would be mainly unsuspecting little old Jewish couples who will do anything to kill time; they'd quickly come stumbling right back out again).

The film is a melange of dumb jokes (at a lusty backstage party, luminaries of the classical world are being introduced: "And this is Strauss." "Johann Strauss?" "No, *Levi-Strauss!*" Shoulda been a jeans commercial) and elaborate fantasies which reek of self-conscious Russell indulgence. Second-rate Russ Meyer in the long run; you can find hotter sex on the newss'tands.

The tossing together of Busby Berkeley, Grand Guignol, *Frankenstein*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Cabaret*, et. al. sounds good, but it's all rendered with such mannered slickness that it soon demands all the attention of a kaleidoscope. With the principals unable to muster enough character to bring any emotion or feeling to their stylized paces, *Lisztomania* should finally squeeze the

last drop of trendiness from Russell's reputation.

Even with Daltrey in there, the film isn't likely to make Who fans learn or care about Liszt and Wagner, or, for that matter, about sex and Nazism. Because, primarily, the movie itself doesn't care; like a glutton it just crams in as much as it can and doesn't taste a thing until it vomits.

Wagner (Paul Nicholas, an actual actor), despite being the embodiment of Evil, the spiritual father of fascism, a preincarnate Hitler and a voracious vampire with a great set of canines, is the most endearing character present, simply because there is vitality and consistency in his exaggerated antics.

Lisztomania's best scenes take place in his lair, where he's concocted a Sigfreid-Frankenstein (Wakeman) and where the new children of the Master Race conduct strange ceremonies as they muster for the next century's holocaust. To show that you can't keep a dedicated guy down, Wagner recovers nicely from his slaying at the hands of a vengeful Liszt to ravage the land as an Adolf-monster, blasting away at the scrambling Jews with an electric guitar-machine gun. But he gets it again from Franz, who swoops down from Paradise with the loves of his life in an

organ-pipe rocket ship to blow him once more into oblivion. Even my Nazi friends thought it was dumb, and I'd rather watch Buck Rogers.

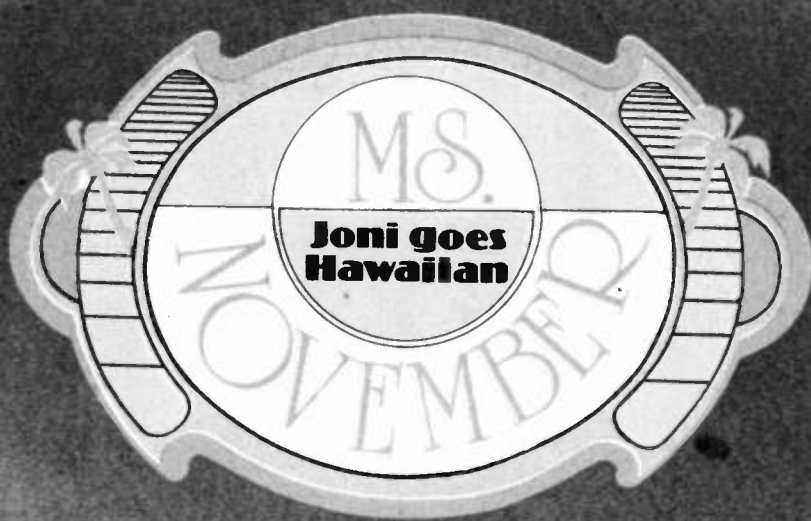
The imposition of rock 'n' roll trappings on the proceedings is not only cheap and exploitative, but ineffectual. The idea of Liszt as a 19th-century teen idol is rife with potential, but the main exposition of that facet -- a concert scene modelled on the Beatles' performance in *A Hard Day's Night* -- is fatally stiff. Again, Daltrey's failure to emit any feeling or expression is a crucial flaw. Russell could probably do better with Leslie West as Beethoven.

Lisztomania is vain and vacuous, a handsomely mounted exercise in retro-fashionable futility. The Youth Market should prove to be smarter than Russell must think and will, it is hoped, refuse to acknowledge the rear end he's waving in its face, whereupon he can return to being arty again. He should have realized that the jaded sensibility this film is designed to tickle has had its day. Even Lou Reed, reportedly depressed these days, is feeling *something*. *Lisztomania* is strictly for those who like their trash with panache. As John Waters and Divine proved in *Female Trouble* (the real-thing alternative), it's best when it comes raw and unvarnished.

Norman Seef



Joni Mitchell's forth coming *The Hissing Of Summer Lawns* album art out Pepsi's Donna Loren, and just in time for winter too.



PHONOGRAPH RECORD REVIEWS

TODD RUNDGREN'S
UTOPIA
Another LiveIncludes Heavy Metal Kids/Do Ya
Just One Victory/The Seven RaysANOTHER LIVE
Todd Rundgren's Utopia
Bearsville BR 6961

By BUD SCOPPA

With a running time of just 45 minutes and one entire side of highly accessible rock & roll, Todd Rundgren's *Another Live* represents a return to earth for this talented but self-indulgent iconoclast. Once a critical favorite (for his trio of

bunch of adventurous musicians in a context known as Utopia, and the first album from that band, also called *Utopia*, contained what amounted to the beginnings of a whole new idiom: cerebral, dramatically streamlined rock & roll using extended passages and complex interplay to create an atmosphere both sinister and celestial. And with its title track, *Utopia* presented what is unquestionably the best live-recorded sound I've ever heard.

Another Live gives us a fuller taste of this inventive band as it faces the challenge of live performance. On side one Rundgren and Utopia delve further into the style they're still developing. Although these three numbers are neither as adventurous nor as thrilling as the "Utopia" number from the earlier album, they contain elements that, whether taken literally or ironically, expand the context: Roger Powell's trumpet passages and a big chorale in "Another Life" re-mold a heavy-metal base into a kind of space-age Broadway sound, while in "The Wheel" and "The Seven Rays," Rundgren manifests (vocally and melodically) his Philly-soul

out its infectious spirit and rhythmic sophistication—it works, and in the end the band owns the song. The other surprise is thundering, faithful rendering of the great Move/Jeff Lynne single, "Do Ya," that could become the hit the original should've been. "Mister Triscuits," a chromium, delta-wing Utopia-tune by keyboarder Roger Powell, and sledgehammer performances of "Just One Victory" and "Heavy Metal Kids" combine with the above pair of non-originals to make this the least intimidating, most lighthearted side of music Rundgren has recorded since *Something/Anything*.

There are some problems with *Another Live*, though. For some reason the sound on this live recording is much less impressive than the "Utopia" track from the last album led me to expect; the bottom is particularly flaccid. And Utopia misses original drummer Kevin Ellman and synthesizer man M. Labat; their replacements, John Wilcox and Roger Powell, respectively, play with a bit less power and elegance. And the cover art is awful. Still, Rundgren's moves here toward concision and accessibility are sensible both aesthetically and career-wise. Utopia is the most viable format he's yet come up with to showcase his ideas and whimsies, and *Another Live* should provide Rundgren devotees, both current and lapsed, with some much-needed encouragement.

ANOTHER GREEN WORLD

Eno
Island ILPS 9351

By JOHN MENDELSON

Up until the moment the temporary editor of this august journal telephoned to apprise me that he'd just been in a terrible automobile accident in whose wake he was counting on me, the best friend he'll ever have, to write a review of the album we'll be discussing in the unlikely event that I ever complete the present sentence, I had avoided Eno like a case of the flu, largely because when I saw him with Roxy Music at the world-famous Whisky-A-Go-Go in 1973 he was all decked out like a jackass in feathers and carrying on like the dregs of glitter-rock personified.

Imagine my surprised delight on discovering that *Another Green World* is merely unexaggerably superb.

As a singer Eno betrays the cutest English accent since Syd Barrett: true, he's almost invariably flat, but charmingly so, rather like your pre-Richard Perry Ringo. His tunes are genuinely (and quite attractively) melodic as well as interesting or better lyrically. The instrumental selections too are mostly quite beautiful -- a couple are Oriental-sounding in a most engaging way, while my own favorite (whose title I haven't yet managed to ascertain) features the lushest mellotron ever. And whoever the lead guitarist is can play on my third solo album any time he wants.

"I'll Come Running," to commend my personal favorite vocal number, would be a bigger single than "Love Will Keep Us Together" in a better world than the one in which it's my and your cruel fate to be living.

I even love the album's title.

For perhaps the first time in these hallowed pages, I'm being completely serious when I say that *Another Green World* is both excellent and worthy of immediate investigation by anyone who's even a little fond of P. Floyd, Kevin Ayers, and like geezers. If I voluntarily listened to other people's music, I can assure you that this would be on my turntable more than anything else to which I've been forced to listen all year.

BA-FA
The Hudson Brothers
Rocket/MCA 2169

By MARTIN CERF

Some close friends of mine in FM radio are going to look at the heading above and be *real* put off. I can hear Ed Sciak over at WMMR-FM in Philadelphia saying, "The Hudson Brothers? Forget it, Marty." And while I would never punish him for his love affair with Yes and the other cerebral-rock splinter bands which have emerged from that same act over the last couple years, I still can't understand why fine two, and three part harmonies such as the Hudsons serve unfailingly isn't universally accepted in the circles Ed moves in. Vocal greatness when combined with relevant lyric seems to remain a West Coast indulgence, occasionally Anglo.

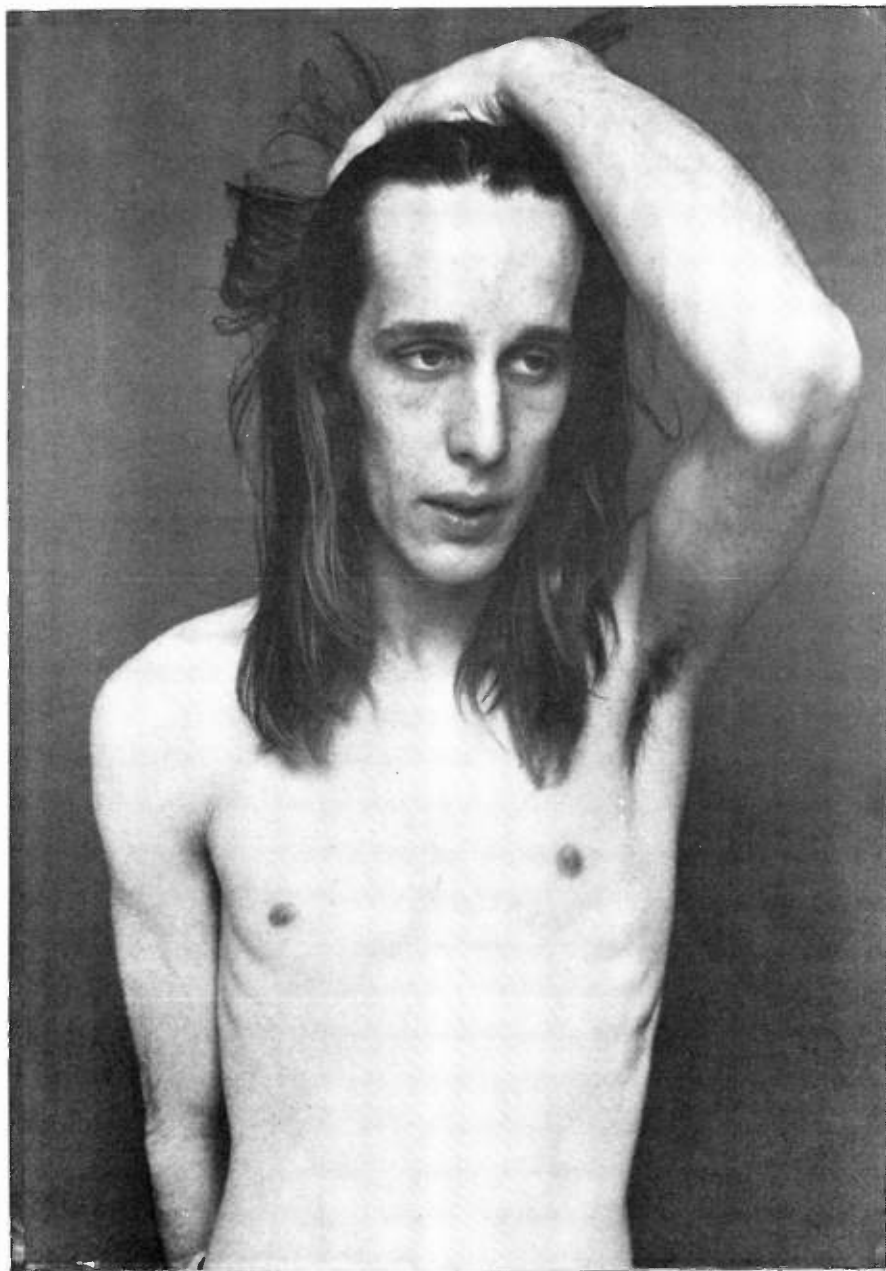
The Hudson Brothers, originally from Seattle (the city that gave us Paul Revere & The Raiders, Don & The Goodtimes and The Ventures too), have recently teamed up with former Beach Boy Bruce Johnston (co-writer of the Hudsons' recent hit "Rendezvous") and his influence on *Ba-Fa* is clear and essential throughout. Especially on "Oh Gabriel" and "Lonely School Year," both would have fit nicely on The Beach Boys' *Friends* from 1968.

This is the Hudsons' fourth album, their first since *Totally Out Of Control* (Rocket/MCA 460) which tracks easily from start to finish. Nothing unpleasant on this release like "The Adventures of Chuckie Margolis," a six minute, incredibly boring narrative from last year's *Hollywood Situation* (Casablanca 9008). *Ba-Fa* was produced by Bernie Taupin (he worked on *Out Of Control*) and marks the band's return to Elton's Rocket Records label. (Rocket is a record manufacturing outlet which with the help of Neil Sedaka, Kiki Dee and Nigel Olsson is developing a reputation among record collectors as the Amy-Mala-Bell of the seventies. All Rocket releases are mandatory pop-library inclusions.) More than just records, Rocket's chief product is fun, and the Hudsons certainly service that market. But, dear reader, there's no need to be afraid of the concept. Even though their Saturday morning CBS-TV show of this summer past was a maze of corny, silly skits you'll find this release neither embarrassing or offensive even to cynical ears. The Hudsons would like nothing more than to blitz the entire media (TV/radio/records/films) simultaneously, but they've been making fine pop records too long to do so at the expense of an individual release. *Ba-Fa* is a convincing effort on the band's part, and does indeed demonstrate their high pop intelligence quotient.

At times The Hudsons can match the soft-crimson sweetness of *Abbey Road* period Beatles and then change gears into *Good Vibrations* era Beach Boys, and back again ("Bernie Was A Friend Of Ours"). The string arrangements by Bob Alcivar are highly crafted and work remarkably well throughout the album, especially on "Bernie."

The songs here are brief (averaging 3:30) but the time is allocated with skillful precision. *Ba-Fa* is obviously the first real Hudson Brothers *album* (as opposed to a compilation of single sides) for this act that has been recording polished pop since 1967 under a bargain-basement full of names (My Sirs, New Yorkers, Everyday Hudson, Hudson).

The Hudsons have surely mastered the complicated art of simplicity and not since *Straight Up* by Badfinger and Rundgren's *Something/Anything* has it been so pleasing.



Norman Seeff

Nazz albums and his first three solo elpees), Rundgren has fallen into disrepute in the last two years for his long, structurally unconventional and effect-filled solo albums, *A Wizard, a True Star*, *Todd*, and *Initiation*. But those with the tolerance and patience to make heavy use of their cuing arms have found music as clear-headedly invigorating as Rundgren's early work; why he's hidden treasures like "Just One Victory," "Sons of 1984," and "Heavy Metal Kids" in the sci-fi morass is beyond my grasp.

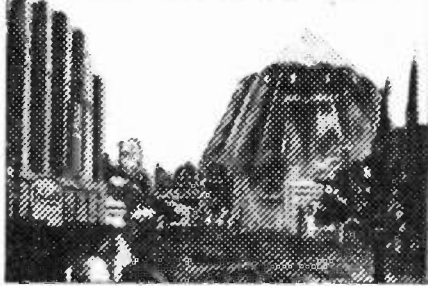
Concurrent with his difficult solo work, Rundgren has been working with a

roots in eerily unorthodox surroundings. This new emphasis on vocals evident throughout the side reveals that Rundgren, up to now an affecting but delicate singer, has managed to dramatically strengthen his voice—he's never less than forceful and confident on *Another Live*.

On side two Rundgren manages, for once, to indulge himself without losing us: he and the band go Broadway in earnest by tackling *West Side Story*'s "Something's Coming." By treating the song as a serious piece of music rather than as the basis for parody, they bring

LITTLE FEAT The Last Record Album

Includes Somebody's Leaving
One Love Stand / Romance Dance



THE LAST RECORD ALBUM
Little Feat
Warner Bros. BS 2882

By SAM SUTHERLAND

Despite its grim title, Little Feat's fifth album is the work of a band very much alive, its best songs charged with strong ideas, exciting performances and the risks only the truly committed dare take. If this sense of adventure results in the set's few lapses, it also provides us with an expanded view of one of the most original American bands going.

