

THE SWEET★BAD COMPANY★PRETTY THINGS★10CC

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WNEW-FM

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ISSUE 6

"All the news
that hits"

MARCH, 1976

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MONTHLY

BRITISH INVADE AMERICA! World Shocked at U.K. Response to Buy-Centennial

MILLIONS SUPPORT COUP

Two Queens Rule British Isles Now

By MITCH COHEN

LONDON—"You're not going to ask me to interpret 'Bohemian Rhapsody,' are you?"

"Notify you don't want me to."

Freddie Mercury, drinking a Bloody Mary at—appropriately enough—the Olde London Pub and Grille—has just been told about a fanciful yarn some F.M. jock has spun concerning Queen's hit single. Something to do with a murder, a hanging and Ken Russell-ish mental fantasies leading to a resigned acceptance of death.

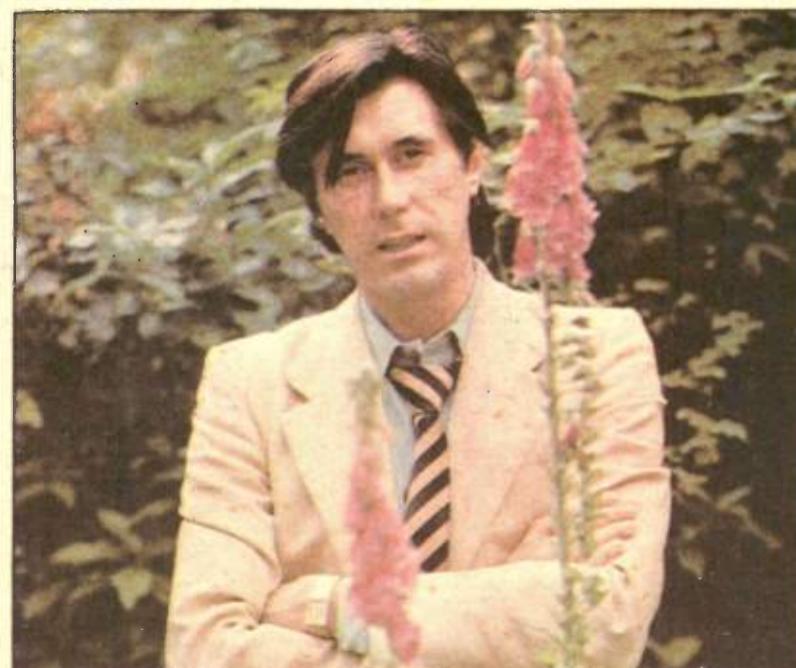
(Con't. on pg. 28)



Mysterious Love Drug Unleashed by Ferry

By RON ROSS

CLEVELAND—Roxy Music, once scorned here as the last frontier of glitter 'n' glam, may now become the one group capable of closing the two gaps which have most prevented '70s rock from developing a format and flair of its own: namely, the once unbridgeable gulf between the British and American charts, and the even wider gap which has traditionally divided AM from FM radio. Where Slade & T. Rex were repeatedly frustrated in their attempts to pop to the top of American rock consciousness, and even the Sweet seem over



anxious to leave their stunning singles successes behind, Roxy Music has both a hit single in "Love Is The Drug" and a hit album in *Siren*, which have compromised their original

musical direction not a whit. What Roxy has going for them is an integrity which lets them come across as what they really are, regardless of the radio

(Con't. on pg. 25)

By KEN BARNES
PRM STAFFWRITER

WASHINGTON—1976 is the year of a new revolution, in musical circles; and, as usual, it's British. The revolution can be calibrated at 45 per minute, and it starts on the charts and in the hearts of you and your concert-going countrymen. British bullets have conquered the Hot 100, the assaults spearheaded by stalwart campaigners like the Who and Elton John and a squad of new recruits led by the Sweet and the Bay City Rollers.

But after rigorous dialectic analysis of the foregoing bicententiousness, we are convinced the key revolutionary acts can be identified as Queen, Roxy Music and Nazareth. They don't particularly sound alike, or look alike, but circumstantially they have much in common

that renders them unique among the legion of hot British bands. All three are true '70s bands, ascending starward seemingly from nowhere, without the lengthy head-start '60s pedigrees of Bad Company or ELO, Gary Wright or Peter Frampton. All three focus on charismatic lead singers with solo capabilities (Bryan Ferry and Naz's Dan McCafferty already have solo albums; Freddie Mercury is likely to follow). And most important, all three have pulled off a '70s hat trick—the all-important hit single, hit album(s) and hit concert tours, a parlay which should assure them of lasting stardom. In short, they seem the three most likely candidates to become the Next Big Thing.

Please turn to page 23

Nazareth Threaten States With American Made Weapon

By KEN BARNES

LOS ANGELES—It's almost schizophrenic. On the one side there's Nazareth the loud, flashy, hard-rocking boogie band. That's more or less their reputation in England, where they've toured indefatigably up and down the country, laying them in the aisles just like proletarian stalwarts Status Quo and other high-decibel low-originality outfits. True, Nazareth get hit singles, but judging from concert reports they seem to deemphasize them live in favor of the surefire crowdpleasing pile-drivers that make up a large

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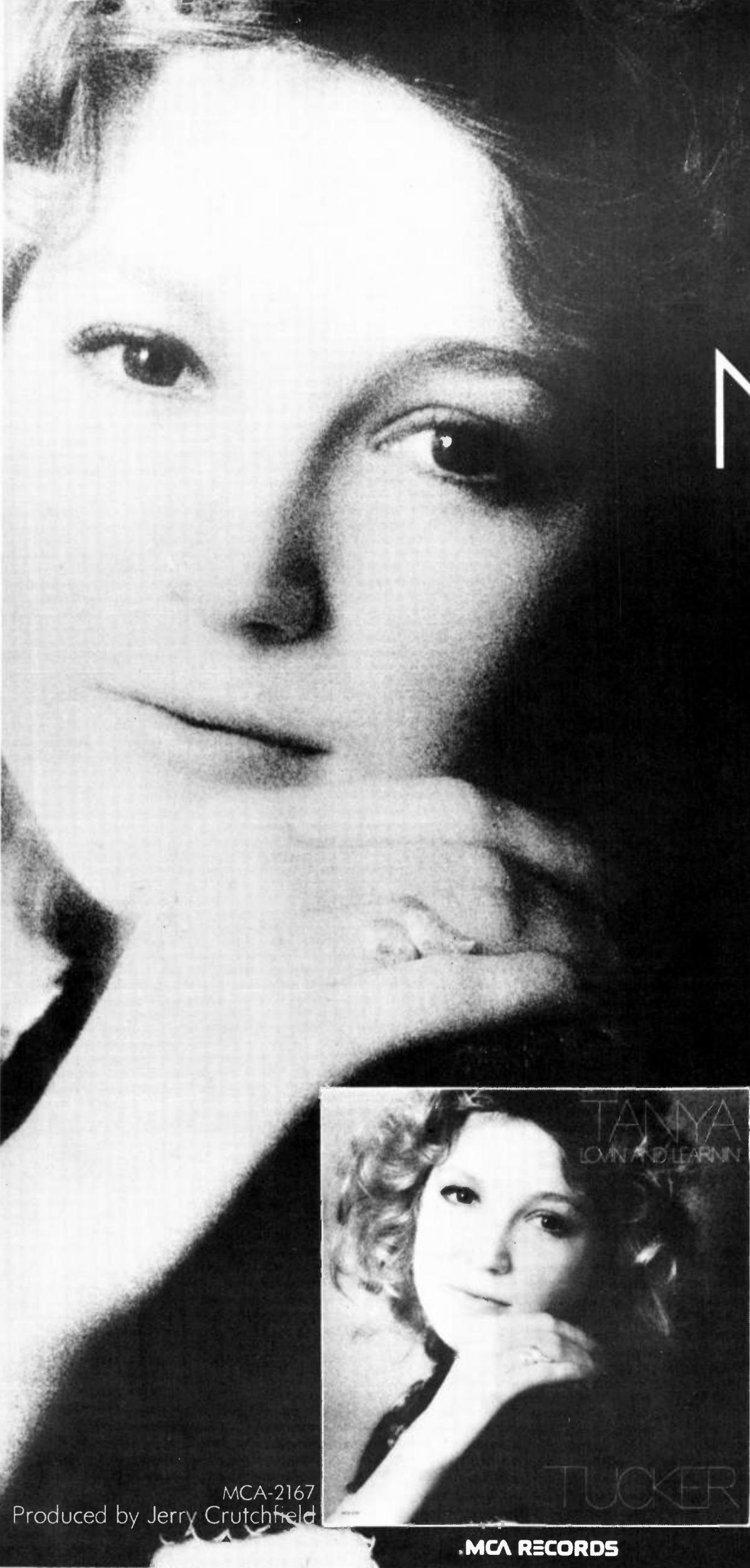


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Tanya Her Newest Album Lovin', And Learnin'



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My Cowboy's Getting Old



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Scott joined WNEW-FM at its inception in 1967, and as one of its founders has guided the evolution of WNEW-FM into New York's premier progressive music radio station. He says, "*I've been with this music since it began in the 'fifties and I still love it...I love all kinds of music and lyrics.*"

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THIS MONTH

BRITISH INVASION, 1976: *Revolutions 45 and 33, per minute*

1976: A new British Invasion has revolutionized American pop in the year of the Bi-centennial. Not since the Beatles/Stones/Animals/Who Atlantic-crossing of 1964 has such a legion of rampaging British bands caused patriotic consumers to commit mass treason. As close scrutiny then told you that the Kinks *would* and Dave Clark Five *wouldn't* maintain, careful analysis now reveals that Roxy Music, Queen and Nazareth are the three most likely, and deserving, candidates to be the Next Big Thing. Each is led by a dynamic vocalist, each presently has a smash AM hit as well as across-the-board FM-progressive acceptance.

So throw away your old pop history textbooks as *Phonograph* gives you the revised edition.

ROXY MUSIC

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QUEEN

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NAZARETH

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JOAN BAEZ: *A Sweet Cream Lady's Forward March*

During the folk protest movement of the '60s, she played queen to Dylan's king; by 1973, she was scorned as a devalued relic, a bitter woman in near financial and commercial ruin. But 1975's *Diamonds And Rust* changed everything; again commercial and for once non-political, she became instantly relevant, while outraging hardened fans. (To their screams of "sell-out," Joan answers "Shove it up your ass.") Her current two-LP live set, *From Every Stage*, is a smash, and her recent Rolling Thunder/reunion-with-Dylan tour was phenomenally received.

Joan is still Joan, meaning she's very controversial. A personal reply to all those who asked: "After Vietnam, what'll she do for an encore?"

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NILS LOFGREN: *The Punk Plays On*

Thanks to mass neglect, this fave rave of critics and Neil Young alike is a case study in the artist-as-underdog. While he's produced scintillating pop for years, it's just now that he's finally being recognized by a cynical-of-hype public. Talent aside, it's his teenage punk stance that makes him so worthy of peer respect. What's it all about Nils?

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BILL WYMAN: *Getting Stoned Alone*

With Mick Jagger interviews so commonplace—with Mick having *nothing* to say—it's time to focus attention on the one Stone who has kept Rolling. An exclusive rap with Bill Wyman on the eve of his second solo release, *Stone Alone*.

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FEBRUARY

20	Agricultural Hall, Allentown, Pa.
21	Einhann Aud., Buffalo, N.Y.
24	Arena, London, Ontario
25	Hamilton Place, Hamilton, Ontario
26	Forum, Montreal, Canada
27	Quebec Congress Ctr., Quebec City, Quebec
29	Coliseum, Moncton, New Brunswick

MARCH

1	Forum, Halifax, Nova Scotia
5	Orpheum Theatre, Boston, Mass.
6	Tower Theatre, Philadelphia, Pa.
10	Rivoli Theatre, Indianapolis, Ind.
11	Ambassador Theatre, St. Louis, Mo.
12	Riviera Theatre, Chicago, Ill.
13/14	Oriental Theatre, Milwaukee, Wisc.
16	Winnipeg Playhouse, Winnipeg, Manitoba
19	Seattle Center Arena, Seattle, Wash.
20	Paramount Theatre, Portland, Ore.
21	Coliseum, Spokane, Wash.
23	Center of the Arts, Regina, Sask.
24	Centennial Aud., Saskatoon, Sask.
25	Jubilee Aud., Edmonton, Alberta
26	Jubilee Aud., Calgary, Alberta
28	Queen Elizabeth II, Vancouver, B.C.
31/APR. 1	Santa Monica Civic, Santa Monica, Ca.

APRIL

2/3	Warner Theatre, Fresno, Calif.
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PERFORMANCES

THE KINKS
Orpheum Theatre
Boston, Mass.

By JON PARELES

The Kinks weren't always known for professional concerts. They used to stumble drunkenly onstage and crash through their songs before an adoring but ever-dwindling Kinks cult. The concept albums that Ray Davies has been writing since the late '60s would get performed with stage actions that increased plot confusion. Apparently, *Soap Opera* and its associated tour changed that; the story was clarified with audio-visual aids. But *Soap Opera* bypassed Boston, so the *Schoolboys In Disgrace* show was Boston's first chance to see a well-planned Kinks concert.

The first part of the set was a quick run-through of Kinkdom past. Ray leaped onstage (usually, he just clings to a mike stand for precarious support) and rocked his way through *Soap Opera's* "Starmaker" and "Rush Hour Blues." "Waterloo Sunset," resigned as ever, was next, then the obligatory Kinky slapstick: the audience singalong for "Lola" and Ray's beer-can-in-hand "Alcohol" preachments. "You Really Got Me," with Davies' vocals drooping lovably off the beat, segued into a fast "All Day And All Of The Night." Almost against his will, Ray led the audience in a verse of "Sunny Afternoon" before concluding the "hits" with "Celluloid Heroes." He



seemed eager to get on with *Schoolboys In Disgrace*.

Schoolboys is Davies' latest dramatization of the ordinary man—that victim of a system designed to generate colorless and uncomplaining workers. He has fabricated a connection between *Schoolboys* and his earlier *Preservation* (a larger work about power, money, and corruption) by alleging that *Schoolboys* represents the childhood of Mr. Flash. That device aids the stage show, since it gives a wizened, imprisoned Mr. Flash a part as reminiscing narrator. But *Schoolboys* could serve just as well as the childhood of Arthur from Davies' first (and best) full-blown conceptual album, or Norman from *Soap Opera*. *Schoolboys* is the story of an ordinary lad who accidentally knocks up his first love. For that disgraceful act, he is beaten publicly by a sadistic pederast headmaster. Thus, we are told, the lad realizes there will always be "The Establishment" to keep him in his

place. Whether this schoolboy would become evil developer Mr. Flash, Walter Mitty-ish Arthur, or normal Norman is an inquiry for Kinkophiles to mull. *Schoolboys In Disgrace*, at any rate, gives Davies a chance to simultaneously exploit and deflate nostalgia.

His target isn't exactly original. The English public-schools have been slagged elsewhere quite frequently. But Davies has always been a capable recycler or cliches; what may seem hackneyed elsewhere is charming and a bit tragic in Kinks music. No one but the Kinks could attempt a song like "The First Time We Fall In Love," which has a chord progression straight out of the '50s. Schoolboy sentiment gives Davies a wealth of readymade emotions. "The happiest days of our lives" weren't, of course, but "we only remember what we choose to remember." Davies doesn't completely spurn traditional bathos—he just hints at its silliness.

The staging of *Schoolboys In*

Disgrace used narration to fill in the plot, while a movie screen flashed song titles, an occasional lyric, and film clips of the action. The drama carried over to the stage when the filmed costumes reappeared on band members. Narration was delicately overdone, providing humorous detachment that kept the songs in place. Naturally, Davies himself played most of the roles—the pained, innocent schoolboy; the nasty headmaster; old Mr. Flash—with his lady vocalists adding bit parts and changing costumes to suit each song. For most of the show, Davies appeared in a school uniform with short pants, knobby knees and all.

Like the album, the show built from the scene-setting generalities of "School Days" and "The First Time We Fall In Love" to the specifics of young Flash's predicament. The ballads moved to the rocking climax of "I'm In Disgrace" (whose pounding chords and wonderfully simple chorus should make it the next Kinks single) and the plaintive confession of "Headmaster." No one is more convincing than Ray Davies singing "I feel like an innocent victim." After a slow-motion beating, "The Last Assembly" and "No More Looking Back" finalized the necessary break with childhood. The encore of "Education" summed up the show with a music-hall cheerfulness.

Davies has taken his own advice to heart. "No more living in the past," he sings, and his new material is his most vital (and endearing) in years. Ray Davies may wear short pants, but he's not going to revert.

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VICIOUS DIRT, RUMORS and SCANDALS from HOLLYWOOD Rodney Bingenheimer

"IF IT'S TRENDY,
I'LL PRINT IT"

Greetings, boys and girls. It's all Happening in Hollywood. The word on the street is all about the bands I've been telling you about. The teen girls sensation, the **Runaways** have actually applied pen to paper with MERCURY/PHONOGRAM Records (for many Dutch Corporate dollars we hear). Their kickoff gig as a label group was an amazing appearance at the Golden West Ballroom outside of town here, with the **Tubes**. This was but a small hint of the bombshell which was about to go off just days later. In the most spectacular event Hollywood has seen since the war broke out, the Girl Beatles played before a mob at the Starwood that literally went crazy at the sight of one Mr. **Robert "PERCY" Plant**, who had come to oversee the event ACTUALLY wearing a t-shirt with the legend "The RUNAWAYS—ROBERT loves KIM." If **Patti Smith**'s band, the **Electric Light Orchestra**, **Smokie**, the **Tubes**, **RICK SPRINGFIELD**, **OHIO PLAYERS**, **Shaun Cassidy**, from Australia, **SKYHOOKS**, **EARL SLICK**, and **PATTI QUATRO** were all there, no one could hardly keep track, because the eyes that weren't on the RUNAWAYS were on **PERCY**, **BONZO BONHAM**, and **MICHAEL DES BARRES**. In the heaviest skirmish since William the Conqueror, **PERCY** worked his way up to the girls' dressing room for the most frantic photo session ever held with his new fave raves. The following night he returned with **JIMMY PAGE**, **MISS PAMELA**, and **MICHAEL DES BARRES** for more of the same. The RUNAWAYS: 16-year-old **CHERI CURRIE**, lead singer, 16-year-old **JOAN JETT**, rhythm guitar, 17-year-old **LITA FORD**, lead guitar, 16-year-old **JACKIE FOX**, bass guitar, and the hippest girl drummer since **HONEY LANTREE** of the **HONEY'S**, 16-year-old **SANDY WEST**. Waiting right in the wings is the backbone of the Girl Beatles, 14-year-old **KARI KROME**. **KARI**, the **BERNIE TAUPIN** of the RUNAWAYS, is too young to go out on the road and do the dog. **KIM FOWLEY** is grooming her to be the spokeswoman of her generation. Always seen at all RUNAWAYS gigs (usually with **HERNANDO COURTRIGHT JR.**) she was thrilled to meet her fellow lyricist and fan, **RON MAEL**. **RONNIE** told me at an **ALICE COOPER** screening, that the RUNAWAYS are the best group I've seen in years." **RUSSELL MAEL** and

past (and future?) **HALF-NELSON** / **SPARK EARL MANKEY** were seen at the **RUNAWAYS/TUBES** gig, digging the sounds. (Was this before



TOP: THE RUNAWAYS with P.R. agent—L. to R. Lita Ford, Joan Jett, Robert Plant, and lead singer, Cheri Currie.
CENTER: L. to R. Yours truly, with Russ and Ron Mael at Alice Cooper movie screening. I was asleep before the credit roll-up.
BOTTOM: L. to R. John Cale, Richard Sohl, (P. Smith band) the irrepressible Rodney and Patti Smith at the Roxy. (Mondo, Deco, Nouveau)

or after their new deal with CBS Records?) Speaking of, the brothers have been in the studio with **EARL MANKEY** and borrowed **STARS'**

drummer, **TERRY RAE**. The stuff with their new CBS producer **RUPERT HOLMES** is as lush and as teenage as **Michael Lloyd** himself could ever want. Former **SPARKS** **DINKY DIAMOND** and **IAN HAMPTON** immediately formed a new group and hustled an English Island Deal. Seems the brothers will have **DINKY** and **IAN**, **TREVOR WHITE** soloist, **JET**, and God knows how many other soundalikes to contend with now. But we all know who the originals are, don't we boys and girls?

When there's a busy signal for hours on end at the Continental Riot House, and my ex-girlfriend **SHANNON** hanging out in the coffee shop on Sundays, you know it's happening. Old school rockers have been going ape over the visit to our town by **DR. FEELGOOD**, some ex-**BRINSLEYS** and one Mr. **Dave Edmunds** from Wales. The sessions of the century are happening right now at **RCA** (Rockfield West) with **EDMUND**,

Capitol kicked off **EARL SLICK** (formerly with some soul singer who hasn't much use for real rock 'n' roll) at a Cherokee Studio record playing party. **EARL** has been making the scene in town with his buddy **MICK RONSON** (also formerly affiliated with same said soul singer who hasn't much use for real rock 'n' roll.) I am playing his new album nightly at the **Starwood Disco Room**.

Patti Smith stunned her fans at a recent round of performances at the **ROXY**, with her producer, the legendary, brilliant, **John Cale**. It was almost too in-crowd for me to bear. In spite of her lame PR company's efforts to the contrary, **PATTI** still manages to attract the most in-crowd audience turn out this side of **FLO & EDDIE**. **PATTI** also made another performance at the **Golden Bear** in **Huntington Beach**, with the **NOEL REDDING BAND**. **PATTI** said she will never play a F---ing club again. Her single will be "Gloria" the "B" side will be a live version of "My Generation" which features **JOHN CALE**.

New albums to watch for coming out next month: the new **STONES**' album **April Fool**, meanwhile **Bill Wyman** just completed his new solo album, **A Stone Alone**. **Led Zeppelin's** long awaited album **Presence** is due for release in April.

Meanwhile, **Suzi Quatro** is touring Europe with new keyboard man ex-**VINEGAR JOE** named **MIKE DEACON**. They've been touring Italy, Yugoslavia, Sweden, Denmark and Finland, and should be in the States soon, hopefully around June. Can't wait until the **WHO** get here, and for the wild party they'll be throwing at a nearby bowling alley. The opening act for the **WHO** has been **Steve Gibbons Band**, who has been known to carry a gun on stage, and the group features ex-**Move** **Trevor Burton**. Hollywood has really picked up in the last few months, with big name concerts almost every night—the **KINKS** at one show, **ROXY MUSIC** at another, **QUEEN**, **KISS**, **PATTI SMITH** and **NOEL REDDING**.

Another new group from the L.A. Scene who are British-sounding went from the Rainbow Parking Lot to Denny's Coffee Shop; they are called **THE QUICK**, who have **KARI KROME'S** and **HERNANDO COURTRIGHT'S** seal of approval. Apparently they sent a tape to Scotland called "Hilary" which somehow got on the radio there and became the most requested song, over even the **BAY CITY ROLLERS**.

Be on the lookout for the new **Robin Trower** album, to be released March 2. Also, **ROBIN TROWER** is up for a possible movie. I'm surprised to see a group who finally knocked **QUEEN** out of the number one position in Europe. The name of the song which lost its number one place in the charts is "Bohemian Rhapsody" which has held that place for almost a year now, and the song which surpassed it is "Glass of Champagne" by **Sailor**. Also, seen on the cover of England's **New Musical Express** are the original **Small Faces**, who have been back together even doing a movie and the re-release of "Itchycoo Park" is still climbing the British Charts. Does this mean the British are invading all over again?

