

# PHONOGRAPHER

## RECORD MAGAZINE

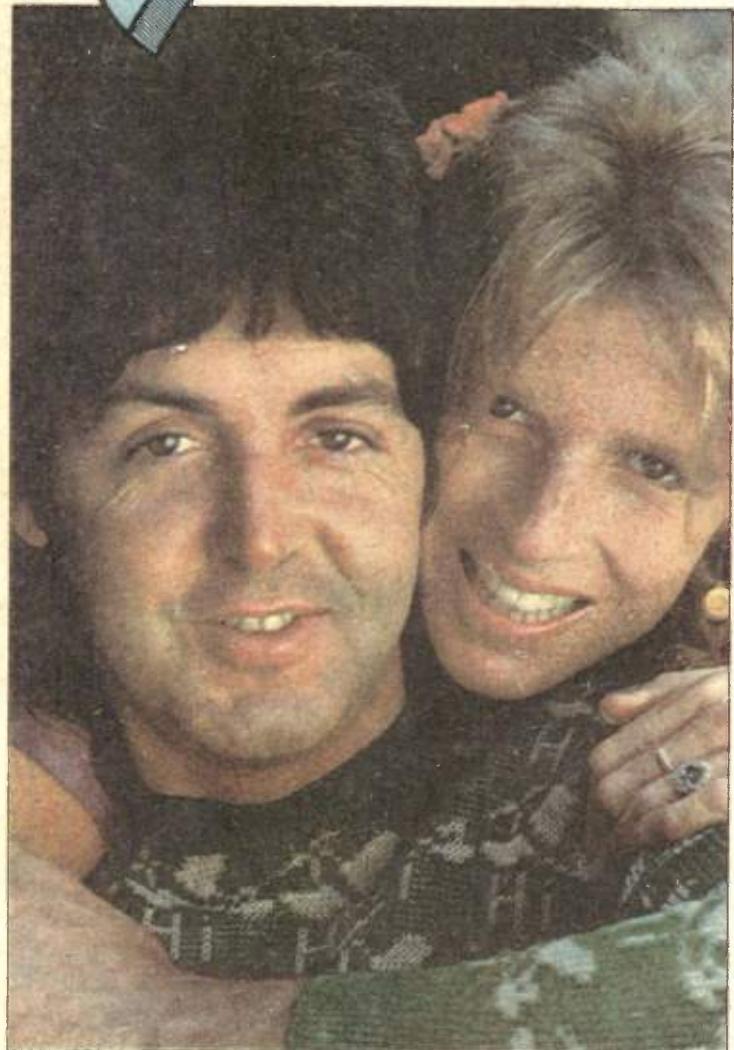
Issue  
67

"All the news  
that hits"

MAY, 1976

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MONTHLY  
60 CENTS



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## McCartney BACK IN THE U.S.A.!!

By MITCH COHEN  
PRM STAFF WRITER

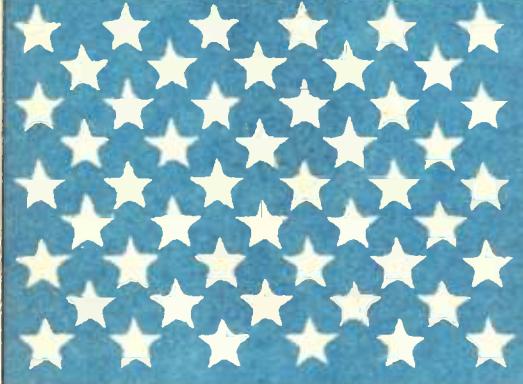
Assuming that Jimmy McCullough's injured hand has completely healed and that no further catastrophes have befallen the members of the band on the run, May 3 will have marked the opening day, in Fort Worth, of Wings' long-awaited tour of America, the first appearance on a U.S. stage by Paul McCartney since the farewell concert by the Beatles in 1966 at Candlestick Park.

The road trip will end at the Forum in Los Angeles on June 22, and in between there will be stops in nineteen other cities: Houston, Detroit, Toronto, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., Atlanta, Nassau, Boston, New York, Cincinnati, Kansas City, Chicago, St. Paul, Denver, San Francisco, San Diego and Tucson. The lead guitarist's Paris hotel room accident, and the tour's subsequent postponement, just added an extra bit of suspense to the already high anticipation: all

tickets at all halls have been sold (in person only; no mail orders)—Madison Square Garden seats went in four hours—and atmospheric conditions appear to be clear.

McCartney is the last Beatle to make the live trans-Atlantic journey, and he's laid the groundwork for it well. No dark horse, he: his track record is based on professional calculation, step by step strategy. Out-of-town tryouts of the Wings rock-show have been going on for years, culminating in major tours of England, Australia and Europe that began this past summer and were greeted with great audience and critical enthusiasm. The new Wings album, *At the Speed of Sound*, took only two weeks to edge the top of the charts and there is a degree of public interest in McCartney's previous band the likes of which hasn't been seen in ages. With Lennon and Harrison spending more time in court lately than in the studio, and Ringo working out business and romantic arrangements, McCartney now has the chance to show up the other three in grand style, to prove that he's emerged as the strongest of the former foursome. (See Pg. 16)

## Local Talent in America, 1976



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# PRESENCE FROM LED ZEPPELIN



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PRODUCED BY JIMMY PAGE

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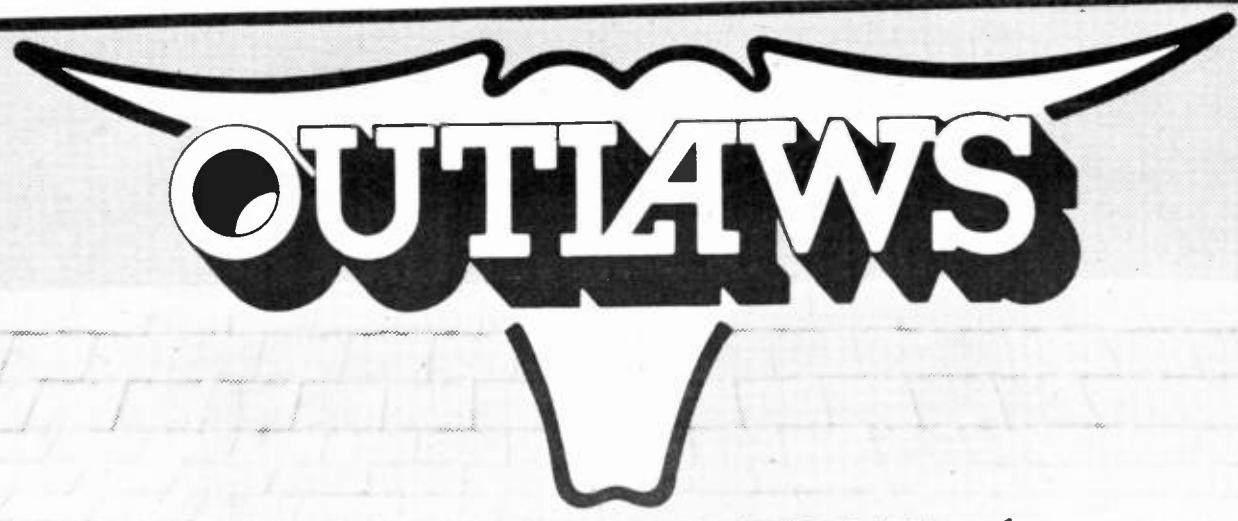
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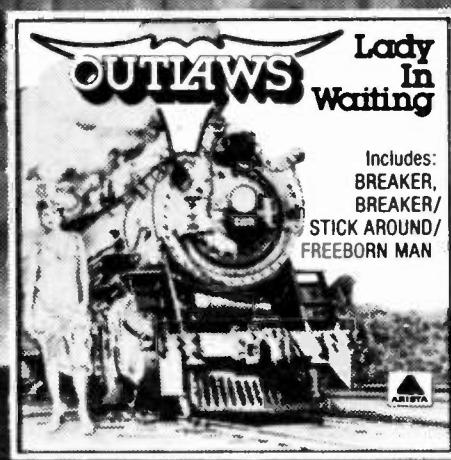
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# OUTLAWS

## Are Back With Their Searing Rock And Roll!



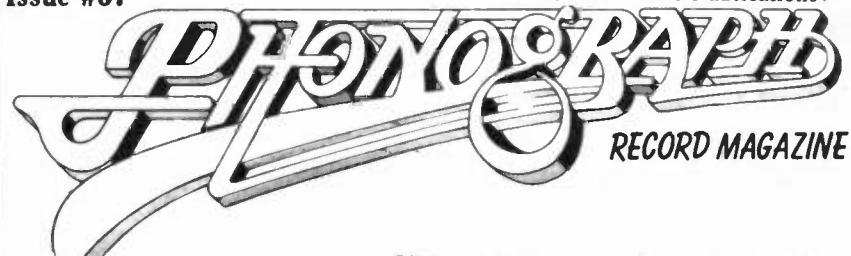
Produced by Paul Rothchild

Last year, the Outlaws made a sensational debut with an album that was called the absolute "Rock 'N' Roll Killer of The Year!" Now, this tough and scorching group returns with "LADY IN WAITING" an album that is both brutal and tender...but always unmistakably stamped as Outlaws.

On Arista Records

Issue #67

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RECORD MAGAZINE

May, 1976

Vol. 6 No. 7

## THIS MONTH

**THE SOUND OF THE CITIES, 1976: Domestic State Of The Art**

After years of domination by England and other foreign influences, rock & roll is coming back from the roots. All across America, local groups are reaffirming their regional culture in their music, as people work to build the kind of local scenes that can prosper, independent of any patronage from the national nabobs of culture.

This is the third year we've attempted this sort of survey. In 1974, we examined the "Club Scenes of America." In 1975, we looked at the influence of local media in various cities. Since that time, several of the then-unknown groups we reported on have gone on to achieve national acceptance (i.e. Aerosmith/Boston, Eric Carmen/Cleveland, Head East/St. Louis, and more). This year, as the nation prepares for an outburst of local spirit, the catalogue of talent to be discovered in every corner of the land is almost enough to convince anyone that a true revolution is, once again, just about inevitable.

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**PAUL McCARTNEY & WINGS: "I Don't Want To Spoil The Party"**

In the midst of a Beatles revival in England and excited talk about a Beatles reunion, Paul McCartney has launched his first U.S. tour since 1966; only this time it's with Wings, the band that he's rehearsed for the past five years. McCartney, with sell-outs everywhere and a number one LP, *At The Speed Of Sound*, has not only eclipsed the disappointment of *Venus And Mars*, but his former mates as well. "Yesterday seems so far away."

*By Mitch Cohen*.....16

**PHIL OCHS: Requiem For A Heavyweight**

He played executioner to Dylan's magistrate in the folk-protest '60s: following Dylan's path, he went on to become the most bitter and outspoken of the politically-conscious troubadours. Over the years, however, the anguish turned inward; a man of extremes, he committed the ultimate anti-establishment act when he hung himself on the night on April 8. Somehow we're responsible.

There but for fortune....