Since Feat's formation, Lowell George has been singled out as its chief architect. Principal writer, vocalist, lead guitarist and producer, he was elevated by the press to the status of rock'n'roll auteur with the release of their best album, *Dixie Chicken*, in 1973. With that album's successor, last year's *Feats Don't Fail Me Now*, producer George began a campaign to challenge this one-man view by shelving his own more personal songs (among them "Long Distance Love," which finally appears

here) and focusing on ebullient rockers showcasing the band's ensemble savvy.

The new album extends this democratic emphasis but takes a different tack. George has written only three of the set's eight songs, one in collaboration with drummer Richard Hayward. There is a greater emphasis on keyboard ace Bill Payne and guitarist Paul Barrere as writers and vocalists, and George's own luminous slide guitar is less dominant. At the same time, the range in mood and production nuance have been restored, giving the new set greater depth and making this an immediate headphone delight.

Though Little Feat's stylistic ecumenicism has baffled any attempt at an easy generic tag (the band's synthesis of eccentric rhythms, harmonic and melodic classicism, and gospel choruses has earned titles ranging from "avant garde" to "Southern Boogie"), they are in fact purely L.A. in both origin and outlook. With the exception of the opening song, "Romance Dance," these songs explore the loneliness, rootlessness and lost faith that have become ideographic landmarks in the Californian consciousness.

Thus "Romance Dance," with its strutting backbeat, a drawling slide guitar that challenges the Stones in raunch, and a classic, funny sexual metaphor (the crucial equation of sex and dancing becomes the "horizontal mambo"), is followed by the fatalism of "All That You Dream," written by Payne and Barrere. A nervous, staccato line of single guitar notes slips into a rolling anthem of cautious survival that declares, "I've been down, but not like this before..." Though the lyrics verge on cliché, the sheer power of the music carries the song. Its surging instrumental energy mirrors the turbulence of the lyric while paving the way for "Long Distance

Love," a quiet Lowell George ballad that is the album's finest moment.

Circumscribing the album's themes of alienation and despair, it's a deceptively concise work that starts with a familiar pop motif, love on the telephone:

"Ah, hello, give me missing persons
They say what is it that you need
I say, oh, I need her so
They say you've got to stop your pleading."

Nominally a song of unrequited love, its second verse reveals a more open-ended hopelessness, again drawn from a familiar motif, the front page. The message is simply "Help wanted, but not enough," but the gently elegiac setting -- George's muted slide guitar and the aching choral harmonies of Valerie Carter and Fran Tate -- adds a wordless eloquence.

If the album's remaining tunes never match the emotional clout of these two key songs, they provide ample proof of Little Feat's bracing musicianship. Bill Payne's keyboards are given more room than ever before, his acoustic piano now more evenly matched by an increasingly distinctive use of electric piano and synthesizer. His playing fuses a broad range of styles, from chromatic jazz to barrelhouse, and is neatly framed by the band's formidable rhythm section of Richard Hayward, percussionist Sam Clayton and bassist Ken Gradney, who craft intricate, off-center polyrhythms that encompass second-line r&b, Latin pulses and flat-out rock'n'roll.

The Last Record Album isn't the flawless Little Feat album Lowell George's devotees (and I consider myself among them) have hoped for. It's simply a strong and mostly successful experiment in growth on the part of one of the best bands playing.

SPARKS/INDISCREET



INDISCREET
Sparks
Island ILPS 9345

By RICHARD CROMELIN

Indiscreet, thanks to a production approach which digs a wide gulf between it and previous Sparks albums, could well win over some new fans for the band, in that their frantic roller-coaster style has given way to a more spacious, sedate and generally palatable sound. At the same time, Sparks' eccentricity remains intact, and British teens are unlikely to rip down their Mael Bros. posters because they no longer sound like a berserk callopie.

Producer Tony Visconti, taking over for Muff Winwood, has altered the basic attack and provided the music with a whole new character, one which lures rather than assaults. It proves to be the right design for the new Sparks material.

That too has opened up stylistically, covering everything from a smooth, Andrews Sisters-style vamp ("Looks, Looks, Looks") to a marching band complete with horns, whistle and triangle ("Get in the Swing"). "The Lady Is Lingerin'" features a strong, tango-like hook, while "How Are You Getting Home" alternates its skittering chorus



Girls: Russ and Ron Mael may not be the darlings of the avant-garde, but they sure are cuties.

with a lush Beatles/Badfinger melody line. Fairportish fiddling leads "It Ain't 1918," and "Happy Hunting Ground" reflects a more familiar Sparks approach.

The music is notable for its juxtaposition of ideas rather than the brilliance of any one motif -- most of which consist of those two- or four- note Ron Mael piano riffs and fuzzed, ascending - and - descending guitar lines. By refusing to stay on any one thing longer than a breath or two, though, Sparks keeps it rolling along nicely. Visconti's expert and tasteful shadings contribute further to the album's tendency to grow on one with each listening.

Another departure is Russell Mael's singing, which has come down from the stratosphere into a comfortable middle range. Writin' Ron continues to delve into themes that are purely off-the-wall:

in "T*ts," a man laments the transformation of his wife's breasts from playthings into feedbags; and in "Without Using Hands" we learn that the manager of the Ritz Hotel will go through life without benefit of those appendages (they're gone, "but at least his face looks well").

By nature, Sparks' music isn't apt to appeal to much of a middle ground. Its childishness and its makers' looks, looks, looks insure its hold on the young, and its wry wit and pervert tinge should continue to captivate fringe types of all ages. Its main drawback is its lack of passion and the artifice that is part of its essence. While it begs to be called lighthearted, it simply has no heart. Still, precious and isolated as it is, it provides one of the few real laughs to be had in today's sombre musical climate.

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GRAND FUNK RAILROAD CAUGHT IN THE ACT

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Produced by Jimmy Ienner 





PRESSURE DROP
Robert Palmer
Island ILPS 9372

By ELIOT SEKULER

It always seemed odd that the best white-boy interpretations of r&b have come from Great Britain. There were wordy explanations accompanying the Average White Band's arrival on this country's shores and charts, publicity chatter about "northern soul," and how the kids in Scotland and northern England are really listening to Marvin Gaye, not the Bay City Rollers. It's still surprising though, that a guy like Robert Palmer can look so fey and have such a sensitive ear for black rock 'n' roll.

Palmer's first album, *Sneaking Sally Through The Alley*, woefully suffered from the omission of credits on what was one of the tastiest album covers to come down the pike in a long while. It seems that there was some problem with those stalwart protectors of our homeland, the Immigration Bureau (Palmer wasn't supposed to be working over here), and a list of personnel wasn't available until months later, when Island Records inserted a credit sheet inside the package. A casual glance at that list confirmed to the eyes what the ears already knew: that Palmer had assembled one of the all-time great session bands to back him. Dominating *Sally's* sound was the slide work and musical influence of Little Feat's Lowell George, and other accompanists included the Meters, Cornell Dupree, Steve Winwood and Bernard Purdie. It was a Little Feat kind of funk-rock record, with a lot of punch, good vocal work and excellent choice of material.

The strengths of *Sneaking Sally* have been amplified on this new album. Fronting various instrumental combinations (the core of which is virtually every member of Little Feat), Palmer's vocals on *Pressure Drop* are far more mature and flexible. Lowell George's guitar work is still omnipresent, as is the playful keyboard of Bill Payne, but this time it's Palmer's voice that gives the album definition. Shifting from percussive, Wilson Pickett-ish grunts and moans to smoother soul styling, Palmer appears to be paying tribute to the entire spectrum of popular black music, from reggae to Motown, Memphis to New Orleans. His writing, which accounts for six of the nine songs on the album, pays homage to the classic songwriters of those sub-genres without sacrificing anything in the way of character or individuality. It may be derivative music, but derivations never sounded so good.

Pressure Drop is a mixed bag of an album. It's impossible to avoid hearing the echoes of Stevie Wonder on "Back In My Arms," of Smokey Robinson on "Which of Us Is The Fool" and of Steve Cropper on "Fine Time" and it certainly takes balls to cover Toots and the Maytals' "Pressure Drop" at a time when record audiences have begun to canonize Toots. Once listeners get past those superficial associations, they'll find one of the most exhilarating albums to be released in 1975.

Mendelsohn Mania

POSITIVE ALBUM REVIEW Positive Group Positive Label

By JOHN MENDELSON

With the release of the unrelentingly stupendous (album title), (name of artist's) stature as one of the most awesomely gifted musicians to have emerged in the '70's becomes incontestable. (Album title) be advised, is one of those records you'll find yourself yearning to listen to not only time after time after time, but also time and time again, for it is packed nearly to overflowing with intriguing nuances and so on.

Those of my colleagues who, in their critiques of last year's spgchal (title of artist's previous album) intimated that said work represented (name of artist) at the summit of (his/her/their) creative

powers will surely be amazed to the point of stupefaction by (album title), for never before has (name of artist) enjoyed so firm a grip on the intricate essence of (his/her/their) art. Dumbfounded, said jumpers-of-the-gun-as-regards-proclaiming-the-full-fruition-of-the-(name of artist)-genius will be capable only of gurgling profound platitudes of praise upon audition of such stunning testaments to (name of artist's) still-escalating genius as (titles of two tunes).

Similarly, the poignant, uncommonly eloquent lyrics of, say, (another song title) are quite apt to spark a revival of heated debate on the subject of whether or not rock lyrics are indeed Poetry, while the melody of (another tune title) will surely result in more than a few thinking of (name of artist) as being in the same league as Rimsky-Korsakoff or Joe Walsh.

I could assure you that no album since *Young Americans* has so profoundly increased my own ability to maintain a stiff upper lip in the face of the world's having apparently grown real fond of throwing me spitballs. Or that I have just heard rock's future, and (album title) is it. I could, in fact, go on and on and on and on and on, but ultimately, I fear, such lavish praise might only, as we in the record industry known as The Street, turn you off. (Album title) is, after all, one of those albums best discovered by oneself in the privacy of his own home, with a snifter of chilled Dubonnet in one hand and the briefs of a loved one in the other. Miss it at your own risk.

SPLINTER HARDER TO LIVE



HARDER TO LIVE Splinter Dark Horse SP-22006

By BOBBY ABRAMS

"Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery," Oscar Wilde once remarked off-handedly, and for Splinter, a vocal duo comprised of songwriter Bob Purvis and Bill Elliot, the opening quote must be a credo to live by, for they have captured the soft underbelly of the early sixties (1963-1966) and effectively translated it into one of the more pleasing pop experiences of the seventies.

Their most obvious influence, is, not unnaturally, the Beatles, but then the Beatles are the foundation stone for any group re-creating this particular pop genre. Perhaps this is what attracted co-producer and group mentor George Harrison to sign them; certainly, the Beatles have been involved with the careers of may of their most successful imitators (the BeeGees, managed by Brian Epstein; Badfinger; et al). Yet they are more than a folk-rock version of the Four Moptops. There is an unmistakable and undeniable Byrds influence, especially of the Gene Clark singing and writing style (as I listen to this record, I most fondly and vividly recall my initial hearing of Clark's "Echoes"). Too, Simon & Garfunkel must be included as

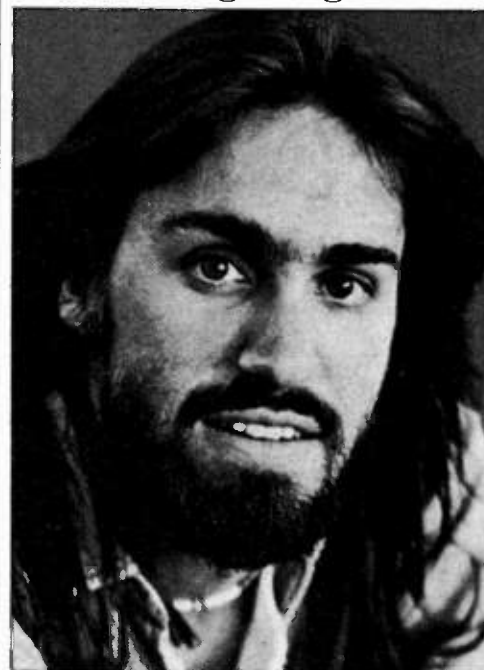
the seminal soft pop duo. At the same time, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, as Splinter retains its own integrity and identity throughout this second album (I missed the first, but after several listenings of *Harder To Live*, I'd certainly like to correct that initial oversight).

As befits a pop group, they are singles oriented. Purvis had over a hundred songs written by the time Splinter was signed, and one of the problems a reviewer encounters with this album is trying to predict what the singles will be. One possibility is the lilting pop reggae sound of "What Is It (If You Never Ever Tried It Yourself)". Perhaps it will be "Half Way There," my choice, as much for its haunting beauty, as for the fact that it sounds like the best of the Raspberries or the Left Banke or even Stories. Some votes will also go for "Which Way Will I Get Home" a great ballad in the John Denver tradition, which just gets better and more infectious each time I hear it. Or the equally alluring "Please Help Me."

The mandatory Badfinger cop is "Sixty Miles Too Far" and it is flawed by inconsistency of mood. The title track, "Harder to Live" is the most obvious Beatles steal; unfortunately, it's one of the styles of the Beatles that I didn't particularly care for. However, those millions of fans who still dream that the legendary foursome will re-unite might get a heartthrob or two as they listen to this tune.

Beyond catchy tunes and perfect arrangements (provided by omni-present session superstar Tom Scott) what distinguishes this duo is the writing ability of Purvis. I'm tired of that school of deep and insightful songwriters whose every grunt and groan add meaning to their apocalyptic visions. Purvis writes meaningful songs within the time-honored pop tradition of getting in and out in a hurry. Nothing to fog your brain over, yet at the same time, the imagery is full and complete. Perhaps the best categorization of Splinter would be to describe them as a Hudson Bros. for the over-18 set.

Every so often, the rock & roll matrix turns up someone very special. At the moment, possibly no one fulfills this promise more than Dan Fogelberg.



His new album is "Captured Angel." He wrote the songs, produced the album, did the cover painting and even played most of the instruments.

And he recently won the First Annual Rock Music Award for this year's Best New Male Vocalist.

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including:
Next Time/Below The Surface/Old Tennessee
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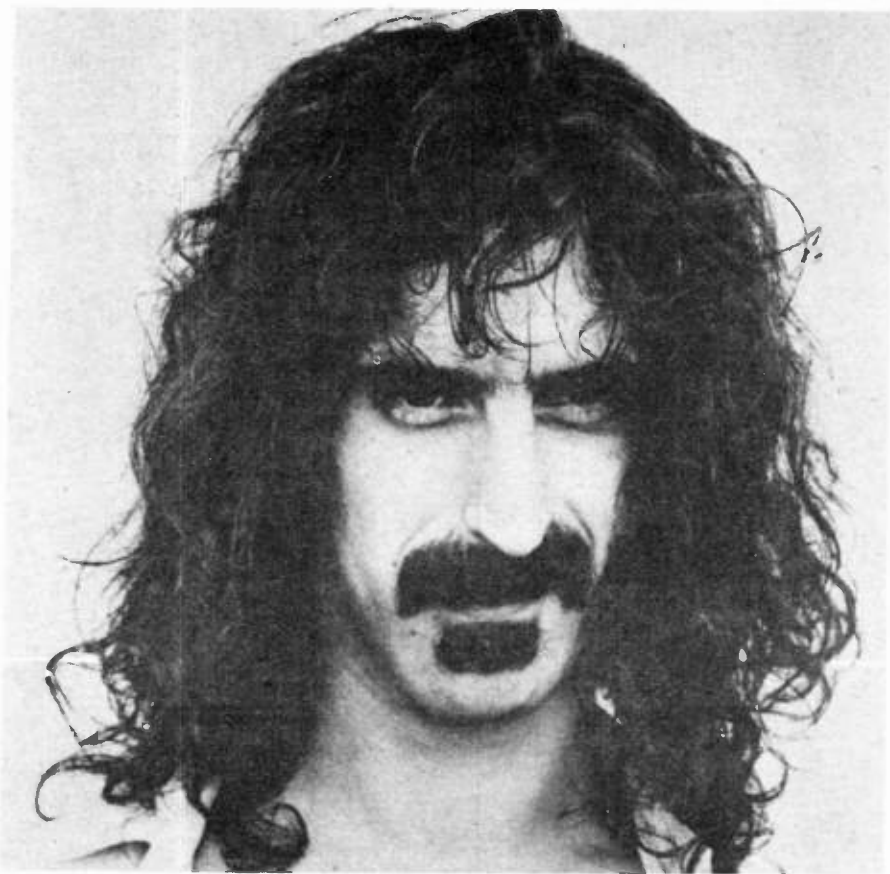


MCA-2155



Produced by Richard Podolor for Richard Podolor Productions, Inc.
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ZAPPA & BEEFHEART



"Bongo Fury isn't the greatest Mothers album ever, but Beefheart is wonderful, and it must have been one hell of a live show."