Bruce Johnston **Gary Usher**
Chad Stuart **Cyril Jordan** of the
Flamin' Groovies (where were you
Brian?)

ISAAC HAYES

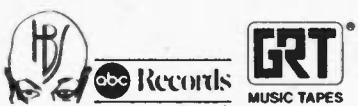
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Joan Baez, who for more than a decade had forthrightly coupled an acclaimed musical career with personal crusades against society's ills, was, in 1973, in serious jeopardy of becoming just another rapidly fading sixties-folk figure. Time had left her once intense vibrato tired, and her lyrical preoccupation with worn-out social themes less relevant and necessary.

With knowledge of a dwindling audience, serious financial troubles, and perhaps a realization that she'd overdone the devout political approach, Baez returned to the studio with ace producer David Kershenbaum in late 1974 to record *Diamonds & Rust*. The album was, surprisingly, a gem, with Baez's vocals carrying that vital, boldly emotional feel of her earlier work, and a host of topnotch session musicians adding a fresh, at times, ragged contemporary edge never heard before. Baez, clearly, was making music again.

Diamonds & Rust, along with the immensely successful single of the same name, brought Baez back into popular music's mainstream. A highly praised summer tour—which her new double live album, *From Every Stage*, is culled from—further demonstrated the resurgence, and, most importantly, proved Baez had indeed regained a proper balance between integrating music and politics.

Baez has for some time received additional attention as a result of her relationship, in song and in reality, with Bob Dylan. The two were reunited throughout the recent Rolling Thunder Revue tour, thus opening yet another chapter in the continuing "Diamonds & Rust" saga.

By JOAN BAEZ

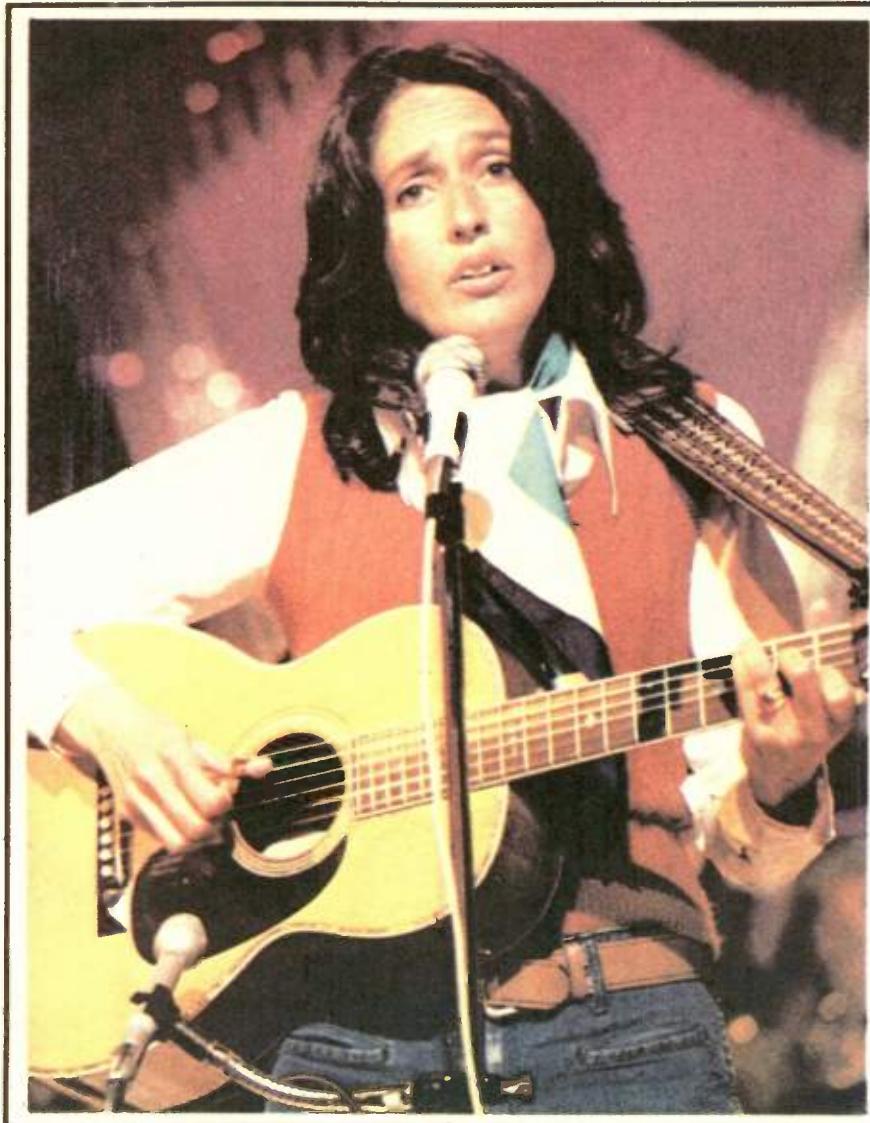
I did the Rolling Thunder Revue tour because I saw plenty to be gained, lots to be learned, and lots of fun to be had. This is a point in my life where I'm not out spear-heading campaigns, so it hit at a really nice time. It wasn't a time when I felt that I was supposed to be going to jail for one thing or another. I've really been eased off of that for about a year. I've decided to put my priorities with music and family. This particular experience seemed great, and I was flattered that Bobby asked me.

It all happened very suddenly and simply. Bob called up one night and asked me if I wanted to go on the road. I had already planned to tour myself, so I had that month blocked out. The only unsimple thing was undoing that one month of tours. Within the next 48 hours, we were going to sign the contracts. So, fortunately, nothing was signed and I had 48 hours to think; to see if it made any sense or not. And for lots of reasons, it made sense.

The whole tour had that spontaneous feeling. Oh Christ, it was sounset. I never knew what Bob was about to do in our set together. Once, I said, "What are we doing?" and he said, typically, "'The Water's Wide,' plunk, plunk, plunk." And then he changed hand positions as I was about to open my mouth and sing, and said, "No, let's do 'St. Augustine'." That's how set it was.

I have to admit that in a musical environment like that, I am completely cramped. It's not my show. It's somebody else's show, and though I was given more minutes than anybody else except the principal, it's very different from having my own two-hour show where I can do whatever I want depending upon what the mood dictates; political

Joan Baez: "I Haven't Sold Out"



stuff, non-political stuff, funny imitations...anything.

On the other hand, performing with a band means more musical freedom. I can depend on them for parts that I would otherwise be filling in. I am not that much of a guitarist. I am absolutely adequate for what I do. I'm careful with it, but I'm not a virtuoso. A backing band is more fun, or should I say it can be a lot more fun.

If I do use a band in my own shows, as I've done frequently since *Diamonds & Rust*, I do half the stuff alone and half the stuff with them; to cover all the bases, my own and everyone else's. During my acoustic set—that's when I say things. Or I'll sing "Sacco & Vanzetti," or I'll talk about political prisoners, or I'll mention the farmworkers. That freedom is important to me, and there's no way to have that freedom on someone else's show.

I had several requests for my older songs. Well, I've always said when I felt myself changing or going in different directions, that I was not a Jean Ritchie. Jean Ritchie is an exquisite presenter of antiques; she displays old traditional songs exactly as they should be sung and she does them beautifully, and she'll never change out of that.

I did that when I was very young; I did those same songs. I did them as well as I could, but then I felt the need to grow. Bobby felt it before the rest of us and had a whole lot more nerve than I ever had, and picked up the electricity and alienated a lot of people. But he just had to move, and I, too, had to move from one thing to another.

Some fans and friends would've

liked me to have stayed more politically involved. But I hadn't taken a break from that for 17 years. I had to discipline myself to take that break and not worry what they were going to say. Good friends, who understand me and were saying, "Well, it's about time she takes a rest," heard a lot of flack like, "Oh; What is happening to our Joan? She's just making money and buying rugs for her house."

My first reaction was to say, "Shove it up your ass," and the second one was, well, how would they know I hadn't sold out and decided to just make albums and let the world go by.

The truth is, I just had to take a rest. My son is at an age where everyone says that in a couple of years I won't have to be with him so much and I won't have to be so careful. But being five years old and entering the first grade, he needs his mommy around. So I thought all my rhetoric and stuff doesn't mean shit if I don't bring him up right and don't pay the proper attention to him.

So, out of this, there are four of me. There's the mother, the woman, the politician, and the musician. I had to do the music 'cause I was going bankrupt. I wanted to do the mother. I was throwing in a little woman when I could. Now, I've decided to drop for the first time in many, many years; drop the overt politics, activism, and just lay back.

When the Vietnam War ended and five million people were dead, it was sort of like getting socked in the back of the head. You had to stop and think what you were going to do next. I think you still have to stop and think. I mean, I did Amnesty International for

a full year, and when I felt the end of that war coming on, I wanted to be doing the next thing, which was building up that organization for political prisoners who were being hung by their heels in Chile, and, oh, 30 other countries. I was involved in that.

There are things to do, but I don't think this is the time to run out in massive demonstrations. There's no handle that's steady enough to grab onto and organize around. Everything is there to be done. Everything is in just as bad shape as it was two years ago; there just isn't that one handle, which was Vietnam, that everybody is desperately working on. Ceasar Chavez, in a sense, is the only viable non-violent organization to throw yourself into. There's also the people who are very interested in exposing the C.I.A. There are things like that going on that are good.

But I don't know if all things can be worked out through the system. I mean, my ex-husband David Harris is running for Congress, and he's saying things now that two years ago he never would have said. He has to get it on the brochure. Instead of saying, "I will never fight in a war," he has to say, "I will never support an unjust war." Aaaaagh! I hate it. I love him, though; he's on the side of the angels and I think he'll do good things if he gets in there. One reason that I would want him in Congress is that he has the background. He was in jail. He knows something. He knows what's going on with those people. He knows the underground of America.

It's my feeling that it's the Nation-State that's snuffing out human beings. Young boys, 18 to 20, fight and slaughter each other, or get their arms blown off and become quadriplegics because the Nation is thought of as being more important than a human being. And being part of this system, you pledge your allegiance to that Nation-State... there's no way around it.

I guess nothing inside me has basically changed. My fanaticism about non-violence; that's just a given...it's there. I would like to explain, though, maybe in a book I'm writing, what it means to take a break, and how necessary I think it is for people to be allowed to take breaks.

I'm very pleased with how well *Diamonds & Rust* has done. It recently turned gold. I needed that. Once this new live album starts rolling, I'm going to do some dates in Europe, and then I'm going home and work on that book. I'm about 30,000 words into it and am really anxious to get back to the typewriter. I can't sing and do that sort of thing at the same time.

I don't know if many people saw the little book I wrote called "Daybreak," but it's experimental stuff about my life. At this point, I can't write fiction. It's things that have happened to me or meant something to me and it's in chapters. This one I'm working on now will probably be the same, only there is more to be said now, and I think it will be a little less mushy. After all, it is nine years later.

Edited By John Rivers & Michael Barackman

Nils Lofgren: Can He Beat The Press

By KEN BARNES

Nils Lofgren, as shamefully underappreciated a top-flight rock & roller as America has ever spawned, now finds himself suffering, ironically, from overappreciation from certain sectors—the press, of course, and lately radio. The minor (and not unpleasant) part of the problem centers around radio and his recent "authorized bootleg" live LP, *Back It Up*. Here he is, almost finished mixing his second solo album, a crucial step in his career and one for which he entertains the strongest feelings ("no question, this is my best album. I like my first one, it's a good first solo album, but there is *no comparison*."). And here's the bootleg, almost accidentally pressed up from a casual radio station broadcast (KSAN wanted to do a live broadcast, so we did it and went off to England") for the edification of radio people and friendly journalists, suddenly becoming one of the hottest airplay items on progressive stations everywhere and, thanks also to scattered ecstatic reviews, arousing all kinds of demand for official, full-scale release.

Which puts Lofgren in an odd position. If it were to be released, he says, "It's like insinuating we're afraid my new one isn't as good as a two-track rough." Hardly the effect A&M wants to convey, planning as they do to weigh in with all their promotional muscle behind the new album, sensing (accurately) that this one could be the big breakthrough.

But still, the reaction—everyone who hears the bootleg starts raving about it. I'm no exception, I've been a Lofgren fan(at) since I took a chance back in '71 and plastered 44¢ stickers over the regular price so I could afford the first two Grinalbums; and I think the versions of "Beggar's Day" and "Keith Don't Go" are dazzling, not to mention the opening of "Back it Up," noted rockwriter/A&M staffer Bud Scoppa's favorite moment.

Scoppa was instrumental in the bootleg caper, having by chance heard a tape transcript of the KSAN show, recognizing its spectacular nature, and in the first rush of enthusiasm planning to make cassettes to send out to other Lofgren appreciators. Tentative lists quickly got out of hand, so the idea came to press it up and quietly distribute it. The reaction, of course, was certainly quiet-saturation airplay, panegyric reviews, offers of \$50 for a copy—and the initial limited pressing ran out quickly. A&M wanted to meet the demand, but there was the new album to consider as well.

Nils Lofgren "thought it was a bad idea to release it right off the bat. But then I realized it was a good idea, a well-intentioned promotion." But A&M's idea to include the bootleg with initial pressings of his new LP did not exactly thrill him, both because of the insinuation factor discussed above and the problem of buyers feeling gypped if their copy was bootless. Other alternatives discussed were the inclusion of a postcard in the studio LP for



interested customers to send for the bootleg, or (more likely) a new bootleg pressing to be sent out to anyone writing an "intense letter" to the company requesting it. At any rate, it does appear as if, eventually, anyone who wants the bootleg is going to be able to get it, a refreshing sort of outcome to the problem.

It's not really a problem, of course—all that word-of-mouth and radio airplay is hardly going to hurt the reception for Lofgren's next album. But all the press he's accumulated over the years may not work so positively. Recently the rock press in general has exhibited a considerable degree of smugness and self-importance, in regard to its power to help propel acts to stardom. Most of the satisfaction stems from the recent breakthroughs of Bruce Springsteen and Patti Smith (though Patti hasn't yet reached the top rung), and it's understandable—a lot of writers devoted a lot of space to both, and lo and behold, there they are high on the charts.

But it's easy to exaggerate the press's role—recall that Springsteen got raves for his first two albums and the fireworks were less than spectacular. *Born to Run* had the advantage of all-out support from the record company (in part generated by the press climate, but probably more significantly by Columbia's promotion effort). Another critical darling, the Blue Oyster Cult, won their devoted audience by nonstop touring not good reviews.

The press does seem to perpetrate a delayed effect—all those articles on Free and Mott the Hoople, neither of which really made it big, created a

climate favorable for the mass breakthrough of Bad Company—the names were familiar, and radio and the public were finally ready. The same process probably worked back in prehistoric days for Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young. But let's not forget the legion of Big Stars, Raspberries, Blue Ashes and all the other press cult favorites who never really reached the masses because they weren't supported by record company efforts and all-important radio airplay. In fact, the raves may have had an adverse effect, as a lot of consumers (and a lot of rather smug radio types who don't like to be told what's good for them and their airwaves by any journalistic dilettantes) tend to react negatively to what they consider hype. As Nils Lofgren says, "Kids don't read a review and say, 'that's worth 8 bucks.'"

Lofgren, if he wanted to, could compile a scrapbook eight feet thick from the favorable reviews he's enjoyed since 1 + 1 in 1972. His reaction is diplomatic—"I realize it doesn't sell records, at least immediately, but I appreciate it." Most writers appreciate him right back, and since his rapturously-received solo album early in 1975 and his recent media-conquering tour of England, he's the likely candidate for the press's new mass cause celebre, with all the mixed blessings that come with that status. With the bootleg's reaction, the new album, and an upcoming (March) tour, it's make or break time for Lofgren.

But according to the man himself, "I look at everything as a make-or-break proposition. I like pressure. When I'm left alone, I stagnate." Further,

"There's a momentum I can feel, you can't fake it." So immediately after finishing up the LP and recovering from three wisdom tooth extractions, he launches himself directly into the tour—college concerts, the Bottom Line, possibly the Roxy, "more concerts than clubs this time." Still, if there's any question he'll take the smaller venue—"I'd rather play to full houses at small clubs to get the energy than back up Edgar Winter at the Spectrum like Grin did."

"We're using the same band" (Mike Zack, drums; Scotty Ball, bass; Tom Lofgren, guitar) "but we're adding another guitarist, a local guy, real flashy." This should infuse the visual excitement some thought lacking in his band during Lofgren's fall tour, and will allow for more versatility from the front man. "Sometimes I feel like just singing without my guitar on; now I can do that."

Lofgren seems absolutely dedicated to making music, with a visibly passionate commitment. When he speaks of longing for the day he can headline any city, not for the glory and the fame but so he can afford proper equipment and enough roadies to handle it, what would normally sound ingenuous (to say the least) is completely credible. He's very confident (cocky is probably the right word), direct, articulate, and his enthusiasm is contagious. So when he talks about his new album, you get caught up in the excitement, even though there's a boggler or two in the telling.

"There are two different sets of musicians. Half the album was produced by David Briggs, and that's hard and simple basic stuff. Aynsley Dunbar on drums, Wornell Jones on bass, like the last album. The other half was produced by Al Kooper. Some songs needed a...slicker production, and that's the reason I hired Al. He's into gimmicks, but I mean that in a good way."

How did the ornately-inclined Kooper, fresh from the certifiably gimmicky Tubes, meet up with your ultimate no-frills rocker? "The last thing on my mind was working with Al Kooper. He came up very intensely and said he thought he could help me. His production really added to it—let me put it this way: it warranted using half the album. I think it will be a good contrast."

For the Kooper sessions, Jim Gordon, Chuck Rainey and Paul Stalworth were brought in for drums and bass, along with background singers, chorales, full orchestration, "more of everything." If that sounds foreboding to fans of the direct Lofgren rock & roll approach (and it does), Nils hastens to allay the doubts. "Coloring is what we're talking about here. The whole album is surprisingly unified. I would never have thought of using moog synthesizer, but Al plays it really tastefully, it works real well. I think this is the first time there was no problem with Kooper feeling superior musically to the artist," he goes on, conjuring up an amusing (and probably accurate) picture of Kooper grabbing instruments forcibly out of

(continued from previous page)

musicians' hands and painstakingly demonstrating the riff he wants. Lofgren emphasizes, though, "It is my record—the final production is subject to my approval. It won't be Al Kooper's five songs where he can do what he wants with Nils Lofgren's talents. I think it's a lot better than the first album—I look at it as my second album, even if some people think of it as my sixth. I've been very technically-minded about records, but this time sometimes I sung straight through songs, instead of taking it a verse at a time. I finally realized it's all emotion..."

At this writing I haven't yet heard the album—we're planning to squeeze a boxed impression of the final mix before this goes to press, and you'll know as soon as I do whether we succeeded. But there is one intriguing track that in all likelihood won't be on the LP—a full production version of Sandie Shaw's "Girl Don't Come."

"I love it," says Nils, "but I hope I don't have to use it. I don't think it should be on this record. Maybe it'll up the audience I've worked five years to build up, small as it is, to play to the new one," presumably as some sort of male Linda Ronstadt updating oldies, "or else keep the old audience and lose the new one right away. The track'll be valid any time..." Possibly as a future B-side...



So it's almost time for the big push. Lofgren is ready—"I can't wait to go back on the road—to me rock & roll is total release." He's determined to get his act in front of audiences, to become an actual presence rather than a cultish phantom of the press, and with that attitude I think he'll go

over the top this time. As Tom Nolan succinctly put it last issue, "Nils Lofgren...seems caught in that limbo where critics love you and record buyers don't know your name." The next album and tour should change all that—limbo rock is the wrong style for anyone as gifted as Nils Lofgren.

NILS LOGREN DISCOGRAPHY

THE NILS CUT-OUT CATALOGUE

ALBUMS		
With <i>Crazy Horse</i>		
Sept. '70	<i>Crazy Horse</i>	Reprise
With <i>GRIN</i>		
Feb. '71	<i>Grin</i>	Spindizzy Z-30321
Dec. '71	<i>1 + 1</i>	Spindizzy Z-31038
Dec. '72	<i>All Out</i>	Spindizzy Z-31701
Nov. '73	<i>Gone Crazy</i>	A&MSP-4415
SOLO		
Jan. '75	<i>Nils Lofgren</i>	A&MSP-4509
Jan. '76	<i>Back It Up</i>	A&M authorized bootleg
Mar. '76	<i>Cry Tough</i>	A&M bootleg
SINGLES		
With PAUL DOWELL & THE DOLPHIN		
'69	"Get Together"	Sire 4107
'69	"It's Better To Know You"	Sire 4107
	"The Last Time I Saw You"	[re-release]
With <i>GRIN</i>		
Nov. '70	"We All Sung Together"	Thunder 4000
'70	"See What A Love Can Do"	4000
Jan.	"White Lies"	Spindizzy
'72	"Just To Have You"	4005
June	"End Unkind"	Spindizzy
'72	"Slippery Fingers"	4006
Jan.	"Ain't Love Nice"	Spindizzy
'73	"Love Or Else"	4007
Nov.	"You're The Weight"	A&M
'73	"Beggars Day"	1502
SOLO		
4/75	"Back It Up"	A&M 1692
10/75	"I Don't Want To Know"	UKA&M

Howard Werth: Looking for a U.S. Audience

By MICHAEL BARACKMAN

LONDON—As a new solo artist, Howard Werth isn't instantly recognizable or in demand mostly because the band he once fronted, Audience, wasn't either. Werth was the raspy lead vocalist and acoustic guitarist for that critically applauded, popularly neglected, and now defunct English progressive pop-rock group throughout their two-year, four-album existence. Werth departed in late 1972, and recently ended a three-year recording drought with the album *King Brilliant*, produced by Gus Dudgeon of Elton John-acclaim.

Audience was a classy four-piece ensemble best remembered in the U.S. for their 1971 minor hit single, "Indian Summer." Though that number was dominantly pop-oriented, Audience was actually far more sophisticated. The unit intelligently integrated subtle jazz and classical elements into a broader soft-rock backdrop, and uniquely examined several complex musical forms (they were among the first English groups to heavily utilize a brass rhythmic backing).

Werth was only one focal point. Keith Gemmell, on tenor sax and woodwinds, was by far the most advanced and dazzling instrumentalist, and Tony Connor's flashy, Keith Moon-like drumming made him the usual favorite onstage. In the end, the diversity of directions and lack of a definite image limited audience growth, and largely contributed to the band's demise. After a small U.S. tour with the Faces in '72, Gemmell left, and several months later, so did Werth.



"The original idea behind Audience was to experiment with a variety of musical styles that hadn't yet been explored, and I think we did accomplish that," Werth explained from his home in North London. "But once we reached those peaks, musically, there didn't seem to be anywhere further to go."

"It all ended up in a complete knot. Popularity-wise, we weren't really climbing; it got to be quite a grind. Plus, we had problems with some terribly amateuristic managements. So I just decided that it was time to finish. When I left, the band split up completely."

Werth set out immediately to record a solo album, and though he claims his English label, Charisma, was totally behind the project, the making of the LP was delayed for 2 1/2 years. Werth had difficulties coordinating studio time with Dudgeon, who was then busied by such elaborate Elton John projects as *Goodbye Yellow Brick Road*, and assembling a compatible backing band. Tentative plans to replace the late Jim Morrison as lead singer of the Doors fell through after Ray Manzarek left that group, and further stymied Werth's situation.