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**JOHN SEBASTIAN: He Is Still A Mystery**

With "Welcome Back," his first number one single since 1966, and a commercially spirited album currently shipping, John Sebastian has re-emerged as the pop hero he once was as leader of the Spoonful. But those years of silence raise questions—had he lost his creative drive, become an "acid casualty" or a psychological wreck? Sebastian looks back, and, at the same time, looks ahead.

Full measure...

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Rodney Bingenheimer's  
**THE GROUPIE NEWS**

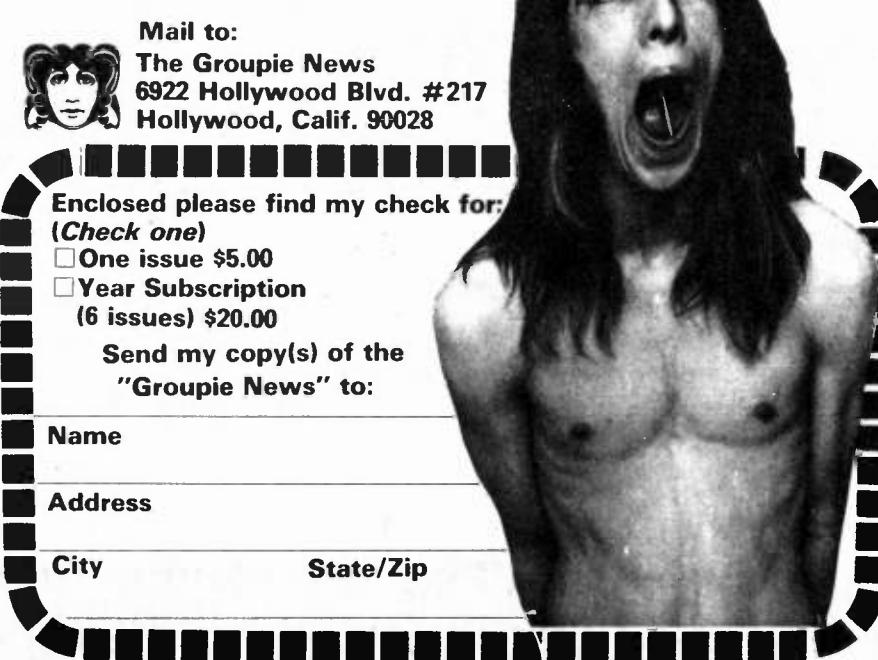
Finally, a magazine that talks about the rock scene in terms that really count. Important details, like who's hung, who's not hung, who's kinky, who's not kinky, etc. It's decadent, it's disgusting, and, frankly, it's expensive. There isn't one legit magazine distributor who'll touch us! We're only available by subscription and we only publish 6 issues a year...cause once just ain't enough anymore!

\*NUDE POP STARS

\*WHERE THE HAPPENING HOTELS ARE

\*GLAM TIPS FOR YOUNG GIRLS & BOYS

\*FASHION, MAKE-UP & OUT



## PERFORMANCES

**PATTI SMITH**  
Avery Fisher Hall  
NYC

By MITCHELL S. COHEN

For some of us, Patti Smith is the girl of our rock and roll dreams. As a performer she doesn't merely flirt with danger, she seduces it, trying at the same time to be both audacious and ingratiating, to challenge an audience and win it over. Of course, there's never been a rock star that mattered who didn't provoke some hostility, and she passes that qualification with ease. There are those who find her a total irritant. She's a cultural scavenger, an eroticist, a dramatist with no sense of limits. By any reasonable standards she shouldn't get away with half of her flights, but she does more often than not, and in the process becomes some kind of wonder. She moves in another dimension. In the space of a few minutes she goes from a version of "Birdland" that borders on psychodrama to a reading of "Jolene" with tension and desperation that pushes Dolly Parton's song into a totally new terrain. Her restlessness, manifested by a testy lack of discipline,

along with her overall complexity, may prevent her from reaching a wide public, but for her expanding cult, Patti has become indispensable.

Her live steps in New York have been steady and methodical up the prestige ladder from C.B.G.B. to the Bottom Line to her headlining concert debut at Lincoln Center. The show has remained more or less constant in material over the past six months, and the loss of intimacy only resulted in the elimination of her standard question and answer period. The underlying theme of the Fisher show was bi-centennial in nature, beginning with Jim Morrison's "An American Prayer" and concluding with a brilliant finale: The Preamble of the Constitution leading into a "My Generation" played with more raw aggression than the Who have mustered in years. It takes some tough self-conception to include "Free Me" from *Privilege* in a rock show (she used to open with it), but she pulled it off, along with her usual moving performance of "Pale Blue Eyes" that cuts the Velvets on their own turf. Missing, unfortunately, was her passionate rendition of "Time Is On My Side."

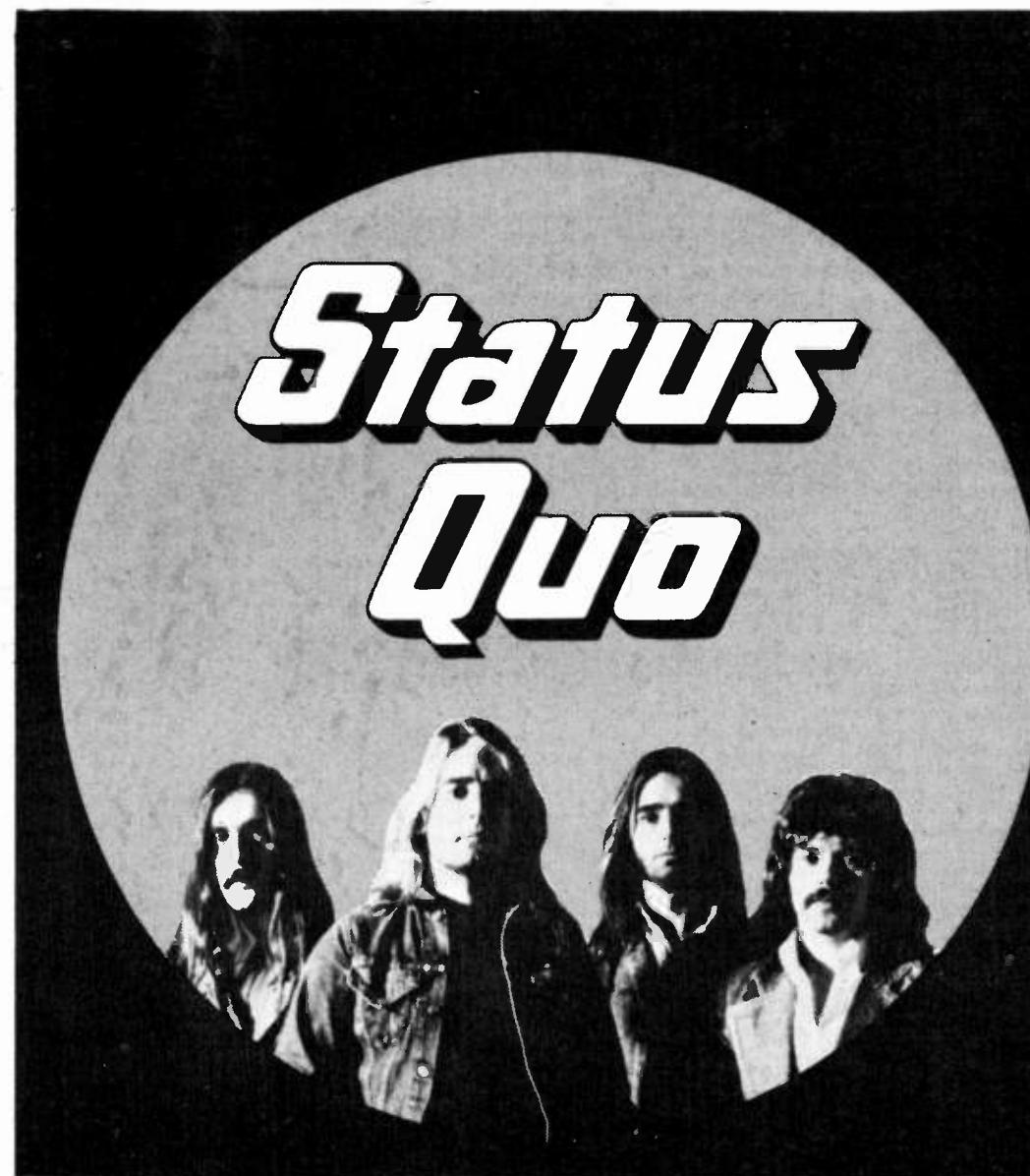
Like so many difficult artists, Patti makes us ask crucial questions about our responses to her art. She digs so deeply that applauding pieces like "Birdland" and "Piss Factory" seems the most inappropriate form of apprec-

iation: the pain she's uncovered demands something less mechanical. Similarly, when the homosexual rape that opens "Land" is greeted with rhythmic clapping, it makes you wonder about her fans' perception of her vision. Her flat-out rockers, "Free Money," "Gloria," are slashing slices of the arrogance that rock was meant to embody, but they also stretch the traditions of rock structure. Patti is as much a critic as any of us, a performer who's taken her early dreams of rock glory and filtered them through ideas from other aspects of our culture. Sometimes her free-form observations operate like the witty word-play, jump-cutting mode of Godard, and like the director, she has an affinity for Brecht (she once wrote a Rolling Stone album review on Lotte Lenya). Film may, in fact, be a perfect subsidiary medium for her.

At Avery Fisher she showed a short movie that, while otherwise pointless and fuzzy, proved that she has a genuine, haunting screen face.

All of this wouldn't mean a damned thing if she couldn't rock and roll, and for all her half-baked ad-libbed insights, when she and the band are in the midst of a song like "Free The Hurricane" (which she calls a "victory dance" compared to Dylan's "protest song") they whip up a metal fury. It's a violent (I once saw Patti at a

showing of Robert Aldrich's incredibly brutal *Emperor of the North*) and sexual sound: Patti is, above all, a very sexual performer. She's a turn-on musically; her songs, like her poems, build on repetitious, steadily escalating rhythms, based on what seem like intense, intimate breathing patterns rising to a crescendo. This regular rising momentum is part of what makes her provocative. Some of her riffs on sounds and words are received like virtuoso guitar solos, and on "Redondo Beach" her voice is positively sultry. She's casually erotic, running her hands inside her thighs; abstractedly stretching out her "colt figure" t-shirt, giving the front rows a clear flash of her breasts; leaping, crawling around the stage. It may have been the most involving exhibition at Avery Fisher since the world premiere of *Last Tango In Paris*; Patti Smith is not Marlon Brando by any means, but she has some of his instinct. And any rock singer, especially female, who invites even tangential comparisons to such figures as Brando and Godard, as well as Kerouac, Coltrane and any number of rock influences, is someone who must be preserved and encouraged. Patti Smith is a rampage, fairly bursting with a talent that scatters fragments in all possible directions, and whatever her failures, they are certainly not failures of nerve. She wants it all.