BONGO FURY
Frank Zappa/Capt. Beefheart
Discreet DS 2234

By GERRIT GRAHAM

Zappa is indispensable, one of the crucial figures in popular music. This contention can be defended on several grounds. First, Frank has always been willing to encourage the creative lunatic-Beefheart, Alice Cooper, Tim

Buckley at his most perverse, Flo and Eddie; he'll always be a hero of mine for paying Lowell George's bills for awhile. That's a pretty good record, especially in the face of constant accusations of blind selfishness and artistic tyranny. Sol Hurok he ain't, but he's certainly supplied us with a number of entertaining nuts.

Remember also his persistent efforts to expose his considerable following to something new. Most of them probably still don't know who Varese is, but at least they've had a taste of progressive rock, atonality, a bit of jazz and a smidgen of *musique concrete*, always



THE BAND PLAYS ON
Back Street Crawler
Atco sd 36-125

By LITA ELISCU

Paul Kossoff is back, minor legend in his own time, in and out of our visibility. He has put together a band using the name Back Street Crawler -- also the title of a solo effort made in 1973 for Island. So the "Band" plays on! Chilling it must have been to be thinking so much of Jack the Ripper back then; one can only wonder if he was thinking of himself as Jack of the music industry. In the last few years, Kossoff has gone under a few times, brushes with drugs and inner-vision, and a very physical near-death from heart stoppage.

As amazing as his life perhaps, this album is great. In a time of overused

words, that one still fits best. This is a great album. Everything works. Distilled, refined and gutsy, this represents one of the best syntheses of present pop music: the music is a metaphor of our time as the pictures painted by the old Flemish painters whose every flower stood for entire doxologies (hardly Bosch, although the same point of view). Each chord and each riff are reminders of all that has come before: the cues are everywhere and endless. This is not a unique event, but it is a successful one where usually it is not. They say there is a formula to rock, to pop music, whereby in the equation the parts easily equal the whole; believing that, they fed all the data of the Top Thirty or whatever into a computer and came out with exactly nothing. Just so, this group of English and Texas musicians has fed into itself every sloppy beer hall and strip joint, all the times with other groups, all their pick-up record sessions and made all of it inimitably their own.

Kossoff's guitar -- searing, brilliant, graceful -- has never sounded better. Touches of Clapton, of Page, solos as good as anything he did with Free. The bass growls, undercurrent of each song, the drums piled over it, steady and emphatic, always rolling. Echo used to perfection, making Terry Slesser's vocals whine, throw themselves into the air, a bucking bronco landing on its feet. The lyrics are full of a raunchy sexuality without attempting the extreme shock of ambiguity or violence. The songs run the gamut of Pop Stardom, a world of

made palatable within the framework of Frank's familiar weirdness.

Most importantly, the guy has a sense of humor. He gets the rock'n'roll joke. Though his social commentary may have lost a lot of its bite of late, he's still willing to make fun of anything or anybody, including himself and his band. He's a megalomaniac, and knows it.

I'm therefore willing, to indulge Zappa in his most wretchedly excessive and self-serving moments. Fortunately, *Bongo Fury* (recorded live, mostly, and mixed with some older studio cuts) is better than that. The big attraction is Beefheart, in full voice and plenty bizarre. The man has a truly astonishing set of pipes, shown off better here than on his recent Mercury attempts to crack the Top 40. Zappa gives him the opening shot on the album, too, a frenzied boogie about Debra Kadabra, "the witch queen of Lankershim Blvd." "Make me grow Brainiac fingers, only with more hair...make me kiss your turquoise jewelry...give me boss relief," Beefheart bellows with the authority of old. He sings lead on most of the stuff, and contributes two crazed raps, one of which sounds improvised on the spot. His main contribution is to give Mothers vocals some variety, not to mention a little real skill. The band, though no match for his Magic Band of Zoot Horn Rollo, Rockette Morton, Antennae Jimmy Semens and The Mascara Snake, fervidly backs him up.

Zappa also gets in his licks at The Bicentennial in two tunes: "Poofter's Froth, Wyoming, Plans Ahead," with Beefheart blowing primitive harp and running down various Bi merchandising scams ("...T-shirts, rats, rubber snats, posters rolled with matching tacks...a special beer for sports, in paper cups that hold two quarts"), and "200 Years Old" ("She's 200 years old, squattin' down an' poppin' up from the jukebox just like she had true religion").

Musically, *Bongo Fury* is restrained, even tame, in comparison to the hyperthyroid jamming of recent Zappa/Mothers efforts. There's an emphasis on simple rock and blues progressions, a bow, no doubt, to Beefheart's influence. It's not the greatest Mothers album ever, but Beefheart is wonderful, and it must have been one hell of a live show. Viva Zappa.

junk/bitches/boredom/survival; most of them are published by Horror Show Music. I only wish tongue was so firmly in cheek throughout. The basic feeling threading through can be found in almost any lyric, "Jason Blue" for example:

*He's got wealth he's got gold
But he doesn't have a soul...
The world was in the palm of
Jason's hand....**

This as other songs was written by keyboards player Mike Montgomery, but the sentiment is the group's. This sentiment is the one cloud on this group's personal horizon.

Because if this is all they see for rock, for themselves, then they will not last through another album or even a tour. In the official bio, some of them say, "...We all have projected future plans at unspecified dates. With Koss(off), we'd like to take it as far as it goes."

As far as it goes.

If they are going to hedge their bets this way--not that they don't have the right--and be this wary, this cynical, it makes not just their music suspect but everyone's...and I would rather not believe that just yet. There is no easy answer. Everyone knows rock has been caught by business ethic, and the survivors have reason to be cautious; only caution just does not go with this music, so Back Street Crawler will have to make their minds up either to bury their personal perspective or play. Rock has its myths, ya know.

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POP SINGLES FOR
THE 70'S
BY GREG SHAW

JUKEBOXJURY

DWIGHT TWILLEY BAND - "You Were So Warm - Shelter 40450"

The screaming rockers of "I'm On Fire" show a softer side here, recalling shades of the Byrds and the Searchers. The flip, "Sincerely," introduces the Zombies as well. I think that what I like most about the Twilleys, apart from the impeccability of their sources, is the cleanliness, the bare simplicity of their sound. They never over-produce, and they're not afraid to be tastefully derivative. This will bomb in the discos, but they don't care--the girls they want to reach are too young to do the hustle anyway.

BAY CITY ROLLERS - "Saturday Night"/"Marlina" - Arista 0149

Like everyone else, I'm a little appalled that these dorks should be considered for even a moment, by anybody at all, to have anything in common with the Beatles. But at the same time, I've liked almost all their records, beginning with "Keep On Dancing" in 1971. For a hard pop group (not quite Slade or Sweet, but more than Middle of the Road) they're not bad. "Saturday Night," a 1973 single in England, is currently on its way to becoming their first U.S. hit. The closest thing to a hard rocker they've done, its success here may say something about American tastes, since none of their more characteristic earlier efforts fared as well. In fact, "Saturday Night" started out as the B-side of this disc, backing the more tuneful (somewhere between Rod Stewart and Albert Hammond...) "Marlina," actually their latest recording. Since their progression over the last four years has been from harder to softer, the question is raised as to what they'll do for a follow-up if "Saturday Night" becomes a hit, short of raiding the back catalog still further--not that anyone in this country would be much the wiser.

THE HUDSON BROTHERS - "Lonely School Year" - Rocket 40464

It seems to me that if American kids wanted something like the Bay City Rollers, they would have picked up on the Hudson Brothers by now. They're a little older, but they're cuter, and they make equally appealing pop records. In fact, England could use them too. Particularly this record, their concession to the disco beat and a radical change from their usual wham-bam approach. The subject matter is refreshingly wholesome (I, for one, prefer to hear sex discussed in romantic metaphors rather than in graphic detail--at least in a pop record; that's what I always liked about the Troggs...) and surely there must be a couple million kids out there who would find this record enormously relevant to their condition.

KASENETZ-KATZ SUPER CIRKUS "Mama Lu - Magna Glide 329"

It's always good to welcome an old friend back, and doubly so for the Super Cirkus, who seem to have been in hiding since around 1969. Who could forget their immortal "Quick Joey Small (Run Joey Run)" (Buddah 64)--and who knows, perhaps it was David Geddes' quasi-theft of their title that brought the boys back to us. In any case, back they are, a little less raunchy than before, but with some nice Beach Boys harmonies in place of their former Ohio Express growls. There are a lot of tricks in this record, no less than you'd expect of such masters as Jerry & Jeff, and it moves fast. So fast, indeed, that it slips by

without ever having established a strong enough impression to make the song linger on in the listener's mind--a factor which, if nothing else, may hold this one back. But given time, I expect this outfit to do great things once again.

As the year's end approaches, the charts continue to reflect a healthy influx of new artists and sounds. Disco is still the biggest trend by far, though it seems to be subsiding, and the disco sound itself is (thankfully) evolving away from its Percy Faith origins into something a little more palatable to us rockers. My current disco fave is "I'm On Fire" by 5000 Volts (Philips 40801), yet another British-produced item--it's really amazing how well they've learned to synthesize this sound.

A couple of years ago, I predicted a revival of novelty records, never dreaming that something like "Mr. Jaws" by Dickie Goodman (Cash 451) could become the No. 1 record in the country. Most of the recent novelty discs seem to be death songs, which (according to Tim Williams of KTOP in Topeka, Kansas who was good enough to send in his own compilation of contemporary pop melodramas) may have some connection with the present state of the economy. Whatever the explanation, we've had Hot Chocolate's "Emma," Michael Murphy's "Wildfire," Austin Roberts' inane "Rocky," David Geddes' "Run Joey Run," and a couple of others that seem to have slipped my mind, possibly including the British reissue of Bobby Goldsboro's "Honey." Any day now, I expect to see a new version of "Leader of the Pack...."

"Better Than Now" (Pye 71050) is the best by Phil Everly in a long, long time, a snappy rocker with a delightful chorus, produced by the ubiquitous Warren Zevon. It's also good to see the Pye label moving ahead so fast, as it certainly should as the U.S. outlet of one of Britain's largest companies, though in its previous incarnation under Bell there were discouragingly few hits, considering the quality of the output.

Herman's Hermits will never be the same without Peter Noone, but they exceed all expectations on "Ginny Go Softly" (Private Stock 45,019), a solidly commercial rock ballad with some charming harmonies. By contrast, David Cassidy needs a lot more than the admittedly excellent harmonies behind him to pull off a song like "Darlin'" (RCA JH-10405), at least to ears which have heard the Beach Boys' original, though I don't expect that comparison, nor his lack of talent, to keep this one from becoming as big a hit here as it already is in England. And whatever his limitations, he's still better than David Essex....

Despite its use of the signature riff from Elvis' "His Latest Flame," the new one from Smokie (formerly Smokey, as if anyone cares) is not destined to enter the same historic annals. "Don't Play Your Rock N' Roll To Me" (MCA 40471) isn't quite as perditious as its title might imply, but it is rather lame. Chinn & Chapman can do better.

Of the latest releases here from England's RAK label, the best is Mike Berry's update of "Don't Be Cruel" (MCA 40432), though I think we're all tired of Elvis revivals by now. Berry, though, has been a personal favorite since his 1961 "Tribute to Buddy Holly" (Coral 62341). "Snow was as-snowin', wind was a-blowin', when the world said 'goodbye, Buddy'..." Ah, it still gives me chills. Anyway, it's good to see his name on record again. The one RAK record I'd

really like to see out here is "Let's Get the Party Going" by Warwick, which sounds like the Jook attempting to turn the Ronettes' "Be My Baby" into a modern post-glitter classic. Doesn't quite overwhelm, but comes close, and is worth searching out (RAK 211, in England).

Some promising debuts this time around. Dan McCafferty of Nazareth goes solo with "Out of Time," (A&M 1753) hardly up to Chris Farlow's version, but I like this song no matter who does it. Brian Cadd's "Allin the Way (They Use My Face)" (Chelsea 3027) isn't really a debut, but despite several previous 45's and a couple of albums, this Australian singer is still unknown here. Produced by Peter Best (formerly of the Beatles??), this one is a very nice pop rocker, with Leo Sayer overtones, a strong beat, and a thoroughly commercial arrangement. The title and the story have to do with how actors are exploited, so it ought to be a hit in Hollywood if nowhere else...

Calico has had records before too, but nothing equal to "Jody, It's Still You" (UA 723), a gentle, countryish ballad that really gets to you after awhile. Lacks the sparkle to be a big hit, I suspect, but someday they'll connect. Same might be said for Hammersmith, a new name but a group familiar to rock aficionados as Painter, for whom high hopes were held out a couple of years ago. Latest from this Vancouver group is "Feelin' Better" (Mercury 73717), a good dose of commercial rock & roll, not as overpowering as BTO but along the same lines.

One of my favorite songs of 1974 was a tune called "Standin' in the Way of the Music" by Harriet Schock, from her first album. A new duo called Jan & Jill has waxed the song under the direction of Michael Lloyd (20th Century 2237) and it's a creditable effort, sounding almost as though it had been arranged for the Carpenters (hey, Richard, this is a good tip and it's yours, gratis!), though I think I prefer the way Harriet's voice breaks on the original. Jackie DeShannon could also do a great version of this song, but her own "Let The Sailors Dance" (Columbia 3-10221) is outstanding in its own right.

Welcome to a new record label, DJM, which some will recall as having existed here several years ago, introducing Vanity Fare, Philip Goodhand-Tait, Mr. Bloe, and Elton John. After a long hiatus, they're back with "Backbreaker" by Grimms (1001), a fine even commercial side from Neil Innes' current group. Hopefully they'll stay around a lot longer this time, bringing us still more English sounds.

As always, I like to close with something a little out of the ordinary. This time it's Reggi & the Hot Ashes Band, on Rembrandt 1003 with "Roller Bird/Watermelon Sun." The label includes helpful notes to the program director, identifying one side as "Rock 'N Roll" and the other as "MOR." It's the rock 'n' roll side we're concerned with. "Roller Bird" could only be called punk-rock, in the purest sense of that term. Sounding at first like a fairly impressive imitation of the late Stones, careful listening reveals this to be the story of a girl who's getting fat because she doesn't know the secret word. Or something like that. I have no idea where you can find this record (if anyone from Rembrandt Records is reading this, please get in touch, but there's always the chance your local Salvation Army will get a copy eventually. Sooner or later, they seem to get everything...

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BLIND DATE

A monthly blindfold test by those masters of slander-rock: Mark Volman and Howard Kaylan.

Typesetters come and go, but the Blind Date goes on forever. This month Flo & Eddie aim their barbs at Martin Cerf, guest interviewer.

"You Were So Warm" (single)--- Dwight Twilley Band (Shelter)

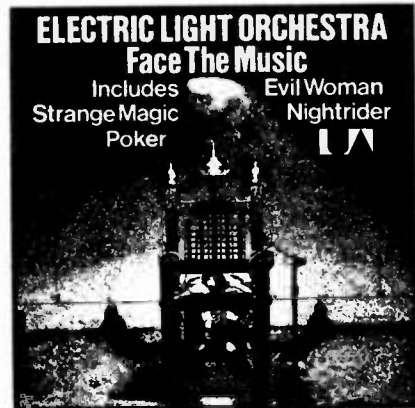
Follow-up to a Top 10 hit? Not a big group...First Class! Oh, *this* summer...I don't think I was here this summer. This could be the tokens. Coppertone gave away towels with the group's name? It sounds like 1964. Dwight Twilley! Turn it up! Sounds really Searchers--really Gene Clark! I like it 'cause I love the Searchers--don't know if it'll be a hit, though....

"He's a Rebel," others, from Elkie Brooks (A&M)

English and she doesn't wear many clothes? I say so far so good. Clydie! Vanetta! Nino's on sax--you can definitely hear that Nino sound there. Ahh...Buy it for the cover alone! Why is her mouth open like that? To accommodate something small, it looks like. John Denver's...hash pipe. I would rather go down on her than own this album. Next! If Kiki Dee looked like that she'd be big!

Excerpts from Harder to Live--- Splinter (Dark Horse)

Related to a Beatle? Mal Evans' solo album. It's country-western. The other three guys who were in Badfinger--Worstfinger. One of Harrison's offspring. New Splinter! We loved the first one--"China Light." Let's get some George in there. I don't think they're as good as Badfinger were. They do pretty songs, though.



Excerpts from Face the Music--- Electric Light Orchestra (UA)

The new ELO record! I love it! I have a feeling people are ready for this. I don't think they have to be the new Moody Blues--they just have to be ELO. The live album didn't help--*The Night the Stars Fell on Long Beach*, it didn't come out here, and it's not very good. They sound terrific now. Keep an eye on them--this is probably their best album. Note to Typesetter's Replacement--Leave in all the stuff where we reversed the music and all that (a process consuming about 20 self-indulgent minutes of valuable transcription time). We've got to show we actually like something. It's almost as good as "SOS" by Abba (best record of the year!). There we go doing an ad for Abba again--we were asked to do their radio commercials, but we've gotta get out of town. Why?