Finally came the promised studio time with Dudgeon, an American distribution deal with Rocket Records and the proud culmination of those 2 1/2 years of work, *King Brilliant*. "I feel a lot more comfortable totally at the front," Werth asserted. "It's mostly because the complete band situation necessitated a large level of democracy, and prevented me from getting across some of my more intangible ideas. I don't feel stifled anymore."

Though *King Brilliant* is substantially less than its pretentious title indicates and leaves ample room for creative growth, the majority of its moments are slick and wryly entertaining. The album carries a welcome continuity; lacking Audience's gripping impact, but also its reckless excesses. Werth's once

raging vocals are pleasantly tempered, the melodic meanderings eliminated, and a new ingredient; coyly humorous, at times incisive lyrics, promenaded.

Werth commented: "Since Audience, I have gotten more interested in writing lyrics, but the strength of melody and color are still the most important to me. I try very hard to make my melodies instantly riveting, and like to maintain a slight cartoon effect overall, to cut off any intent edges."

King Brilliant works well, though, primarily because of Dudgeon's stellar, Elton John-inclined production. The use of strings and horns is overt, and most arrangements are punctuated with readily identifiable hooks. Almost all are blatantly accessible. Werth's vocal similarities with John were capitalized on. Werth agreed, but strongly denied that he was an imitator: "It's been said before that I sound similar to Elton. But you have to remember that I've worked with him for five years, so there's bound to be cross-overs. There's a connection between 'Hula Girl,' from the Audience days, and Elton's 'Island Girl,' but people forget I wrote mine three years ago."

Primarily because of financial reasons, Werth recently postponed plans for putting together a permanent backing band and touring which will hurt his chances for establishing himself in the U.S. He's chosen instead to "polish the recording end" by cutting another album and perhaps writing a musical, and then do some U.S. dates. He somewhat bitterly acknowledged that because of Audience's relative anonymity in the U.S., it will be like starting from the ground floor again. But he added flatly, "What I'm doing now musically doesn't have a lot to do with my past anyway."

THE WHOLE WORLD IS TALKING ABOUT **NAZARETH!**



★★★★ **LONDON: "THEY TORE IT ALL APART!"**

“That's what Nazareth did here at The Great British Music Festival!... The world's finest hellraisers!...”

★★★★ **GLASGOW: "...UNCONTROLLABLE FRENZY!"**

“That's what greeted Nazareth at The Apollo, the hall that never saw anything like it before!...”

★★★★ **FRANKFURT: "...PASSION AND FURY!"**

“That's what filled the Cycle Arena audience here! From the band who's had a single on the German charts longer than anybody else!...”

★★★★ **MONTREAL: "THEY CLOBBERED CANADA!..."**

“That's what they did to the Forum audience in the country where the first Nazareth tour scored them three gold albums!...”

★★★★ **NEW YORK: "...A CONFIRMED SMASH!..."**

“‘Love Hurts’ roused Radio City just like it's done from Norway to South Africa ... Nazareth hasn't just come to tour, they have arrived! ...”

LOVE HURTS IS THE HIT.
HAIR OF THE DOG IS THE ALBUM.
NAZARETH IS THE GROUP.





THE KINKS
I'm In Disgrace
RCA JH-10551

The day is long past when the Kinks could in any sense be considered a 'singles' group. In fact, until their latest album I had my doubts that they were still valid as a recording group at all, however successful they have become with their travelling cabaret revue. But *Schoolboys in Disgrace*, despite being a concept album, is full of good music, and this 45 has all the qualities that define a pop single: catchy intro, strong melody, and a punchy riff (derived from "I Can't Explain"). All it's lacking is the kind of hot production sound that separates a single from an album track, but we can forgive them that, can't we?

TOMMY JAMES
I Love You Love Me Love
Fantasy 761

Who could fail to be elated at news of Tommy James recording a Gary Glitter song and a Suzy Quatro flip ("Devil Gate Drive") for a new label, backed by Berkeley's resident rockers, Earth Quake? The record itself, in a spiffy color sleeve, finds James in top form as always, though the song rather drags, and is certainly no match for most of Tommy's own originals. "Devil Gate Drive" comes off better, though still underproduced by James's usual standards. If I sound disappointed, I guess I am, but only in terms of the great excitement I still feel at the return of Tommy James. Within the realm of pure, uncomplicated pop, James is a first-rate creative artist, not to be confused with the studio-manufactured pseudo-artists who more often present this type of music, and as such I'm convinced his potential is far from depleted.

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
Tenth Avenue Freeze-Out
Columbia 3-10274

Well, 1957 had its hula-hoops, and 1975 had Bruce Springsteen. Rarely has so much been done with so little by means of sheer media hype, and I wonder how much longer it'll take the public to catch on. Don't get me wrong, I loved "Born to Run," but on the strength of that I actually listened to all 3 of his albums, and found a lot of aimless slush, a couple of good songs that have been done better by others, and not one other thing that points to greatness. This single, for instance. Why would anybody want to hear it? It's like the emperor's clothes—let just one person say "hey, this is really boring!" and the whole bubble will burst. Who knows, maybe cousin Brucie will come up with some real shockers on his next LP, but so far I can only conclude that, compared to an enduring master like Tommy James, Springsteen is still just a flash in the pan.

POP SINGLES FOR THE 70'S BY GREG SHAW

JUKEBOX JURY

NEW CITY JAMBAND
Lazy Love
Amherst 710

This is a Canadian group whose album is called *Tonight at the Discotheque*, and like their fellow Canucks the Dudes they've attempted to bridge the gap between disco and real pop—music good

enough to dance to and good enough to play on the radio too, which so little disco music is these days. Here we have a typical hustle beat behind a fine Rubettes-style production and a tune that could just as easily be a Grass Roots hit. Quite infectious, and hopefully a sign of things to come.

of coolth. And the beat goes on....

Don't get the idea I hate everything that's out. I adore the Carmen, Nazareth, Aerosmith, and several others. And I'm encouraged by the much-deserved success of Foghat ("Slow Ride," Bearsville 0306), Quatro, Kiss (a good hard-rock record), ELO, and others, though by the same token I could sure live without Manilow's latest and Paul Anka's Kodak commercial in the Top Ten.

Among the best new releases are the Bay City Rollers' "Money Honey" (Arista 0170), the Hudson Brothers' "Spinning the Wheel" (Rocket 40508) and Kiki Dee's "Once a Fool" (Rocket 40506), a nice Lambert-Potter song. Worthy entries by less familiar names include Obie Clayton's "Say You're Sorry" (DJM 1005), a nicely-produced English pop ballad with harmonies, Michael Dinner's "The Promised Land" (Fantasy 750), a strong rocker in the Jackson Brown/Eagles mold, and both sides of David Werner's "Cold Shivers"/"Imagination Quota" (RCA 10535), one of America's most sadly-overlooked post-glitter flash rockers.

We're also witnessing a strong resurgence of locally-produced records, a trend that's been growing for some time and should become even more prevalent in the coming months. In addition to the *Fate* disc reviewed above, several New York groups are on the verge of issuing their own platters, and the same seems to be true in Boston, where Willie Alexander's fine record has inspired such locals as Fox Pass and Third Rail to undertake similar projects (expected soon) as well as David Misch, whose "Somerville" (Philo) is a clever, tongue-in-cheek tribute to the Boston suburb of that name. It's more Billy Joel than Modern Lovers, but it's local, and very professionally done (order from David at 18 Ware St #8, Cambridge 02138). Also from Boston is "Holiday Fire" by Marc Thor, formerly of the Sea Monkeys, backed by "Boystown Boize" by the Boize, a Boston punk band. The sound is very garage-simple, but worth a listen (Indy Records, Box 128, Nonantum, MA 02195).

Still very much a part of the local scene, though distributed nationally, Beserkley Records latest is "Mankind" by Son of Pete, a Bicentennial orgy featuring Donald Duck's three nephews singing to a player piano programmed with John Philip Sousa riffs. Weird, to say the least.

Ohio is still home of the local scenes. Of the several records to emerge of late from that fabled state, the most intriguing is "30 Seconds Over Tokyo" by Pere Ubu, formerly Rocket From the Tomb. Meant as a sort of "psychodrama," the record is a very intense, complicated approach to the early Pink Floyd style from a band whose musical roots are in "Surfin' Bird". Well not exactly, but it's a difficult record to explain, and should appeal to a broad spectrum of the lunatic fringe. Order from Pere Ubu, 2314 Bellfield Ave., Cleveland Hts., Ohio 44106. It's two bucks, and well worth it.

If your band, or one in your town, has a locally-produced record, please send a copy to this column and it will be reviewed. Our slogan: independents in '76!



Aerosmith: Hits from the Closet

AEROSMITH
Dream On
Columbia 3-10278

I must admit that, for all the fine music they've made since then, this 1973 debut single remains my favorite Aerosmith track. I can't imagine why it's been reissued, except perhaps that Columbia

has decided they're not going over on AM radio as hard rockers, falling back on this as the only example of what wonders these boys can (or could) do with a powerfully-produced ballad. I hope it goes Top Ten (it's already in the Top 40!) and inspires a whole album of similar material.

This also supports my position that the direction of disco music is to achieve new dimensions of absurdity, to see how much blatant hokum their audience can be made to swallow with a straight face. At this rate, it seems to be fast approaching the infinite. It all started with Disco Tex; the day he was accepted as valid disco music, disco sentenced itself to a fate not unlike that of the Twist. Now with the revival of increasingly corny old songs from the Xavier Cugat era, it's hard to keep from rolling on the floor at each new idiocy. "Brazil" was bad enough; now there's "Baby Face," and the most ridiculous yet, Frankie Avalon's disco update of "Venus" (De-Lite 1578). And these are just the hits; you wouldn't

audience has never heard these songs, nor much of anything from before 1970, so it's wide-open.

More and more new releases fit this pattern. Robert Palmer resurrects a reggae oldie, the Maytals' "Pressure Drop," on Island 049. Nice, but superfluous. The ever-lovable Hello People turn in a fairly straight, non-disco rendition of "Book of Love," (ABC-12160) and my hands-down favorite is by a group called Wallis, from the production team of Michaels Lloyd & Curb, doing the old Connie Francis chestnut "Where the Boys Are" (a Neil Sedaka song too!). I can just see all those buffoons in their discos doing the hustle to this and thinking themselves the absolute apogee

PARIS

Former Fleetwood Mac guitarist, Robert Welch, has put together, with producer Jimmy Robinson, PARIS, a new group that combines the musical sophistication its members have picked up in previous groups. Glenn Cornick was with Jethro Tull, and Thom Mooney played with Nazz.

The result:

"ze Rock'n Roll music hot!"



BE-BOP DELUXE

IS a fusion of all forms of contemporary music, erupting in an exciting sound that moves from early rock styles to unexplored space, under the leadership of lead guitarist and songwriter Bill Nelson.

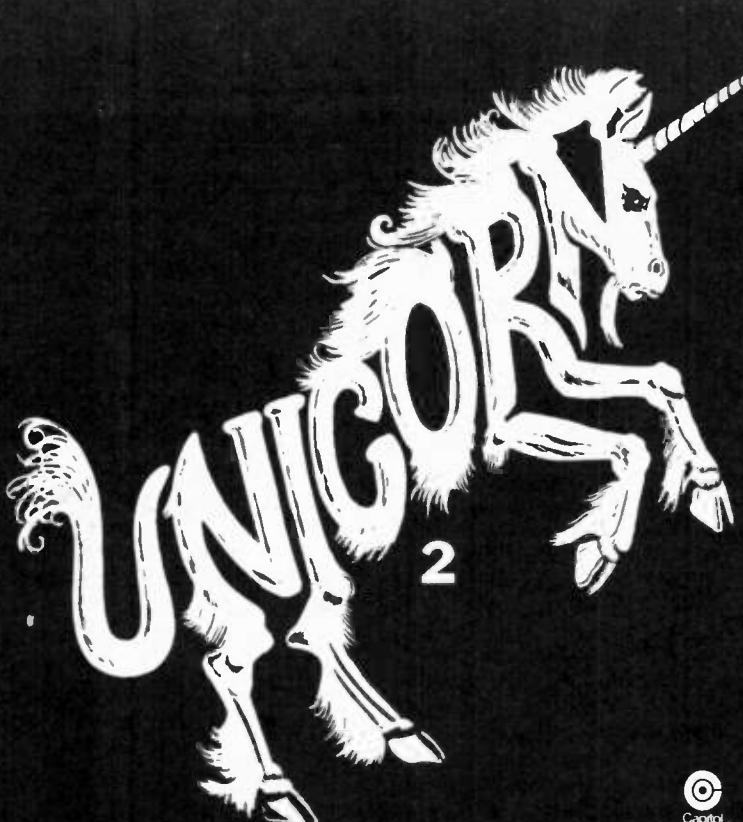
Their new album is
SUNBURST FINISH.



BUX

This five-man band pushes out a driving rock'n roll that steps behind you and starts you moving. Jack Douglas, the producer of Aerosmith, has also produced Bux' debut album for Capitol.

WE COME TO PLAY.



Generally, Unicorns are depicted with the body and head of a horse, the hind legs of a stag, the tail of a lion, and a single horn in the middle of the forehead...more recently, Unicorn has the sound of one hell of a rock'n roll band! Their second album, Unicorn 2, is again produced by Pink Floyd's David Gilmour.



TRENDS

The National Lampoon's "Good-bye To Pop": A Vital 70's Musical Statement

By ROGER De SWANNS

Every once in a very great while, it is my pleasure, not to say privilege, to receive in the morning post a free phonograph record which forces me radically to consider my theory of music, the contradictions within capitalism itself, the month's menus, and the very values by which I, for one, live.

Goodbye Pop is just such an album. A work of art so holistic, so hermetic, that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, creating an entire *gestalt*, an ambience at once cynical and nostalgic, sentimental yet, with a wink, casting the "cold eye" of which the late Yeats wrote, ironic and yet in a way paradoxical.

Musically, it is flawless. Lyrically, brilliant. Its concept is bold, its execution masterful. It attracts, yet repels, leaving one with little to say, and much to write of.

My close personal friend, Rasta Bob Marley (who has worn out innumerable copies of the record and at least three cheap Jamaican sapphire styluses listening to the disc) compares it, with mystic exactness, to the Hollies' finest work. To my dear friend and former lover Art Garfunkel, *Goodbye Pop* is the synthesis of Tommy Roe and the Webers.

To me, personally, it was pure Bobby Vee. The platonic Bobby Vee, the Bobby Vee that never was, the Bobby Vee in the mind of God.

The record begins, as it must, with a taped lecture by me, Roger de Swanns, discussing one of the many subjects on which (eclectic me!) I am an expert - the Blues. As a callow undergraduate, like so many, my friends Evelyn Waugh, Chris Isherwood, Stevie Spender among others, in one of England's finest universities, I first discovered the Blues. On a cracked 78 RPM in the digs of Pongo, my erstwhile friend and lover. And felt like stout Cortez. Vistas of funkiness and negritude opened before my eyes and ears. And I knew that, though I was born with a silver spoon in my mouth, the Blues was me.

How pleased I was, then, to be asked by the National Lampoon to discuss the origins, the roots, of this music, for inclusion on their new record album.

My lecture is seamlessly sequayed into the main title song, "Goodbye Pop," which is as clear-sighted as Blind Boy Fuller, as wide-eyed as Blind Lemon Jefferson, better even, than Don McLean in its incisive dissection of the history of pop music. It contains similes, metaphors and some alliteration, as my neighbor and frequent dinner guest Patti Smith was quick to observe.

"Kung Fu Christmas" is the next cut on the album, a harsh yet gentle composition that is black and yet not

black, an observation and a celebration of exploitation and the big disco sound.

"The B Side of Love", which follows sequentially and metaphysically, incorporates a tribute to the commercialized but never trivialized folk music of the American rustic with my own sage observations about the Appalachian concept of the four part harmony. It is sheer delight, at once a parody, a tribute, and homage and a rip-off of the music which has come to be known as country and western.

My chum and business associate Billy Sherill called it his favorite melody of the last twenty years.

The album contains, as it must and should, a woman's song, a contribution from the distaff side which expresses without containing the joy, the sorrow, the grief, the essence of all that is female and yet ineluctably feminine. My adopted sister Gloria Steinem was "just knocked out."

Neil Young is, like chocolate grasshoppers and women wrestling in mud, an acquired taste. The highly mimetic imitation of his entire *oeuvre* which begins the second side of the *Goodbye Pop* album will appeal to those of us who are yet to acquire a taste for Mr. Young's work, and yet amuse and instruct (wasn't it Horace who said that?) those of us who have not. Neil himself told over a brioche the other morning that he was personally "in love with" the tune, and only wishes he had penned it himself. Dear Neil.

Winding its way toward the inevitable, and yet in a way unforeseen conclusion, the disc next presents the "Art Rock Suite," a major composition that begins, I am proud and humble to announce, with yet another snippet from my own work, an analysis of the influence of young British homosexual undergraduates on the bottle-neck guitar stylings of long dead Delta bluesmen. The composition itself, a rich and densely textured collage of the idiosyncrasies of many significant groups, left my old and dear swimming partner Clive Davis, for one, "breathless."

And the apex, the zenith, the apotheosis of the whole is the triumphal concluding ditty, "Down to Jamaica" - a prophetic foreshadowing which is also a lingering look backward toward days gone by and yet to come, wherein the Afro-Carib undercurrents of so much that is great or at least foot-tappable in all jazz, surface to dazzle and devour the degenerate tendency to create a lyric style less than contrapuntal to the melodic line.

If you were to be tossed up upon a desert island with only one phonograph album, and no phonograph, I would want that album to be *Goodbye Pop*.

Entire contents of this page, including simulated advertisements at right, were created by Sean Kelley and Martin Cerf.

"By far the most important release of the year....I've already worn out two copies and I haven't even played it once"

--Jerry Garcia
Berkeley, Cal.

"It contains similes, metaphors and some alliteration....A must for the Cambridge set"

--Patti Smith
Union, N. J.
"It left me breathless"
--Clive Davis
New York, N. Y.

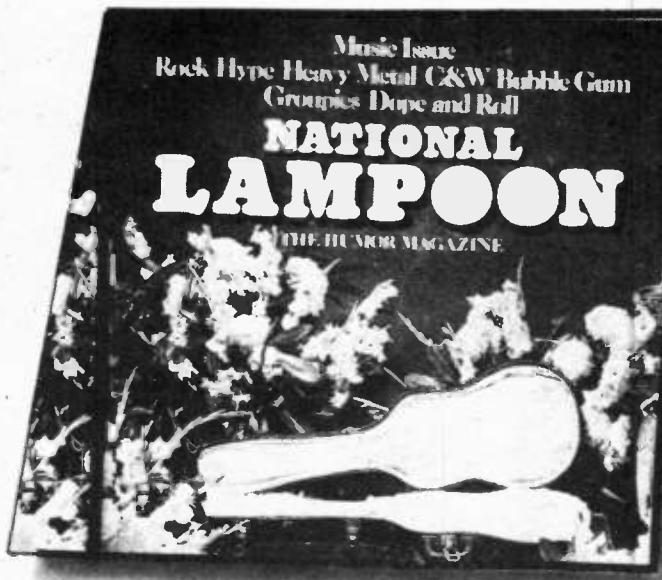
"It saved my marriage"
--Carly Simon
L.A., Cal.

"It ruined my life"
--James Taylor
L.A., Cal.

"Just what the discos have been waiting for"

--Don Cornelius
L.A., Cal.
"One of the most impressive Epic records in years"

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--S. Freud
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("Where Their Accountants Are!")

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that "Run With The Pack," Bad Company's third album, is by far their best—a genuine rock classic that will remind you why you liked rock and roll in the first place. **ON SWAN SONG RECORDS & TAPES**



Blind Date

with

FLO & EDDIE

A MONTHLY BLINDFOLD TEST BY THOSE MASTERS OF SLANDER ROCK, MARK VOLMAN & HOWARD KAYLAN.

Edited by KEN BARNES

For newer readers, we thought a brief history of the Blind Date would be helpful. We originally stole the idea from the British pop papers of the mid-sixties, who would weekly torment trendy popstars by demanding they identify the latest obscure American soul records and unknown British stiffs, usually causing considerable embarrassment all around. We've changed with the times and play our resident trendy pop stars, Flo & Eddie (once part of an obscure surfing group), the latest unknown albums. Any resemblance to actual record reviews or genuine wit is purely unintentional, as required by state law, and should be read in the same spirit it was made. Next month: Is the Blind Date part of the Rock Press establishment-And Can That Be Tolerated?



"Shannon," other tracks from *Release*—Henry Gross (Lifesong)

I would like to express first my heartfelt appreciation since last issue to Queen's incredible effort. I think *Nights at the Opera* is right up there with ELO last month. It's unbelievable; they went "What if 10cc was funky?". Skyhooks, too. Forget it, it's over. That was the quickest phenomenon—Australian rock. It was like the Bosstown Sound, Ultimate Spinach's Greatest Hits.

This guy was in a rock revival band? Frankie Valli. Frankie Avalon. Bobby Rydell has a disco version of "Sway"? I can't stand it! The Captain without Tennille. It was a 50's revival group...like ShaNaNa, Showaddywaddy. It is Sha Na Na! We got one. Oh, this is a guy who left Sha Na Na. Rocko. Jocko. The fat guy with the beard. Lenny the sax player. Right, Henry Gross. That's pretty, he sings good. He sounds real inventive. Sure must have driven him crazy to do steps all those years. A little Norman Greenbaum in there. Norman Greenbaum's still around? I know, but he only talks to lights and police cars. This is very progressive. "Shannon" sounds like a hit record. I don't want to be so committal as to say he's cool. He's wearing a white suit on the inside. Nice goin'.

"Buckets of Rain," "Strangers in the Night," from *Songs for the New Depression*—Bette Midler (Atlantic)

Very famous personality? Georgie Fame. Nicky Hopkins. Big Tiny Little. Sounds like Mungo Jerry—big month for them. Emitt Rhodes. It's not Floyd Cramer either. Tony Joe White. Jessi Colter. A famous duet? Hugh Hefner and Barbie Benton. Dylan and Baez. Dylan and Phoebe Snow. Dylan and Arlo Guthrie. Dylan and Emmylou Harris. Streisand. Bette Midler. She's one of the few who'd go after that knowing that her album needs that kind of credibility. Any album could use it. But especially hers—she's lost a certain amount of respectability in rock circles.

Will this duet live through the ages? Nothing produced by Mark "Moogy" Klingman will live through the ages. Let's hear "Strangers in the Night." Disco! Bette Midler Disco. Oh my God, nothing is sacred. I like fag songs sung by dykes. Don't ever print that, we'll lose our gay audience. It may be all we've got. I think she's afraid to show what her body really looks like these days. I must admit the first time I saw Bette Midler I was very impressed, but the more I saw her the less I liked her. "The More I See You"—Chris Montez Disco. He's right around the corner. "Call Me." And then Rivers would have to do his. Is "Happy Together" a discoitem? "You Showed Me"?