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one of the  
world's great  
rock 'n roll  
bands,  
boogies!**



**NOW ON NATIONAL TOUR!**



**JOE WALSH RECORDED LIVE  
"YOU CAN'T ARGUE WITH A SICK MIND"**

ABCD-932

The first 'live' album from Joe Walsh features Glenn Frey, Don Henley, and  
Don Felder of the Eagles, Willie Weeks, Andy Newmark, Joe Vitale, Rocky Dzidzonru,  
Jay Ferguson, and David Mason performing a set of Walsh classics.

On ABC Records and GRT Tapes

# VICIOUS DIRT, RUMORS and SCANDALS from HOLLYWOOD for Rodney Bingenheimer

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

Yay yay boys and girls! Here is the poop and the scoop.

For the second time in my entire life, I actually arose at 9 AM last week to breakfast with the *Bay City Rollers*. They had arrived a couple of days earlier straightaway into the clutches of several hundred genuinely hysterical, very young girls. The fans adjusted in two flat seconds to the absence of Eric Faulkner (in hospital for an overdose of strawberry milkshakes) and Alan Longmuir (who has retired to a sheep farm claiming 9 years of eating dust on the road has gotten the better of him)—and commenced to strip them down to their plaid be-bops (tennis shoes).

Next day the Rollers were off to Disneyland where freelance photographers and young girls were told to buzz off. To the consternation of officials, the Rollers were tailed at a distance by freelancers Richard Creamer and Phonograph Records' dog on the street, Brad Elterman, who were wired with telephoto lenses and walkie-talkies. The lads got a big bang out of our local paparazzi hanging out of the overhead tram cars. The middle-aged "officials" were not pleased.

Back to our breakfast, the Rollers milled casually among locals in the Beverly Hilton suite of their publicist. Once again, young girls were not allowed. I have plenty of explaining to do to my new Beverly Hills girlfriend Leah, who was asked to wait outside. The Rollers are surrounded by old fuddy-duddies at all times. One old fuddy-duddy was raving about an upcoming meeting with the President

and a tour of the musty Smithsonian Institute. The lads were more interested in meeting Steve and Susan Ford, whose interest in rock they've heard about.

Why the hell don't they let them walk and breathe and be teenage? The new kid, Ian Mitchell, is all of 17 and spending a beautiful, sunny Hollywood morning answering questions about his plans for the turn of the century (And that old sawhorse, "What's your sign" has GOT to go!). Les McKeown is a regular guy and hip to the scene. He's anxious to snap up all American records and do the dog in Hollywood—eventually. And he's got the salt to get out and do it whether anyone likes it or not! Yay yay for the Rollers. They've got much more to offer teenage America than self-important turkeys like *David Bowie* and *Sweet*.

The world is still raving about *Pete Townshend* taking back his group and showing everyone he is the guv'nor.

"Got 'im right pissed off, didn't I?" sez *Daltrey* (referring to his now-famous retaliation to *Pete's* disparaging remarks to the English papers regarding the state of the *Who*, who is prouder than anyone of *Pete's* death-defying energy onstage, which we witnessed at Anaheim Stadium here and at San Francisco's Winterland this month. The world also knows that Roger is a kill-in-the-streets patriot when it comes to the 'Oo. More remarks: "You tell 'em that they ain't seen the last of us! There will be another *Who* album. There will be another *Who* tour. Anyone says any

different, you tell 'em I say "BOLLOCKS!"

In a bang-up two-week stay that coincided with that of *Eric Carmen*, *Dr. Feelgood*, and last, as well as least, *Sweet*—the Who took over the town. With *Moon* (alias Mr. Waterbuffalo in the master personnel list) somewhat "confined to quarters," *Pete Townshend* himself actually hit the streets for the first time ever, dining nightly with the *Ox* at the *Rainbow Bar & Grill*, buying rounds for the crew at the *Riot House's Red Roulette Room*, and in a stunning, historic appearance with *Wizard* soundman and "Odds And Sods" cover boy *Bobby Pridden*, the entire *Steve Gibbons Band*, and other tour members (*Entwistle* showed up, but left at the refusal of certain *Sparks* groupoids to move their overweight bums from the seats saved for the holder of 5 platinum records) incited a near-riot at the L.A. debut of *Dr. Feelgood* at the *Starwood*. Imagine REAL rock 'n' roll and a REAL rock 'n' roll God stamping his approval on a younger incarnation of himself! We will be getting back to this event later. It was a quiet week for the ailing *Daltrey*, seeing only wife *Heather*, cousin *Graham Hughes*, local pal *Michele Myer* (who also handled hostess honours that week for *Dr. Feelgood*), and his local doctor.

The Who's huge Anaheim Stadium concert to 55,000 at ten bucks a crack, featuring breathtaking lasers lighting up the pitch black night brighter than day, was followed by a real boffola bowling party (bowling?). This not quite in keeping with the preceding event, *Pete* finally elbowed his way in and very loudly invited the person (s) responsible for the unpleasant gathering to drop dead. *Moonie* was in the door, his *Annette Walter-Lax* double parked outside, and right back out. His comment: "BLAAAAGGHH!" The *Ox* showed up briefly and *Daltrey* and his knockout redhead wife ate and ran. Oh yes, my date was *Star Magazine* cover girl *Patty Clark* (I bowed a whopping 69).

Big news for all you *Runaways* fans! You might be seeing them with *Queen* on their upcoming October tour. Their first album *The Runaways* on *Mercury Records* is now out, and *Robert Hilburn* and *Ben Edmonds* are screaming. The girls have been having a vacation since completing the album, *Lita Ford* seen hanging out with *Ritchie Blackmore* (guitar lessons?), *Jackie Fox* making the scene with *Brian Connely*.

I actually effected a truce between the battling members of *Sweet* and *Queen*, who have been tearing each other to shreds to the absolute glee of the malevolent British press for months now. Members of both groups joined me at my table at the *Rainbow* for dinner, and left arm-in-arm, singing filthy pub songs very loudly, in the friendliest of spirits.

We locals, however, have had our fill of *Sweet* lately. They very rudely gave a lot of their Hollywood supporters (who brought *Sweet* here by popular demand) the elbow. Their paranoia of a decent opening act (ask *Eric Carmen*) has put our local promoters on the spot once too many times. Why don't you jerks allow our promoters to support local bands like the *Stars* and the *Runaways*? The crap you're turning out can't carry a show. And *Connelly*—when are you going to cough up the 30 bucks you owe "Hung On You" (formerly *Granny's*)?

Locally, the *Starwood* here has been racking up more record deals for new bands than we can count. You have *Quiet Riot* (banned for general obnoxiousness), *Hot Shasta*, *Ray Manzarek's Pyramid*, *Quick* (featuring popular, personable *Danny Thomas*), *Killer Kane* (whose *Blackie* was ecstatic to find out recently that *Huntz Hall of the Dead End Kids* is still alive and hanging out at *Schwab's*), the fabulous *Ratz*, the *New Order*, and Hollywood's own *Stars* kicking ass nightly.

But the *Starwood* was the scene recently for the most indescribable happening since before there were writers and jerk-offs around to describe anything. Here was what had *Pete Townshend* foxtrotting with *Trevor Burton* in the balcony. In a legendary performance, in trappings as stark as the *Star Club* or *Cavern* ever saw, *Dr. Feelgood*, consisting of four looney toons in tatty suits, with ONE amplifier each behind them, set some sort of Neanderthal panic into the very souls of aging corporate farts, jaded so-called journalists, soul brothers, teenagers and fake teenagers alike. *Wilko Johnson*, a *Ray Davies* lookalike, gnaws his fingers when he's not playing and plays without a pick.

Well, is that enough news for all my fans and readers, or what? I'm now off to spend the next four weeks deciding on which *Teen Queen* I will be escorting to the *Paul McCartney* bash in June, which will feature a surprise party theme. I will be available to all applicants every day at Denny's Restaurant at 2 PM.

**Ho-hum, the Party Life:**  
(Pic 1) L-R: Rodney, Leon Wilkerson  
(Lynyrd Skynyrd), Brian May &  
Roger Taylor (Queen).  
(Pic 2) L-R: Patty Clark  
(Star cover groupie),  
Pete Townshend & Rodney,  
sporting a Rollers hair-do!

Brad Elterman



# THE HOT SHOTS!

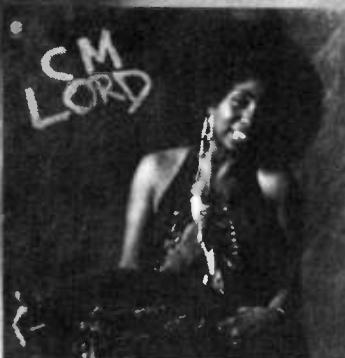
## BROKEN GLASS

Features vocalist and guitarist Stan Webb (formerly of Chicken Shack) and guitarist Robbie Blunt. Produced in England by Tony Ashton. They cut right to the heart of good blues-based music. ST-11510



## C. M. LORD

Sensuous Catherine Mitchell Lord, dynamic performer and writer of super songs! She has a truly unique voice that must be heard to be appreciated. Produced by Ken Mansfield. ST-11514



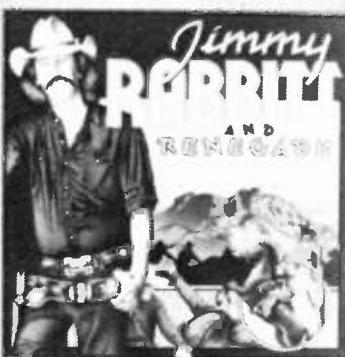
## STEVEN FROMHOLZ

A Rumor In My Own Time  
Steven is a hell of a singer and songwriter out of the progressive Austin, Texas music scene. He formerly played with Steven Stills' "Manassas." ST-11521



## JIMMY RABBITT AND RENEGADE

Renegade disc jockey turned progressive country singer! Jimmy Rabbitt proves he's a pro in both fields. Includes tunes by Carl Perkins, David Allen Coe and Chuck Berry. Produced by Waylon Jennings. ST-11491



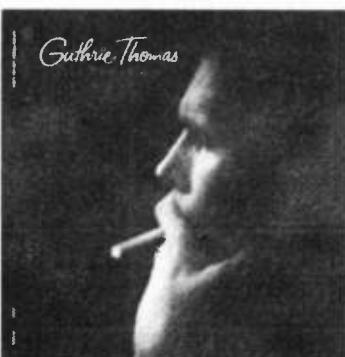
## LITTLE RIVER BAND

From "Down Under," voted "1975 Album Of The Year" by The Australian Record Industry Association. Strong melodies with a heavy stress on harmonies . . . an ear pick for America! ST-11512



## GUTHRIE THOMAS

Lies And Alibis  
Aided by a superstar musician cast—Guthrie presents his second Capitol album. Natural folksiness and contemporary arrangements form a musical dynamism that must be listened to. ST-11519



## SIX HOT NEW ALBUMS... FROM CAPITOL RECORDS!

# “There but for Fortune Go You or I”

# Phil Ochs’ Tragic Last Years

By LEONARD BROWN

*“This then is the death  
of the American  
imprisoned in his paranoia  
and all the diseases of  
his innocent invention...”*

Liner Notes  
*Rehearsals for Retirement*  
© Barricade Music, Inc.  
ASCAP

The facts about the death of Phil Ochs are simple and shocking. He hanged himself in the bathroom of his sister's home in Far Rockaway, New York, during the night of April 8. As an artist, Ochs was a vivid and enduring holdover from the protest years of the 1960s. As a man, he was a 35-year-old human being in deep emotional trouble, for in the same night and by the same act, another entity perished—a demonic alter ego named John Butler Train.