(Commence advertisement) We're on



Roy Wood: "Do you really think there's going to be a Trade Winds revival this year, Howard?" Kaylan: "Of course, what else could follow a Starship revival?"

tour--with Stephen Stills and the Jefferson Starship in some parts of the country, and we should be in *your* town by the time you read this (missed printing deadlines permitting). If you have any complaints, you can voice them personally!

Excerpts from Skyhooks (Mercury)

Yeah! We know who that is! Skyhooks. The first album is good. But the reason it was so big in Australia (Skyhooks were awarded the equivalent of 15 gold albums or so for it) is that--we've studied this--they refer to a lot of local things. The album is just laced with local references. The second album gets a little more relatable. If they stick together they could make it in America. Onstage they paint up exactly like Kiss. They have a giant revolving stage that spurts out jizz juice (I don't know the exact term). We do their song, "All My Friends," -- we're influenced. Their old image was more paint, more high heels, more feather boa. Lots of rhinestones. They're cleaning up their act now. The guy's voice--Shirley is his name--is really strange--Americans might latch onto that. We're big fans of theirs. (Discussion continues for 15 esoteric minutes) We're proving we're the world's greatest Skyhooks experts.

Excerpts from Jack Jones (RCA)

This guy has been associated with Bachrach and Davis? B.J. Thomas? Jackie DeShannon? We're both close? B.J. DeShannon! Lou Johnson. Herb Alpert. That's Jack Jones! Bruce Johnston is producing his *next* album? That will work! Bruce is really going to surprise a lot of people! Jack Jones--"Wives & Lovers." He's ready for the times. If he gets in with younger people who are image-conscious as far as he's concerned, he'll make it. I've always loved him, I don't know why. I wouldn't buy this album--wait for Jack's next one--the one with Bruce will be good.

Excerpts from We're No Angels--- Dudes (Columbia)

Canadian? Stampeder! Would I know

any of them? Not that "Green-Eyed Lady" sound coming out again...Wackers? Hi, Wacker fans! Thundermug. Thunderhead. Thundercloud Newman. Thunderbox. I don't know...Mashmakhan, April Wine and the Wackers...the Dudes, of course! Bob Segarini is back--Miss Butters! Family Tree! A smash? I think it may work in Canada--limited here. I don't like what I've heard so far--I don't like the name. It's too punky for the music. They don't look like Dudes--they look like pansies. If dude means pansy in Canada,....Anyway, hi, Bob, good to see you back. I wonder if Jerry Hahn's doing anything these days.

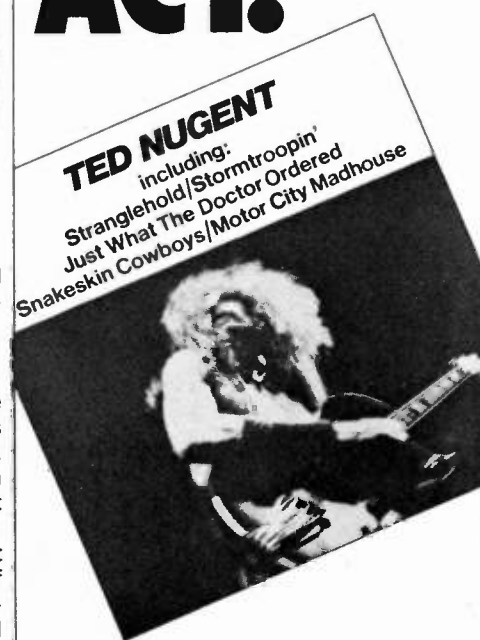


Excerpts from The Eddie Boy Band (MCA)

Biggest group in Chicago today? B.T. Express. Orleans! Doobie Brothers! I never heard of this band. Joe Walsh--Joe Vitale--Joe Simon--Jo Mama. They're just starting out? The Eddie Boy Band...who paid a lot of money for them? MCA? Sure, they'll happen. On the other hand, they could be another Good Rats. They do sound a lot like the Good Rats. Good Rats fans out there who have listened to me in the past, rally to my side! They can boogie but they have a good sense of humor. I like this. Possible. Pretty good month--I don't know if anything was funny, but we heard some good stuff.

Edited By KEN BARNES

HIGH-WIRED ACT.

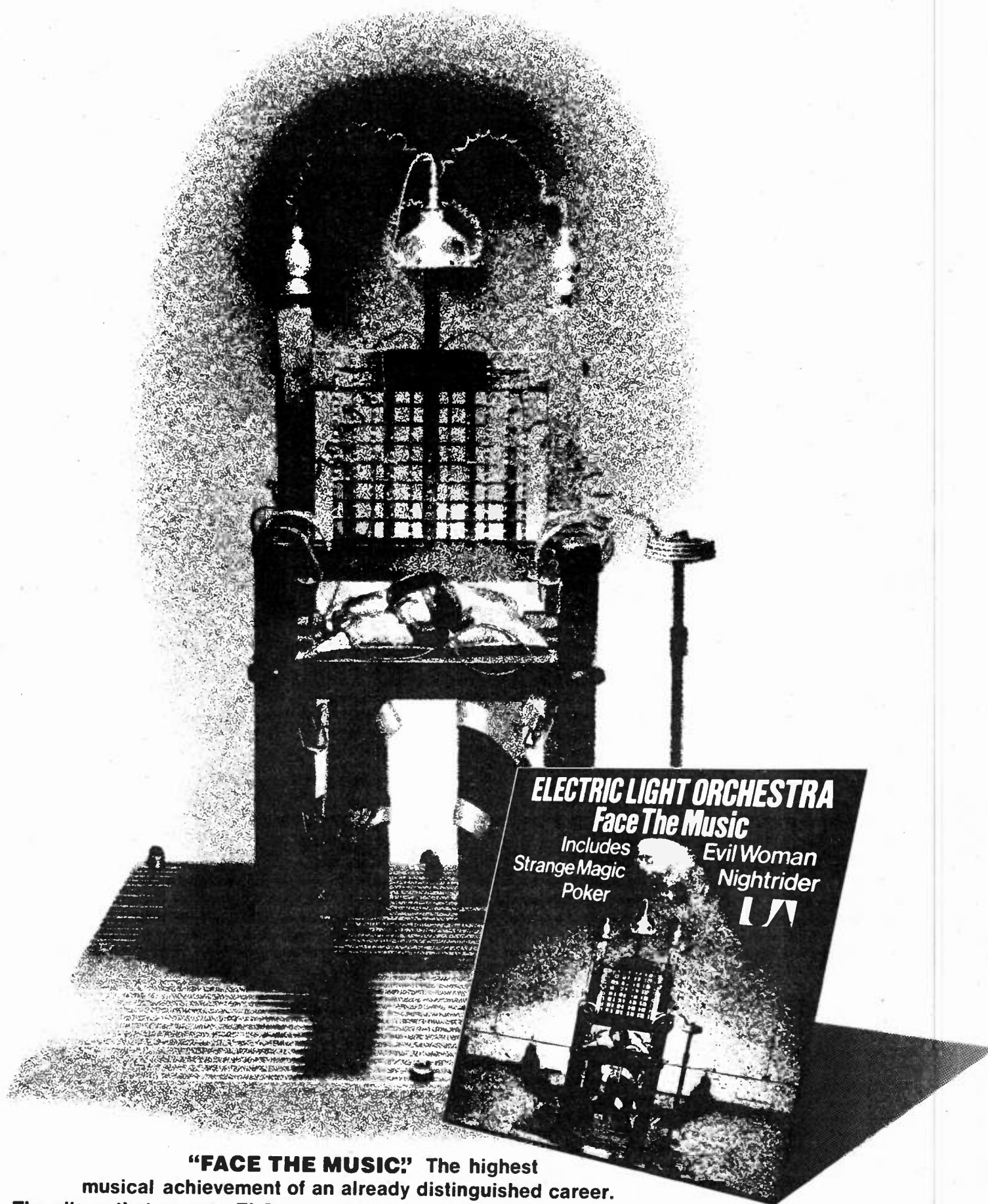


Ted Nugent. Some claim he invented high energy. All agree he does it best. With his music, his songs and his very plugged-in guitar, Ted Nugent's new album entitled, modestly enough, "Ted Nugent," raises the threshold of high-energy rock and roll. **"Ted Nugent?"**

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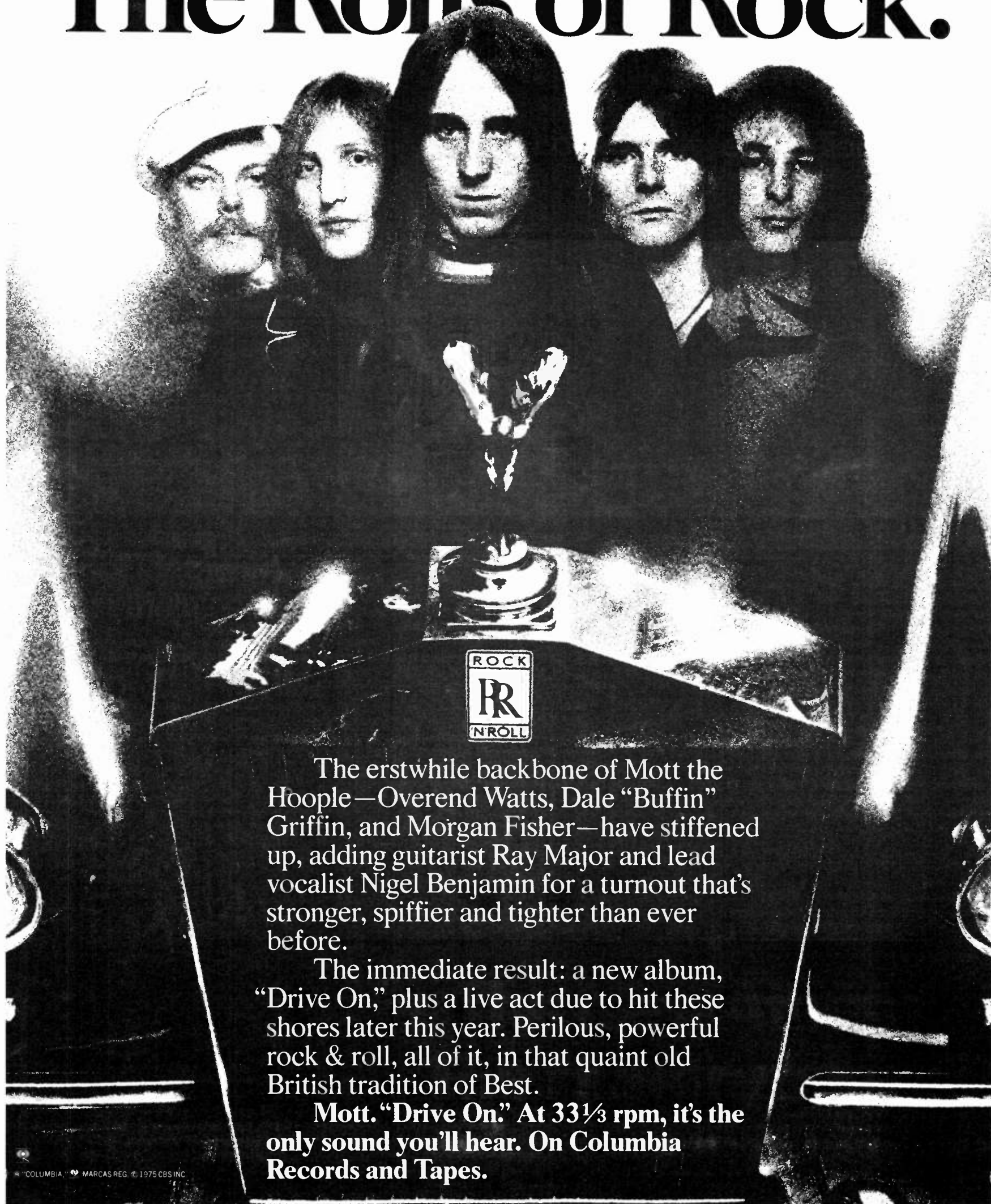
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Mott. The Rolls of Rock.



The erstwhile backbone of Mott the Hoople—Overend Watts, Dale “Buffin” Griffin, and Morgan Fisher—have stiffened up, adding guitarist Ray Major and lead vocalist Nigel Benjamin for a turnout that’s stronger, spiffier and tighter than ever before.

The immediate result: a new album, “Drive On,” plus a live act due to hit these shores later this year. Perilous, powerful rock & roll, all of it, in that quaint old British tradition of Best.

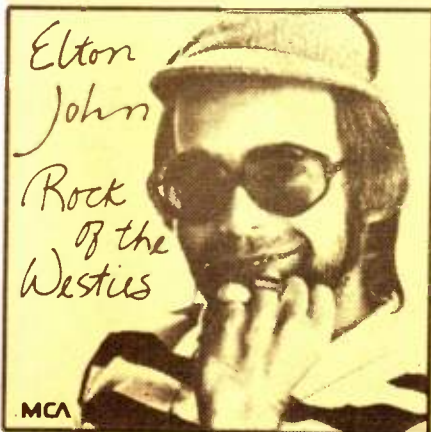
Mott. “Drive On.” At 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm, it’s the only sound you’ll hear. On Columbia Records and Tapes.

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ROCK OF THE WESTIES



Richard Creamer



ROCK OF THE WESTIES Elton John MCA (MCA 2163)

By BEN EDMONDS

It might seem ridiculous to contend that an artist was weakened by two albums which sold a higher number of copies than I can count to, but that's roughly where Elton John was sitting just before the release of this album. *Caribou*, the first album after the popularity

explosion of *Goodbye Yellow Brick Road*, was disproportionately stacked with not-so-memorable melodies. The platinum-shipped *Captain Fantastic*, was the first album that sounded like he was doing it for himself rather than for the radio, and though it contained a #1 single, it required you to care as much about Elton John as you did about the music to make it completely work. To an audience who payed unparalleled piles of cash for his catchy melodies and instant pop relatability, there was something vaguely dissatisfying about both these albums.

If they're looking for another *Goodbye Yellow Brick Road*, they'll probably feel a similar dissatisfaction with *Rock of the Westies*. The single from it, "Island Girl," is one of the least effective radio songs he's ever released. And none of the songs on the album will beg to keep company with "Your Song" or "Daniel" in the hearts of music lovers everywhere. Even those who credit Bernie Taupin as a great 20th century poet will have to concede that the bulk of his verse here is something less than inspirational. I think you'd even be safe in saying that the people who prefer sensitive Elton John will find very little use for this album at all.

The purpose of this album is to provide a rock & roll showcase for Elton's new

band. Guitarist Davey Johnstone and percussory loon Ray Cooper are the only holdovers from the old band, the departing Nigel Olsson and Dee Murray having been replaced by bassist Kenny Passarelli, keyboard/synthesizer man James Newton Howard, guitarist Caleb Quaye and drummer Roger Pope (the latter two having been members of EJ's original studio band). *Rock Of The Westies* is theirs, different from other Elton John records in that it's more an album of good licks than good songs.

You have to consider this not as Elton John, but as the Elton John Band, before it begins to make sense. And the point doesn't really become clear until you get to the second side of the album. You have to look at the first side as the sound check; pleasant enough funkrock warm-up exercises that prepare you for the meat of the presentation, all of which can be found on side two.

It's not that the members of the band are outstanding soloists--though you know they are if you've seen Elton on his current tour--but how smoothly they hold together as a unit. John, Johnstone, Quaye, Passarelli and Pope are a nifty little rock & roll five piece, with Cooper and Howard adding the colorings that give the sound its depth. As with all of Elton's music, the songs here are

constructed from the good elements of the role he sees himself in. This is his rock & roll album, and most often comes off as a weird mutation of solid guitar action and disco danceability. (One wonders if this album's "Billy Bones," along with Bruce Springsteen's "She's The One," will prompt a resurgence of interest in Bo Diddley as the Rolling Stones and Beatles did for Chuck Berry.) The band seems to fall naturally into attractive grooves, to the extent they can redeem a lesser piece of material like "Feed Me" and turn it into one of the album's best performances.

The band, excellent as it is throughout, made this album while they were only getting acquainted, and the picture it paints is of a group still emerging. The album's best power songs, "Street Kids" and "Billy Bones," point in a direction worth developing heavy duty expectations for. *Rock Of The Westies* should be taken as a good first album from a new band. I can't wait to hear what they're capable of after they've played an entire tour together; I suspect that it will amaze the people that this album will only please. And, not forgetting who's driving this plane, we'll close by saying that it's great to see that Elton can get his rocks off doing something that could very easily have become a job long ago.