Excerpts from *Fish Out of Water*—Chris Squire (Atlantic)

Progressive time! Member of a famous progressive group? Michael Quatro. Suzy Quatro. Patti Quatro. Dad Quatro? Is he the keyboard player of the group? Moogy Klingman. David Essex. One of the biggest groups? The Who, the Stones, Led Zeppelin, Jethro Tull. More progressive? Pink Floyd. Nice skip they've got on the record. Yes! I could tell by the skip in the record. What instrument? Bass. Listen to the bass, it's so predictable, as only Chris could play that run. He wrote all the songs on the bass. This sounds good. It doesn't sound as nervous as Yes. They're so keyed up trying to show every lick they can play every 12 bars. And after 12 bars you get tired of both. I like the voice. That's not the "Roundabout" voice? Sounds just like it. I like it.

Excerpts from *Reflections*—Jerry Garcia (Round)

Progressive stalwart? Magma. Eno. Mayall. Zoot Money. Tony Joe White. Delaney. Delaney is not coming back; he wrote his Mom saying he's not coming back. A solo album? Breakoff from Yes? Another cut—this is all G to D with a C, maybe a B minor, for all you guitarists. Mellow country. Phil Lesh. Jerry Garcia! Jerry always makes this kind of music, I always like listening to it. I think he's cool, he shoots at chickens with a gun. He knows some of the Hells Angels. He won't appeal to Chris Squire fans—they're total opposites. The fact that I like 'em both scares me. Scares me, too—for your sake. Phil Lesh is playing bass—it is the Dead. It is Dead. Most of it was recorded

at Bob Weir's house. Take it off. I'll tell you what he's lost—the ability to really keep trucking like he used to. Phil Lech is on the album—spell it like that. It's good acid rock. I saw them fill the Hollywood Bowl, man—and that was just their roadies.



Excerpts from *Paris* (Capitol)

Hot new heavy metal trio? The bass player is Bogert, right? No? The guitarist came from a real popular group that became real popular right after he left? That's understandable. It's not the new Mick Taylor Group album, is it? Named after a city? Des Moines. Paris. This is the kid from Fleetwood Mac, Bob Welch. He's a little surfer guy—what's he doing playing this stuff? Uh-oh, he's not a little surfer guy anymore. Sure is heavy stuff, isn't it? Anyone who owns the Buckingham Nicks album will want to get this. He's competing with Dog Soldier as far as I'm concerned for that heavy metal triosound. Baker-Gurvitz Army.

Excerpts from *Station to Station*—Bowie (RCA)

Superstar time? Heavy cajun beat. Dr. John. Eno. Bowie. The best. I love this album. I especially love the 10 minutes it took to do the graphics. I think it's great—"Golden Years" I think is fabulous, but when I heard "Wild as the Wind" and remembered Dmitri Tiomkin and the 50's and color screens that didn't make it, my eyes hurt and I thought this guy is really nuts. I can't wait to see him.

Frampton Comes Alive!



Excerpts from *Peter Frampton Live* (A&M)

The new sensation of FM radio? Kiss.

They're applauding. They know this song. Peter Frampton. All of a sudden he's huge. Why? I like his songs. Best song he ever wrote—"Something's Happening." I wish he wasn't so damn cute. I'm glad they doctored up the vocals a bit—those are real nice studio vocals. The guy's really hot and it's got the best of what he does on it—it'll be huge. I'll even go with that one, it's recommended. The little guy has aged. Michael Fennelly on a good day out of focus could have taken that picture.

"Sleepwalking," from *To the Hilt*—Golden Earring (MCA)

Flo & Eddie favorite of sorts? I don't know if we have any favorites any more. Negative favorite? Lynyrd Skynyrd. Leonard Cohen. Leonard Schaffer. Mose Jones. Atlanta Rhythm Section. Not American? Then they could be from the South, right? Kraftwerk. German? Close? Austrian. Hungarian. First Hungarian synthesizer band—The Hungary Years. Oh my God, put Frampton back on. John Kay. It's them. It's Golden Earring. I just pictured that guy drooling and almost threw up. Barry Hay, I hate you. An open letter to Barry Hay. Wonderful cover. Third Hipgnosis cover I've seen in a week that's caught my eye. Better graphics than group. This is identical to "Radar Love". He's so greasy.

Excerpts from *Who Loves Ya Baby*—Telly Savalas (MCA)

Label mate of Golden Earring? That narrows it down to the Who or Conway Twitty. International star? Charles Aznavour. Cat Stevens. Mungo Jerry. Chart-topping hit in Britain? Gilbert O'Sullivan. Helen Reddy slowed down. Like Lorne Green or something? Leonard Nimoy! Bill Shatner. Famous for his hair style? Wayne Cochran. Yul Brynn—Telly Savalas! I can get it on TV; maybe I'm missing some of the sensitivity here. Telly goes Disco! The lights shine on his head, he just spins round and round in the center of the room. I can see him duetting with Cher on this. Sammy Davis. This is like the Last Poets. You know, I don't even mind it. It's so bizarre. Until the William Conrad album comes out I would go with this.

Excerpts from *How Dare You*—10cc (Mercury)

More Flo & Eddie favorites? Disco. This is cool. I love it so far. I can't even guess. Sounds like an Arabian Soundtrack. If Jackie De Shannon starts singing I'm going to be weirded right out. I want this album. Wings? What could it be that I like that much? Not 10cc is it? They start to give themselves away every once in a while. Let me see it. Gorgeous cover. Hypothesis! Hipgnosis, I'm going to love this more than life itself. We're going overboard, folks. We have to hear this through before letting you know. I don't have to hear it, I have confidence it's a classic. They haven't let me down yet.

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1976

is the year of the new revolution, in musical circles; and, as usual, it's British. The revolution can be calibrated at 45 per minute, and it starts on the charts and in the hearts of you and your countrymen. British bullets have conquered the Hot 100, the assaults spearheaded by stalwart campaigners like the Who and Elton John and a squad of new recruits led by Sweet and the Bay City Rollers.

But after rigorous dialectic analysis of the foregoing bicententiousness, we are convinced the key revolutionary acts can be identified as Queen, Roxy Music and Nazareth. They don't particularly sound alike, or look alike, but circumstantially they have much in common that renders them unique among the legion of hot British bands. All three are true '70s bands, ascending starward seemingly from nowhere, without the very lengthy head-start '60s pedigrees of Bad Company or ELO, Gary Wright or Peter Frampton. All three focus on charismatic lead singers with solo capabilities (Bryan Ferry and Naz's Dan McCafferty already have solo albums; Freddie Mercury is likely to follow). And most important, all three have pulled off a '70s hat trick—the all-important hit single, album(s)

and hit concert tours, a parlay which should assure them of a lasting stardom. In short, they seem the three most likely candidates to become the Next Big Thing.

Queen in particular, with their flashy road show and sophisticated-veneer-over-heavy-rock approach, could be the next Led Zeppelin. But Roxy, making the transition from cult idols to mass acceptance with heavy A M & F M air play on "Love Is The Drug" and Siren, could become huge—if they stay together long enough to cash in.

And Nazareth, combining a hoarse 'n' boogie era live attack with subtle, expertly crafted singles, stand a chance to cover all the bases more successfully than anyone—if they tighten up their albums a bit for better F M penetration, and can follow up "Love Hurts".

All three bands have made quantum leaps in early 1976, as a result of longterm developments which, planned or unplanned, enable them to avoid the pitfalls which befell so many of their compatriots. Though products of the '70s, Queen, Roxy and Nazareth have all been around (their current albums are,



respectively, their fourth, fifth and sixth). Earlier records have built solid listening audience foundations (especially Queen's and Roxy's), and previous tours (especially Nazareth's) have staked out territory in the discrete and equally crucial live audience realm. Thus they've sidestepped the plight of the Sweet, who seem to be finding that two quick hit singles aren't enough to fill concert halls on their debut tour. They've also avoided the Slade/T. Rex syndrome, launching full-scale American assaults arrogantly and prematurely and falling flat.

But the last crucial factor is their ability to make American hit singles, with vital pop appeal. "Bohemian Rhapsody" is a dazzling contrivance, almost ludicrous pretension rendered captivatingly commercial. "Love Is The Drug" combines Roxy's usual detached frenzy with a definite hook, and "Love Hurts" is a superb '70s update of a classic American ballad.

If they can follow up these hits, the sky's the limit. And even if not, the impact of the hits plus already-established power will raise them another level higher. Many other bands (Jigsaw, Sweet) have had American hit singles, but they don't have the album/FM credibility and touring credentials (Sweet might earn them). A host of British '70s progressive acts (Yes, Genesis, ELP, etc.) have the FM band and the live arena sewed up, but haven't (lately) frosted the cake with hit singles. And there are the sloggers, live bands like Status Quo, Foghat (now working on a status-shifting hit), and, now they've faded a bit, even Deep Purple, whose records are mainly pale reflections of their concert acts.

The difference between these also-rans (successful as some are) and our trinity is the ability to establish a separate,

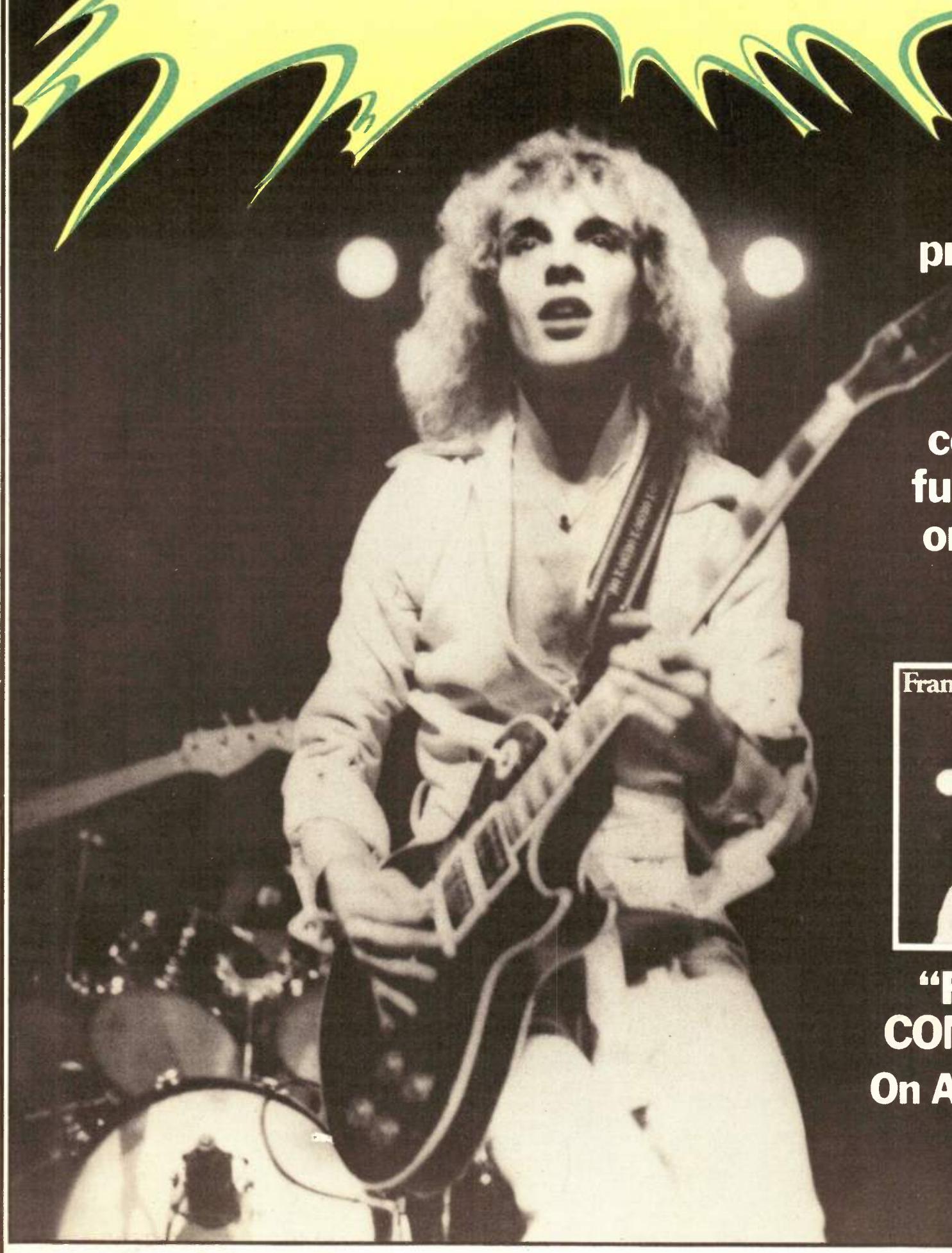


•STARS OF
THE NEW BRITISH
INVASION: (TOP TO BOTTOM),
QUEEN, BRYAN FERRY, NAZARETH.

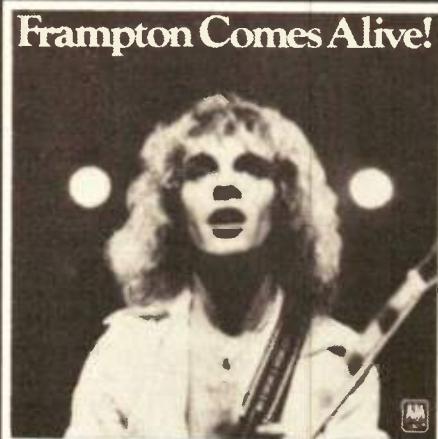
successful identity for pop singles, progressive-appeal albums, and live gigs, keeping them in balance and gradually attaining a massive, widespread power base. In accomplishing this delicate feat, Queen, Roxy Music and Nazareth have become the insidious vanguard of a new British Invasion, which by careful manipulation of the multi-faceted American rock scene may well be just as important and longer-lasting than the 1964 original.

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THE NEW BRITISH INVASION

ROXY MUSIC

FEATURING BRYAN FERRY

By RON ROSS

Roxy Music, once scorned here as the last frontier of glitter 'n' glam, may now become the one group capable of closing the two gaps which have most prevented '70s rock from developing a format and flair of its own: namely, the once unbridgeable gulf between the British and American charts, and the even wider gap which has traditionally divided AM from FM radio. Where Slade and T. Rex were repeatedly frustrated in their attempts to pop to the top of American rock consciousness, and even the Sweet seem over anxious to leave their stunning singles successes behind them, Roxy Music has both a hit single in "Love Is The Drug" and a hit album in *Siren*, which have compromised their original musical direction not a whit. What Roxy has going for them is an integrity which lets them come across as what they really are, regardless of the radio context involved, an integrity similar to that of The Kinks and The Stones, who were quite different for their time but nevertheless no turn-off to programmers in their pseudo-scientific search for the broadest possible audience.

In the late '60s and early '70s, when

radio's fragmentation had its greatest negative effect on exposing new talent, large-scale concerts and extensive tours became an alternative means of breaking. But where radio aims for the mass (no station

sense. When Bowie was still a mystery to jocks outside of Los Angeles and Cleveland, kids lined-up outside box offices everywhere for the opportunity to dress-up and stand-out at his concerts. The same

calculated weirdness, they don't even seem to be controversial; "Love Is The Drug" is a hit on both CKLW (AM) in Detroit and KSAN-FM in San Francisco, and for all the right reasons. For the first time in years, album artists don't have to be afraid of a hit single, and AM stations aren't afraid of playing a hit single by a progressive artist. Too many artists who have emulated the Stones seem to have forgotten that despite the controversy surrounding them, the Stones were always played by everybody. And the Stones were bought by everybody.

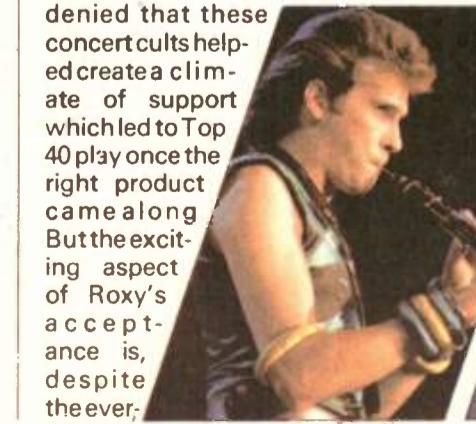
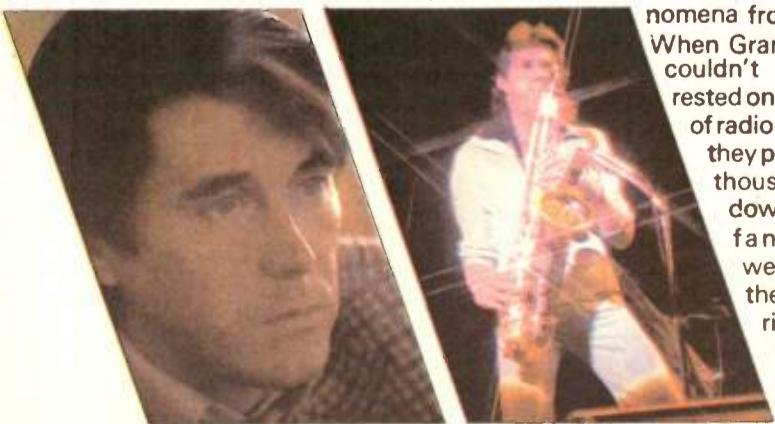
As much as Roxy Music, and especially their leading light, vocalist/writer Bryan Ferry, may have wanted success in the States, they were self-aware enough to realize that intensive Savoy Brown-style touring would ruin them as much as the *fey-er than thou* image they cultivated in the Eno-era. Ferry's switch two years ago from his futuristic greaser image to one of impeccable establishment formality, embracing both dinnerjackets and militaristic *j o d p h u r s* was thought at the time to be merely a stylistic change.

one more rocker was going so far out of his way to be different, that looking straight became a novelty in and of itself.



ever hesitates to let its listeners know its number one), the concerts, derived from Fillmore/Woodstock fall-out, sought to create phenomena from cults. When Grand Funk couldn't get arrested on any kind of radio format, they played for thousands of downed-out fans who were proud their favorite group wasn't pop-in the 60s

principle applies to Alice Cooper, Lou Reed and a number of other "distinctive" acts who once fell between the gaps in radio. It can't be denied that these concert cults helped create a climate of support which led to Top 40 play once the right product came along. But the exciting aspect of Roxy's acceptance is, despite the ever-



•VINTAGE ROXY: Bryan Ferry (2nd from L) looking a bit chubby, Eno (4th from L) looking a bit trendy.



Gregg Papazian/Jon Levine

But as Ferry, as well as his close observer, David Bowie, realized, behind the obvious image change, there was a less obvious marketing intent. A good-looking guy in a well-tailored suit is never going to be a turn-off, especially in pictures (now who mentioned movies?). In fact, the opposite is often true; programmers failed to play such hit Bowie tunes as "Sorrow," because in their eyes, if not in their ears, he was a glitter fag and with so many competing singles to choose from, why let your station be cited in the tip-sheets as promoting a queer, even a hit-making queer. Where's the demographic percentages in that (who mentioned Barry White)?

Whether Bowie is, was or ever will be a pederast is not really the issue. The point is, his image gave programmers, who are always being pushed to play more music than they have time for, an excuse to say "next," and play *Donny and Marie's* latest sure-shot. Similarly, only a year ago, FM-ers felt infinitely more comfortable playing ancient *'Live Dead* cuts than anything English. So Ferry, and ultimately Bowie, saw the handwriting on the wall and chose for their latest "costume" the street drag of another generation. And in so cleaning up their act visually, allowed their real product, the music, to stand or fall on its own merits. And since Roxy Music's music is among the most innovative and lyrically valid of this or any decade, once the prejudices were removed, it couldn't fail.



Phil Ceccola

"Love Is The Drug" employs every one of Roxy's instrumental and lyrical motifs, which have always been produced by Chris Thomas, with such finesse as to be mini-concept pieces in themselves. Mysterious sound effects, jangling, unexpected guitar leads from Phil Manzanera, who will become popular with the same people who like Robin

Trower-Keith Emerson and who is more rock 'n' roll as well as more imaginative; an almost reggae, nearly Detroit rhythm riff, a hook beneath a hook (like a mixture of horse and cocaine) held to a constant by drummer Phil Thompson and bassist Johnny Gustafson; instinctive, intense contributions by violinic electrician Ed Jobson and vari-

hornist Andy MacKay (who would have been in a black jazz band in the '30s); and Ferry's ambivalent sung-spoken, irresistible, bedroom smokey suggestion, "it's no big thing to wait for the bell to ring." Looking for a fix and a kiss in a frame of mind like that of a motor-city assembly joiner working overtime. Any wonder "Love Is The Drug" ("got its hook on me") is the drive-time sensation in Motown, where in work, outta work, numbness is a high?

Bryan Ferry and Roxy Music are out to make their audience here, there and everywhere care enough to "save" them. That stance of post-war (any war) ennui and despair marks great music stars from Frank Sinatra, B. B. King, the Stones, the Velvet Underground, Charlie Christian, the New York Dolls, Bix Beiderbecke, and so on. What's their common poison is jade-collecting. But all of them care, despite the stylization they want to get across. That intensity, that belief that the next fix of love could be it, appeals to the mushiness of the American heart (as well as its devotion to a back-beat you can lean on any guitar that bites back). Sentimentality mixed with a yawn hits all'uns where we live. And it's commercial. Put it to music that conserves and focuses energy. When you do something so well that's so American, 1976 will find a place for you. Congratulations, America, you've come a sigh away from making "Love Is The Drug" the "Surfin' U.S.A." contender of the Bi-Centennial.

Keep an eye out for
Pretty Things



Pretty Things, a legendary band who combine raunch and musical sophistication have created their masterpiece in "Savage Eye," a type of rock that you simply don't hear anymore. Produced by Beatles arranger and Pink Floyd producer Norman Smith. Phil May—lead vocals, Peter Tolson—lead guitar, Jack Green—bass and harmonies, Skip Alan—drums, John Povey—keyboards, Gordon Edwards—keyboards and harmonies.



QUEEN

THE NEW BRITISH INVASION

FEATURING FREDDIE MERCURY

By MITCH COHEN

You're not going to ask me to interpret "Bohemian Rhapsody," are you?" "Not if you don't want me to." Freddie Mercury, drinking a Bloody Mary at—appropriately enough—the Olde London Pub and Grille has just been told about a fanciful yarn some F.M. jock has spun concerning Queen's hit single. Something to do with a murder, a hanging and Ken Russell-ish mental fantasies leading to a resigned acceptance of death.

"I think that's very rewarding, to be honest. It's nice to hear somebody has gone that far to try and interpret a song. I like them to make up their own. If I were to come up with my interpretation, put my views to it, it would just shatter their illusions and things, so...They've got a competition on the radio back home; people had to write in what they thought the song was about. Hundreds and hundreds of letters came in. Some were really amazing."

So, while "Bohemian Rhapsody" may be this season's "American Pie" parlor game, it is also, thankfully, a totally brilliant single, easily the best thing Queen has done to date. It's got everything: superb vocals, a flashy guitar solo, an absurd operatic middle section, and an interesting-enough structure and theme to hold the listener's attention throughout its six-minute length. In England, it's the biggest 45 in a decade, selling over 1.5 million copies, and the album from which it came, *A Night At The Opera*, is similarly topping the LP charts. At the moment, Britannia is ruled by more than one Queen. In their home country, as Mercury put it, they can do now wrong.