Ochs was born in El Paso, Texas, in 1940. He was sent to school at the Staunton Military Academy in Virginia, and subsequently majored in journalism at Ohio State University. He dropped out after his third year and never went back, having discovered the New York folk music scene of the early 1960's. The names of the artists who attracted and influenced Ochs during that period constitute a roster of legendary folkies—heading the list, Bob Dylan, Bob Gibson, Hamid Hamilton Camp, Dave Van Ronk, Pete La Farge, Judy Henske, and so on.

He performed in several of the Newport Folk Festivals, and was represented on the Vanguard recordings of these affairs. By the time he was signed by Elektra, he was writing well and prolifically. His songs were being recorded by Peter and Gordon, Judy Collins, the Four Seasons, Anita Bryant, Ian and Sylvia, Pete Seeger, the Brothers Four and Joan Baez. The people at *Broadsides* magazine, a mimeographed folk journal, claimed to have published “thirty or forty” of Ochs' songs from 1962 on, and said further that they just couldn't keep up with his fluent writing.

His first of three Elektra albums, *All the News that's Fit to Sing*, was issued in 1965. The songs were mostly topical and directed at causes. In 1966, he made two albums—*I Ain't Marching Any More*, and an *In Concert* album, recorded in New York and Boston.

It seems he was always successful in concert, then and right up to the end. It would also seem that



he had a great deal to feel good about, but even then his sense of his own worth was woefully limited. His liner notes for *I Ain't Marching* gave a hint: “And I force myself to wonder that perhaps I am as phony as the world I criticize and that I am the greatest fool of all. I realize that I can't feel any nobility for what I write because I know my life could never be as moral as my songs.”

His Elektra recordings sold well for the time and for what they represented, eventually totalling nearly a quarter-million in sales. But for reasons of his own, he moved over to A&M in 1967, where he recorded *Pleasures of the Harbor* in 1967, his biggest selling album. Two songs from this album, the title cut and “Outside of a Small Circle of Friends,” were given considerable airplay and were near hits. It was as close as he ever came to the charts, and there is some evidence that he saw this as proof of failure.

He made three more albums for A&M, *Tape from California*, *Rehearsals for Retirement*, and *Phil Ochs' Greatest Hits*. The first two stand with his best, and on *Rehearsals*, the cover depicts his tombstone: “Phil Ochs, American, Died—Chicago 1968,” an apparent reference to the bloody street battles which took place in that city during the Democratic convention.

The *Greatest Hits* album—the only one of his LPs which has been cut out—is a strange item. It belongs to what his friends call his “gold suit period,” and it is difficult to tell where the satire leaves off and the bitterness begins. There are ten original cuts, ten bogus “hits,” and a line on the sleeve: “Fifty Phil Ochs fans can't be wrong!” His picture on the

cover shows him in a gold lame suit, posing as Elvis Presley. It is his first—and only—heavily electric album. He had been among those who, a few years earlier, had expressed opposition to the electrification of folk music, although he much admired Dylan's “Like A Rolling Stone.” Too, Elvis was one of his heroes, but exactly what kind of hero is difficult to determine.

One of the songs on the *Greatest Hits* album celebrates an incident which scandalized the music business in 1969. Epic Records threw a beautiful people bash at a mini mansion in the Hollywood Hills. Among others, Donovan Leitch was there; it was that kind of party. Ochs was also on hand, wearing his gold suit, drunk and disgusted by the hedonism of the affair. He won the door prize, a large basket of gourmet goodies, and he dropped it into the swimming pool, after casting a pall on the party people with a long, rambling speech about the war and the woes of the world. Needless to say, his publicity was devastating.

He made only one album after 1970, but that came later. His catalogue continued to sell, eventually adding up to more than half-a-million copies, and he had a loyal following so that he could put together a sell-out concert whenever he wanted to—or when he wanted money for himself or a cause he favored.

His last album was taped at Carnegie Hall, during a concert which was competing with Joe Cocker's first “Mad Dogs” date across town. Ochs gave what was said to have been one of his rare bad performances. The album, *Gunfight at Carnegie Hall*, was released in Canada but rejected by A&M here.

He wrote very little in the 1970s, but rather seems to have turned his creative energy in upon himself, one consequence possibly being the gradual emergence of John Butler Train, the name he adopted for himself as a fantasy super-person.

He had a compelling urge to travel, to see the world. Through his close friend Ron Cobb, painter and cartoonist, he was invited to Australia to perform benefits for the Australian Student Union. While there, and under the impression that he had a firm deal with M-G-M, he wrote and recorded a rocker which was intended to be the theme for “The Kansas City Bomber,” starring Raquel Welch. There were formidable obstacles—great distances, unfamiliar recording facilities, and a studio political fight which he lost—but the John Train energy and force of personality prevailed. The record was cut, the tapes shipped; but M-G-M had assigned the theme song to one of its own people. Ochs prevailed upon A&M to release his version as a single, (A&M 1376) but his disappointment was severe.

During the year that followed, he went to Chile at the invitation of Salvador Allende. There he met many of the people who were to be victims of the military coup.

Next he went to Africa, where he wrote what is considered to be his last song. He recorded it with African musicians, reportedly in a native dialect. It was released in South Africa. In Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, he was attacked and robbed by three hooligans, who strangled him into unconsciousness and left him for dead. He sustained throat injuries which left scar tissue, impairing the upper register of his voice.

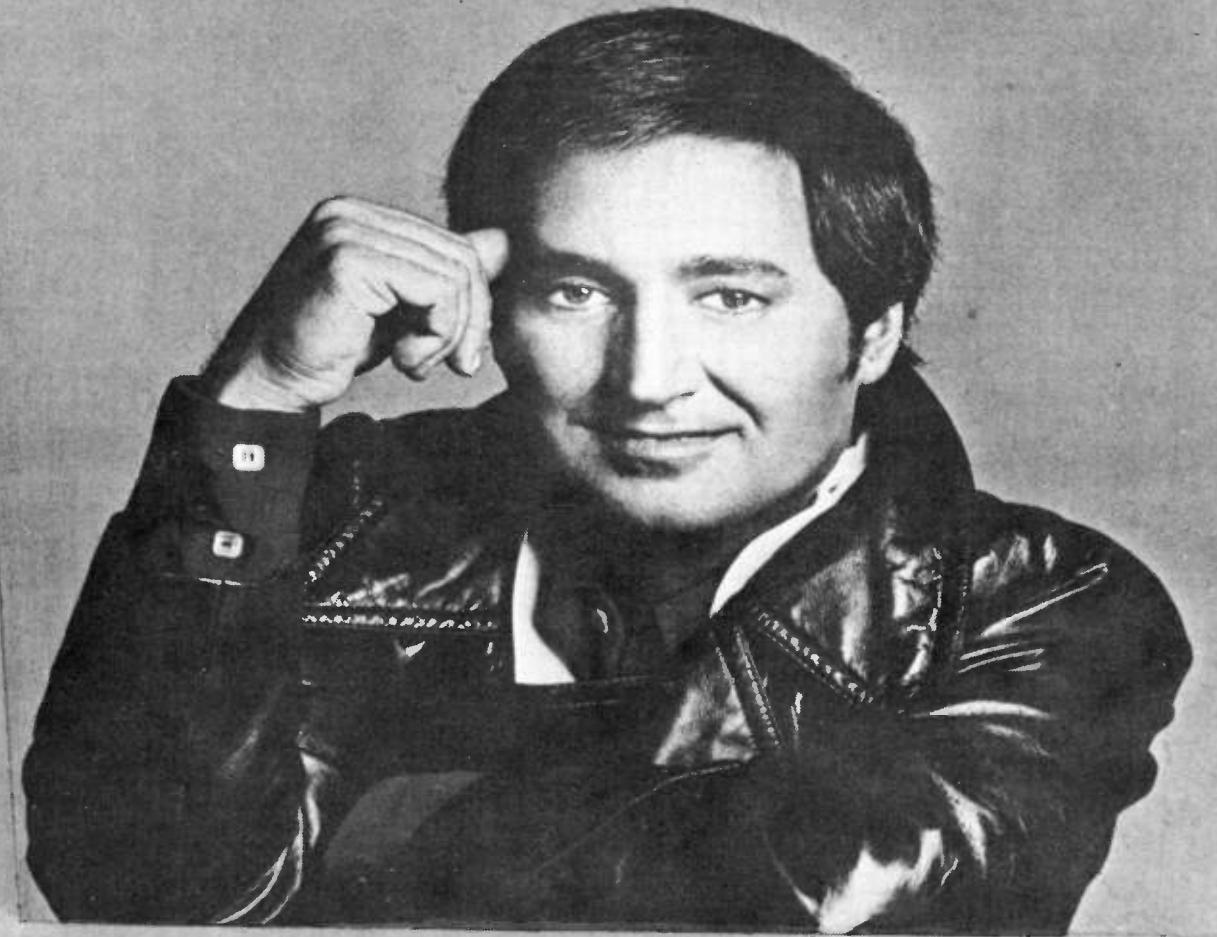
He had been drinking heavily throughout all of these experiences, and was convinced that he had inflicted permanent damage upon his health. He also believed that he had contracted African diseases, and he went from doctor to doctor until he found a diagnostician who would agree to treat him for minor parasitical problems.

When he was *being* Phil Ochs, he was defeated, gentle and depressed; but when he was *being* John Butler Train, he was prodigiously manic and decisive.

Thus, when he conceived of a benefit concert for Chilean refugee relief, he was able to persuade a number of stars to join with him at the Felt Forum in New York. Dylan performed, and Allende's widow

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# Warren Zevon: Jackson Brown As Producer

By MICHAEL BARACKMAN

"Do I sound like a martyr to art?" asked Warren Zevon, Asylum Records' newest and perhaps most authentic Southern California troubadour. The self-professed "journalist-composer" spent three lean years researching and drafting material for an album which thematically explores his sultry Los Angeles-based experiences, then two more in imposed confinement in Aspen and Sitges, Spain polishing his work.

It took Jackson Browne, Zevon's former musical sparring partner and close friend since 1968, to convince him to return to L.A. and actually record the accumulated songs. Browne held up work on his own album (a project now delayed further by his wife's recent suicide) to produce Zevon's Asylum debut, entitled *Warren Zevon*.

"After all that investment of time, I was interested in making an album," Zevon, a blonde, good-natured, and admittedly lackadaisical 27-year old, said over a bottle of imported ale. "But I would have been happy making it on *Gespacho Records* in Barcelona, or on an English label, or just on cassettes for my friends. However, I was corresponding with Jackson, and he intimated that the album was ready to be made here, businesswise."