Soul & Jazz



**Bobbi
Humphrey**

Sly Stone

**Billy
Cobham**

**Jean-Luc
Ponty**

Sun Ra

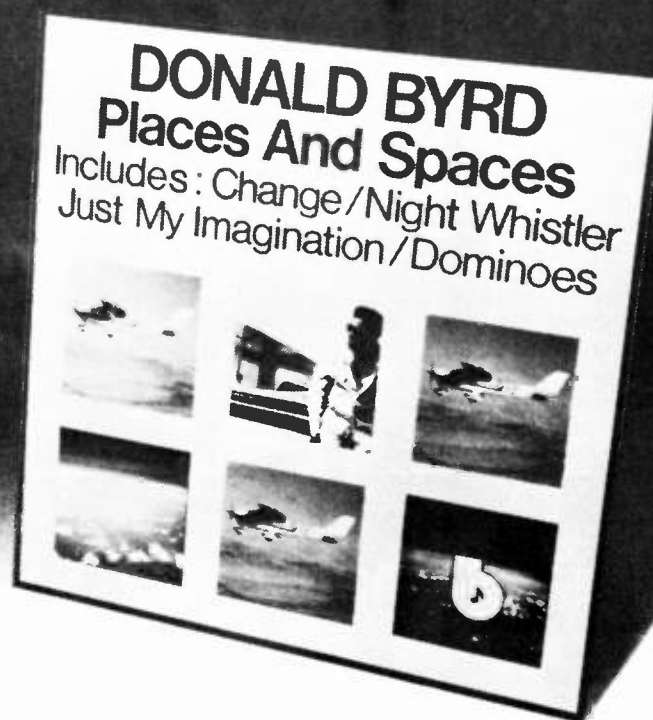
**Bobby Blue
Bland**

BOBBY WOMACK

THE SECOND DOZEN YEARS

NOV. 75/ VOL 2, ISSUE 8

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SOUL & JAZZ PERFORMANCES

JEAN-LUC PONTY
Main Point
Philadelphia, Pa.

By FRED TRIETSCH

One of the many marvelous things that The Mahavishnu Orchestra did for today's music was to introduce the violin to a large-scale audience, first with Jerry Goodman in the original Orchestra, and then with Jean-Luc Ponty in the classically-oriented second incarnation. Ponty's work with McLaughlin and previous time spent with Frank Zappa will probably send him in most people's minds into the rapidly-filling jazz-rock category; but his current group really reaches into Ponty's background beyond Zappa to his years of playing European jazz clubs and concerts.

Admittedly, they all play electrified instruments, but the form is straight jazz-introduce the melody, allow several group members to solo, reprise the melody, and conclude. And while this style doesn't lend itself to the flashy current trend of jazz-rock riff duels, it's just as well, for those all too often delve into cute gimmicks and cliché-drenched note bursts rather than true musicianship.

The show was brief, limited to four numbers, but each was a stirring romp through several textural changes, and no doubt even this will expand, as the band had been together just two weeks at this show. They opened with "Upon the Wings of Music", title track from Ponty's latest album, and immediately set the tone for the show: brinksmanship. After the melody line was set up, guitarist Darryl Sturman took hold of a solo and absolutely flew. His style is hard to pinpoint, but it was intriguing and intelligent without sacrificing emotion, with touches of Wes Montgomery for a mellow side and John Aberchrombe for sting. He took it up to inhuman heights, then gave way to a stunning piano solo. Again, the statement seemed so fresh, so unique, that comparisons failed. Unlike the Corea copiers abounding today, it had a special vision it held firmly.

These two set the dramatic tension for Ponty's first solo. Until then, he'd been restrained, just placing slight runs between the variations in the music. But now he seized the moment and began to loop and soar in extensions of the melody line, building gradually, using the wah-wah pedal sparingly with superb effect, speeding up his fluid runs in crisp note bunches and taking chances in spinechilling forays. The second number was a typical jazz ploy, "Bow-ing, Bow-ing", taking on the feel of a soundtrack, turning it into a jam, showing that, for all the improvisational expertise, they never lose sight of the melodic content of their pieces.

A change of pace followed, the distant, unearthly, "Echoes of the Future", with Ponty on an electronically enhanced, blurry violin—a moody, windswept piece full of swirling rushes of sound.

The finale was an absolute masterpiece, "Polyfold Dance", laced with gypsy overtones and Continental flair, as Ponty's violin brought to mind Gato Barbieri's romantic sax work in its phraseology and use of pauses. As in earlier numbers, they relied heavily on soloing skills, but spread it deftly around among the group members. In short, the set was a tour-de-force of intense musicality, inventive solos and firm melodies, combining the urgency of a light funk foundation and modern jazz into a truly memorable night of music.

PAPA JOHN CREACH
WITH THE MIDNIGHT SUN
Nixon Theatre
Pittsburgh, Pa.

By STEVE HANSEN

This was the first of the planned series of rock shows the historic Nixon Theatre has booked in hopes of staving off the wrecking ball. The new tenants feel a mix of theatre road shows and medium-draw, high caliber acts can restore the Nixon—which predates even Papa John—to its former greatness, and provide Pittsburgh with the much needed forum for new talent to crack the city. Unfortunately, neither of the two Papa John sets sold well. Attendance was held down, however, by the erroneous belief that Papa John would be returning in two weeks with the Starship (he is no longer touring or recording with them) and by the fact that the second show was broadcast live on WDVE, the first such live rock concert broadcast in Pittsburgh history.

Papa John's group, Midnight Sun, opened each set displaying a tight,

rhythm-oriented proficiency. The Sun are 3/5 of the old Zulu, with whom Papa John recorded two Grunt albums. John Parker on organ, Kevin Moore, guitar, and Holden Raphael, conga have been joined by bassist Bryan Tilford and drummer Mark Leon to make up Papa John's new complement on his first Buddah record, "I'm the Fiddle Man."

After an opening number, Papa John joined the Sun onstage. In his white shoes, maroon doubleknit slacks, white belt and flowered shirt he could be stepping off the links in Boise or heading for a fund raiser in Des Moines. But he's here to sizzle for the people. Painful arthritis has bowed his spine and rendered him even older appearing than his actual 58, but his nimble fingers have graciously been spared. His fiddle licks scamper playfully about the throbbing bottom line of the Sun; intertwining with it here, gently floating over it there, then suddenly swooping down on the beat like some crazed pelican after its prey.

Papa John carries on like this through an energetic hour and a half set, even tossing in a couple of vocals for good measure. Fortunately, he doesn't fancy himself a singer. He uses his vocals more

as an excuse to invite the audience in on the song, which the house did this night with gleeful abandon, hardly mindful of the fact that they had no idea what the words were. There is scant trace of a Western Pennsylvanian accent in Papa John's voice, where he lived until he was 18. More evident are the absorbed influences of the Chicago and Memphis blues scenes he spent a good deal of time around, playing with the likes of Roy Milton, T-Bone Walker, Big Joe Turner and Jimmy Rushing.

His concert material spanned those decades, yet there was hardly a lack of communication between the charismatic "Pops" and his predominantly white rock audience. Probably the only song most people were familiar with was "Over the Rainbow," a tune easily several decades older than the average age of the audience. But they brought him back with a commotion that would have done a crowd several times their size proud. When he did come back for the second encore, it was with the consummate skill honed by years on the road that he brought the audience over the edge with "Milk Train," and then was quickly gone and on to another city.

SUN RA
The Fivespot
New York, N. Y.

By RON WELBURN

The Five Spot Cafe is one of New York City's most famous jazz clubs, having been in business since the mid-fifties. It has moved once and been closed more than once, and in the early seventies it was renamed The Two Saints because of its location at the edge of the East Village on St. Mark's Place (8th Street) and Third Avenue. But for the summer of 1975 this landmark returned to its illustrious name and hosted in fine fashion musicians that it sometimes tentatively gave gigs to when "Avant Garde" came on the scene for keeps: Cecil Taylor played an unprecedented three-week engagement where every show was a sellout and those who couldn't fit inside lined the curb waiting for the next performance; Ornette Coleman and Don Cherry, who played together there in 1959 and made history, led their respective groups; Jackie McLean was in terrific form; there were others who made the Five Spot's rejuvenation a major event against the background of a city headed for financial disaster. The Humanistic Solar Arkestra of Sun Ra played there late in August, one of their themes, "Give up Your Death", deserves to reach the ears of Abe Beame, Big M.A.C. and everyone else from banks to the subway riders now shelling out an extra fifteen cents in fares.

For those who haven't heard Sun Ra since the late sixties his music has, on the surface, toned down a bit. There are still those sections where the Arkestra members display their collective pyrotechnical skills that make a solid emotional impact but even these are more muted than they were before. Sun Ra is now making good use of a level of dynamics reminiscent of his work in the fifties, and the opening of a set I attended illustrated how intensity could be achieved with the saxophones and trumpets playing all at once in the high energy style, only this time they were barely audible.

The Arkestra played many of the themes popular by now with its staunch followers, "Astro Black," "Love in Outer Space," the rhythmic but wispy "Theme of the Star-Gazers" and of course, "Space Is The Place."

The instrumentation this evening included two baritone saxes (Charles Davis and Danny Thompson), three altoists (Marshall Allen, Danny Davis and Pat Patrick, with Patrick doubling, on baritone), bass clarinet (Eloe Emoe), bassoon (James Jackson), two drummers (one was John Gilmore, who doubled on tenor sax), trumpet and mellophone (Ack Tal Ebah), trumpet (Abdullah), bass violins (John Ore and Ronnie Boykins, a bass guitar and a tuba player, with Sun Ra playing organ and acoustic piano. Marshall Allen plays an extremely important role in this band as its concert master.

While the percussion played, led by a vibes solo, Allen began playing a koro, the seventeen-string harp-lute from the Senegambia region of West Africa; he coaxed lovely melodies from it. From this point the Arkestra moved into its well-known music while June Tyson led the dancers in the narrow space between the stage and seating area. From organ Sun Ra switched to piano and a medley of vintage compositions ensued: Ellington's "Lightning" was performed between Fletcher Henderson's arrangements for Jelly Roll Morton's "King Porter Stomp" and "Yeah Yeah." The facility with which the Arkestra performed these pieces that were nonetheless difficult for the musicians of their time, and the fact that the soloists were faithful to their idiom and period is enough to make one realize that the Arkestra's universality is certainly timeless and makes its appeal even more attractive. After this was Sun Ra's solo rendition of "Autumn in New York" which led into Gilmore soloing brilliantly with his unmistakable crisp clear tone. As he played the melody he substituted a diminished chord in the opening phrases that lent a solemn edge to the theme as it was accompanied by the slides of aerial and other views of Manhattan. I think he was telling us something. Even though the chants extolling the audience to "prepare yourself for the moonship journey..... greetings from the twenty-first century...." and stating that "around the earth is an eternity of damned air" led to their final promenade through the audience asking listeners to give up their deaths, the "Autumn in New York" mood hung in the club's atmosphere. With that Sun Ra left New York to face its month to month fiscal crisis, and whatever happens here, he'll say we first heard about it from him.

BOBBY "BLUE" BLAND
The Boarding House
San Francisco, Calif.

By CLARK PETERSON

"I was raised on country music and always wanted to do a C&W album. It's a little late, but there's certain things the public will accept."

So that's why Bobby Bland stuck with safe ballads in his opening night appearance here. He knows that *Get On Down* is "Not the best; not the worst," and that he can keep working from here on without a hit. Still he has to promote the LP, so he chose a token cut, Merle Haggard's "Today I Started Loving You Again" and then leapt right back into the blues. He doesn't read his album reviews but admits the blues are where he belongs. He and B.B. King even plan a Japan tour next year despite the widespread disapproval critics gave their live LP together. With the MF's (Mellow Fellows) behind them, even Tommy Turdnoise can sound fine, and that practically happened this time.

Mel Jackson led the nine piece forcefield through the gears - a lengthy, overpowering warm-up like a blast furnace. Then Burnett Williams (who's he?) lurched out to our surprise and ran through "Let's Get Married," "Love Won't Let Me Wait," and "Bad Love." If he sounds as well without this backup, he's another Al Green-ish up and comer. Finally they got the hook on him and the lion of blues trundled out and commenced roaring.

The spotlights shone on the firthsome, middle-aged man, skull to ankle in faded denim, all studded up to the spry denim cap perched upstairs. He crooned his vocals, spitting out words at junctures as he wrenched his head sideways and proceeded through "That's the Way Love Is" and "Stormy Monday." Impromptu shouts from the crowd plus his own ad libs (Is this your better half?) he queried a front-row female of her seatmate as he leaned under the lights) were all captured on KSan's live broadcast. The packed house craved him and caught him off-guard several times, causing him to recoil in laughter instead of finishing a line. Finally, "Driftin'" and "Driftin'" curtailed his short segment and no amount of applause could recall him before the late show. Bland had quit long before either we or him were close to being drained.

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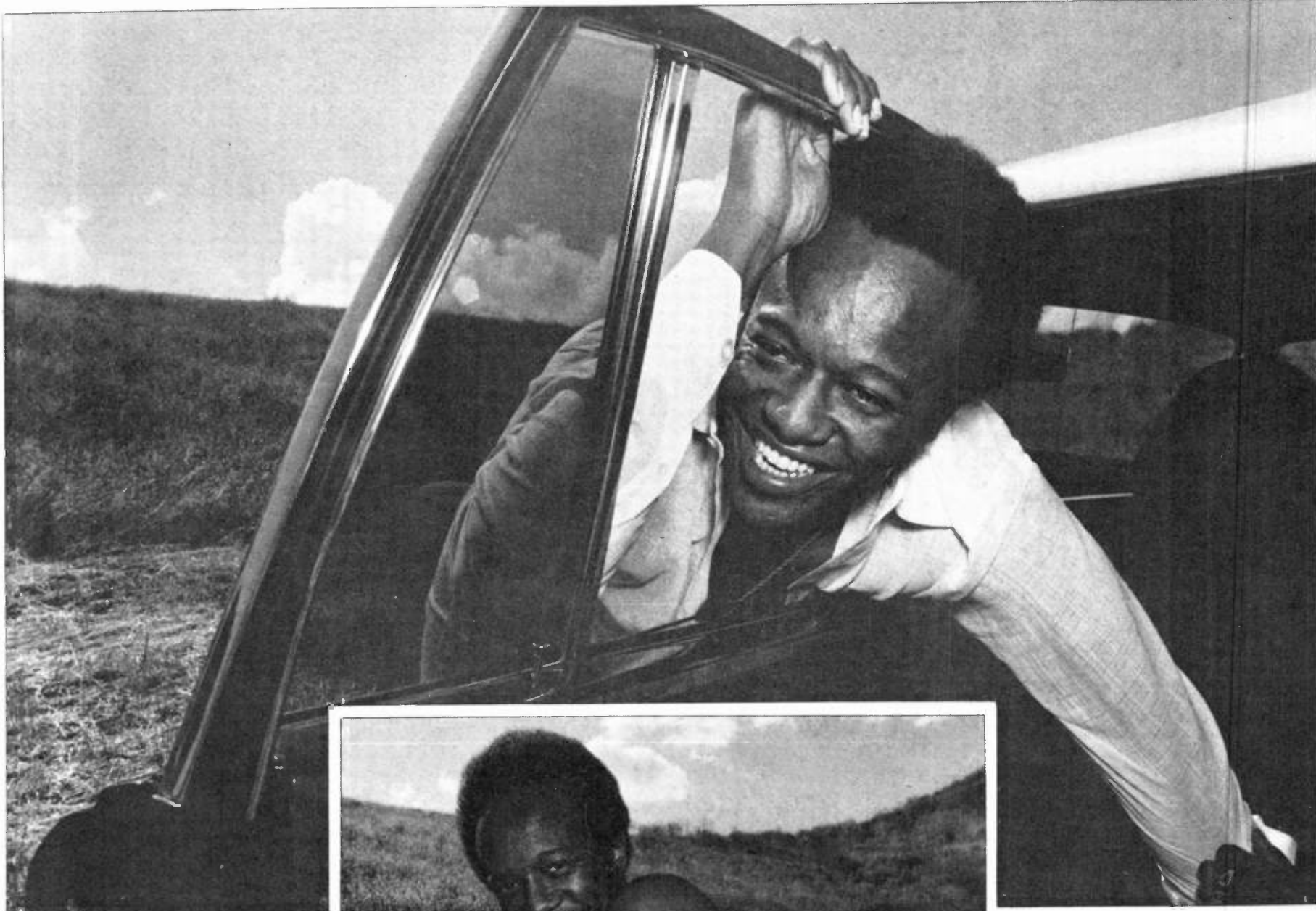
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Apr. 74 Grand Funk, Music on TV, Aerosmith, New York Dolls.
May 74 Rolling Stones, Joni Mitchell, Ronettes.