And unlike so many recent U.K. phenoms, Queen's success appears to be making a smooth Atlantic crossing. The group is on a two-month American tour, going clean in most cities, as their album and single are steadily heading toward the top ten. These aren't the first favorable U.S. indicators for the group—last year's "Killer Queen" and

Sheer Heart Attack were very well-received—but this visit and these recordings do look to have a special significance for them. The influential press—Time, The New York Times—is on their heels, the SRO crowds are ecstatic, and Don Law, the kingpin of Massachusetts rock who promoted the concert at the Music Hall the night before the interview, was quoted in *Boston* magazine as calling Queen "the biggest act since the Beatles, absolutely the biggest since Led Zeppelin."

Taking for granted the usual amount of promoter hyperbole, that is still a pretty strong statement to make. But stardom does seem to be in the air for Queen, and Freddie Mercury, at least, is casual in his acceptance of it. After seeing Queen's show, a very theatrical and dramatic affair during which the flamboyant lead singer sometimes skirts on the hem of Rocky Horror exaggeration, one might expect a somewhat bizarre luncheon companion. But despite the makeup, slave bracelets and black nailpolish that give him a vampish, Theda Bara appearance (maybe their name comes from Cleopatra, Queen of the Nile), Mercury comes across as a lucid, unassuming fellow (John Deacon, the quintessential bass player, speaks barely a sentence in an hour and a half). Asked why Queen has broken through while other British bands have not, he answers easily.

"A very different kind of group, that. What you say is true only in one sense, because if you point out groups like T. Rex and Slade, that's just one aspect of music that was going back home. Though I couldn't put my finger on the reason, I didn't think America would go for groups like that. I think they fall into a category that America wouldn't accept."

"We just want to make sure that we appeal to as wide a cross-section as possible, and not cater to just a fragment of people. It's limitless; we want to hit everyone. We've become sophisticated and disciplined and more listenable as a band, and I think

we've matured and so has the audience. But I don't think we've lost the hard-core fans, the real rock and rollers who bought the first album and know what Queen is really about. It's just that we have a lot of sophisticated fans turning up."

The previous evening at the Music Hall did seem to attract a well mixed assortment of the committed and the curious. Instead of a house packed wall to wall with rowdy young men of the sort that bopped a photographer acquaintance of mine with a beer bottle at a recent Black Sabbath concert, the Queen crowd was demographically less confined, reflecting the spectrum that the group has been able to span. By and large, popular bands get to be that way by one of three routes: getting hit singles via A.M. radio, relentlessly hitting the road (there are some very big groups who get no airplay of any sort), or cracking the F.M. album market. Queen is a rare example of a band that has done all three, at the same time overcoming backlash against trendy English bands and groups that sell singles. For a group with no built-in musical or personal association with the 1960's, that's quite an accomplishment. They've had to start from square one with no natural constituency.

On stage, Mercury is definitely the focal, as well as vocal point, but not to the exclusion of the three other members. In fact, in contrast to most hard rock bands that have an overpowering singer raving in front of a thick, monotonous background, Queen relies a great deal on multi-layered harmonies and complicated song structure that frees their stage act from the Tyranny of the Chord. Even without the various special effects like flares and smoke bombs that, much to the group's disappointment, had to be scratched from the Music Hall show due to Massachusetts fire laws, Queen's concert, with a few boring lapses (obligatory guitar and drum showcases for Brian May and Roger Taylor), was surprisingly entertaining. The stance of the group, a kind of arrogant defeatism and

off-hand nihilism ("Nothing really matters") that can tend to get overly serious, is extremely accessible to a young audience relating to Queen's mixture of defiance and pessimism, and older fans respond to the complex textures of the music without being sucked into the vision. It may be a precarious political balancing act—incorporating elements of punk, pop, glitter, progressive and heavy metal without being tied to any one form—but for now both factions are kept more or less happy.

"Within the scope of the stage show there's a bit of spontaneity to enhance the music we play, but there are certain set pieces that have to be done a definite way for them to leap out. Queen isn't the kind of group that can go into a twelve-bar jam. We could do it, but it doesn't work with the kind of show we do, which is really structured and holds together."

The final result, on stage or on record, usually comes about after a fair amount of hassling, according to Mercury. "If there was ever an equally divided quartet, this is it. We need that kind of blend where each one's got to contribute just about evenly. Just because I'm out front doesn't necessarily mean I'm any kind of leader. We all have strong characters and we row constantly. It's healthy, because then you get the cream, the good product. We're very fussy, very meticulous, and have numerous battles to get the right sound."

"Deciding the single wasn't an easy task, especially with the four of us having very strong views of how it should be released, cut or whatever. Back home our company couldn't believe we wanted to release a six-minute single. We said, you'll release it or else, figuring it was out of the ordinary, has a lot to say, and if it did click it would really put us on the map. So they did, and they're jumping up and down now. It was a very big risk. It's important to us to put across something that we feel is what Queen's doing at the time, and we felt that 'Bohemian Rhapsody' probably captured more or less all the types of moods that we were doing at



•QUEEN (L to R) Roger Taylor, Freddie Mercury, Brian May, John Deacon.

this given moment, so we thought, O.K., this is what we want to present to the public and let's see what they do with it."

Queen has arrived at their present status in a very organized, methodical manner. The group was formed at the early part of the decade, after all four members had completed college (Freddie studied Art, the others had Science backgrounds). May and Taylor had been in a group called Smile, and after the breakup of that group, they recruited Mercury and Deacon. Choosing Queen as their trademark ("It's a very strong name, very universal"), they set about to see if the new quartet could cut it. After about eighteen months they knew

they had a promising band. Their debut album, *Queen*, was released in 1973, and was rather better received in the U.S. than in Britain, but caused no great stir on either continent. Touring and a second LP, *Queen II*, increased their popularity, and *Sheer Heart Attack* really established them as major artists. Having been burned in the past by unscrupulous management, the members of Queen now take a lot of care and interest in all phases of their career from stage lighting to chart progress to album production, and devote their energies entirely to the business task at hand. They are, if anything, overly cautious and guarded. "Everything we undertake is such a mammoth project we can't concentrate on anything else. It's got to be that way whether it's a tour or an album. Nothing else

matters."

As excellent as "Bohemian Rhapsody" is - which means right up there in the league with "All The Young Dudes" and "I'm Not In Love" - there is some doubt about where Queen can go from here creatively. Certainly they do what they do with consummate professionalism and not a small sense of vocal and instrumental dynamics, but the material on all four of their albums is wildly uneven, with terrific tracks, "Liar," "Killer Queen," "Rhapsody," alternating with unimaginative plodding rock. Right now Mercury's voice, often reminiscent of Eric Carmen, strangely enough, as much as Robert Plant, is the best asset they've got, but his queenly stage demeanor may prove a limiting persona. At their worst, Queen succumbs to an almost

morbid anguish, a victimized, "you're tearing me apart" pretension that Peter Watkins and Paul Jones presaged so eerily in *Privilege*. They can also, on songs like the aforementioned "Killer Queen" and "Flick of the Wrist," be bright, inventive and rocking. Depending on whether they let their smarter or dumber fans, or instincts, guide them, they could end up either at the top of the hard-rock pile or in the midst of the art-rock heap.

"We don't consciously think about what's going to happen in a year's time. We're not that kind of group. Things just happen day to day and everything we do is at that very moment. I don't even know what kind of shape the next album's going to take. Let it take its course. Right now, it's looking very rosy."

THE NEW BRITISH INVASION

NAZARETH

FEATURING DAN McCAFFERTY

By KEN BARNES

It's almost schizophrenic. On the one side there's Nazareth the loud, flashy, hard-rocking boogie band. That's more or less their reputation in England, where they've toured indefatigably up and down the country, laying them in the aisles just like proletarian stalwarts Status Quo and other high-decibel low-originality outfits. True, Nazareth get hit singles, but judging from concert reports they seem to de-emphasize them live in favor of the surefire crowdpleasing piledrivers that make up a large portion of their album tracks. In America, where, second-billed to Deep Purple, they're currently undertaking their sixth cross-country tour, the shows (again from reports) seem even more slanted towards the rock-bottom boogie crowd.

And then on the other side there's Nazareth, a band of rare sensitivity and taste, with an exceptional lead singer (Dan McCafferty) who combines raw rasp with emotional delicacy better than anyone since Rod Stewart, and an impressive guitarist (Manny Charlton) whose lightning-burst leads can conjure up memories of the Yardbirds and who produces and arranges their uneven material, bringing out the best in the good ones and sometimes mitigating the negative impact of the indifferent tunes. When Nazareth are on target they're astonishingly good, so good you can't help wondering what goes on the rest of the time.

"Love Hurts" (about which more later) is their first American hit, but Nazareth have been big for three years in England. They hail from Scotland, and formed about 1970, with the same lineup as today—McCafferty, Charlton, Pete Agnew (bass) and Darrell Sweet (drums). Their first album (for Warners) was as routine a collection of tuneless riff-rock as you could ever imagine (with fleeting moments of interest); the second featured an odd preponderance of orchestrated ballads, with ambitious lyrics, quite promising.

They hit their stride in early 1973 with a Top 10 hit called "Broken Down

"Angel," which combined a vintage Rod Stewart-style melody line with Slade power-pop punch, a superb record by any criteria. Their next hit, "Bad Bad Boy," was a standardized slide-guitar boogie, not unlike "Ain't Superstitious" by the Jeff Beck Group. In America their new label, A&M, followed up the unsuccessful "Angel" with "Razamanaz", in many ways a typical pulverizer but with more flair and excitement—it's more or less the band's signature tune and ranks in the "Rock & Roll All Nite"/"We're An American Band" anthem class.

The next single was brilliant. Nazareth took Joni Mitchell's "This Flight Tonight" to hard-rock realms unimaginable in the original context. McCafferty delivered a sensitive, rough-edged vocal but the ever-present tense rock pulsebeat below carried it. A classic folk-to-rock transformation, it reached Top 5 in England and topped the Canadian Charts, which along with several arduous tours made Nazareth one of the top bands in that country.

Their next single was almost as good, a humorous, cleverly-constructed hard-rock original called "Shanghai'd in Shanghai" which sadly was only a minor English hit. "Love Hurts" followed it up and went nowhere. Then another failure, a rather ordinary rocker called "Hair of the Dog".

In summer 1975, though, Nazareth delighted all the psychedelic relics of '67 by revamping Tomorrow's "My White Bicycle," a legendary underground single favorite, and taking it to the Top 20. According to McCafferty, it was the first single they'd ever recorded specifically as a single, a precedent they followed swiftly with "Holy Roller," which took a dim view of religious fanatics in the framework of a captivating melody (again only a minor hit).

All these singles were assembled in a *Greatest Hits* package (released in England and Canada, where they had some hit significance, but not here), which makes for their most consistent album, highly recommended. It's McCafferty's contention that "We just record everything for an album and then pick the most commercial

tracks for singles. Singles and albums both help each other, but albums are the important thing," he continues, in regard to building an audience.

But the singles seem to overshadow most of the remaining album tracks depressingly often. The last four A&M albums all contain powerful, exciting rocking originals (for the best selection, the first side of *Loud 'n' Proud* is recommended), but there's a preponderance of hackneyed metallic hard-rock noticeably lacking in the subtleties and melodic flair present in their best singles. The highlights of the albums are usually the ambitious cover versions they've tackled, from the first LP's unusual treatment of "Morning Dew" onward.

In considering their cover versions, the impression you get is of a band with pronounced, out-of-the-mainstream tastes in music (cf. McCafferty's solo album for some intriguingly obscure songs), and possessing enough youthful zest to attack their favorites head on. They don't all work, but when they do the results are spectacular.

Razamanaz missed with a Woody Guthrie tune, "Vigilante Man" turned into a tedious slide guitar showcase; but Leon Russell's "Alcatraz" became a blast furnace rocker, quite a neat trick. *Loud 'n' Proud* has the wondrous "This Flight Tonight" and a sledgehammer version of Little Feat's "Teenage Nervous Breakdown," minus the humor but undeniably impactful. The big cover move here was a nine-minute version of Bob Dylan's "Ballad of Hollis Brown," but the initially effective monolithic drone can't sustain interest for the full length of the song. Portions blister with stark emotion, but ultimately it becomes wearying (not so fast as the Dylan original, though).

Rampant focused on another major project, the Yardbirds' "Shapes of Things," and (contrary to what I felt at the time of release) pulls it off in an idiosyncratic fashion. Charlton doesn't try to equal Jeff Beck's searing original solo, but plays with restraint and eventually turns the whole thing into an effectively spacy mood piece. The recent *Hair Of The*

Dog (a generally undistinguished LP) has "Love Hurts" and a fairly radical revamp of Nils Lofgren's "Beggar's Day," starting like a bar-band version of "Spoonful" and then going into heavy gear with oddly intriguing chordaccents.

Near the end of 1975 Dan McCafferty found an outlet for his covering bent by cutting yet another in the continuing series of my-favorite-oldies albums. This one was a solo effort (though produced by Manny Charlton), using ex-Deep Purple bassist Roger Glover (Nazareth's longtime producer) and members of Alex Harvey's band. Aside from demonstrating more instances of intriguing tastes in covers, *Dan McCafferty* offers the singer a chance to show off his vocal versatility, deemphasizing the gravelly attack he favors for Nazareth material.

Little Feat's "Trouble" is a showcase of restraint, and he does an affecting job on Dylan's "Boots of Spanish Leather." A euphoric reggae treatment of Doris Troy's "Watch Gonna Do 'Bout It" works well, and "Out of Time" (a minor English hit) isn't bad either. He tackles Lorraine Ellison's "Stay With Me Baby," a classically dramatic R&B ballad which is burdened here with too silky and smothering an arrangement, and falls short of Terry Reid's impassioned version. But "You Can't Lie To A Liar," an obscure Ketty Lester single picked up by the Searchers as well, is fascinating, with the same unusual violin bits as the original.

The standout, though, is an intense, slowed-down version of Neil Young's "Cinnamon Girl," which ranks with the best of Nazareth's output, and as one of McCafferty's top vocal performances—another potential classic.

On their last British tour, Nazareth spotlighted some of McCafferty's solo tracks, with keyboardist Tommy Eyre added to enhance them, but that's ruled out for the States. "My solo album is new here, and so we're concentrating on Nazareth," McCafferty says. His loyalty is centered on the group; he says he may continue to record solo only "as long as it doesn't interfere with the



group. I don't want to cause bad vibes."

And now is indeed the best time to concentrate on Nazareth, since they've finally broken America with a hit single. "Love Hurts," now in the Top 15 and rising, was an unexpected success, to say the least. It was out around November 1974 in England, and despite following four consecutive chart records, went absolutely nowhere. Then in April 1975 it suddenly materialized in the South African Top 10. Shortly thereafter

A&M released it here as the most commercial *Hair Of The Dog* track, but it seemed to sink as fast as their first four American singles (one, "Morning Dew," on Warners).

But gradually it began showing up on the playlists of small Texan stations. Airplay spread in the region, and it registered impressive sales. But its spread to other areas was slow, hampered by two independent factors—a ratings period, during which stations avoid adding new records, in the belief that strictly

familiar stuff will attract the largest audience sample; and then the Christmas slowdown, when single releases slow to a crawl and stations freeze their playlists to concentrate on year-end countdowns and holiday tunes.

Despite all the playlist amputations, "Love Hurts" managed to add a lot of stations and by the New Year it was all right, firmly established in almost every major market, the first time the venerable Boudleaux Bryant copyright had ever made the charts.

"Love Hurts" is a beautiful song, one of the classic melancholy lovelorn numbers, frighteningly intense in an understated way, with eloquently simple words:

*"Love hurts, love scars
Love wounds and mars
Any heart not tough
Or strong enough
To take a lot of pain
Take a lot of pain
Love is like a cloud
Holds a lot of rain"**

(continued on next page)

Pictured left to right,
Nazareth members:
Manuel Charlton, guitar
Darrell Sweet, drums
Dan McCafferty, lead vocals
Peter Agnew, bass



(continued from previous page)

It was apparently first cut by the Everly Brothers on their second Warners album, *A Date With The Everly Brothers*, in December 1960. "We got it from the Everly Brothers," McCafferty says, and Don & Phil's version is similar in pace to Nazareth's. It would have made an exquisite follow-up to "Cathy's Clown" and "So Sad," but the company went with "Ebony Eyes" / "Walk Right Back" instead, so it remained obscure. The Everlys cut it again in 1965 (*Rock & Soul*) in an uncomfortable but oddly compelling heavy beat treatment.

Roy Orbison recorded it next, again exquisitely, a little slower and, naturally, more operatic. It was the B-side to "Running Scared," which monopolized airplay, leaving "Love Hurts" still largely unheard.

Ray Peterson cut it as a 1965 single, in quasi-Orbison style, smothered in strings and choruses, with piercing falsetto flights at the end which he must have picked up from Denny Laine of the Moody Blues. Odd, but not a hit. Years later it was recorded twice on Reprise singles, first by Jimmy Webb (quite movingly, rough vocal contrast to smooth backing), then by Gram Parsons and Emmylou

Harris, simply, delicately, very mournfully.

Each one of these versions (there must be more; Jim Capaldi's blithe

CLOSE ENOUGH FOR ROCK & ROLL

Nazareth
A&M

By KEN BARNES

Close Enough For Rock & Roll, due for release in the near future, is more of the same for Nazareth. That is to say, out of nine tracks four fall into the familiar pounding three-chord blues-based tuneless monotony bag we know and love as Boogie. But monotonously-constructed rock and roll can be transformed by exceptionally passionate or skilled performances (that's the appeal of early rock, than which nothing was more simplistically constructed). And even the most ponderous Nazareth tunes here are sparked by something special—fiery guitar breaks on "Born Under the Wrong Sign" and "Loretta" an astonishingly gritty vocal on "Vancouver Shakedown" which sounds like Family at triple the volume and intensity.

And there's material which is impressive on its own, too. "Homesick Again" features attractively delicate musical frills over a relentless Scottish drone. "Carry Out Feelings" is a not-exactly-ethnic stab

British hit, for one) is marvelous in its own way, but Nazareth's is my personal favorite. McCafferty's vocal is tortured and intense, and the

at reggae, but the guitar rhythms are authoritative and irresistible, the tune is catchy and there are some nice harmonies, too.

The only cover this time out is "You're the Violin," taken, improbably enough, from the recorded legacy of Rosey Grier, the ex-Rams defensive star (he appeared on *Shindig* with his cohorts, billed as the Fearsome Foursome) turned TV personality. It works, though, with a deliberate "Indian Reservation" flavor and a wealth of electric power. Star track, though, is the original opener, "Telegram" / "Here We Are Again," sparked by a pulsing guitar underpinning which sounds like a massed string section, punctuated by power chords, a burner and a screamer. Midway, when you least expect it, it suddenly shifts into "So You Want to Be a Rock & Roll Star," and then shifts back out before you've had time to assimilate it. Cassette reproduction of this advance copy precluded in-depth lyrical analysis, but the words sounded interesting.

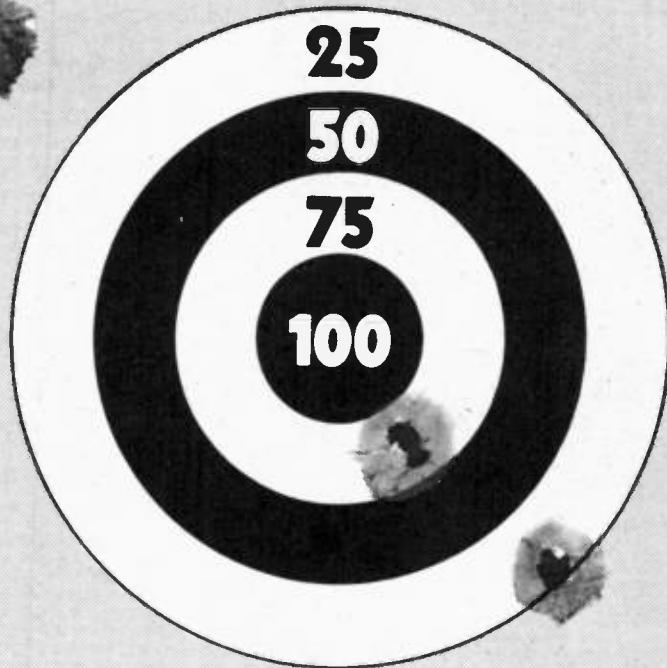
I'm not sure whether there are any hits on *Close Enough*, but there are enough strong tracks to make it one of Nazareth's best albums (possibly the best), with satisfying rewards for both the metal-boogie and singles-connoisseur sides of their audience.

ringing guitar lines are the perfect setting, especially with Charlton's lovely, simple guitar solo (edited from the American single but on the LP) added. It's easily one of the year's Top 5 singles, artistically, the single Rod Stewart should have made for a comeback move, and should (with any luck) establish Nazareth as an important singles presence. There's talk, according to McCafferty, of rereleasing "This Flight Tonight" as the follow-up, and what a fabulous radio cruise anthem that would make!

Meanwhile, for the moment Nazareth have it both ways, concentrating their sensitivity and special tastes on their singles and the odd change-of-pace LP track, while whipping live audiences into ecstasies of boogiemania. It's a clever formula, not a million miles removed from that of the great British bands of the mid-sixties, who made their innovative singles and jammed hard on the R&B staples when playing live. It might well be more constructive for estheticians like me to celebrate Nazareth's frequent displays of skill and taste rather than decry their also frequent pedestrian excesses. For even if I can't help hoping for more consistency and brilliance, a "Love Hurts" makes up for a multitude of mediocrities.

LYNYRD SKYNYRD

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THEIR FOURTH ALBUM

Produced by Tom Dowd
MCA-2170

MCA RECORDS

The Tour:

March	4	San Jose
	5,6	Winterland
	9	Sacramento
	10	Fresno
	12	San Bernardino
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	14	San Diego
	16	Seattle
	17	Spokane
	18	Portland
	25	Houston
	26	Dallas
	27	Oklahoma City
	30	St. Paul
	31	Des Moines
April	2	Chicago
	3	St. Louis
	4	Kansas City
	7,8	Boston
	10,11	New York
	13	Buffalo
	14	Detroit
	16	Philadelphia
	17	Pittsburgh
	18	Cleveland

Bill Wyman Solo "Happier in The Stones Because I have this Outside Freedom"

By LITA ELISCU

"I've been in this band so long that if I haven't sung for a long time, I can't sing. If I haven't written a song in ten years, I can't write a song. You really get stuck into a corner where everything is supposedly known about you. 'You never talk,' 'you never smile'; a build-up of opinions, each year handed to the next ones. 'Your friendly undertaker on the right hand-stage' is me—and really, that's all fun, but it isn't really me to me or my old lady, or my kid, or my friends."

Bill Wyman speaks quietly, sometimes searching for the right word to make his point. This band, The Rolling Stones, has been together for 13 years. Last year, Wyman produced a solo album, *Monkey Grip*, himself writing, arranging and producing. He has just finished a new album, *Stone Alone*. He says he won't tour, his grin very real: "Nawww, I'm not a singer-performer. I'm a shy bass player."

Talking about The Stones, he says by rote. "It's great that we can still relate to each other after so long, still be friends, still get on very well." He continues. "I do feel very relieved; I can't think of another word. Very much less frustrated musically. Much happier and relaxed in the Stones, because I have this freedom outside, to do this. I can't explain it better."