Zevon's association with Browne began in early '68 while both were struggling, un-signed artists living in and around Laurel Canyon and Echo Park. Because Zevon's strong classical music upbringing hadn't facilitated "communicating with my peers or getting laid," he had previously turned to playing contemporary folk music on piano and acoustic guitar. Frazier Mohawk, an Elektra Records executive interested in bolstering that label's extensive folk artist stable



(which then included Judy Collins, Tom Paxton, Tom Rush, etc.), avidly pursued both Browne and Zevon, and the two met through him.

"It was like two gunslingers on main street at high noon," Zevon laughingly recalled. "Jackson played a song, then I played one...and we squared off. Then we both decided that we respected each other, and it wasn't worth seeing who was best."

While Browne did sign with Elektra, and reluctantly took part in an ill-fated group album project dubbed "Baby Browning," Zevon retreated. Instead, he signed a song-writing contract with Bones Howe, a noted L.A. producer, placed one composition, "She Quit Me," on the *Midnight Cowboy* soundtrack, and eventually made his own ill-fated album of "early-'20s poetry" on Imperial Records.

Zevon's return to the studio in early '76, and Browne's first production effort aside from himself turned out to be a gala musical event. An eyebrow-raising array of L.A. artists, including J.D. Souther,

Carl Wilson, Phil Everly, Eagles' Glenn Frey and Don Henley, and Browne's own backup band lent instrumental and vocal support, and gives the album a characteristic laid-back Southern California melodic feel. Despite the flurried studio activity, Browne's production is thankfully subtle, and works to camouflage Zevon's limited vocal range. Only Bonnie Raitt's intruding backing vocals on "Join Me In L.A." are counter-productive.

"I considered the danger that it would look like I was just getting in everybody heavy, but I don't think it turned out that way," Zevon opined. "The songs are mine, to an almost painful degree, and the people who came along—I'm awed by the talent—all really complemented the intent of the songs."

Zevon's clear-cut "intent" was to document varied emotional and physical encounters within specific L.A. backdrops. Though L.A.-soaked themes have been examined before, especially by

Asylum artists, Zevon's approach is unique, and has validity. His images are blatant and direct; the lyrical lines doused with sardonic humor. The songs possess a dramatic cinematic quality which makes Zevon's L.A. landscapes, in particular, come alive. For instance, on his best song, "Carmelita," the opening verse proceeds: "I hear mariachi static on my radio, and the tubes they glow in the dark/ And I'm there with her in Ensenada, and I'm here in Echo Park."\*

While noting lyrical similarities with others, Zevon is proud of his format: "I'm aware that lots of people will say, 'Oh, he's made an L.A. album,' but you have to let that shit roll off your back. Or else, what are you gonna' do, where are you gonna' go...to the moon?"

"I was a surfer in the '60s—I was all that California junk. It was emotionally important for me to make a statement about it. So I took a chance. Sure, I'm competing with the Eagles, with Ned Doheny, but I'm also competing with Joan Didion, Nathaniel West, and Raymond Chandler."

But to insure against being typecast, Zevon plans to lyrically base his next LP on European culture. As for the immediate future, he's in the process of putting together a backing band (already selected: former Fairport Convention acoustic guitarist Jerry Donahue) and will begin a nation-wide tour in late-May. Has the album itself, and the mingling with L.A.'s popular music elites, changed his preoccupation with creativity over material success? "Cashmere definitely feels better than sweatshirt material," he said, smiling. "But if you get hung up with that stuff, you're asking for trouble. Really, I just want to be cheerful."

\* ©Darkroom Companion Music-BMI

## Tremeloes: Even the Bad Times are Good



By KEN BARNES

The Tremeloes have a problem—they've been too successful. 15 years together (the first five backing Brian Poole) and upwards of a dozen pop hit singles on their own have apparently killed their chances of being accepted in England as anything but a teen-oriented pop band. They've been wrestling with the problem for years, making clever, sophisticated records that have heedlessly been lumped in the same old pop bag, and even shortening their name to the Trens in a bit of less-than-inspired image-mongering.

So their hopes are with the U.S., where the hits stopped earlier. It's like beginning again here, but that's just as difficult. When self-righteous progressive FM stations are weighing your records and the choice is between coming off as complete unknowns or being remembered for topping the pop charts with "Silence Is Golden" nine years ago, the situation is not encouraging.

But the Tremeloes, newly signed to DJM Records, are giving the American market another shot, and they're going about it as straightforwardly as possible. Their album, *Shiner*, encompasses all their long-

standing pop values (economy, a nimble verbal facility, catchy melodic hook lines) and their more recent sophistication (mastery of a wide variety of styles, from melancholy balladry to sledgehammer hard rock). They're singing better than ever, airtight harmonies, and they play with restraint and taste. *Shiner* is very impressive, comparing favorably with the fine albums the Hollies have been making of late, not far removed from the category-demolishing music the Sutherland Bros. and others are creating, and infinitely more lively than the tedious Dave Masons and Peter

*Continued on Page 44*

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**LONDON**  
RECORDS & TAPES



## McCartney: The Band On The Road

By MITCH COHEN

The Wings live show has been evolving over the past three years, and McCartney deliberately kept a low profile during its earliest stages, a university tour of England. On a syndicated radio show, *Rock Around the World*, McCartney recalled the joys of starting from scratch, away from the skeptical eyes of the press and the complex economic maneuverings of a full-scale superstar traveling band.

"We went to the University tour and we charged 50p (about \$1 American) at the door. And it was the first time for years I'd seen real money. We'd give the students' union their cut...and we'd divide up the rest in the van afterwards. Great feeling, you know. '50p for you, 50p...' it was like robbers or something...That kind of thrill was exactly like the Cavern when you got paid in the door money..."

"Second time around wasn't exactly the same, but there were many instances very reminiscent of Hamburg and stuff. Funny hotels and late night things, and the owner trying to chuck us out because he thought we were going to be yobs. There was a lot of that. Because we didn't do it on a big star level. We very much exposed ourselves by going back to the grass roots. I'm very glad we did it now. The success that

we're having now is like a kind of worthy success. It's not as if we just left right from the Beatles right into a kind of big show. I like the feeling of a build-up because then you feel like you've got something under your belt."

From all reports, Wings now does a fast-paced, exciting set, kicking off predictably enough with "Rock Show," concluding with "Band On the Run," and mixing in a collection of the group's hits, Paul and Linda album tracks and a rather more liberal sprinkling of Beatle songs than Harrison offered in his revue. In Europe, the most well-received portion of the show has been McCartney's solo spot doing familiar things like "Blackbird," "Yesterday" and "I've Just Seen A Face," accompanying himself on acoustic guitar. The word is that even more nominal, Lennon-McCartney material has been added to the extended repertoire for the Americas.

The one small crimp in this whole picture is the album that was released to coincide with the Tour. Probably the best, and safest, thing to do would have been to put out a package of heretofore uncollected singles and B-sides, ranging from "Another Day" through such rockers as "Hi Hi Hi" and "Junior's Farm": one thing Wings doesn't need is bad reviews beating them to their SRO cities, and that type of LP is

virtually immune to criticism. Besides, those are the songs that the crowds will be hearing. Instead, *At the Speed of Sound* is a risky attempt to establish Wings as a more democratic unit (it's not even "Paul McCartney and Wings" anymore). McCartney only sings lead on six of the album's eleven songs, the smallest ratio since he struck out on his own. In theory it's a good idea to have his voice alternating with others—it always worked in the old days—but Linda, McCulloch, Denny Laine and Joe English are not the distinctive vocalists his old mates are.

Like Paul's fictional grandfather, the album is very clean, and one can see how it will fit into the live format. It prominently features the four man horn section that will join Wings on stage, particularly effective on "Let 'Em In;" gives Laine a couple of songs to replace Paul Simon's "Richard Cory," which he performed on the early legs of the tour; and adds at least one McCartney vocal raver, "Beware My Love," which is probably splendid live. "Silly Love Songs," already a big hit single, is light and infectious, and has simple harmonies for Linda. All in all, *At the Speed of Sound*'s best tracks, along with those from *Venus and Mars* and *Band On the Run*, will be the foundation for the two-hours-plus, no opening act, no intermission Wings show.

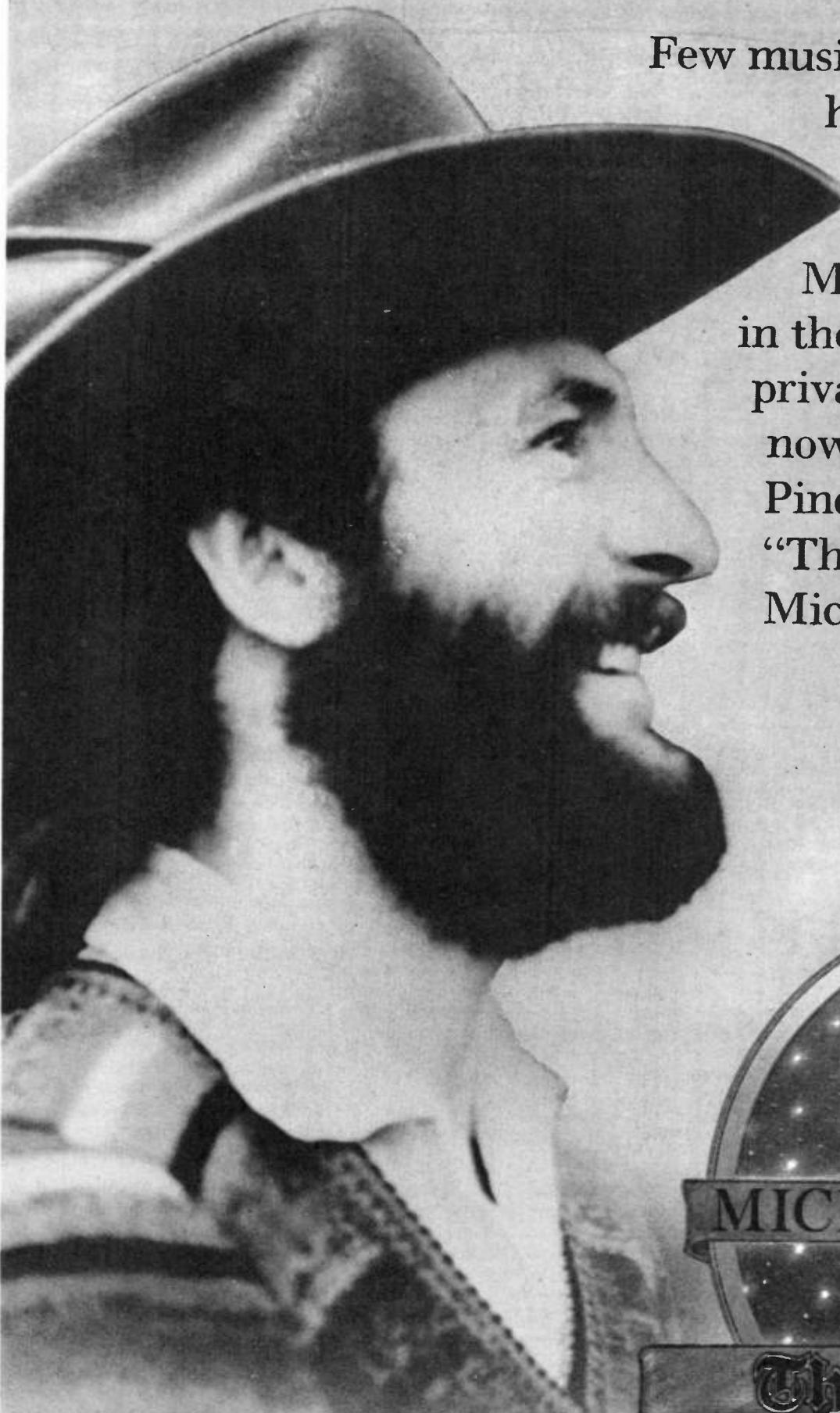
(Cont. on Pg. 18)