July 74 Bowie, Roy Wood, Kinks, 10CC, Wet Willie.
Aug. 74 Suzy Quatro, Sly, Elton John, Abba, more.
Sept. 74 Surf Issue- Beach Boys, Jan & Dean, The Raspberries.
Nov. 74 Eno, Badfinger, Wizzard, Who, Todd, Linda Ronstadt.
Dec. 74 1974 World Record Roundup, Keith Moon solo, Stones, Jan & Dean, Sedaka.
Jan. 75 Hudson Bros., Alex Harvey, Roxy Music, Billy Swan, Grand Funk.
Feb. 75 Donovan, Genesis, Dylan, Kiss, Sweet, Nektar.
Mar. 75 Led. Zep., Rodney Bingenheimer, Lennon, Hollies, Alice Cooper, Wet Willie.
Apr. 75 Pink Floyd, Tommy, Del Shannon, Faces.
May 75 Carly Simon, Local Music Scenes of America, more.
June 75 Hunter-Ronson, Eagles, Beau Brummels, Rolling Stones,

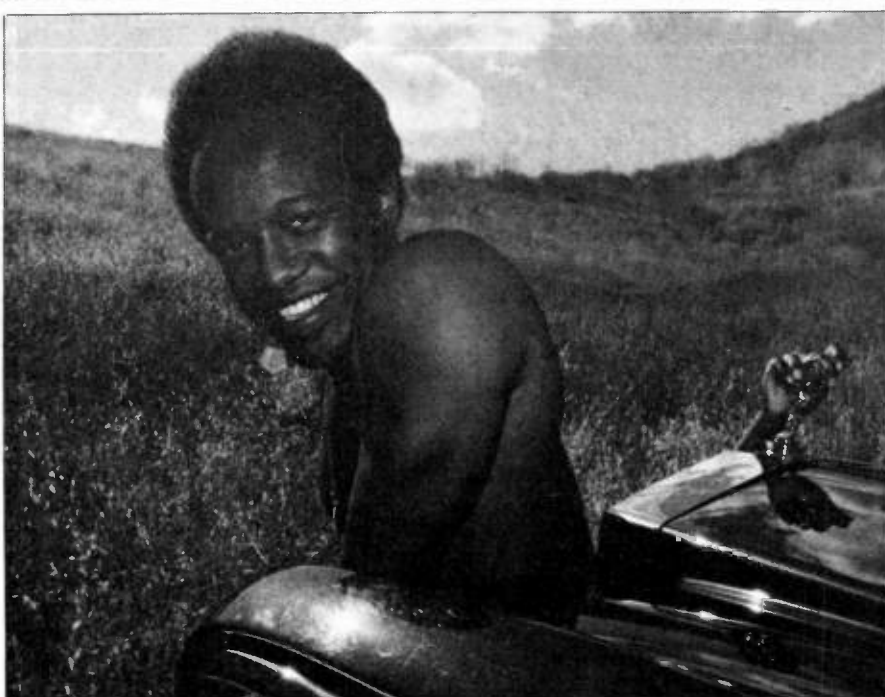


He's written hits for Rod Stewart, the Rolling Stones, Wilson Pickett and the J. Geils Band. He's played on countless sessions from Aretha Franklin to the Allman Brothers. At present he's finishing up a tour of Europe and the States with Rod Stewart and the Faces and preparing for the release of Safety Zone, thought to be his most adventurous and "progressive" album to date. With the help of Herbie Hancock, Wah Wah Watson and other LA session greats under the direction of David Robinson [Pointer Sisters, Herbie Hancock, The Headhunters] this next album should establish Bobby Womack as a major talent in his own right at long last.

His is an incredibly successful career, now into a second decade, which has been splintered with tragedies few artists have encountered, more less endured. From the brutal killing of his close friend and co-worker Sam Cooke, early in his professional life to the recent stabbing death of his brother Harry Womack in the hills above Hollywood last year. Following is a sequential account of the personal and professional life of Bobby Womack, in his own words.

He was born March 4, 1943 in Cleveland, Ohio. His father worked in a steel mill and sang with an amateur gospel group called the Voices of Love. Wednesday nights the group rehearsed at the Womack house, and after three years of this, Bobby and his four brothers grew tired of hearing the same thing every week, and one day decided to mock the older group. So they worked out harmony parts and proceeded to perform their parody.

Mr. Womack was impressed enough to drop out of his own group and spend his time working with the boys. Every afternoon he'd come home from work



A Documented History of BOBBY WOMACK

and rehearse them, while evenings they would sing at local storefront churches to raise a little extra money for the struggling family. The father played guitar, although Bobby, then about 8 years old, had been practicing on the sly, teaching himself chords and hanging around the Majestic Hotel to learn what he could from the R&B groups that played there. Not only did he have no training, he was even playing the thing upside down, but when his father heard him play he recognized Bobby's instinctive talent.

The Womack Brothers were well known around the neighborhood when a major gospel group called the Soul Stirrers came to town one day in 1953. From that day can be traced the beginning of Bobby Womack's professional career, and it was a momentous day in another sense as well. For it was on this occasion that Bobby met the man

who was to be a primary influence on his life, Sam Cooke.

BY BOBBY WOMACK

When my father heard the Soul Stirrers were in town, he went down and hit on the manager to see if we could open the show. The man was skeptical, but Sam happened to be around and he said "Go ahead, give the boys a chance." So we went out and rented matching blue uniforms. We were still very young. I had to stand on a box just to reach the mike. We were opening the show, and there were some 500 people in the place. So we got on stage and the people were just amazed. We had this one song, a real fast one, and we got so worked up I forgot how to end it. So it kept goin' on and on, and finally the crowd was so excited, Sam came out on stage and led the crowd in an ovation. Then he called my

mother up, put \$10 in her purse, and had her stand by the door while all the people went by and put money in. We made about \$73 that night, and that was a lot of money.

When we got home my dad said, "See what I'm talkin' about?" Pretty soon we were playing everywhere. We started traveling, we toured with the Staple Singers, we were making it real big. On this gospel circuit, we were playing mostly churches that held from 300 to 600 people; sometimes we'd play major gospel shows in front of some 3,000.

We used to have a lot of problems in those days with my littlest brother Cecil, who was only four at the time. He was always falling asleep on stage! One time he even wet his pants while he was singing. The preacher was stomping his foot and noticed the water splashing, and said "What the hell?" and the audience was laughing their heads off. I told my dad, "man, I can't play behind this kind of thing." But that's how it was.

One day I was in a restaurant with my mom and this guy was there changing records in the jukebox. He got talking to mom and she told him about our group, so he said "Why don't you come on down tomorrow?" But when we got there, he told my father he wanted us to sing pop songs. And of course he said "No way!" So we took him aside and begged and argued until finally he said okay. But he wanted to hear the song first. It turned out the song was called "Buffalo Bill" - it was country & western! But we cut that tune and the guy gave us a check for \$600 and had us sign a contract. That was a lot of money for us. Next day he called and said, "You know what? Somebody broke in the studio last night and stole all your tapes! So the deal's off..." A few weeks later we started hearing the song on country stations while we were traveling, and it was under

“Sam (Cooke) was a guy who always looked out for me.”

a different name. And there was nothing we could do.

Meanwhile Sam Cooke had moved out to California and was singing pop, he had big hits like “You Send Me,” and now he was getting ready to start his own record company. Pretty soon one of the guys from the Five Blind Boys, who were friends of ours, called him up and told him about us, and how good we were getting to be. And Sam said, “The Womack Brothers? I know those kids! Tell ‘em to send a tape, and I’ll see what I can do.”

We sent him “Lookin’ For a Love,” only it was a gospel thing, called “Couldn’t Hear Nobody Pray.” It was a traditional gospel song that I had arranged so it was faster and more like rock & roll, but to keep dad happy we kept the gospel lyrics. When Sam heard it, he said “That’s a smash, Bobby, but it ain’t goin’ nowhere. Know why? Cause you’re singing gospel! I can’t get no gospel played on any pop stations.”

Now I understand that, but Pop just couldn’t accept it. So to prove his point Sam told him, “Look, I’m gonna cut the gospel song first, just to show you, and it ain’t gonna make it. And then I’m gonna put the boys on a big gospel show and let you see what happens.” And that’s what he did. We got booked on this big gospel show and we had a record out that was playing on all the gospel stations, and we felt like stars. Then we got up on stage and we were hot, we were tearing the house down, and little things started happening. We found out somebody had tuned the guitar out of tune. Another guy from one of the groups walked past and pulled the cord out of my amp. Little things like that. I thought, man, these cats are cold. You’d walk up to guys from the Swan Silvertones or whatever and say hi, and they wouldn’t even speak!

My father couldn’t believe it. He’d thought all these people wanted us to make it. Now that we were making it, they didn’t want to know about us. So I said, “Dad, what’d I tell you? That’s why we should be singing rock & roll. You talk about religion? They got no religion, treating us like that.”

But we went back to Cleveland after that. I was about sixteen then, in the 11th grade, my brother Harry was in the 10th, and Cecil was in the 9th. My two older brothers had just finished school. So we had to make a decision. One day we told pop we weren’t gonna sing no more gospel. He said fine, but you ain’t livin’ in this house. So we left, all except for Cecil.

This time, when we called Sam, there were no arguments. He sent us to Chicago, and we cut the song in about two hours, with just a guitar and piano. It was Sam’s suggestion that we sing “I’m lookin’ for a love” in place of “couldn’t hear nobody pray” but aside from that we kept my arrangement. And the record was a smash. For our first gig Sam booked us in the Apollo with James Brown, and he sent us \$3,000 to buy us a car so we could get there. We went straight to the used car lot and bought the shiniest black Cadillac we could find. It cost us two grand, and before we got to Akron all the tires blew out. All the way to New York things kept going wrong, and we had to push it in toward the end, but we got there.

First thing that happened after we checked in at the Cecil Hotel, where all

the gospel groups stayed, we ran into this white chick. Now dad had always warned us about white women, but we were feeling pretty big, being in New York hitting on this white chick. She said she would give us all some action, but it would cost ten dollars. So we took her up to the room, and the next day we all had the clap.

It was a crazy week. We were doing great at the Apollo, but we’d run out of money and didn’t know enough to ask for what we had coming each day. So we hadn’t eaten in three days and were so sick from the clap we could hardly sing. Finally we went to a clinic. Man, we learned a lot that week!

The second time we played the Apollo was with Sam, because he didn’t think James Brown had looked after us right. During rehearsals, Sam’s bass player got in an argument and walked out, so I said “hey, I can play bass,” even though I’d only played guitar up to then. Sam was amazed at how good I could play, and left handed too, so he started taking the group along everywhere he toured, just so I’d be there to play bass for him. We were on the road so much it was a year before we cut our next record, another gospel thing called “I’ll Make It Alright.”

It got to the point where I had to tell Sam I didn’t think it looked right for me to come off stage from leading my own group and come back out playing bass for him, besides which I was a guitar player. So he offered me \$200 a night to be in his band, and sent the Valentinos home. I’d be sending money back from the road to pay the bills, which I didn’t mind, but eventually it began to seem to us that Sam was trying to break up the group.

So I went to Sam and told him how we felt. And he did something that really surprised me. He told me, “Bobby, here’s what I want you to do. Go write a song, all by yourself this time, take full credit, cause you’re good enough to be doing your own stuff now.” And he told me about publishing, how much I was throwing away by not having my own publishing company. He told me all about that, and other ways people will try to rip you off, and said that he believed in me and the group, and was gonna put a lot of money behind us.

I wrote the song, it was called “It’s All Over Now” and it was a huge hit; sold over half a million. We went on that tour again with Sam, our last tour before the Valentinos broke up. It was on that tour that I met Jimi Hendrix.

Jimi at that time was called a beatnik; there weren’t no hippies then. He was playing guitar for a guy named Gorgeous George, who treated him like he was nothing. Jimi would go out to open the show, and he was playing with his teeth and everything; the people used to go crazy. So George said he’d crack that guitar across his head if he played it with his teeth anymore, and Jimi, he was so humble, just said “I’m sorry, I only wanted to help the show.” I’ll never forget one night we were riding in the bus, we had just got paid and my brother Harry had decided to hide his money in his shoe which he had off. He looked later and it was gone, so he said “look at that beatnik, he ain’t got no money, he probably stole it.” So that night while Jimi was asleep, Harry took his guitar and threw it out the window. He never



did figure out what happened to that guitar. And that was the last I heard of Jimi Hendrix until he made it.

When we got back to California, Sam started telling us we had to make a change. He said the Valentinos were

gonna be real big, but we had to watch out. It was around 1964, and he said, “some big changes gonna happen in this business, it’s gonna scare you. Some cats gonna come over here with long hair, freaks, and things never be the same again.”

"At one time, I was probably the hottest session guitarist in the country."

He started acting and talking real funny, almost like he knew he was gonna die. He'd been taking care of old business, getting his things straight. And then he brought me this song, which he had written and arranged all by himself, called "A Change is Gonna Come." Now for years I'd been working with him on all his songs, he'd write the lyrics and I'd fill in the melodies and the music. But this one he did himself, and he told me he thought it was really gonna mean something. I knew right away it was something special. RCA didn't want to put it out, they thought it sounded spooky.

Even though we'd finished a tour, I thought the Valentinos should go back out on the road to all the same places we'd gone over so well, just do a tour of our own instead of a package show. Sam loaned us some money, even let us take his bus, and we got to Houston when we heard the news that Sam had got killed. So we came all the way back, and then everything started dissolving. The record company was collapsing, the guys were all going in different directions.

Now I'd been closer to Sam than just about anybody. We'd worked on all those songs and traveled together, of course, but more than that he was a guy that always looked out for me, taught me things about music and the business that made it possible for me to get where I am today.

So when he died, I felt obligated, like I had something to carry on for him. I even took it to the point of marrying his wife, not long afterward. A lot of folks took it the wrong way, they were saying we must've had a thing going before, but that wasn't true. I liked her, but it didn't become love until later. At the time, it was just something I felt I had to do, for her and for Sam. There were all kinds of people coming around, going through Sam's stuff, looking for tapes and whatnot, you know, and the company was falling apart, so somebody had to be around to take care of business.

After all that went down, I started moving around. I went to Chess Records, who I had talked to before when they told me the Rolling Stones were cutting "It's All Over Now," which was of course a Top Ten record for them and pulled our version up to No. 20. I did some songs for Chess, then I went to Atlantic, wrote a bunch of songs for Wilson Pickett - "Midnight Mover," "I'm In Love," "99 1/2 Won't Do," "Jealous Love" - some of his biggest records. I did some things for Aretha Franklin, and was playing sessions for just about everybody, I'd say I was probably the hottest session guitarist in the country at one time. I was on Janis Joplin's last album, she wrote that song "Mercedes Benz" about a car I had.

My manager at that time was Ed Wright, who was also President of Minit Records, so I ended up there where I had a couple of albums and some hit singles, moved on to Liberty when Minit was bought up, along with Ike and Tina Turner. I had some big sellers there, "California Dreamin'," "More Than I Can Stand," and another called "Oh How I Miss You Baby." People were starting to talk now, saying "ooh, this cat is something!"

Then Liberty went out of business too, and I was on UA, First thing I did there was a live album, since everybody had always told me I never let it all out in the studio, and I wanted to see how it would sound. So, I cut it, and it was a hit, and I sat back and said, "far out, I didn't know I did all that stuff." Cause when I get on stage, I don't know anything but trying to turn the people on; it's like an instinct that takes over from my gospel days.

Now I was beginning to feel like I could



Brad Elterman



SAFETY ZONE
Bobby Womack
UA LA 544-G

By BOB FUKUYAMA

Bobby Womack's experience and Godfather-cool account for the sophisticated-pro image his records project. However, he's held close to his roots--the gospel and the soul--in the twenty years he's polished and streamlined his act. Mannered style has never overwhelmed his music's purity.

Not that Womack doesn't use every stylistic trick in his encyclopedic-volume book; he does. But a clarity of purpose threads through all his work that excuses the occasional excess and miscalculated artifice. As productive as he is (this is his second album within eight months), mediocre output is inevitable. He always lands on his feet, however. After the disappointing *I Don't Know What The World Is Coming To*, comes this latest (and among the greatest) Womack albums, *Safety Zone*. It's so self-assuredly confident that I can picture Bobby chuckling "Look man, I can do this anytime."

Five of the eight songs contained here are self-penned--you'd think that after handing Ron Wood an album's worth of material he'd be hard pressed for

recordable tunes. (Never!) The non-originals include Strong-Whitfield's "I Wish It Would Rain," a super choice thanks to a fine gospel-flavored performance. It's the kind of wistfully romantic ballad Bobby seldom records but always excels at.

The LP's only other ballad is the more emotive, almost desperate, "Trust In Me." Womack's emphaticness gives credence to his "Preacher" reputation. Using an album as a pulpit can be risky, but his sincerity makes "Everything's Gonna Be Alright" lyrically tolerable: "I've been trying to keep on top/Everything I have, everything I own is in a pawn shop/The city got no feelin'/Don't care about me at all." While the chuka-chuka funk rhythm supports him, Womack, no longer preaching, appeals: "Girl, I hope you'll be there/I sure hope you'll be there/To catch me when I fall."

As evidenced, the feeling that urban alienation is supplantable only by strength-giving love pervades the album. Womack's ghetto consciousness is reflected in his world-wise/world-weary persona's ambivalence. However the songs superficially deviate from this pessimism/optimism dichotomy, the underlying sentiment is omnipresent. "Daylight" and "I Feel A Groove Comin' On" are seemingly light-hearted tunes about partying and dancing, but in the LP's context, there's a reason for "Groove" being so manically uptempo that, although it says to "dance dance dance," it's impossible to do so. Mindless entertainment can take you only so far away from the ghetto's schizophrenia, intimates Bobby.