The songs on the album were written over a 15-month period, recorded a week or so at a time, in between rehearsals and touring during the Stones' last American tour. Recording was done at the Record Plant studios in Sausalito and Los Angeles, and Wyman credits Gary Colgren, who owns the Record Plants, as a source of unique TLC. "He was constantly kicking me up the backside, saying: 'C'mon, let's do another track'." Colgren acted as an equivalent to, say, the film world's executive producer, calling up musicians to drop by and play on sessions. All told, the album features such players as Van Morrison, Ron Wood, members of Tower of Power, Dallas Taylor, Joe Walsh, Joe Vitale, and Ruth and Bonnie Pointer helping out with the vocals. Not to mention Al Kooper, Nicky Hopkins, and others. A not impressive line-up of talent; more impressive, however, is the incontestable quality of the music. Instead of "super-group" star-solos and discord, the whole works as an effective, cohesive band effort as though they have been playing together for quite a while. But Wyman shakes his head. "Naw. We didn't rehearse. Whoever comes... I always like sessions to be fun. Charts were off the top of everybody's head, worked out in the studio. Everybody contributing, so nobody thinks afterwards that it was theirs. I don't think I arranged the horns, and they don't think they did, for we all gave a bit. I like to leave it fairly open for anybody who's got an idea. I was in charge, but I wasn't heavy about it."

There is no doubt that the music is



commercial, full of what is often called 'infectious' sounds. Wyman ticks off on his fingers, "There's a country song, a reggae, two or three '50s rock 'n' roll things, some up-to-date rock 'n' roll, ragtime, a Latin kind of thing. Several of the songs have fairly suggestive lyrics, one of which has a refrain of 'Get it in, get it in/Get it on/Get it out.' It's about his dog he says, a young Golden Retriever who is in a state of perpetual and unsatisfied horniness. Dog yelps at the end of the track are heard, and a voice crying, 'Get a bucket of water, then!'"

Wyman did not write any songs for a long time because he only recently has managed to end an unfavorable songwriting contract signed in 1965. There was no point in writing songs before this. "No incentive for me to write songs, so I didn't bother. Then suddenly, I thought, 'Right, I can now.'" He continues on, leaning forward a little. "When I started doing my own material, I could write whatever I wanted to. Whichever way a song came out was OK. It didn't have to be rock 'n' roll or funky." And how does he feel about the pressures

of his new career? He reflects a minute, then speaks slowly. "I do have something to prove to myself, I suppose, that's the main reason for it all, if you start to delve deeply. It is a lot of things I can't do in the band I'm in, so I have to do it apart, without any influence, totally separate. It gives me so little time at home, though. Probably been home six or seven weeks out of the last year. And that's crazy. We're building a new house in the south of France."

Continuing, he says, "I don't think fame or fortune has changed me. I'm very very content and happy with my lifestyle. Happy with my old lady, happy with my family, my house, friends, parents—if I want to, I can get on with 'em, I mean. I've got no real problems. I don't really have to worry about money, although I don't have as much as you might think. I have most of the things I love. Things! I'm not free out, dope or alcohol, because I'm very content. Always been, pretty much, except when I was much younger."

Here we sit, in a suite at The Plaza Hotel, surrounded by his beloved video equipment, used for recording

old films. Some stereo components sit on top of a table, so he can play an acetate of his new album, and there is a selection of albums nearby, old and new stuff. His own favorites, he says, are "way back". Astrid, his beautiful lady, is in the next room, unpacking clothes; several of the songs on both his albums are obviously about and to her. When he was a young boy, he must have been the one who sat in the back of the room, skinny and small, dark-eyed and long-faced, watching the goings-on quietly, deciding how best to make his own moves. Cautious, prudent, steady. And here he is, a man of 40 or so, a man of some taste and wealth, a self-made man, taking his satisfaction in what he sees that is his. He is so slight and boyish still, it is hard to accept.

He is talking about life in the south of France, his community where many artists, musicians and painters live. "It's a whole great thing going down. Picasso used to live quite near—I just missed meeting him by three months. After he died, I met two people who used to go visit him, and they told me, 'You could have come to meet him, if we had known you then'. So there's a nice, artistic movement to be involved in. And they all admire me for the music, ya know? And I'm regarded as an equal."

Asked if he wants to produce other people, he nods, "I haven't been asked. Some big names and some little names. But I haven't got the time now to do it. I think that's where my final vocation, is that the word?—will be. It seems to be going that way, that I could end up being a producer when everything else stops."

The reserve once again back, Wyman talks about his albums. "When I cut the first one, I went for a nice, fun album, no more. And when the album started to be pushed, people wanted singles and there weren't any. This time, I started thinking, 'Right, there has to be a single, it should be commercial,' and all that. So it is the complete opposite of the last one as far as that. And now I have five or six potential singles!" He laughs, pleased.

Tom Dowd did the mixes, and Wyman likes six of them very much, carefully pointing out that it's merely a matter of taste, not judgement, and that Anita Wexler is going to re-mix some of the tracks for a more disco sound. "She's really heard a lot of good music, and I know she's into real funky stuff." Also, Gary Colgren will help with some of the other final mixes. Wyman shakes his head, saying that mixes are critical, "You should be able to spend a lot of time on it but I never find the time."

And what does he want to do with his next album? "Experiment a little more. Try some different ways of cutting tracks. Maybe try to make it much simpler. 'Clean-Up Woman'—that sort of record. So simple! To be able to get the song and make it great in its simplicity instead of making it great because of all things going on, poppin' in and out. I think that's my next step."

GRAND FUNK RAILROAD

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Produced by JIMMY IENNER



REVIEWS



GIVE US A WINK
The Sweet
Capitol ST-11496

By BEN EDMONDS

The question with the Sweet has always been one of validity. In England, it was the struggle to become something more than the string of Chinn-Chapman instant teenhits. (It's a battle that has yet to be conclusively won. Their post-Chinnichap work has really only proved their ability to maintain that teen audience; they're still regarded with some suspicion by the dispensers of aesthetic validity.) In America, they initially faced similar difficulties. "Little Willy" sold a million, but even with that and a mid-charter in "Blockbuster," they couldn't sell enough albums to meet the payments on their platform boots. Not only did they not win any FM acceptance, beyond "Little Willy" AM wasn't interested either. It looked like the Sweet were fated to join the sad company of English one-hit wonders.

By the time they'd regrouped for another offensive, the climate for hard rock in America was considerably more hospitable. Bad Company had reestablished the viability of no-frills rock & roll, and the Sweet in the context of Bad Company made infinitely more sense than when they were appraised in light of Gary

Glitter. They got a second shot at AM and made the most of it, and, to the surprise of most everyone, were welcomed enthusiastically by FM as well. Their two hits got maximum FM play even at the peak of their AM hammering--certainly a rare enough occurrence --and "AC/DC" provided FM with the requisite great song that AM couldn't play.

The base of their American validity,

and the team with the track record, BTO, evidences not the slightest trace of commitment to the genre.) They keep the torch of hard rock blazing on the AM airwaves, a calling certainly noble enough to command our unequivocal respect and gratitude. It's a public service.

Give Us A Wink maintains that level of validity. It's opener, "Action," may be their best single yet (especially the slightly



•THE SWEET—L. to R. Brian Connolly
Steve Priest, Mick Tucker, Andy Scott

however, remains on the AM dial. In registering back-to-back Top 10 singles, they've built a momentum which has carried them to the top of the AM hard rock heap. (As for the competition: Neither Bad Company nor Aerosmith nor Kiss have grabbed AM with consistency,

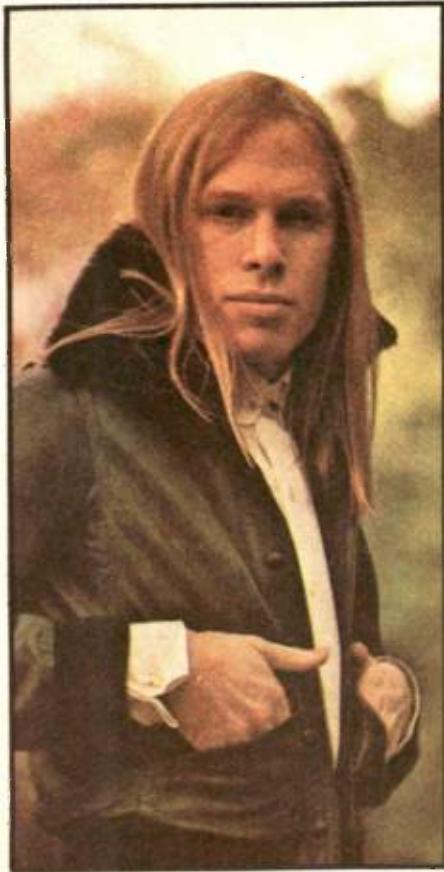
edited AM version). It's got the same drive that carried "Ballroom Blitz" and "Fox On The Run," the same sparing electronic integration as "Fox," and some additional carefully-chosen effects that suggest, in spirit anyway, great singles like the Beatles' "Rain" or the Yardbirds'

"Happenings Ten Years Time Ago"; songs that started to reflect an expansion of consciousness, but not so strongly that it compromised the primary communication function of singles. "Action" is more ambitious than either of the band's two preceding hits, and in this respect is the key to the rest of the album.

Though *Desolation Boulevard* gave them across-the-board validity here, the Sweet's European experience has obviously instilled the notion that success can not necessarily be equated with validity, and their purpose with *Give Us A Wink* seems to be to validate themselves as musicians. The compactness of the songs on that previous album has given way to several longer, show-offy pieces more closely related to "Sweet FA" than "Ballroom Blitz." It should be noted that this is their first full album out from under the Chinn-Chapman worldview, and that the release from those confines is ample excuse enough for a little flexing and stretching. Where the Chinnichap formula called for a non-stop flood of singles, to get one beyond "Action" from this album will require major surgery.

Though I was apprehensive after witnessing excessive guitar and drum solos nearly assassinate the pace of an otherwise excellent live show, they make the move credibly on record. The solos are extended, but usually not beyond guitarist Andy Scott's capabilities. The songs seem to be *elasticized* as much as merely lengthened, and if it does change their musical frame of reference from the Stones more toward Deep Purple, their intentions are genuine enough to make the transition a smooth one. They do quite well by themselves as producers, both in terms of getting a sound and acting as reasonable self-editors. It might've been nice to anticipate an album of twelve ballroom blitzes, but there's something to be said for a band who can still marshall a sense of purpose after three years at the top of the charts. (Even if the point they're out to prove hasn't been contested here in the first place.) And as long as they can produce a tune or two every album as good as "Action," they'll have ample breathing room in which to try and resolve such questions for themselves.

Night Lights: "Elliot Murphy's First Album that Doesn't Have to be Read to be Appreciated"



NIGHTLIGHTS
Elliot Murphy
RCA APL-1-1318

By BUD SCOPPA

Lost Generation, the second album by this hero-obsessed New Yorker, made it clear that Murphy's haughty, proper-noun laden style could be undercut by unsympathetic or insensitive studio guidance. "The Love Song of Eva Braun," for example, audacious, grimly funny, and strangely stirring in its original minimal New York recording, was transformed into self-parodic muddle in its finished version, cut at L.A.'s Elektra studios with a horde of West Coast studio musicians. And though that album turned out to be less disappointing than it had seemed to be on first hearing, it did demand some major modifications in Murphy's recording approach. Happily, Murphy has met the challenge, trundling his foot-long lyric sheets from the Beverly Hills Hotel back to New York City, engaging the services of (would you believe ex-BS&T guitarist?) Steve Katz as producer, and taking on the crude but oh-so-committed remnants of the Modern Lovers as his combo.

Naturally, it's worked extremely well. The context and sound are again as quirky as the artist himself, as they should be.

The songs—which cover treacherous territory like Isadora Duncan, art deco, the Bicentennial, and Patti Smith—seem on the whole less forced, the performances and production are dramatically low-keyed, and the album not only approaches the fervor of Murphy's onstage performances, it adds an unexpected new dimension in the tough grandeur of "Diamonds by the Yard."

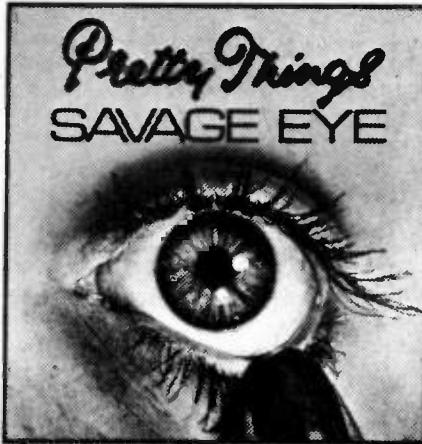
The sound of the record is spare, but each of the elements has strength and value: the band, minimal in a way that recalls the Velvet Underground on their third album; succinct, solemn strings that come and go without warning; living room vocal harmonies; Murphy's voice and harmonica, still petulant but sounding noticeably more experienced and assured. Much more accurately than those of the first two albums, the sound and songs of *Night Lights* describe the hard spirit that gives Murphy's bold, excessive style its coherence and conviction.

That hardness is particularly apparent on the great "Diamonds by the Yard," with its moving tough-guy vulnerability, "Isadora's Dancers," which applies still another Famous Name to a persuasively personal end, and on the more directly personal close-ups, "You Never Know What You're in For," "Rich Girls," and "Lookin' for a Hero." On the other hand,

it's completely absent on "Deco Dance," the insipidness of which is exaggerated by its novelty arrangement; facetious or not—ugh. Happily, there are no other major lapses of taste or good judgment on *Night Lights* (although some overly ornate piano parts are bothersome here and there); even the secondary songs, like "Lady Stiletto," Murphy's love song for Patti Smith, tend to strengthen the album as a confessional work.

Because the sound and spirit are gripping of themselves, and because Murphy is writing with greater economy and precision than in the past, *Night Lights* is the first of his albums that doesn't have to be read in order to be fully appreciated. Nonetheless, I can't resist inserting these crucial lines from "Diamonds by the Yard":

*As I lay down with my lady
The sounds of the night keep me warm
I'm livin' the city life called maybe
and tonight there's no reason to be strong...
Midnight I surrender
I live beneath your ancient spells
You've been my lover since I can remember
You change my life with the stories you tell....*



SAVAGE EYE
The Pretty Things
Swan Song SS 8414

By TOM NOLAN

Notas, notatallas, notnearlyas, doesn't even come close to being anything atallas as good as their last one, *Silk Torpedo*, which impressed throngs from San Francisco to Philly. Still, there's something endearing about this band. "Under the Volcano," the leadoff title, has nothing to do with the Malcolm Lowry novel but does have a passing resemblance, through a recurring secondary riff, to Steely Dan's "Show Biz Kids." It's saying something about Chuck Berry and James Dean as parental surrogates. The P.T.s seem to have refined the lyric-as-an-excuse-for-opening-your-throat to familiar levels this time. On "My Song," they're doing a song about a guy trying to write a song. It's not a bad song, as such songs go. It reminds you of Brian Wilson, lyrically and harmonically, as well as Barry Manilow (ditto & ditto); Beach Boys mini-symphony, and "I Write the Tunes." It's another long piece, typical of the sort these fellows build, sustaining their multi-layered and alpha-wave-inducing threnodies like, as Jared Johnson of the *Denver Post* put it, "heavy-metal Hollies."

"Sad Eye" (title track?) is a Led Zeppelinish ballad. Echo-chambered acoustic guitar underscores Gregorian choristers lamenting the loss of a special one, "like the setting of a sun," rhymes with "telephone." Unlike the Zeps, the P.T.s don't explode with screams on this one; they have a knack instead of making thundering riffs homey, of turning spacey voids into nostalgic reference points. They've incorporated roaring power into a romantic tradition; it's that necessary power that makes love songs up-to-date.

"It Isn't Rock 'n' Roll" evokes '50s raunch while continually pulling back to survey it from a lifting counterpoint of view. It's a tribute disguised as God-knocks-what higher statement. I think they're saying rock is dead but we can't help dancing on its grave. No, it's that whatever lifestyle the narrator is into, it differs from good old *R&B*.

"I'm Keeping," the best track on the album, is a slice of lowlife, a hunk of anger, a chunky rocking putdown with the venom quotient of "Dead Flowers." It's an attractive cut, accessible to those expert at the Kingston Hustle. "It's Been So Long" has more rudimentary lyrics, with black mass chants and Floyd Cramer-esque piano adding grace notes to be or not to be. I take it back, *this* is the best track. "Drowned Man" has more of that "long ago" nostalgia. "Take what you need, give the rest back, give it to the drowned man, he needs the water." What could it all mean?

As hinted, *Silk Torpedo* had strong, stirring melodies and catchy choruses to sing, and this LP has neither, but still it's all right, okay, you win, I'm in love with you. I can't help liking this group. They're grasping at straws, they're building little rafts with them, and then they're setting them on fire!



10cc How dare you!



HOW DARE YOU!
10cc
Mercury SRM-1-1061

By BUD SCOPPA

In the February *Esquire*, Douglas Davis discusses the new meaning the word "tough" has taken on in photographic circles: "It has come to mean (particularly in the recent visual arts) a work that defies the expectations of its audience yet, in the deepest sense, serves that audience. 'Tough' does not mean punching, sneering, thumbing the nose. It is not a picture unwilling to please. It simply refuses pleasure on the normal, accepted ground. The picture jabs with you, even fences now and then...." 10cc is "tough" in very much the same way. Using the icons of pop honeyed McCartneyized vocals and Beatley chorales, cowbells and sleigh bells, fat drums and chromium guitars under Cole Porterish rhymes—these four like-minded Englishmen resolutely veer off the expected pop course and zoom instead into the most unlikely (but on second thought the most perfectly apt) trains of thought imaginable for a rock 'n' roll band. Until you've heard it, it's hard to conceive of a standard rock-band chorus earnestly singing the refrain, "Art for Art's sake/Money for God's sake...," or an automaton's basso chorus rumbling ominously, "I wanna be a boss/I wanna be a big boss/I wanna boss the world around..."; this is the stuff of literary satire and B movies, not rock & roll. But in 10cc's world—where cartoon characters romp through the icy wastes of stark, technological reality, where real life and movies get all mixed up—it all fits together, and it sounds real good, too.

How Dare You!, the band's fourth album, seems at first to possess a bit less breakneck dazzle than '73's startling *Sheet Music* (a record that definitely improves with age) and to contain nothing approaching the romantic lushness of the group's classic single, "I'm Not In Love." But the music is so blazingly bright, the songs so brashly witty, and the effect so cumulative that I

hesitate to go out on the limb in judgment just yet. And like the album's wonderful cover and sleeve illustrations, every song on *How Dare You!* is gem-hard, multifaceted, and informed by some delicious irony. In regard to this last aspect, check out this romantic commentary from "Headroom":

I've never been kissed before
It's been on my list before
A flick of the wrist before would do
But when you get down to it
It's got a good sound to it
Don't meddle around with it
'Cos it's far too wet to woo....
When Mummy and Daddy play
They tell me to go away
But by hanging around
I can learn all the rules
Now I got the technique
I'm away....

The group is all the more impressive because—unlike Beefheart or Steely Dan—it holds itself rigidly within the stylistic parameters of pop. For that matter, ironies notwithstanding, there are some exquisite pop song-performances on the album: "Lazy Ways," "Rock 'n' Roll Lullaby," "I'm Mandy Fly Me," "Don't Hang Up." Each plays against the mood created by its music, even as it tends to advance that mood. The band's cinematic style, with its quick cuts, starting transitions, and sharply focused production, is as brashly inventive as its content. There's always more going on than meets the ear, and what's going on is generally sardonic, nasty, mean-spirited, and—yup—tough.

LYNYRD SKYNYRD GIMME BACK MY BULLETS



GIMME BACK MY BULLETS
Lynyrd Skynyrd
MCA 2170

By KEN BARNES

Lynyrd Skynyrd are fast becoming one of my favorite American bands, in part because they're starting to sound so British. When they want to (a significant portion of this new album and the last

one) they sound more like Free than that group's logical heirs, Bad Company. They've mastered Free's crucial innovations, perhaps the most revolutionary British rock style of the 70's—the measured, almost stately cadences, the fat solid chording, and simple, eloquent instrumental work, which leaves space for the imagination to fill in rather than cluttering up every spare second. Ronnie Van Zant is no Paul Rodgers, but his singing has achieved optimum effectiveness in the freestyle on "Cry for the Bad Man," "Same Old Blues," and "Give Me Back My Bullets," which I'd perversely hoped was a plea to the chart statisticians at *Billboard* and *Record World* but is actually a fairly scarifying lyric of renunciation and implied retirement (a melancholy note which recurs frequently).

But sounding like Free, noteworthy and pleasurable accomplishment that it is, is by no means the sum total of Skynyrd's achievements. In "Sweet Home Alabama," they came up with one of the brightest, most serviceable guitar riffs of the decade, and they know it, too (infectious variations are employed on "Every Mother's Son," "Searching," and "Trust" (which also conjures up the phantom of "All Along the Watchtower"). The band's guitar work is unparalleled for combining restraint and excitement, and the loss of ex-Strawberry Alarm Clocker Ed King hasn't had any noticeable effect—they've still got the best rhythm guitar in America. Even when they go acoustic, it sounds like rock and roll played acoustically rather than plaintive folksie plaints.

Full credit must be accorded Tom Dowd for creating a tense, smoky atmosphere. Once in a while the feminine backup gets a bit overwhelming, but overall Dowd serves Skynyrd better than he did Rod Stewart, chiefly by leaving the band's basic rock & roll inclinations intact and uncluttered.

There's monotony here, but it's the best kind of monotony—a rock band with a powerful, simple style and no frills (subtleties, yes; frills, no) playing on their strengths. All in all, they've never sounded better.

BAD COMPANY



RUN WITH THE PACK

RUN WITH THE PACK
Bad Company
Swan Song SS-8416

By SAM SUTHERLAND

Bad Company excels at classic, riff-laden guitar rock 'n' roll. For all the bone crunching weight of its strutting rhythm section, and the heated cutting edge of Mick Ralphs' guitars, the band rises above mere flash through a sharply defined sense of style in both playing and writing. It's only in the latter category that past Bad Company records have suffered: Overly long arrangements and Paul Rodgers' priapic lyric conceits drained some of the music's energy, and on last year's *Straight Shooter* these excesses seemed on the rise.

Run With The Pack is a welcome contradiction to that trend, achieving a greater consistency in its songs while retaining the best elements of Bad Company's earlier albums. The new

songs still adhere to an archetypal balance of charged rockers and dark ballads; likewise, the stark geometry of guitars, rhythm section and Rodgers' lithe, feverish voice is again presented with little embellishment beyond the impressively full sound of the mix. What differs here is an increased variety augmented by greater restraint: In contrast to the earlier albums, this set offers ten songs instead of eight, and the increase in material only helps, enforcing a more pointed arranging style.

"Live For The Music" opens the album in the tradition of its predecessors: Bad Company clearly believe that rock 'n' roll records should kick off with a vengeance, and this track — like "Can't Get Enough," on the debut album, and *Straight Shooter's* "Good Lovin' Gone Bad" — is a snarling, full-throttle Ralphs song built for speed, not comfort. What's telling here is that this opener, unlike those earlier songs, isn't the side's energy peak: "Honey Chile" generates just as much heat, and the title track closes the side with a rolling power diminished only by a superfluous string backdrop. I suspect the same song could have crested more forcefully had the band provided that drama through a searing, high-register Ralphs solo instead of inappropriate sweetening.