# WINGS AMERICAN DATES



May 3/Ft. Worth  
Tarrant County  
Convention Center  
May 4/Houston  
The Summit  
May 7/Detroit  
Olympia Stadium  
May 8/Detroit  
Olympia Stadium  
May 9/Toronto  
Maple Leaf Gardens  
May 10/Cleveland  
The Coliseum  
May 12/Philadelphia  
Spectrum  
May 14/Philadelphia  
Spectrum  
May 15/Washington, D.C.  
Capitol Center  
May 16/Washington, D.C.  
Capitol Center  
May 18/Atlanta  
The Omni  
May 19/Atlanta  
The Omni  
May 21/Nassau  
Nassau Veteran Memorial  
Coliseum  
May 22/Boston  
Boston Garden  
May 24/New York  
Madison Square Garden  
May 25/New York  
Madison Square Garden  
May 27/Cincinnati  
Riverfront Coliseum  
May 29/Kansas City  
Kemper Arena  
  
June 1/Chicago  
Stadium  
June 2/Chicago  
Stadium  
June 4/St Paul  
Civic Center Arena  
June 7/Denver  
McNichols Arena  
June 13/San Francisco  
Cow Palace  
June 14/San Francisco  
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Community Center  
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The Forum  
June 22/Los Angeles  
The Forum





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## Beatle Re-union: "There's Always a Possibility."

Maybe the most curious sidelight to Wings' U.S. debut is the shadow that's being cast by the Beatles, with two words being thrown about with considerable weight behind them: reunion and revival. The first is merely more speculation on a topic that's always been on hand to a greater or lesser extent, but the second has some real basis in numbers. Anyone who's been keeping an eye on the younger segment of the pop audience could see the Beatle fever rising, as young teenagers—toddlers and pre-schoolers back when the Fab Four touched down at Kennedy Airport—have taken a near fanatical interest in all prior and present manifestations of the quartet. Fanzines, conventions, film festivals are proliferating.

In England, developments are even more dramatic. EMI has instigated a concentrated reissue program, spearheaded by "Yesterday," never before available as a single in Britain (like "Imagine," a recent top 10 U.K. hit), and including every other Beatle 45. As of a couple of weeks ago, the British top 50 looked something like this: "Yesterday" (8), "Hey Jude" (18), "Paperback Writer" (23), "Get Back" (30), "Strawberry

Fields Forever" (32), "Help" (50), with such songs as "Love Me Do," "I Want to Hold Your Hand," "Yellow Submarine" and "Lady Madonna" bubbling under. Nearly  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the top 100 (23 discs) are Beatle records. Many, of course, are McCartney-associated songs, leading to speculation that last year's Wings tour helped to rekindle interest, and England is normally receptive to oldies, but this spurt is causing a tremendous amount of industry controversy. Some of EMI's competitors like Pye, CBS and Phonogram are accusing EMI of glutting the market and making it tougher to break new acts, but Decca, seeing a good thing, is bringing out old Stones records.

With all this U.K. chart action, and McCartney in the public eye, all that was needed was for one enterprising entrepreneur to fuel the fire, and Bill Sargent fits the bill. As everybody knows by now, Sargent offered the four Beatles some exorbitant guarantee (he keeps upping the pot; at last bid the number of millions was up to fifty) to get together for one live, closed-circuit T.V. appearance. Despite his super-confidence (he

even said he'd buy out the Wings tour), there's no real chance the Beatles'll bite, but that hasn't kept the media from playing it up. *People* put them on the cover, *Variety* relayed rumors of a Lennon, Harrison, Starr, Nilsson and Voorman summer tour, and the Beatles were making the usual denials. McCartney, in the Rock Around the World interview, went into some detail as to his views on an impending Beatle reunion.

"My comment is that I don't think it's likely myself. I never really have since the group split up. There's always the possibility of it happening again, but I've never really felt it was a likely thing. I was just telling someone before, I spoke to John the other night on the phone; I just happened to ring him up for something, and we were just chatting. And we spoke for about an hour and a half...and I realized after I got off the phone, neither of us had talked at all about this 35 million deal. He never said to me, 'What do you think about it?'

"And so that really proves where it's at, in a way: Both got off the phone and probably both thought, 'Oh. He didn't say anything about

it.' Which to most people, 'Didn't say anything about a 25 million dollar deal? They gotta be crazy!' But it's just the way it is, you know. For me, the whole thing is I don't like the idea of it getting back together for money. If it ever was to get back together in any form, which is always possible—I'd never rule it out; I don't think the other three rule it out—I personally would like it to get together for real reasons. Now I know a lot of people would say money is a real reason, but for me, as far as music is concerned, money isn't a good incentive, really, to go and do it. I would like to think we'd only go and do it if we really wanted to say something musically and really favored playing with each other again."

Even if it isn't out of the question, there are four very tender egos to deal with; none of them wants to seem desperate, or mercenary, or to be perceived as the spoiler. Meanwhile, as Paul McCartney's second band is storming the States, a former Apple promo man, according to *Billboard*, has been seen wearing a t-shirt inscribed "Beatles Revival Tour 1976, Road Crew." Some people will never give up hope.

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# Sutherland Bros: Starting Over Again

By KEN BARNES

A little history first. Not too much, don't worry; this isn't one of my retrospective tomes. The group is called the Sutherland Bros. & Quiver because it was composed of two separate recording entities, the Sutherland Brothers (a duo) and Quiver (a quintet, though through natural attrition Sutherlands now equal Quivers in the lineup).

Iain Sutherland, the elder and balder of the brothers, started a band called the Mysteries at age 16 in Stoke-on-Trent in England's Midlands. They evolved into the New Generation—"Me and two other guys from school started it," says Iain. "I signed to Southern Music as a songwriter, and all the songs I wrote we made demos for. I must have made 50 demos." Southern Music, a powerful publishing concern, was involved in the formation of a new label called Spark in 1968, and the New Generation kicked off the label with a perfectly delightful pop-rock ballad called "Sadie And Her Magic Mr. Galahad." It didn't sell, but the next record, "Smokey Blues Away," made the British Top 50 for several weeks and came out in this country on Imperial. A New Generation demo called "Heart-breaker" also came out on Imperial under the name UK Baby, much to Iain's horrified amusement. "They must have just made that up for here. We were never called UK Baby," he says, laughing in disbelief.

The New Generation broke up, shortly after younger brother Gavin had joined up. Iain's Southern Music contract, however, lingered unhappily, which is why when the Sutherland Brothers Band made their first album for Island Records in 1972, Gavin wrote the bulk of the songs (notably "I Was In Chains," still a notabler part of their repertoire). Iain's one song, "The Pie," was nearly a hit single, but not quite.

The Sutherland Brothers Band failed to stay afloat long, the drummer and bassist leaving after some less-than-satisfactory gigs. "We spent a few months, just the two of us with guitars on the road, which wasn't what we really wanted to do," Iain says. They made a second album, *Lifeboat*, with session men, and Gavin's "Sailing" was nearly a hit single, but not quite. In 1975 it was picked up by Rod Stewart for his *Atlantic Crossing* album, and his version sold a ton in England and Europe.

Meanwhile, Quiver, a guitar band with two Warners albums to their credit, was experiencing troubles of their own. The group had been formed by guitarists Cal Batchelor and Tim Renwick, the latter late of Junior's Eyes, the Jackie Lomax



The Sutherlands sitting pretty: (L-R) Willie Wilson, Tim Renwick, Iain and Gavin Sutherland.

Band, and a group called Wages of Sin (with Jerry Shirley of Humble Pie fame). The first Quiver album was on the mediocre side, but the second, *Gone In The Morning*, was full of good harmony numbers, plus the standout extended title track. Batchelor, however, decided to leave. "He went to Holland, that's the last I hear," says Renwick. "He was working with a sort of R&B band in Amsterdam."

"We hadn't met before," Iain says. "An agent, a mutual friend, was aware of both situations, and it was relatively easy to get together." The situations were 1) the Sutherlands needed a band, and 2) Quiver, with chief songwriter Batchelor about to leave, needed original material. The merger was a natural. "We had a gig at the Marquee, New Year's Eve 1973," Iain recalls, "and the band came up to jam. We played a lot of rock & roll and Everly Brothers songs. It was great."

"The prospect of the Elton John tour came up, and we knew we needed an album for the States," he continues. So the *Lifeboat* album was remodeled to include a few new tracks the Sutherland's & Quiver had recorded together. One of them, "You Got Me Anyway," was nearly a hit single in Britain, but not quite. It was however, a hit in the States, and with its memorable melody, deliberate minor chording, and spot-on harmonies, is still probably the best-ever Sutherland track.

It was nine months before SBQ (if you'll pardon the abbreviation) had another *single* out, effectively destroying the momentum built up by the tour and "You Got Me Anyway." The eventual 45, a rare Iain/Gavin collaboration called "Dream Kid," was nearly a hit, but not quite. In Britain, that is; here it didn't come close. *Dream Kid* was also their first complete band

album's title, and it was a good LP, though not really outstanding—the title track was the top cut. They toured in America around its time of release (April 1974), but it went poorly.

To add to their troubles, the group's relationship with Island had soured. *Dream Kid* had suffered in the U.S. because it was one of the last Island albums distributed by Capitol, who were disinclined to promote it when they knew the label was going independent shortly.

The new independent Island decided in turn that the next Sutherland's album, *Beat Of The Street*, would not be issued in America. The decision was difficult to understand, as *Beat* was stronger than *Dream Kid*, with any number of impressive tracks; and SBQ were less than thrilled. "We were thinking about getting the album out on another label," Iain says, "but it came out on Island. When they decided it wasn't good enough to come out in the States, we decided, well, that's it. It was a hopeless situation."

Bass player Bruce Thomas had left before *Beat Of The Street*. "Bruce had a bit of an explosive personality and we had trouble getting along with him on the road," says Renwick. "It culminated in a big row in Europe on tour with Traffic, and we decided we had to part ways." Thomas was most recently heard in Keith West's promising band Moonrider.