His intense vocals are soulful throughout, his material embellished by fine instrumental support from the cream of L.A.'s session fraternity (Herbie Hancock even guests). David Robinson's tasteful production never clouds Womack's spotlight. The result is a sensuous, fun listening album with plenty to say. Bobby should be proud. Sam Cooke can rest easy.

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really do something. I told UA I wanted to produce an album myself; after all, I had produced Sam Cooke, why should I need a producer? So I went in the studio and in four days I cut *Communication and Understanding*. The company didn't like it because I'd spent twice the budget, but both albums took off, and we had hit singles - "That's the Way I Feel 'Bout Cha" did a million, then we had "Woman's Gotta Have It," "Sweet Caroline," "Understanding" and "Harry Hippie." Every one of them sold close to a million, and all inside of one year.

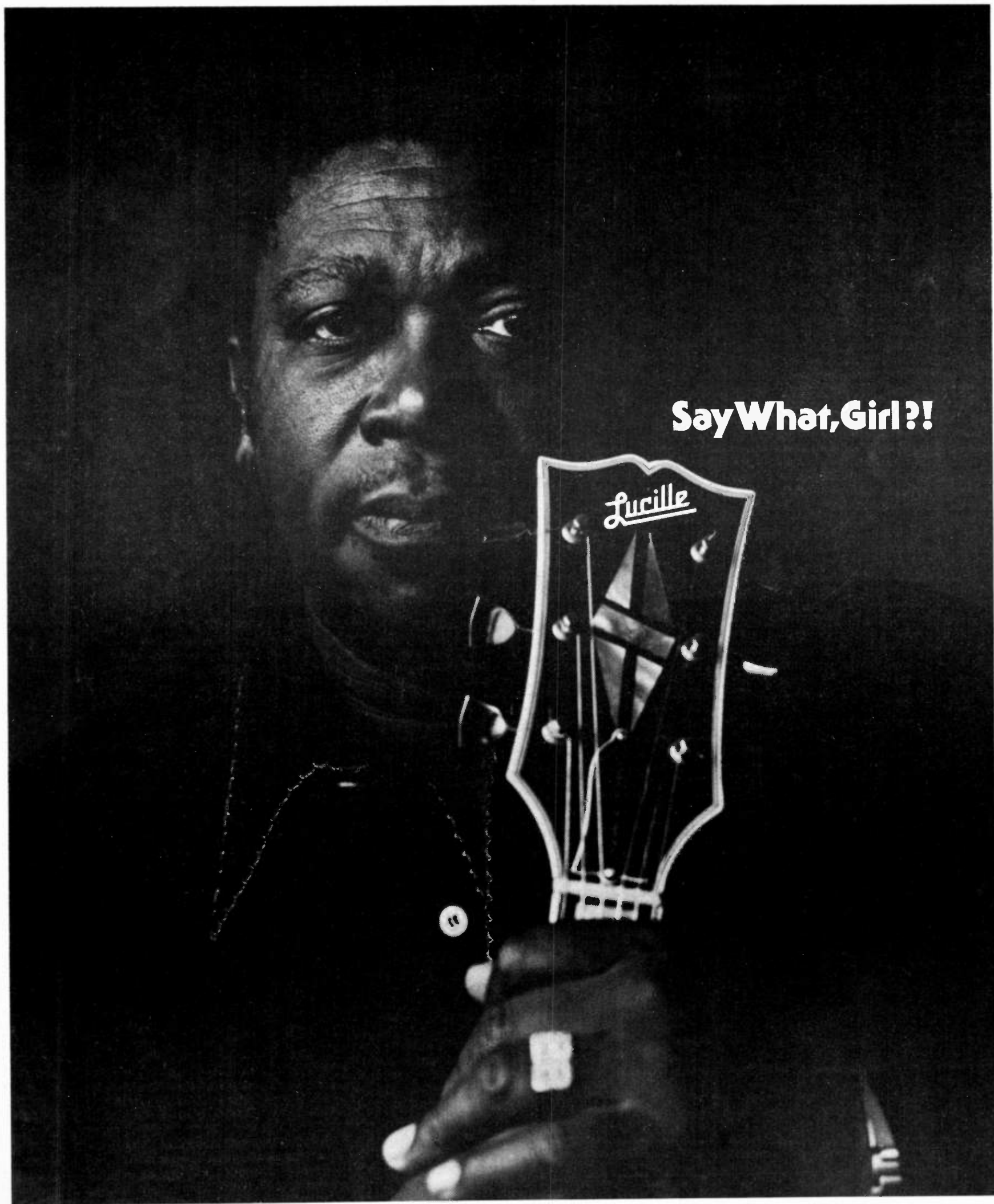
It was about this time that Harry started talking to me about getting the Valentinos back together. I'd always been the leader of the group, I'd talked them into leaving school when we were young, and now they were in the position of not being able to get jobs because they dropped out. They wanted to sing, anyway, so they asked me to help them get the group back together.

I wanted to put them on UA, but I didn't like the deal they offered. They were gonna give them \$10,000, and if the record didn't sell, they said they would take the money out of my royalties! So I took them to Atlantic and got \$25,000, and they put out a single. We're gonna do more too; I've written them some songs, and I helped them buy some instruments too. They're gonna be performing with me on the road, and whatever other gigs they can find. I know and they know they'll never be a really big group, but as long as they can play supper clubs and lounges and that sort of thing, anything just to be playing and make money, they'll be cool.

Back to myself, the next thing I did was *Across 110th Street*. Isaac Hayes and Curtis Mayfield had done their things, and I told UA they could make me just as big, and they already had a film company too. So they got me the score for this film, actually J.J. Johnson was already involved, but it was a chance at least to write some songs even if I wasn't running the show. They messed it up, though, like for certain segments of the picture I wrote specific songs, and they used them in the wrong places. I thought it made me look stupid, and besides UA didn't capitalize at all on the fact I wrote the songs. My name was buried in the credits.

But it helped. Now that I've done all this stuff, I can go up to anybody and they say man, do whatever you want. Before, I'd try to tell people how much I'd already been through, and they didn't have no idea how far back I went. I've had other problems, too. Like they used to say I sounded too much like Wilson Pickett, not knowing I'd given Pickett all my songs. Sam had warned me, but I still made a few mistakes. Ever since then, though, I make sure I get credit for everything I do.

Now some of them are saying I sound like Sam Cooke, you know the easy sound. Man, I've been hearing that for ten years. When I first started they said I was copying Sam, but pretty soon those same people started saying, "damn, if this cat is writing new material that still sounds like Sam, he must've been part of that." Lately I've heard people say my music is like hearing where Sam would've been now, if he'd lived. They talk about me having a "Sam Cooke flavor." And I just say, "hey, you ever thought that Sam Cooke might've had my flavor? He just got over with it first." You listen to that old stuff like "You Send Me." When he died, he wasn't singing like that. So to me, it's just common sense. You listen to all those records, and you'll know what I've done. I don't have no point to prove. Themusic speaks for itself.



Say What, Girl?!

Lucille Talks Back

ABCD-898



SOUL & JAZZ SINGLES



By JOE MC EWEN

Let's not waste time. Somebody finally turned on the faucet and August's trickle has turned into September's flood. Lots of favorites this month but certainly at the top of the list is Aretha with "Mr. DJ (5 for the DJ)" (Atlantic 3289), a record full of the type of testifying life and energy that has been absent from much of her recent output. "Mr. DJ" is a bit lightweight lyrically but still lots of fun, especially for those who can indulge themselves on radio, "playin' those ballads and the beat all day long." Both crazy and inspired, Aretha sounds like she's having a good time and besides when's the last time you remember Lady Soul screaming "You got to shake your funky soul" over an absolutely righteous groove. The best thing on the market.

In fact female singers are hitting particularly hard this season. Right behind Aretha is Mavis and the Staple Singers, who've survived the Stax mess and are now at Warners with "Let's Get It On" and you don't have to think too hard to guess what the song is about. Curtis Mayfield produced this piece of delicious erotica, a far cry in message from "Uncloudy Day" or even "Respect Yourself." Who would have thought that Mavis would tease us with "the smell of the morning flowers/as we pass the hours/I wanna do it again" and Pop echoing every refrain. Sexy and suggestive, should steam up any room. Even raunchier is Jeannie Reynolds "Lay Some Lovin' On Me" (Casablanca 846). Jeannie sounds like a torchy Mavis over one of Don Davis' punchy Muscle Shoals tracks. "The way you're lovin' me/about to lose my self respect/in private places rated X." Whew. Not to be outdone is Lady Gwen McCrae from Miami and "Love Insurance" (Cat 1999), a policy you can't buy from State Farm or Mutual of Omaha. Last year husband George brought home the bacon with "Rock Your Baby" but Gwen seems to be doing most of the shopping in 1975.

Anybody who thinks that Van McCoy's work is easily xeroxed should listen to Black Magic's "Hey Boy, Come And Get It" (Avco 4658). Without the peculiar bass drum pattern of the original (Stylistics) and the absorbing, spatial arrangement, this Horace Ott produced remake never gets off the ground. Neither does Ronnie Dyson's "Lady In Red" (Columbia 10211), which has all the usual Philly clichés but lacks a standout hook or lyric. Dyson is one of my favorite vocalists but since his work with Thom Bell ("One Man Band") his music has been less than compelling. More enticing dancing fare includes the red hot Sunshine Band's "Shotgun Shuffle" (TK 1010), an instrumental that slipped out of Miami a few months ago but has since been reissued following the enormous success of "Get Down Tonight." If you didn't get enough of "Bad Luck" the first time around the Atlanta Disco Band (Scorpio 600) does a pumping, if fluffy, instrumental remake anchored by Philadelphia's drummer non pareil Earl Young and produced by Dave Crawford (where has he been the last year). Ronnie Spector's reemergence is a very clipped, Gloria Gaynorish "You'd Be Good For Me" (Tom Cat 10380) while the South Shore Commission's followup to "Free Man" is Ultra High Frequency's unjustly ignored "Right Track." (Wand 11291). The remake is faithful to the original including churning Philly rhythm

track and chugging train noises, the group even has a tenor with creamy Smokey Robinson sounding falsetto. Unfortunately the single was released almost the same day as the new Blue Magic album, *13 Blue Magic Lane*, and "Right Track" is a prominent part of the LP. Norman Harris worked on both. Wonder which version will get derailed?

It's easy to be cynical about Gil Scott-Heron's "Johannesburg" (Arista 0152), since Gil has made it a point of stating that he would never self-consciously record a disco record and inferring that "The Bottle" was a fluke. Certainly the *First Minute of a New Day* was conspicuously absent of danceable melodies. "Johannesburg" sports a heavy, Philly sounding bass drum and, like "The Bottle," a very persistent and memorable hook. Maybe he decided that there wasn't really anything wrong with political dance music. Anyway the revolution may not be televised instead "What's the word/Johannesburg" will be resounding from discos all across the country. Let me see your I.D. Somewhat reminiscent of "Jive Talkin'" the Midnight Band boogies on and down. Recommended. Also surprising, though no less engaging, is the Wailers "No Woman, No Cry" (Island 037) recorded live at London's Lyceum. A slightly

altered arrangement from either *Natty Dread* or *African Herbsman*, spotlighting I Three's back-up vocals and Bob



Aretha's "Mr. D.J. (5 for the DJ)" is lightweight lyrically but still lots of fun for radio fans.

Marley's impassioned lead, it's lowdown and nasty Island music.

Nobody seems to know exactly what

IN THE SEVENTIES



By LITA ELISCU

Joe Williams used to sing with Count Basie's band vintage early '50s, used to work with Cannonball Adderley and most of the other people who made jazz sang in front of the Buddy Rich Orchestra at Buddy's Place where jazz, as someone said this night as many others, is still around. Again. Tunes by Basie, by Bacharach, by Ellington---because a jazz singer born after the fact must sing Ellington, just as the musicians must play. The delicacy, honor and conviction of the Duke's music is so obvious; some come early to love it, and others get there later, but loving the music is inevitable.

Buddy's Place doesn't so much jump as ease through and into, fool around with, the stuff that made jazz hot before it turned cool. This parallels Mr. Rich's own jim-dandy career as a fine drummer, of course.

The orchestra plays some intro numbers, much of which is set pieces played by rote---as much heart as a pacemaker and about the same tempo. Stated not in anger but simple realization that this preparation is necessary to wean the audience from their steaks and drinks to steaks, drinks and *listening*... More about this later.

Joe emerges, sails into "Don't Get Around Much Anymore," and belies those very words. This is a jazz singer, a pleasure for musicians and listeners. The phrasing, the control, the use of notes and lyric to emphasize the music itself, the bass velvet voice: it's all there, still. He sings Ellington, "Don't Mean A Thing (If You Ain't Got That Swing)" and "Love You Madly," the elegance of the Duke's lyrics shining on, diamonds nestled on the comfortable worn velvet of familiar riffs. He sings "Heritage," a show tune Ellington wrote about 'black pride' when the concept was too heavy even *with* quote marks; the Duke walked a swell tightrope.

During "Nobody Knows You When You're Down and Out," the audience joined in, and it is a fine tribute to Mr. Williams that he makes his craft so invisible that it never occurred to the eager chorus that he was doing anything more than singing a simple melody line, so they supplied the harmonies.

Oh, it was fun for everybody that music. The sweetness and wildness that make jazz an art just a little always out of control were both present in abundance. If Joe Williams plays in your town, have fun.

There is no doubt that Oscar Peterson, jazz's Big O, is a fine pianist when he wants to be. A classy pianist when he wants to be. Lately he has been giving solo concerts, bearing out the truth that a piano alone can fill the stage and the soul. His appearance at Carnegie Hall with Joe Pass was somewhat more in line with a Chinese meal, leaving holes in the hearts of the hungry. To be blunt, he candyassed. He showboated. He condescended. He shrank his soul and fit it into the pocket handkerchief with which his left hand mopped his face. This activity was perhaps the most intricate thing his left hand did all night and Mr. Peterson, should he decide to take out a policy with Lloyd's of London, could well save himself some money and insure only the right hand.

That right hand is brilliant of course. Mr. Peterson's reputation is much too well-founded and secure for anyone with ears not to realize that; not to realize that almost all pianists favor one hand; not to realize that his right is worth better than most pairs of hands applied to piano keys. It is an awe-inspiring thing to hear him ripple through a medley of Ellingtoniana, a proud man playing proud music. Notes hang in the air, create crystal blown right before your eyes, inhaled by the piano, re-exhaled to form new figurines.

But there were no meat and potatoes. Elegance outweighed emotion. There was little sense of improvisation or spontaneity, to be more exact.

Joe Pass played a solo set after Mr. Peterson, and if ever Technique and Expertise have smothered a wild thing, Mr. Pass is the man to do it. Note after note, riff after riff, brilliant and icy. No condescension but then, no great insights. Frankly, it was boring. Mr. Pass is understandable a great accompanist, in demand with singers and musicians alike, but on his own the performance does not create a vision firsthand. It is like falling in love and asking for help and

the story is with the Dramatics "No Rebate On Love" (Mainstream 5571) - perhaps recorded in between their Stax/ABC crossover. More exciting than anything on their latest album, produced and arranged by Detroit perennial Jimmy Roach, "No Rebate" is very up with lots of interplay between Ron Banks and LJ Reynolds. The message should be clear to everybody, "No rebate on love/give it up, give it up, give it up." Just as concise and a lot grittier is Syl Johnson's "I Only Have Love" (Hi 2295), more of the thumping Hi Sound.

Recommended. Betty LaVette's sunny "Thank You For Loving Me" (Epic 50143) as well as Debbie Taylor's (remember "No Deposit No Return") emotive ballad "I Don't Wanna Leave You" (Arista 0144) - Tom Moulton even mixes ballads now. Also the spicy Latin "Never Let You Go" (Jan 300) by Jobell and the Orchestra de Salsa, Harlem River Drive's peppy "Needing You" (Arista), King Floyd and Dorothy Moore's "We Can Love" (Chimneyville 10207) - produced by Eddie Floyd and reminiscent of those old Peggy Scott-JoJo Benson duets) and finally the odd ball record of the month, "Down In The Jungle" (Sound Gems 108) by Jungle Rock - heavily percussive with lots of jungle noises, a Mandrill derivative.

being told the facts of life: one remains positive that something vital had been left out.

The best part of the concert was the duet, and the actual life of jazz finally combusted on stage, lovely interplays of form and Time between the two men. Spirit made its presence known, and made what had gone before so much the paler.

...Giorgio Gomelsky has been in love with music, with all forms of it, since the early days when he would drag The First Rock Journalists to hear a ratty group at the Crawdaddy in England. The Rolling Stones was the name. Mr. Gomelsky has stayed in the business, managing groups, working with record companies, listening to the music. One of his recent ideas is that it would be a great thing to choose, say, 15 major cities throughout the world, and go to each one, looking for local talent. Pick 2 musicians out of the welter of young talent spawning in each place, until one has 30 or so musicians who will then stay together and play, interacting and learning from one another, creating music fit for record albums. He says that record companies are basically deaf to the music being created anywhere, except America and England, above and beyond the real limitations of language and being removed-from-the mainstream. He thinks that if new creative input is to be found anywhere, it will be from the new, untapped sources, and he sees the project as a kind of 'farm' activity whereby the record companies will foster the new talent which they will be looking for anyway.