Side two yields another Ralphs raver, "Sweet Lil' Sister," which tirelessly recycles his obvious penchant for densely-chorded raunch (and also marks the only serious intrusion of the band's preening machismo in its chorus), but the real highlight is a raucous fling at the Coasters' classic "Young Blood." The band steps back to let Rodgers' juicy, pop-eyed vocal take full advantage of the ripe humor in the lyric.

Where *Run With The Pack* clinches the impact of its rockers, though, is in the greater strength of its ballads and medium-tempo songs. Ralphs has turned in a soulful ballad, "Simple Man," that

Rodgers' makes his own through a rich, mournful vocal. And Rodgers himself ventures into melodic pop with surprising success on "Silver, Blue and Gold," another deft foil for the fast songs.

I doubt anyone has questioned Bad Company's ability to cut blistering, propulsive rock singles. The good news here is that they've finally achieved the necessary depth and self control to make an equally strong album that doesn't demand judicious tone-arm hopping to achieve its power.

CONEY ISLAND BABY

Lou Reed
RCA APL 1-0915-B

By KIM FOWLEY

Lou Reed is back. *Coney Island Baby* is the new wimp non-rock of the New Year. "Crazy Feeling" is George Harrison Meets Buddy Holly's "Everyday." Almost MOR, it will bring Lou back into the good graces of those he let down by the abruptness of *Metal Machine Music*.

"Charlie's Girl" is fluff. Background voices circa *Transformer* a la Thunder Thighs. The advance copy I am listening to in my Hollywood Boarding House Guest Room, doesn't list these voices' owners. No matter, it works as well as the Lettermen and/or Vogues.

Lou Reed is the real Neil Young of the post-glitter closet kings and he proves it on "She's My Best Friend." More Woodstock than Times Square, at least it's a new song but Eno is still better.

"Kicks" is boring. Lou merges Fred Neil with the Standells on a "Try It" in reverse level. Muzak goes quaalude; Lou Reed isn't sleezy, he is easy. No tension! Easy listening has a new entrant — look out Lobo and Bobby Vinton, Lou Reed is hangin' in there about to take your gig.

"A Gift" establishes Lou as a supreme anti-feminist in the class of Blackbeard

and Joe Namath. *Deadly Nightshade* will have the answer song on their next Leslie West produced LP. I can't wait.

Lou takes a Leo Sayer position on "Ooooh Baby." Daryl Hall and John Oates do New York City songs better. At this point in time I must cry out to hear the Ramones' first LP. You couldn't sing this kind of filler on C.B.G.B.'s and get out alive.

"Nobody's Business" has an intro straight out of 1967. Where is my headband and body paint? As useless as a Paul McCartney and Wing's B-side. Why bother!

"Coney Island Baby" is Sha-Na-Na meets cocktail lounge meets Paul Newman's role in *Cat On A Hot Tin Roof*.

This isn't rock 'n' roll, teenage music, or street poetry. *Coney Island Baby* is another artifact which indicates that Lou Reed is on his way out. Lou Reed will join other sixties misfits like Sky Saxon, Sam the Sham and Donovan in a revival show some night in early 1980 and odds are that none of these songs will be in his set.

REACH FOR THE SKY

Sutherland Bros. & Quiver
Columbia

By KEN BARNES

Positive notes first. Of the four Sutherland Bros. & Quiver albums, *Reach For the Sky* is definitely the most consistent, the strongest yet. The band, pared down to a quartet (Sutherlands now equal in representation to Quivers), have perfected a British pop style virtually all their own. It's more substantial, rocks harder, and is much less fruitier than the Pilots, Jigsaws, and Rollers, but it's lighter and more astringent than, say, the Hollies. For some reason it strikes me as a cross between the Byrds and the Beatles without really sounding all that much like either. But there's a sureness and

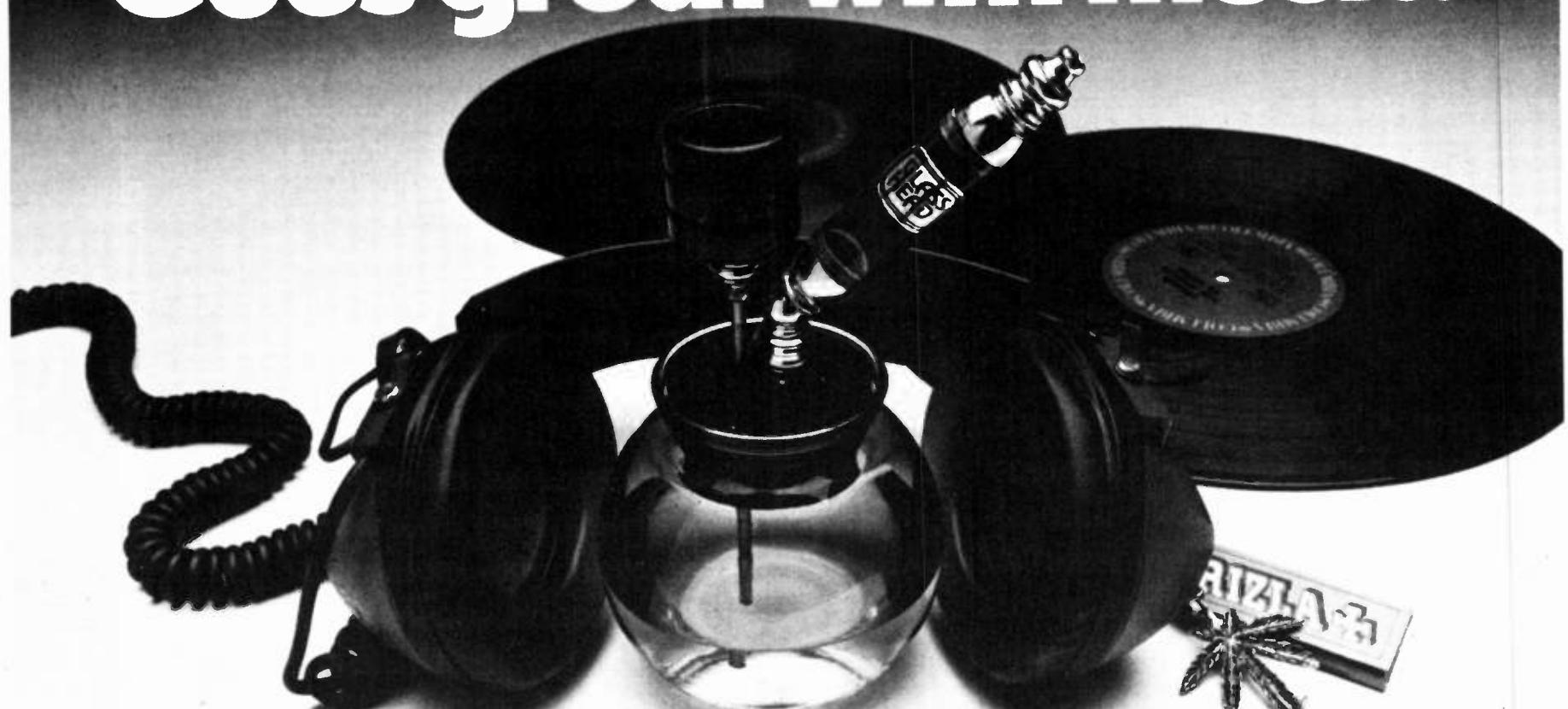
authority in their concise, memorable guitar lines and an ethereal perfection in their harmonies that at its peak outclasses just about everybody.

The most flawlessly realized Sutherlands song is still their 1973 American hit "You Got Me Anyway," and they have yet to match it, even on this LP. But there are any number of standouts here. Like the British single, "Ain't Too Proud" — steel-edged chorus, harmonies galore, an immediate delight. "Dr. Dancer," is exhibit #2, with its rock-solid reggae/ "Under My Thumb" riff and striking 12-string chorus. "Dirty City," a relentless, well-written, superbly-played number with another sparkling chorus whose lyrical content totals as follows: "I sang oo oo oo to the dirty city," and pulls it off successfully. Or, perhaps the best yet, "Arms of Mary" (tabbed as the American single), softer, with gorgeous harmonies on the bridge and an enchanting melody line.

But, as with any Sutherland/Quiver LP seemingly, I'm vaguely dissatisfied. Iain & Gavin Sutherland are great on catchy choruses, and can write stunning melodies, but they seem to combine the two in a single song too infrequently. Sometimes, as on "Something Special" (which isn't) and the hard-rocking "Love on the Moon," they employ neither. And they're still capable of a clunker like the title track, a dismal skiffly blues revival that sounds glaringly out of place. Maybe, all things considered, it's that they sound spectacular with all the burners on that anything remotely less seems gravely disappointing.

But imperfect SB & Q is better for my money than most other bands at 100%. By any standards, except possibly their own potential capabilities, *Reach For The Sky* is an exhilarating triumph. I can wholeheartedly recommend it to anyone, even while hoping for even better things maybe next time.

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WNEW-FM

PRESENTS

JONATHAN SCHWARTZ

Jonathan Schwartz is a WNEW-FM original, having joined the station when it adopted its progressive music format in 1967. "As far as I'm concerned," Jonathan explains, "There are only two kinds of music: good music and bad music...And I favor the good. All good music speaks the same language."

Jonathan's personal interests and activities roam as independently as the music he plays. He's an author: of the highly regarded short story collection, *Almost Home*, and of the soon-to-be published novel, *Possibilities*. Not to mention the screenplays he's written, or the reviews or articles (for the *New*

York Times, *New York Times Book Review*, *Harper's* and *The Paris Review*).

With all his literary pursuits, Jonathan hasn't lost touch with America's national past-time -- baseball. Frequently in summer, he parks his Volkswagen at 96th st. and York Avenue (the better to pick up the faint, very distant broadcasts of the Boston Red Sox).

In all his activities, however, Jonathan is Jonathan. "I never put on an act. Everything I do is as truthful as possible, in my own voice."

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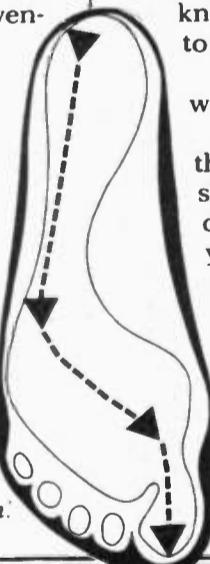
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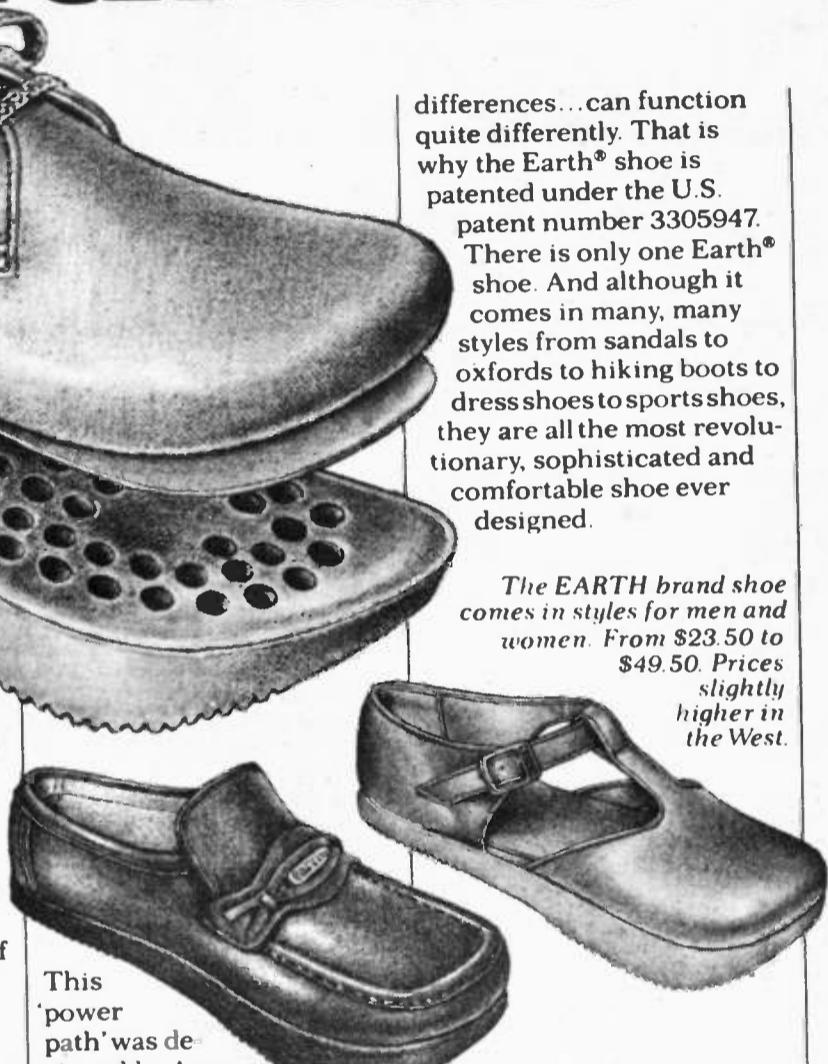
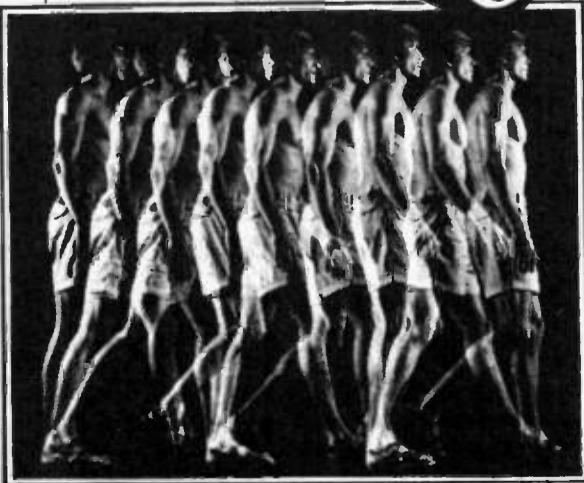
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DAVE HERMAN

Born in Huntington, Long Island, and raised in the Bronx, WNEW-FM morning man Dave Herman always wanted to be a DJ. He grew up with WNEW(AM) Klavan and Finch and William B. Williams, hiding a radio under his pillow to listen until 2:00am. Dave didn't hook into rock and roll until 1965, when Frank Zappa, the Beatles and Dylan exploded onto the scene, changing a global lifestyle.

"I realized the importance of communicating positively on the radio," says Dave. He worked for Metromedia's WMMR(FM), Phila-

delphia, and did a nationally syndicated show for ABC-FM, before joining WNEW-FM in 1972.



land that plays rhythm and blues -- or German and Polish bands playing American rock and roll?"

Dave Herman
Mon.-Sat., 6:00am-10:00am

WNEW-FM

102.7
METROMEDIA STEREO



PETE FORNATALE

"We WNEW-FM personalities function basically as tour guides, musically and culturally," says Pete Fornatale, mid-morning host. "We provide both entertainment and information. When I play Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young -- that's entertainment. When I tell which group is where, who's coming out with a new single -- that's information. Both aspects are important and necessary to young people today."

Pete first became actively involved in radio while completing his B.A., Communication Arts, at Fordham University in his native Bronx. He worked at the university's WFUV(FM), and was the first DJ to integrate

progressive music into the format. After graduation, he taught communications and mass media at a suburban high school. Eager to return to broadcasting in 1969, Pete started subbing on WNEW-FM, and got his own shift in 1970.

In addition to his WNEW-FM show, Pete teaches "Media in America" at Pratt Institute. He has written articles about rock and roll and/or media for the *New York Daily News*, *Newsday* and

Scholastic magazines, and a textbook chapter for Scholastic Publications.

Pete Fornatale
Mon.-Fri., 10:00am-2:00pm
Sunday, 4:00pm-8:00pm



WNEW-FM

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LET THE MUSIC PLAY
Barry White



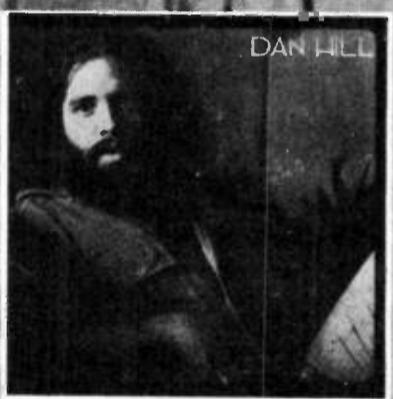
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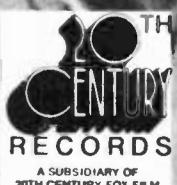
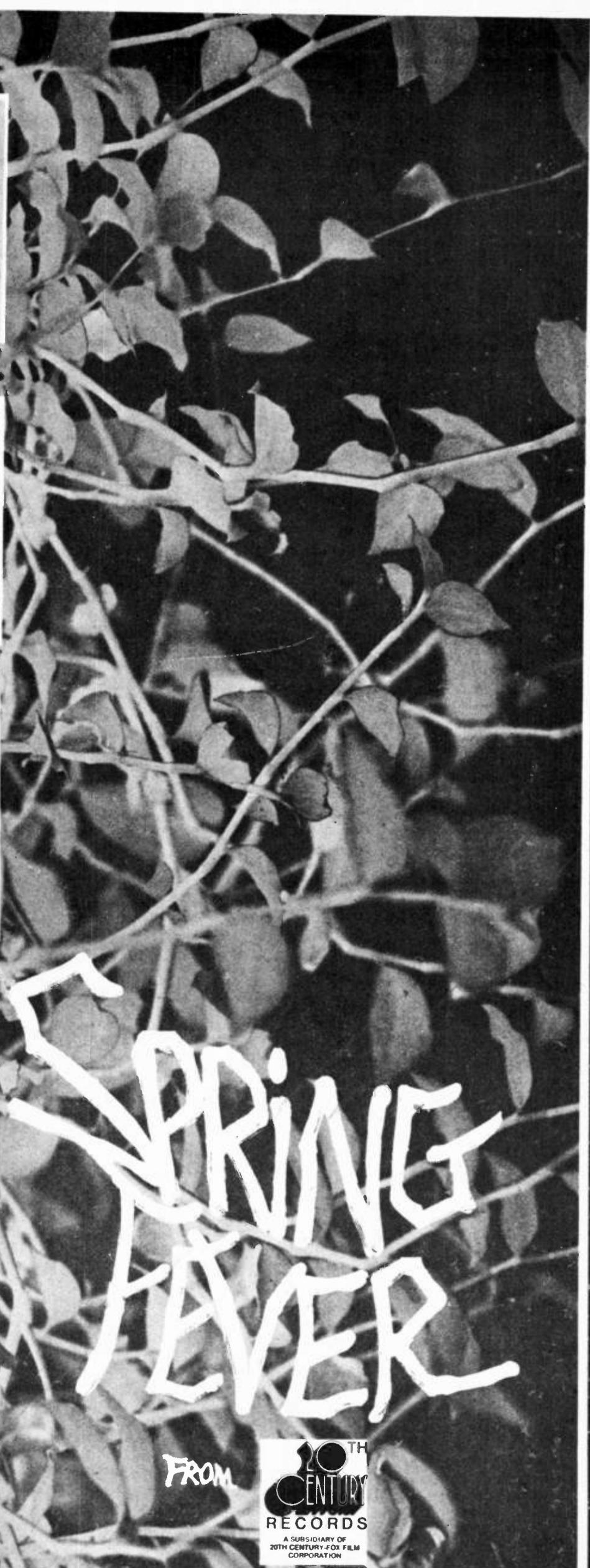
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Thom Bell & The Spinners: Looking For 'Hudson Bros.' Acceptance

By IAN DOVE

When the Spinners recently celebrated 25 years together as a group, amid all the celebrations the soul quintet were quick to point out the part played in the group's success since they joined Atlantic by Thom Bell.

Bell is a producer, closely associated with Gamble and Huff in Philadelphia, one of the architects of the all-embracing Philly Sound. And if anyone still thinks a producer hangs around the studio just clock-watching, listen to Thom Bell talk about, for instance, his life with the five Spinners. He is in DEEP with the group.

With Bell, who is also writer and arranger as well as producer for the group, the Spinners have had a total of nine gold records since 1972, four albums and five singles.

And Bell just does not record the group—he thinks for them. "What I'm trying to do with them now," he says, "is to acquire another realm of sounds for them and reach another medium, identifying them just a little bit more musically with happier kinds of tunes. They have done fantastically well in the r&b field with the demographics of the 18-30 year olds and now they are reaching the 18-50 year olds through songs like 'Games People Play.'"

"The way I see it, they will always have a built in market because of those age groups. They are always going to sell 750,000 singles and six to seven hundred thousand albums if the product is decent. That's automatic."

"So the next market for me and the Spinners would be to reach the younger folks, the kiddies, 8 to 14 year olds, the ones that go for the Hudson Brothers and the Jackson Five. I don't see anyone new in that area right now. That looks like the next step for



the Spinners, the next plateau."

It may disappoint Spinners fans who think that it's all spontaneous art, but don't forget the Spinners have been on the road some 25 years and a lot of those were hungry years, being part of the Motown packages, seeing groups shoot to the top while they were still the support act. Nobody blames them for merchandising themselves, or Thom Bell for helping them do it. Bell remembers those early years too.

He and the five Spinners go back. Fifteen years. Bell paying his dues as house pianist at the Uptown Theatre in Philadelphia when the Spinners rolled into town, bottom of the bill in a Motown revue.

Reflects Bell: "I guess part of the secret of the rapport between us, in and out of the studio, is that we were low men on the talent totem pole then. We've paid and learned a lot of things since then."

Bell remembered, from those days 15 years ago a particular piece of

harmony that the Spinners laid down, a few tricky bars. When Atlantic records asked him to produce acts for them in 1972 and showed him a list of acts that were available, the Spinners were there. The piece of harmony clicked in Bell's head.

He has that kind of freakish memory: "I can remember every song I've ever heard. I can remember any one bar of music. I can't remember words but any note of music I can remember from when I was a kid."

"So I chose the Spinners..."

The song Bell remembered was called "That's What Girls Are Made For" but the song that gave Bell and the Spinners their first success was "How Could I Let You Get Away," one of the first two songs they did in the studio.

Bell recalled: "The most important thing in that session was to take the rhythm patterns of the Spinners lead voice—at that time it was only Bobbie Smith doing that work. He naturally sings on the upbeat of a rhythm, not on the downbeat, which most singers

do. All the things that the studio musicians found difficult in the studio that day, strange and different, came from the arrangements and feeling being patterned after Bobbie's vocal style. The music had to follow the artists, not the other way around." From this beginning Bell took the group into varied roles and styles, allowing everyone, not just Smith, to handle the lead chores, something that also helped group morale as well.

"Recording shouldn't be a boring situation for anybody," says Bell.

Work is quick in the studio. The Spinners arrive in Philadelphia a couple of days before recording but they are rehearsed because Bell had gone over the specifics of each song with the group before, had explained the thrust of the piece, the arrangements, etc.

Comments Bell: "The Spinners never hear the tracks until the day before they go into the recording studio. The reason why I do this is so they won't be overrehearsed when it's time to sing in the studio. You can sing only so much when it's time to record before the whole thing starts to get boring. But we work quickly inside the studio—one song every hour or hour and a half maybe for the backgrounds. A song that has three or four leads demands more time, more energy of course. Maybe two hours!"