The Elton John tour went well, too. "That was a great tour for us. The record and the tour worked for each other. The timing was good." The group was understandably encouraged. "We didn't think we could go out and buy Rolls Royces or anything, but we thought this was a great start. There was no real follow-up, though. No particular reason. The

guy who was managing us at the time was more a personal friend...It just went on and on."

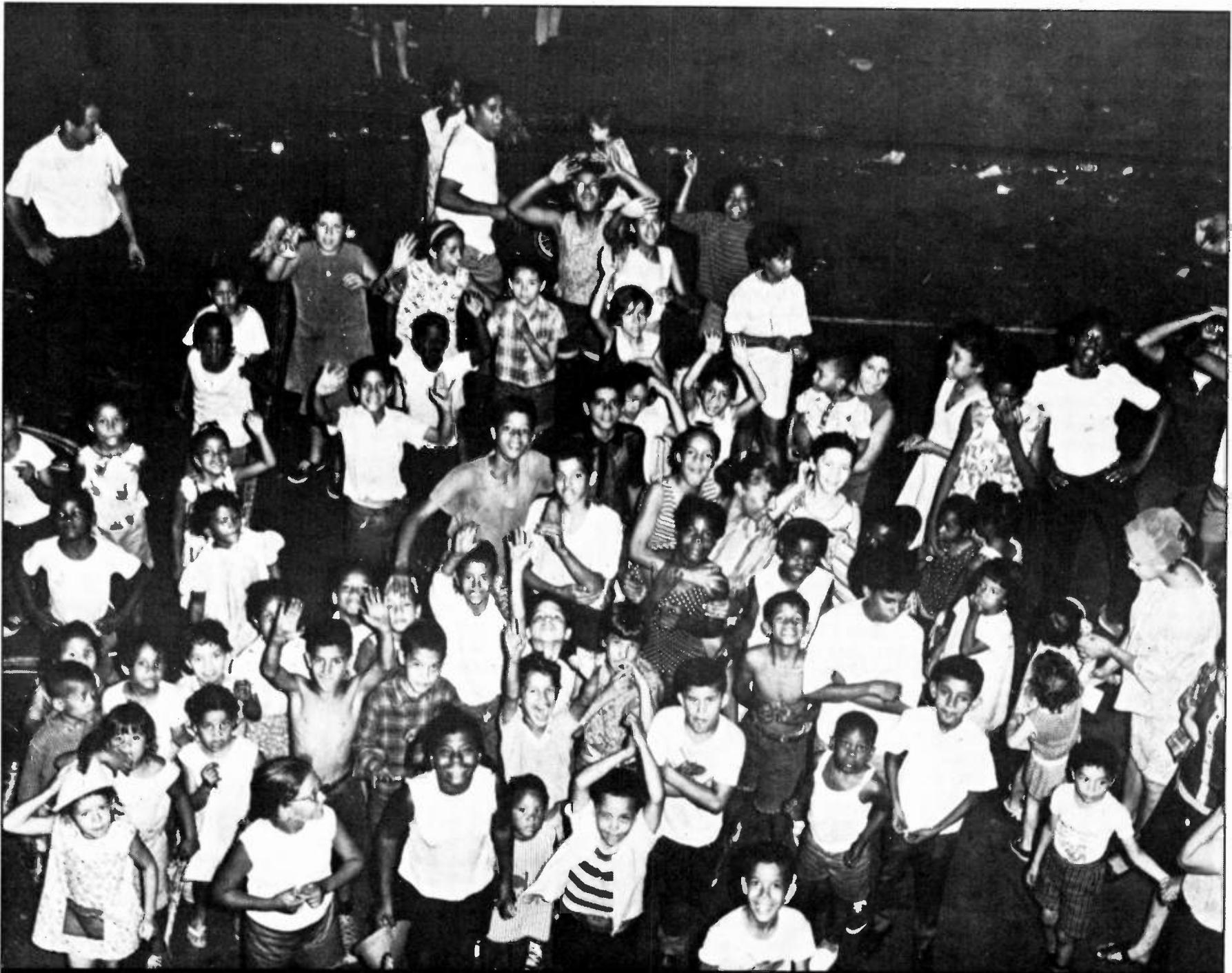
In 1975 keyboardist Peter Wood departed. "He had plans of his own. We'd been having a bit of a hard time, and he's just got fed up," Renwick says. "He's working with a group called Natural Gas now." Natural Gas, also featuring Jerry Shirley, ex-Tempest bassist Mark Clarke, and Joey Molland from Badfinger, are incidentally a potentially excellent band with an impressive debut album slated for May or June release.

With all their problems, and now slimmed down to a quartet (ex-Cochise drummer Willie Wilson being the fourth), SBQ found their music revitalized. "It's funny," says Renwick. "When Pete left it got us off in a new direction. It was more rock & roll. There's more guitar. We found we liked it better. Pete's a great keyboard player. But I think things got swamped in keyboards. You tend to use it—you get a Hammond Organ on a track, then you say, 'a bit of grand piano would be nice,' and before you know it there's a clavinet—it's a big wash of sound."

The new-look SBQ did sound better, rocking more energetically and benefitting from stronger new material. The new album, *Reach For The Sky*, is their best yet, as chronicled in the March PRM; and new label CBS (Columbia here) was enthusiastic. An initial single, "Ain't Too Proud," fared badly in England, but "Arms Of Mary," the album's strongest melodic track, hit the British charts in April and despite the competition of some two dozen reissued Beatles singles, is currently close to the Top 30. In America, "Arms" got off to a slow start, like most records by relative unknowns, but picked up strong regional action and was aided by an encouragingly large amount of FM airplay. It's now bulleted as of this writing on the national charts, and appears to have a good shot at full-fledged hit status.

The Sutherland Brothers & Quiver are in the States for a tour at present, and their recent L.A. gigs demonstrated vast improvement since the 1973 Elton John tour. Their playing was unexpectedly fiery, providing an interesting contrast to their polished, commercial recorded versions. No one in the audience recognized "You Got Me Anyway," but the group's impeccable harmonies and Renwick's effortlessly fluid, sometimes scorching guitar breaks were thrilling.

Starting all over again seems to be working for SBQ. "That's the way to look at it," says Renwick. "It doesn't bother me. I think we stand a real good chance, and we have the confidence. Which is quite incredible after being together for such a long time."



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the Latin countries, and  
the U.S.A. all meet.



**"Amigos."**  
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## John Sebastian: Welcome Back Hits

By KEN BARNES

"I did doze off for a long while," John Sebastian speaking, summing up his last few years. Up until a few weeks ago, that's how the average rock-fan-in-the-street pictured Sebastian—some sort of sentimental terminally tie-dyed acid casualty. Hardly a likely candidate for the office of Top 40 box-office champ, 1976 division. But "Welcome Back" is the fastest-breaking, hottest-selling single of the year so far, the kind of instant, across-the-board automatic smash most performers would option 20 points to Lucifer Associates (the well-known soul management firm) to get. It wasn't that easy, of course; a lot of circumstances had to coincide, one of which was the commercial rejuvenation of John Sebastian.

It's been five years since I've really paid any attention to John Sebastian, and record sales, reviews, and other tangibles imply that I wasn't alone. It was a mysterious drop from the pops for a seminal figure in American rock.

If you remember, or even if you don't, the Lovin' Spoonful were tremendously important. While they weren't as innovative as the Byrds or as consistent as the Raiders, they were probably the biggest American group from 1965-67 in terms of popular acceptance. The Spoonful was John Sebastian's vehicle all the way, and when he left in 1968, everyone assumed instant stardom was forthcoming.

It didn't happen that way. His first solo single, "She's A Lady", a pleasant ballad, barely made the charts in early 1969. His first album didn't emerge for another year, but by this time the movie *Woodstock* had plastered that sentimental tie-dyed acid image of John burling stoned platitudes to the delighted throngs on the nation's consciousness at large. The album became quite popular, but the typecasting of Sebastian as *Woodstock* Nation's indulgent uncle (enhanced by his *Cheapo Cheapo* live album) was damaging, and misleading.

"That burned out on acid idea is interesting, and I can kind of see where it came from," Sebastian

says. "One of my very few acid trips was also my most highly visible. I never in my life took so much acid as was handed to me while at Woodstock. I wasn't on the bill, but I was asked to play while the electrical system was out of order. So my most intense psychedelic experience came before a half-million people and a large movie audience."

Apparently the early 70's were traumatic times for Sebastian, and it hurt. He admits as much: "All the emotional, psychological anguish affected my creativity and writing." He made a personal album, *The Four Of Us*, which did moderately well, and then let three years elapse before the next one, *The Tarzana Kid*, which besides displaying a dearth of new compositions, did not even sell well enough to qualify for the "moderate" category.

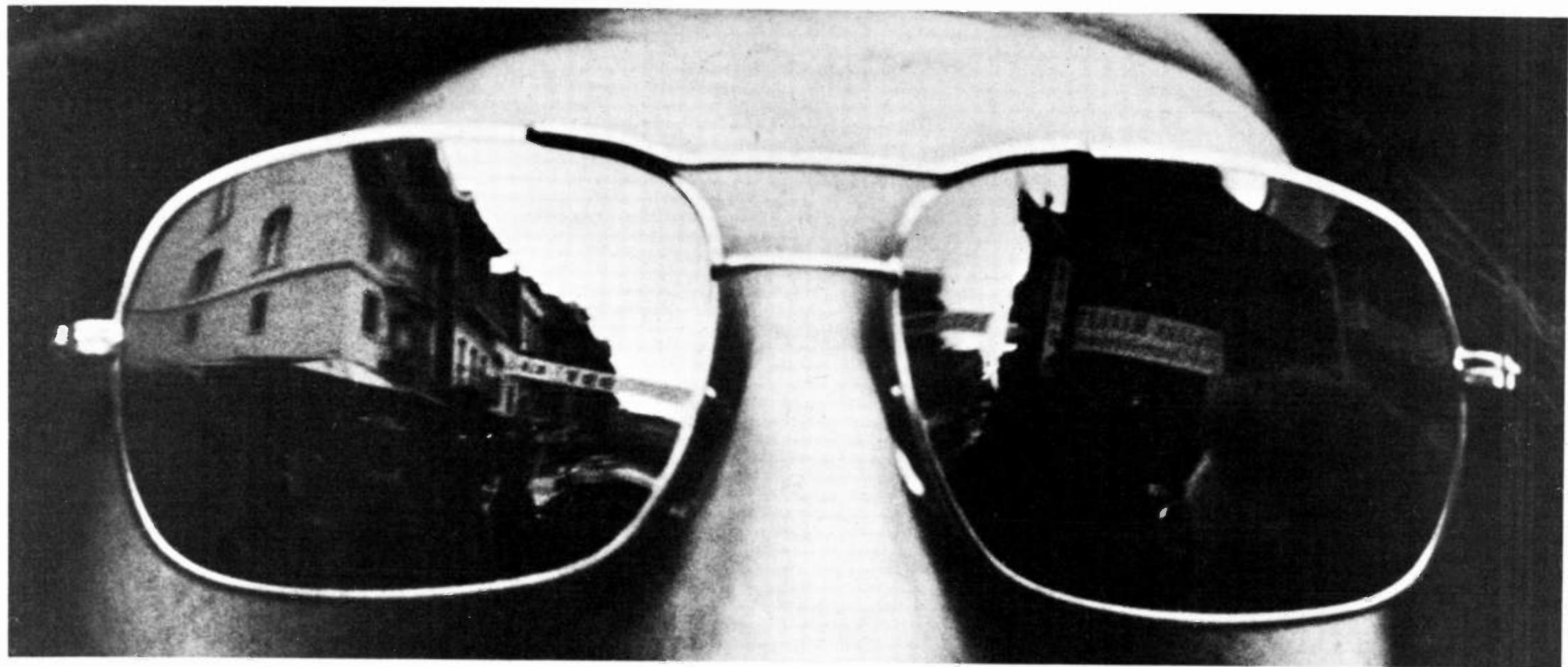
Sebastian seems a bit defensive about the yawning gaps (no pun intended) between creative spates. "People believe that because I don't have 'product,' I'm not creating. Well, all these years I've

been establishing myself as a concert performer, and directing my creative energy towards that. Records, I admit, come slow. But that's the way I work."