Music needs to be more than another nostalgia stimulus, as jazz is fast becoming. People at Buddy's Place, for example, are paying for mnemonic reassurance. They are paying for the memories, not the music. Just as people go to rock 'events' to be present at the event, to get a charge off the theatre of *being there*. Still, one hopes there is an audience who actually listen to the music beyond lyrics which tell of a broken heart. Not all the time, of course; only enough to make room for new sources, new sounds, before one or two are weeded out and foisted upon us as *the* new sound. And if Giorgio Gomelsky sounds like another dreamer, one should add that his credits include the original Yardbirds -- from the earliest days -- as well as Brian Auger at his most creative, as well as the first recordings of John McLaughlin. After all, *somebody* has to be listening...

A RREET BEAT FOR ELLITE FLEET



"FANCY DANCER".

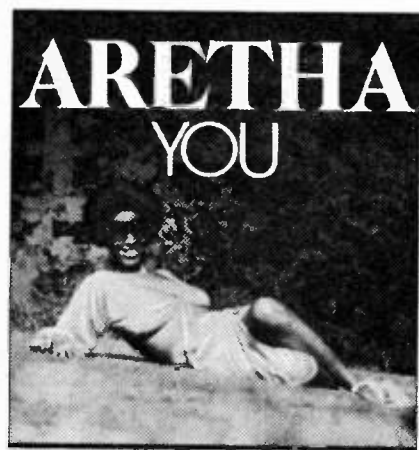
The new album from the new sensation in contemporary music.
Bobbi Humphrey. The Satin Doll herself.
On Blue Note Records & Tapes.



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Aretha's Latest is a Blend of All that has Made Black Music, American Music



YOU
Aretha Franklin
Atlantic SD 18151

By LITA ELISCU

What can anyone say about Aretha that has not been said before? Music has been pulsating out of her since she was a child singing in church, coming out of records since the now-famous gospel demos made for Chess when she was 16 (*The Gospel Soul of Aretha Franklin*) which contain a version of "Precious Lord" which...the words have already been used.

Since that gospel album, Aretha has moved steadily through various kinds of music, some suiting her better than others. There is a vein of popular soul of which she is undisputed owner, the Queen as she is so often called. When she strays from it to be the female Sinatra and woo various middle-of-the-road Vegas revue-lovers, well, the strings threaten to suffocate her and the overly lush arrangements make her sound almost silly. But one of the aspects of this artist is that her career, spanning actual decades, has had a secure foundation for so long, that she can put out albums *all* the time; unlike other performers who consider an 'up' period synonymous with record releases, Ms. Franklin's life, to an extent, is in her recorded music. Sometimes, her perspective has made the music suffer, but this is not one of those times. From the first soaring notes of an obvious single, "Mr. D.J." with Bobbye Hall's congas right there to push everyone along, Aretha's voice is simply great, and the music never lets up. There is a lovely, spare feeling here missing lately, and everything has been de-emphasized in favor of her voice.

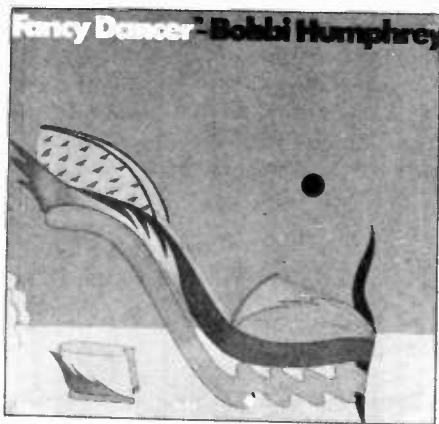
The songs are about the same as always, eminently hummable, with good hooks, commercial songs of heart-stealing and breaking. There is nothing gospelish except for the voice which pours a wonderful waterfall cascade of notes over the intros and choruses. As the title suggests, the songs are about "You," a helpmeet not always helpful but, in the end, there. Although the obvious is that she is singing to someone else, one gets the feeling that Ms. Franklin also means herself.

Jerry Wexler's production -- a partnership which goes back some time with Aretha -- is so well-crafted as to almost unnoticeable. The musicians complement the vocals, the engineer captures all the nuances and sky-high notes she possesses, each track is a gem, a textbook on how to produce.

There's no doubt this is all a format, but THIS is really it, the best. The imitators have gotten so good and so numerous that sometimes one forgets who was the

original. Compared to jazz, say, this is a rigid, uncomplicated music, and yet even as I write this, I can remember seeing Ms. Franklin a few years ago, when she was not at her best; sitting at dinner, waiting to be entertained after *Sole Amandine* and chit-chat, and then the music on stage, and those first few notes and everyone is jumping up and clapping and I know there are tears in my eyes when she hits the first high note. Not cool, probably overdramatic, but it happened and I really don't care why any more. I am just glad that it does.

This album is a blend of all that has made black music -- American music -- the exciting powerful magic it is, and able to last so long. Even when it is no more than commercial, the funky rhythms, the gospel-textured emotion, the real-life lyrics, combine to say something that still needs saying. There are few enough albums one can imagine playing in the laundromat where the round windows go round forever...and in smoke-filled rooms where the lights are low and couples merely hold on to one another...and on a turntable right now.



FANCY DANCER
Bobbi Humphrey
Blue Note LA550-G

By BOB FUKUYAMA

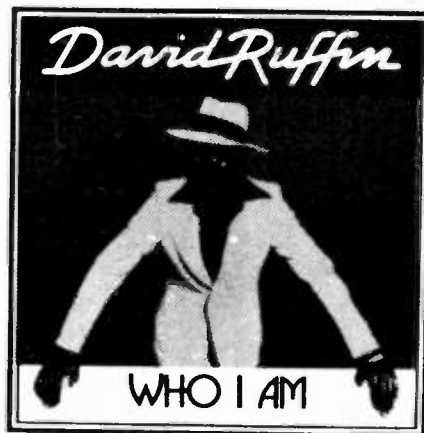
Bobbi Humphrey's tiny build and school-girl cuteness belie a skilled flutist who ranks high among contemporary women jazz performers. The problem is, her instrumental talent together with a good sense for material and supporting musicians must always compensate for the unimaginativeness of her seamless records. *Fancy Dancer*, her fifth, is typically impressive but equally un-moving.

Although it'd be easy to critique the songs in order (there are only seven), I'll instead describe the mood established by the whole. Above everything, this *is* mood music. The ensemble-playing is so fluid, the production so smoothly textured and the transitions so unnoticeable, however, that the overall effect is one of sedation. If a daydreaming mind could be programmed to create music, it would sound as free-flowing as this.

But then it's the naturalness of Ms. Humphrey's melodic, ephemeral flute playing that makes it so simplistically beautiful. Its casual sound never intrudes upon her accompanists, Bobbi taking the position she's just another boy in the band. Unselfish, yes, but certainly self-limiting. I also question how much longer she'll allow her producer/arrangers--the Mizell brothers and Chuck Davis--the freedom to confine her with directionless tune arrangements.

There are some fine moments---I

especially like the captivating title track and the hot salsa of "Uno Esta"---but, in the end, it just amounts to very good background music. Bobbi Humphrey's spacey flute playing glides along like a feather caught in a cross-wind. But like said feather, it has little impact when it comes down to earth. Which isn't necessarily a dig---at a time when heavy-handed jazz musicians are dispensing garbled pretense in the name of art, Bobbi's sisterly peck on the cheek is much preferable to such slaps in the face.



WHO AM I
David Ruffin
Motown M6-849S1

By JOE BIVONA

I think it was Jan Hadenfeld who gave Barry White some kind of an award for making the most hits out of one song. Well, with "Who I Am", David Ruffin just copped the crown. Herewith are eight disco singles that are all but indistinguishable from one another, and the villain (or hero to those who think with their platformed feet) is none other than Van McCoy.

You will recall that a few months ago, McCoy recorded a song called "The Hustle," and got everybody and their grandmother scurrying down to Fred Astaire's dance school to prep for a night at LeJardin. Definitely the hottest dance craze since the fox trot hit Dodge City at the turn of the century.

McCoy co-wrote, produced, arranged, and conducted this epic, and if it wasn't for Ruffin's rather distinctive voice, you'd never guess that this is the same singer who lit a fire under the Temptations a decade or so ago. There's no hint of melody or harmony on the whole first side (outside of some soul-less backup singing and McCoy's asinine glockenspiel). That hurts, especially when one remembers what Ruffin was capable of; the lovely interpretation he did of "What Becomes of the Brokenhearted" is one example.

The second side is almost as tedious, with the sole exception of "Statue of a Fool", the only Ruffin composition on the album. Not only is one with a modicum of intelligence able to cope with the lyrics, but the chorus contains the only real hook out of the nine songs. The only trouble with this cut is McCoy's production. It seems that McCoy can make every grunt, growl, snort and chortle come to life, but he's hell with a straight voice. Ruffin's vocal on "Statue of a Fool" is not only flat, but one-dimensional as well.

There are a few potential smashes on this album, but they could have been sung by Vic Damone to the same effect. Ruffin deserves better.



MAKING MUSIC
Bill Withers
Columbia PO 33704

By EDWARD ECKSTINE

Since his emergence in 1970, Bill Withers' brand of soulful, folk-flavored funk has given him an instantly identifiable sound. His simplistic approach is evident on the hits ("Ain't No Sunshine," "Lean On Me," "Use Me"), all enjoyable records featuring universally-relevant lyrics.

Withers' first four albums were recorded for Sussex Records, which recently folded, as most independent black labels do. Consequently, this latest effort is his first for Columbia, and from all indications, it could be Withers' biggest yet.

Making Music has definite traces of the old Withers, but, importantly, he has set his lilting ballads and churning up tempo numbers in a more polished framework, with production assistance from Larry Nash (Merry Clayton, Tom Scott's LA Express and Joni Mitchell).

The album opens with a rolling funk ballad, "I Wish You Well" wherein Withers' glad tidings to all are underscored by a multi-layered section of strings and horns. The orchestral feel continues with "The Best You Can," which sounds like the single---a strong bass line by Quincy Jones' band member "Thunder Thumbs" Johnson drives the song home. Withers reasserts the lyrical stance that he is "just a man and all that you can do is the best you can" (a recurring theme in his work).

A Paul Riser arranged (there's no listing but it sounds it) "Make Love To Your Mind" follows, the strings and horns on top of the rhythm section's burning undercurrent. The musicians on this album include: Harvey Mason on drums, Ray McDonald on percussion, Louis Johnson and James Jamerson on bass, George Johnson, David T. Walker, Melvin Ragin, Ray Parker and Denis Budinir on guitars, David Grusin and Larry Nash on keyboards.

This is undoubtedly the finest studio band that Withers has ever assembled and they play a large part in this record's success.

On the mellow side, Withers scores with the string-laden "I Love You Dawn," "She's Lonely" and the closing tune, "Hello Like Before." Bill's always had a way with ballads and these are in the classic "Ain't No Sunshine" mold. My favorites however, "Sometimes A Song" and "The Family Table" show a new side of Withers---a disco, dancin' feel.

Almost a year and a half after Withers' last album, *Making Music* marks the return of a major talent. Though the trappings are different, it is essentially, and thankfully, "Still Bill."

Norman Seef



SOUL & JAZZ REVIEWS

SLY STONE
HIGH ON YOU

including:
Organize/ So Good To Me
Le Lo Li/Crossword Puzzle
Green Eyed Monster Girl/I Get High On You



HIGH ON YOU
Sly Stone
Epic PE 33835

By MICHAEL DAVIS

The advance word on this one was that it was to be Sly's nod to the disco scene. If that sounds strange to you, it should; most disco music these days owes at least its rhythmic base to Sly's late 60's innovations and if his first hit, "Dance To The Music," doesn't define disco, I want to know what does. If James Brown is the Godfather of Soul then Sly is surely supplying the hit men with ammunition.

High On You isn't anything particularly new for Sly, just a continuation of his funk-bump rhythms and terse, clever commentary. It also signals the further disintegration of the Family Stone; only Freddie, Jerry, and Cynthia from the original band are credited here. Not surprisingly, this doesn't affect the sound much. Since there are thousands of musicians today playing his kind of

music, Sly didn't have to look far to find complementary company.

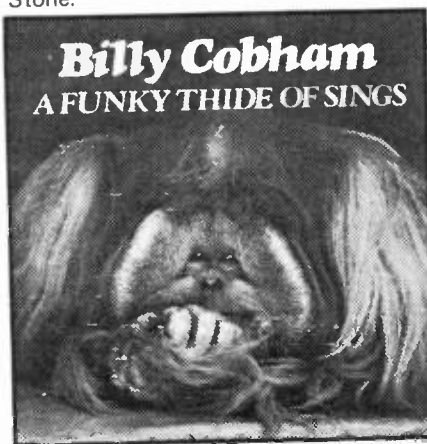
He doesn't waste any time getting down. "High On You" starts things off fine with a butt-bumpin' bass line providing the intro to the first of many tributes to his lady: "When push comes to shovin'/I'd rather make some lovin'." Here, as elsewhere, Sly doesn't let his heart overpower his muse as he fits romantic lyrics together with interesting, danceable music. "That's Lovin' You" is another example, a ballad with a hot, sneaky fiddle break (from Sid Page, I'll wager) in the middle.

Sly's eyes aren't always turned inward; he's checking out the outside world as well. Most of his observations are positive ("You're good to me because you're people") but he also scans some sexual repression in "Crossword Puzzle" and "Who Do You Love?" ("When you need to satisfy her/Ain't no need to pacify her").

And he has a little fun with his own influence on the scene. Many of us have been all too aware of the supersmash one Mr. David Bowie has gotten for himself by extending one of Sly's throwaway lines, "Damn this fame," from "Can't Strain My Brain," and this of course includes Sly. So he counters with "Greed," no big pissed-off trip, just a slight rib. "Fe fi fo fum/Can't forget from where you come," he jibes, as the music explodes in a manner Bowie's sidemen can't begin to touch.

All in all, *High On You* is another solid, mature work from Sly. He's not doing much innovating these days, true, but I don't think that was ever his primary intention. He's always been more than the sum of his musical parts, and just because certain aspects of his sound have been incorporated into the

contemporary musical vocabulary, it doesn't mean that the man himself is any less valid today. There is only one Sly Stone.



A FUNKY THIDE OF SINGS
Billy Cobham
Atlantic SD 18149

By PETE WELDING

The liner credits are impressive, to be sure. Drummer Cobham's group---guitarist John Scofield, keyboard player Milcho Leviev and bassist Alex Blake---is buttressed on most of the cuts by a horn section of trumpeter Randy Brecker, saxophonist Mike Brecker, trombonist Glenn Ferriss and/or Walt Fowler, Larry Schneider and Tom Malone, and congaist Rebop Kaaku Baah. Cobham himself handles all the synthesizer work, of which there's plenty throughout the album.

The cutesy album title (also that of one of the tunes) pretty much characterizes the intention and musical orientation of this effort. With the exceptions of Keith

Jarrett's winsome *Sorcery* and Leviev's too ambitious *Moody Modes*, the music here rarely strays too far from an approach that might be described, for want of a better term, as disco-spacey. Over strong foundations of energetic polyrhythms, a number of the textures and colors of contemporary electronic music and/or jazz (choose your own favorite) are used to transmit what are, when you get right down to it, fairly simplistic riff-based song materials of little substance or implicit interest.

Much the same is true of the "development" each piece is given. Though there's an enthusiastic display of motion, not much real movement takes place nor, for that matter, does anything of consequence occur in the music at any point. This is dance music, and ain't nothing wrong with that. But once one has observed that the rhythm playing is vigorous, the instrumental colors appealing, the overfamiliar synthesizer and ring-modulator sounds as expected, and the whole thing as funkily fashionable as this month's dancestep or handshake, he's pretty much said all there is to say about this set's contents. It's that evanescent--great to move off of as dance music but as listening music revealing its all in one sitting. Nor could it be otherwise, for this music is, with the exceptions noted, long on manner and woefully short on matter.

I hope the album realizes its goals and is a huge commercial success for Cobham, though the music's lack of strong melodic appeal as accompaniment to its obvious rhythmic strengths may forestall that happening. This is as hip as any number of other like ventures by Donald Byrd, Stanley Turrentine, Herbie Hancock, et al; and in some respects it's a hell of a lot better. But, like them, it doesn't go anywhere.



In May of 1973 a new group went to England to record their first album. The album, "The Ozark Mountain Daredevils," emerged as one of the most musically original albums of that year with songs like "If You Wanna Get To Heaven."

The following year the same band recorded their second album, "It'll Shine When It Shines," in their studio in the Ozarks. That album brought you the #1 single, "Jackie Blue."

Their third album, recorded in Nashville, is here:

THE CAR OVER THE LAKE ALBUM

THE OZARK MOUNTAIN DAREDEVILS



Grover Deluca
4272 Westover
Memphis, Tenn 38117

RECORDS & TAPES
Produced by David Anderle