Bell and the Spinners are ordered workers. "I'm thinking now about what I can do for them in the next two years right now because I always think at least a year in advance. I can't just worry about today, what's happening now. All the stuff you are hearing from the Spinners now was done more than a year ago. I make a habit of giving Atlantic Records two albums at a time. In April I will give them two albums that we started working on in February. I never like a company to look back and say 'Where's our product?' It gives everyone, the label, the manager, a chance to map out a plan of campaign. I'll work with you—not against you."

IN THE SEVENTIES



By LITA ELISCU

Tashi is the classical group led by Peter Serkin, a young, gifted pianist. *The Bottom Line*, one of New York's most influential and responsive clubs, has been branching out in its bill of fare, presenting more exotica and less rock music. The club owners first thought of presenting classical music in the afternoon, then decided to try it at night. So *Tashi* was duly found and contracted. In sneakers, long hair, and informal guise, the group played Messiaen's *Quartet to the End of Time*, a work composed in a concentration camp specifically for the instruments available: piano, cello, violin and clarinet. Given the circumstances of the work's composition, it is perhaps understandable

that the music seemed repetitive rather than merely cyclic, and even overly-long to this ignorant pair of ears. Fortunately, I am not here to give a critique of their musicianship (excellent) or music (hmm). What was most interesting and important was, rather, the edict that no drinks could be served while *Tashi* performed.

Why not? Because classical music requires more attention than jazz, even avant-garde jazz? Because drinks are not served at Carnegie Hall? Looking around at the ever-so-attentive faces which could be seen *listening*, one got the feeling that far from de-escalating the concert hall atmosphere of classical music, *Tashi* had sniffed haughtily at the whole point of playing in a club: one goes to a concert hall in order to hear a performance; one goes to a club in order to have fun and hear some music. From the over-serious, strained look on so many faces, it is safe to suggest that many customers hadn't expected to actually sit for 45 minutes and listen in dry anticipation of intermission.

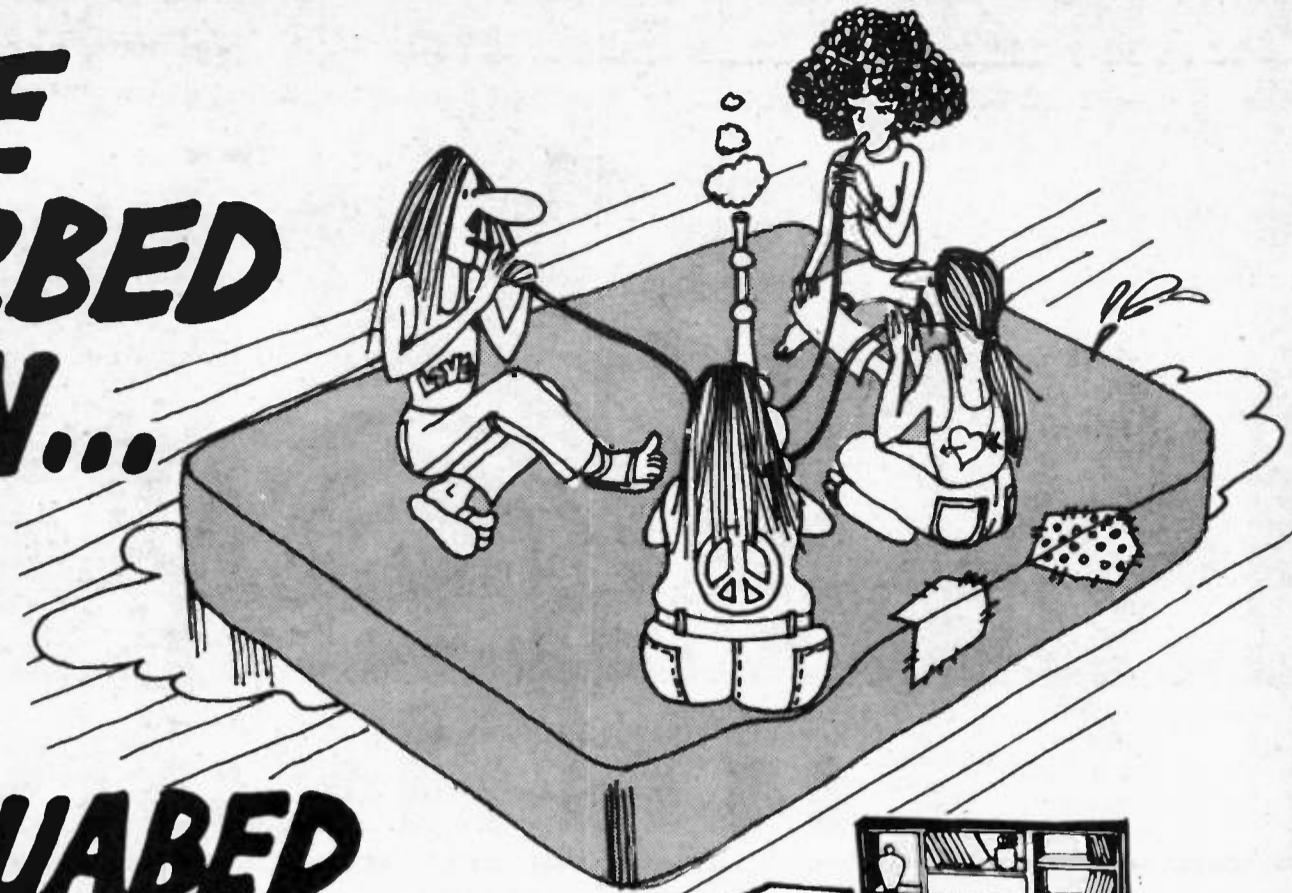
If this all seems petty or inventive, or too much made of too little, then let me just add that The New York Jazz Repertory Company failed to get a grant from the NY State Council on the Arts—and had to cancel its series of 12 concerts for the coming season. George Wein has managed to get a grant to produce four of the concerts as part of the Newport Jazz Festival this summer. Still, the point is that jazz, *an art form*—the most truly American art form—and a respected, even beloved musical genre in other parts of the world, can neither get on the pot or off. No jazz musician in his (or her) right mind would demand that an audience refrain from ordering drinks during a performance in a club. Thank heavens. But to quote Rodney Dangerfield, "I don't get no respect." Why should culture vultures be so eager to get up grant money for classical music when they donate only yawns to jazz efforts? The success of jazz-fusion artists such as Stanley Clarke or Chick Corea or Herbie Hancock does not mean that most jazz musicians are not subsisting on chicken-feed or even

that these particular artists are performing to anywhere near their limits in terms of ability.

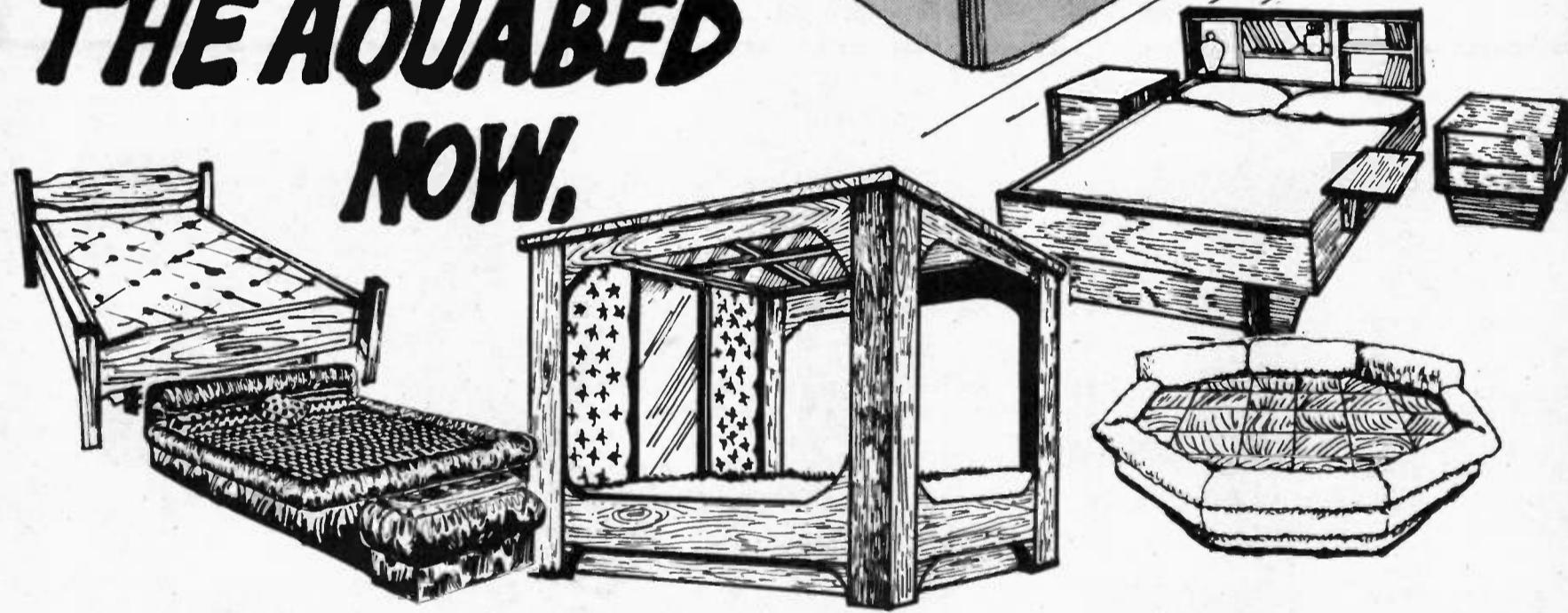
Anthony Braxton, playing with Dave Holland on bass, Kenny Wheeler on trumpet and Phillip Wilson on drums, was quite entertaining in his set at *The Bottom Line*. Mr. Braxton, whose virtuosity and somewhat precocious attitudes have often rendered me incapable of enjoying his work, was invigorating. As usual, he played a whole series of horns, tenor sax to a contra-bass sax so huge it dwarfed the musicians. The music kept veering off into Charlie Parker runs, melodic *tour de force*, bop bop. All four musicians are of course excellent, and part of the emphasis on melody is probably due to Mr. Wheeler, an Englishman known for his free jazz work in Europe before he came here.

The music was enjoyable but not new—something that Mr. Braxton must deal with and wonder about if he is to keep walking the line between avant-garde reputation and listenability. After *Tashi*, however, it was nice to relax a little.

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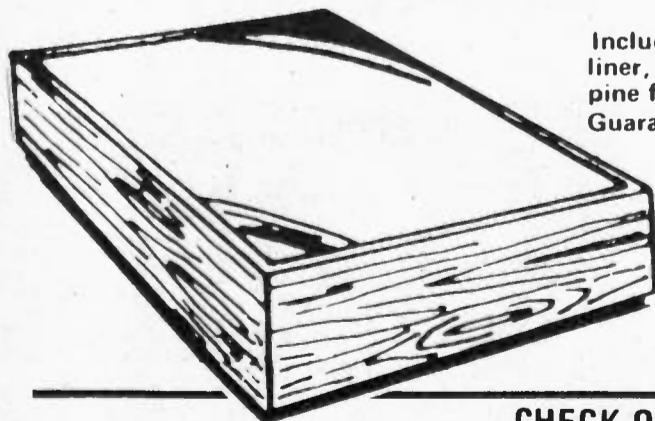
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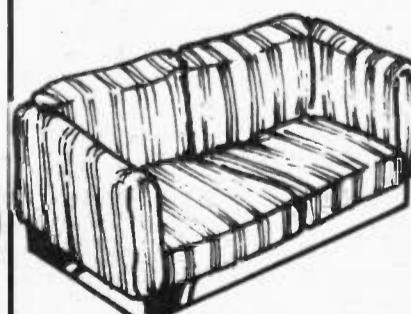
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VIN SCELSA
Weekends

SOUL & JAZZ REVIEWS

COME AS YOU ARE
Ashford & Simpson
Warner Bros. BS-2858

By BOB GLASSENBERG

Male/female singing duos have not made a strong mark upon the soul music scene lately. In fact, aside from the Carpenters and the Captain & Tennille, the entire music scene lacks mixed duos. But in the genre of soul music, we have had some great teams over the years; Otis Redding and Carla Thomas; Marvin Gaye and Tammi Terrell; and Marvin Gaye with Diana Ross. All have been successful and, in fact, presented definitive works for mixed duos. But all have also been successful as individuals before teaming up for one or two albums.

Nick Ashford and Valerie Simpson had been successful as a writing team for years before they embarked on a singing career as a duo. Their first hit tune was "Let's Go Get Stoned," by Ray Charles. As producers & writers, they have had experience with the album by Marvin and Tammi ("Ain't No Mountain High Enough," "You're All I Need To Get By," and "Ain't Nothing Like the Real Thing."); as well as the two Diana Ross solo LP's where they wrote "Remember Me," "Surrender," "Reach Out and Touch(Somebody's Hand)," and "And If You See Him."

Valerie also had two albums of her own for Tamla, but it was Warner Bros. Records that signed the team as recording artists in 1974.

Their first effort for Warner Bros. was good, especially considering that the company was still floundering in the Sea of Soul, searching for a way into the R&B market. With this new album, "Come As You Are," Ashford and Simpson could step into the Soul Spotlight, but the step for them seems a bit tentative.

There are several cuts here that could be disco hits. "One More Try," "Caretaker," and "It Came to Me," all have the movement for the dance floor. But the velocity seems just a hair off. Maybe instead of dancing, you'll just sort of sway in place for a few moments.

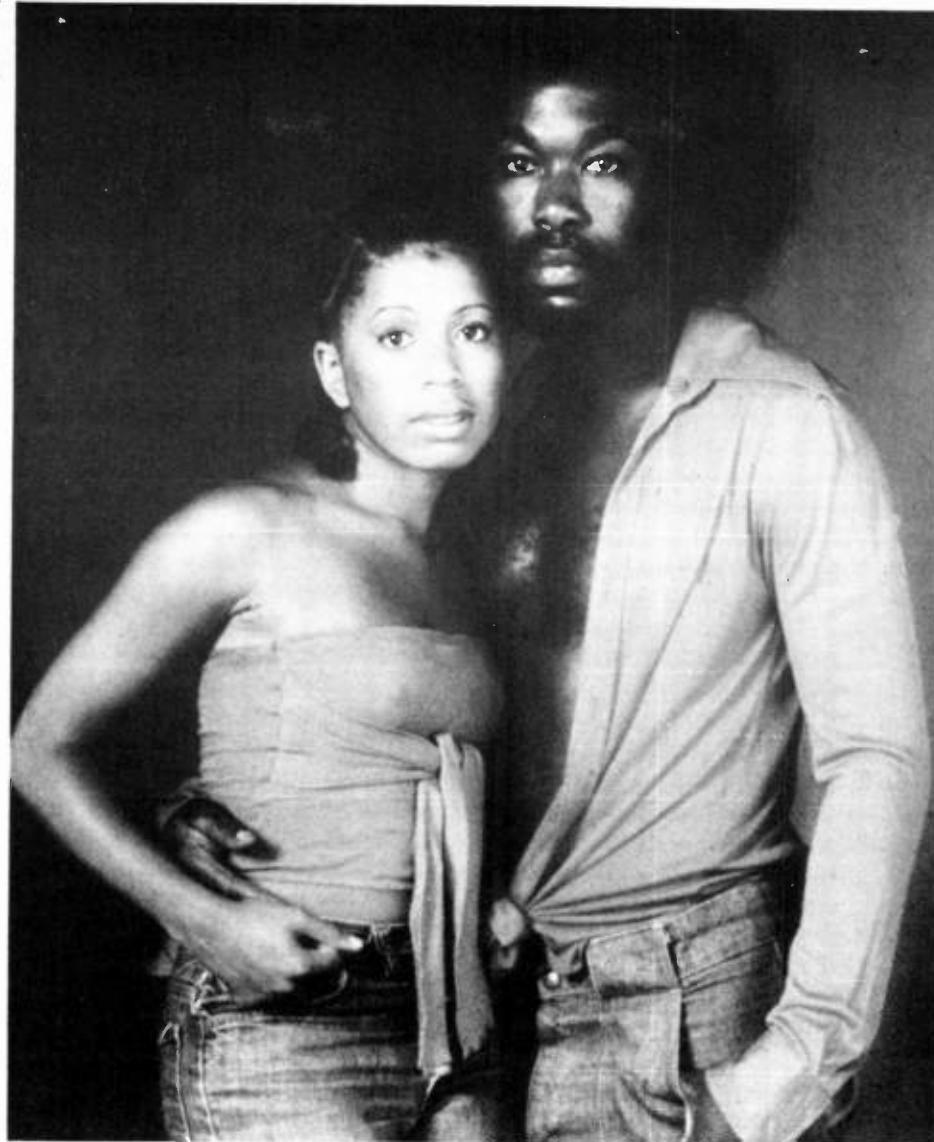
"Somebody Told A Lie," sets a good mood, with nice lyrics, sweet with love. But the length is questionable, with some filler of Nick and Val scatting soulfully with the music. This, it seems would be better off reserved for a stage show, rather than record. But the tune itself is not in question.

Another good ballad, "Believe in Me," is also slightly lengthy. But again, the words do have meaning, somewhat lost in the vocal switching and the strings.

And this seems to be the crux of the matter. Here is a trap that many duos fall into. The focus of the vocal parts switches from the powerful, well proportioned voice of Valerie Simpson to Nick Ashford's slightly tentative, somewhat garbled vocal style, sometimes confusing the listener into a state of "I know there is something there, but maybe someone else should be singing these tunes."

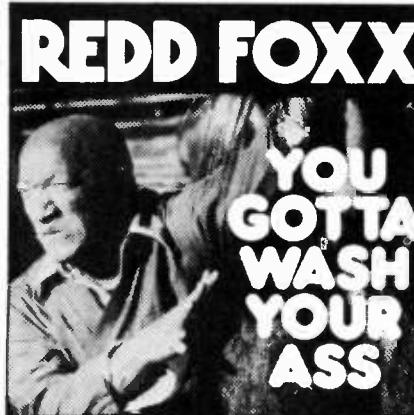
Or maybe someone else should be producing Ashford and Simpson. It is often the case that the artist cannot foster enough objectivity in his production methods to do justice to his own recording. A prime example of this is Alan Toussaint.

Basically, this is a sweet album, full of bright ideas and good energy. Ashford and Simpson have created a work worthy of record, we must applaud their energy and talent as recording artists, although they can and will do better.



YOU GOTTA WASH YOUR ASS
Redd Foxx
Atlantic SD 18157

By R. MELTZER



Twelve years can seem like a damn long time to wait, for both the waiter and waitee alike. I mean like some of you reading this right now weren't even hatched a dozen annums ago, right? Long time. Total time between Elvis's earliest eclipse and the emergence of the Beatles was at most only around half that dozen just to give you an idea what an interval the big number can sometimes be. But middle-agers are known for their patience and forebearance and all of that and oftentimes a real *good'un* will even result from all the prolongation. Like it took eccentric German philosopher Immanuel Kant a full decade plus two to complete "The Critique of Pure Reason," today regarded by eggheads the world over as a helluvan opus. And for another instance this here *Gotta Wash Your Ass* album under review is (coincidentally!) the first in twelve years for "the two funniest four-letter words in the English language" Redd Foxx.

And once again it was worth the wait—and then some. 'Cause without reservation it's just about the finest and funniest extended comedy riff ever set to

wax or vinyl or tape or anything, *really*. Kicks ass on Richard Pryor and Lenny Bruce and do I really have to bring up George Carlin and all of *them*? So well edited (by Joe Hubbard, Jr., and Bob Greenberg) it actually sounds like a continuous stand-up set, something I don't remember ever noticing upon the hearing of any other purportedly live elpee. Recorded live at the Apollo in Harlem, this is Redd in his glory: the still-not-too-big-for-his-britches TV star back among the folks who put up with him long enough to give him the credentials that put him on the tube in the first place. He's even able to go on hoarse (makes a halfway decent tasteless joke about it too) and still knock 'em dead (laugh track sounds authentic). Only one sequence in the whole bunch they don't get much of a chuckle over (a corny wartime whorehouse routine followed by something about getting shot in his address book) and in that case he graciously refuses to belabor the situation by coming back riffing on its *lack* of humor the way a Johnny Carson or any of his replacements would. Just leaves it alone and on with the next yuk-yuk.

There's a great story about the derivation of the word "funky" and a few nasty pokes at the good looks of Shirley Chisholm but what this album's mostly about is cusswords. The three-letter item in the title of course and also everybody's favorite four-letter standbys beginning with s and f. Talks about their usages and meanings in addition to just using them to cuss with too, something Lenny seemed awkward and pretentious with in comparison. "But didn't Lenny die to make this possible?" you well might ask. And the answer is nope, Redd was doing this stuff before Lenny (even two times twelve years ago or three) although maybe not on the Steve Allen show or in the Catskills. All Lenny did that Redd hasn't messed with is the redeeming social value move. Which you can keep. 'Cause it only leads to tedium, Al P movies and Woody Allen. Redd's too much of an artist for that half-assed cowpoop. Yeah!



NEW RAY OF SUNSHINE
Dobie Gray
Capricorn 0163

By BOB FUKUYAMA

"Drift Away" might've rescued Dobie Gray from terminal obscurity, but in many ways it was a curse; the success of the soul-country sound he introduced on the "Drift Away" single and album motivated Gray to record two more albums with the same formula. Although he was a natural, his vocal style proved too non-committal; by walking the tightrope between soul and country, black and white, he only reached that "gray" area of consumers in between. Getting dropped by MCA was the jolt Dobie needed; it made him reassess his then(1975) stagnating career.

And the soul-searching paid off. While recorded in Nashville, *New Ray Of Sunshine* sounds like it was done farther south, say Muscle Shoals: the plucky piano chording, punchy horns and sweetly inspirational female accompaniment are tastefully handled by co-producers Gray and Troy Seals. The grooves jump with a recharged Gray whose nervous energy (especially on side one) you'd normally associate with wide-eyed babes like Vance Or Towers, and not with a battle-scarred veteran. But to paraphrase Gracie Slick, who certainly knows, "you're only as old as you feel."

Disco can be blamed for bringing out the worst in people (David Bowie), along with bringing out the worst people (Monty Rock, Frankie Avalon), but I'm thankful for its influence on Gray.

Side one is an absolute gem. With the exception of the gritty, bluesy "Drive On, Ride On," which just doesn't fit in, they are *all* singles. "If Love Must Go," the actual single, is a smooth pop ballad; tender and soulful, Gray, with the support of a pretty string arrangement, elevates the merely sentimental to articulated heights of sensitivity. "Harold And The Swinging Rocks," "Lover's Sweat" and "A New Ray Of Sunshine" are all unified by theme and style; all celebrate the release music, love, dancing and sunshine (a metaphor for optimism, I surmise), give the soul.

However, Gray's energy level drops noticeably on side two, with the artistic and entertainment levels sinking in synch. "I'll Take You Down To Mexico" leaves you there, "Easy Loving Lady" is sweet but too casually performed to be endearing. "What A Lady" is a funky exercise for Gray, but also a light work-out. And "Easy Come, Easy Go" which Capricorn is threatening to release as the next single, could only damage his image; such flaccid MOR only Johnny Mathis should touch.

Flavorful, zesty and fresh, side one's menu leaves you with a glowing warmth in your gut and a flaming desire for more. Only, it seems Dobie expended all his energy at once and conked out before the end of the record. The crucial issue is, however, that after several years of aimless wandering (or worse yet, standing still), Gray is finally heading in the right direction, in *quick-step*.

STATION TO STATION DAVID BOWIE



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