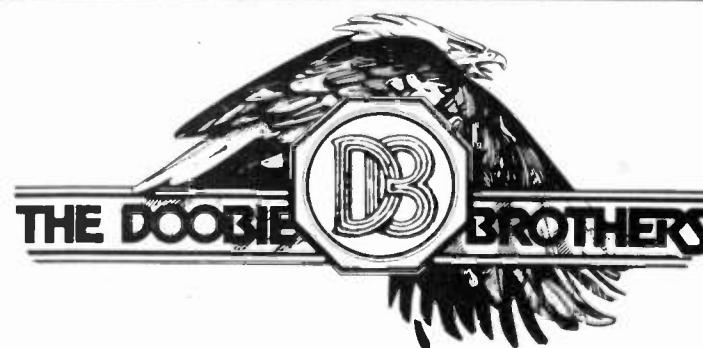
Whatever the problem was—the laid-back L.A. blues, falling into an image trap, insecurity, or choose your own conjecture—it seems to have been solved. Sebastian has deserted L.A. for Woodstock, NY—not what you'd ordinarily consider a high-energy locale, but it seems to affect him that way. And he's got his hit, and as always that makes all the difference in the world.

There are a lot of reasons why "Welcome Back" is such a monumental home run. Having "Rockford Files" and "Theme from S.W.A.T." pave the way for TV themes didn't hurt, and Gabriel Kaplan and the cast of the super-successful *Welcome Back Kotter* series (unbeatable teen demographics) deserve an assist on the play. Big changes at Warner Bros. Records also played a key role. Warners had apparently settled

(Cont. on Pg. 31)



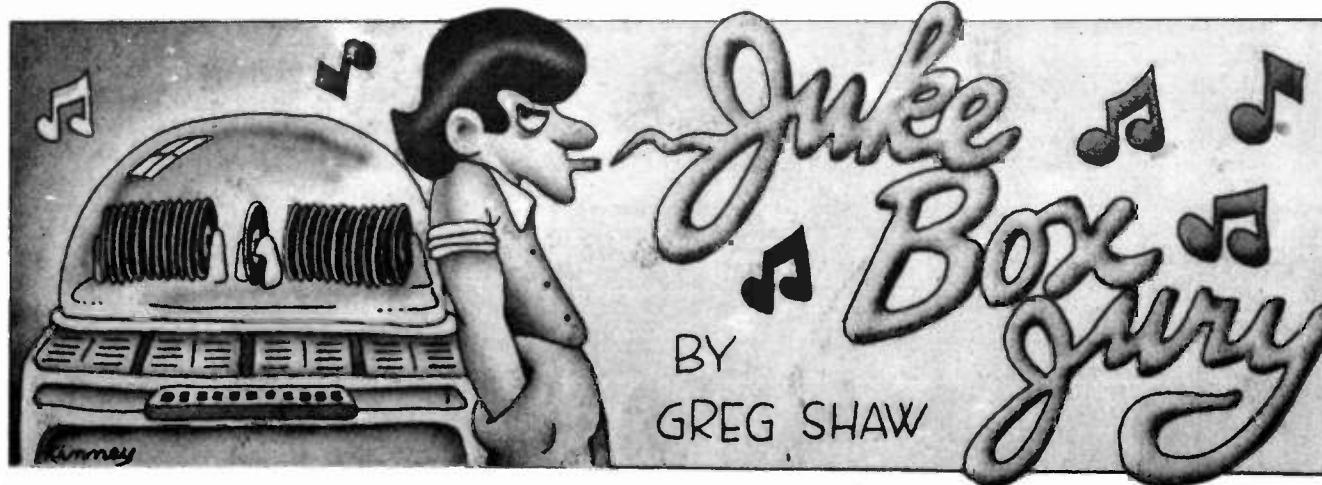
*takin' it to the streets*



NEW ON WARNER BROS. RECORDS AND TAPES.



BS 2899



## The Fonz: "Some people call me a teenage idol."

This month's column is dedicated to the greatest American folk hero of the '70s, the only man to emerge in this bicentennial year with any of the classic qualities we have admired in George Washington, Patrick Henry, and Paul Revere. I'm speaking, of course, of none other than Arthur Fonzarelli, 'The Fonz.' Here is a man who, in an age of anti-heroes, champions the ancient virtues of honesty, incorruptibility, and strength of character. A man who's become, to a nation of long-haired, pot-smoking nerds, the single hope of salvation from lives of appalling mediocrity. A modern-day Prometheus, bringing the gospel of cool to an uncool world. A veritable titan among men.

Unfortunately, he can't sing, as his televised performance of "Jailhouse Rock" amply demonstrated. But that little fact won't stop him from being a teenage idol. Already there are more records about Fonzie than have ever been dedicated to Elton John. Most of them are pretty dire—"The Fonz Song" by the Hayettes (London 232) and "Hey Fonzie" by Steve Sawyer (Casablanca 855) heading the list. "Cruisin' With the Fonz" by Pratt & McClain (Reprise 1351) ain't so hot either, but it's only the B-side of the hit "Happy Days" which, well, it sounds just like the theme song. It would have been better to let Flash Cadillac do the record, I think. The best Fonzie record is "The Fonz" by Ray Sanders (Hillside 76-02), which has a real '50s feel—it reminds me of "Sandy" by Larry Hall. This is a local record, you can get it from Box 1190, Reseda, CA 91335.

And if there can be spinoff shows, why not spinoff takeoffs? That's what you'd have to call "Making Our Dreams Come True" by Cyndi Grecco (Private Stock 45,086), the theme from "Laverne & Shirley." I loved the song the first time I heard it on TV—waited anxiously for the closing credits, sure they'd say "Jeff Barry & Ellie Greenwich", it sounded that much like one of those great Dixie Cups type girl group records. It's even got semi-surfing harmonies. THIS IS A GREAT RECORD!

Of course I needn't mention "Welcome Back (Kotter)" by John Sebastian (Reprise 1349), another TV theme fast approaching the Top 10. But how about "Let Her In" by John Travolta (Midland 10623), otherwise known as Barbarino. Expect a heavy push on him. I'm waiting for Marcia Strassman (Kotter's wife Julie on the show) to start recording again. "The Flower Children" (Uni 55006, 1967) was too good to be her last. And I wonder when Shelley Fabares (Danny Thomas' daughter-in-law on "The Practice") will make her record? Of course the one we're all really anxious to have on wax is "Baby Boy" by Loretta Hagers, with that great Brenda Lee-style rockabilly hiccup and a fancy picture cover. Although after what she did on the Dinah show, she may have blown it. I hope not; she's such a nice girl....

**BAY CITY ROLLERS**  
"Rock & Roll Love Letter"  
*Arista 0185*

Always liked this song, and theirs is the best version yet. Completely irresistible. A strong comeback from "Money Honey" which I didn't care for at all. But now, I'm forced to revise my opinion. They are as good as the Archies.

**JOHN FOGERTY**  
"You Got The Magic"  
*Asylum 45309*

Now I know what John was talking about when he said he was looking for a way to stay true to his roots while not copying the Creedence sound. This record, from the forthcoming album, has a very contemporary feel, with an opening somewhere between "Dream Weaver" and "Radar Love", but the essence is pure swamp punk, not unlike "Walk on the Water". And the flip, "Evil Thing", reminds me of "Porterville". Yet the discophiles will be able to dance to it and everybody will be happy. I'm looking forward to that album.

**DON HARRISON BAND**  
"Sixteen Tons"  
*Atlantic 3323*

There are two ex-Creedence members in this group, and it sure sounds it...The sound is raw, with a heavy beat and searing

fuzztone guitar. It's exactly the sort of record Fogerty might make if he had no qualms about rehashing what he did 7 years ago. But these guys don't have to worry about protecting any image, which is fine, because this is one record I'm glad was made.

**JOHNNY RIVERS**  
"Outside Help"  
*Epic 8-50208*

This is Rivers at his best, full of nostalgic references, built on a sparkling dance beat, and featuring as always, the hottest musicians around. It has the warm, dreamy feel of "Summer Rain", always my favorite Rivers song.

**WINGS**  
"Silly Love Songs"  
*Capitol 4256*

Methinks the man doth protest too much....

**BILLY OCEAN**  
"Love Really Hurts Without You"  
*Ariola 7621*

Nowadays the best disco records are clearly emanating from England. This is one of my favorite AM hits of the moment, with its pseudo-Abba beat and bright sound. It's pure pop, which the best R&B has always aspired to be:

**HOLLIES- "Write On"**  
*Epic 8-50204*

Like most Hollies singles of the past few years, this one is rather long (3:25), tends to drag at times, and yet has one of those melodies that insinuates its way gently into your subconscious until you can't get enough of it.

This month's new releases offer slim pickin's, I'm afraid. Of the debuts, only two really stand out. "Beatles" by Alan Gordon & the Extragordonary Band (RCA 10641) is similar to "Titles" by Barclay James Harvest, a tribute to the group everyone misses most (do you know there are now 23 Beatles records on the Hot 100 in Britain?) using familiar titles and a likeable melody. Is there no end to the Beatle obsession? I'd prefer to hear some new groups trying to sound good the same way the Beatles did. Enough imitations and tributes already; how about some honest inspiration?

The other standout is "Forever

and Ever" by Slik (Arista 0179), a Martin & Coulter song/production similar to those they did for the Bay City Rollers. Obviously someone is hoping this will be another "Saturday Night", but it appears that Slik are nothing more than a studio group demonstrating the fact that a good producer can make identical sounding records with anybody, something the English never seem to tire of proving. Which is not to say that this isn't good, and rather interesting, variation on the basic Rollers sound. If you can get it, get it.

Speaking of English producers, it should be interesting to watch what Chinn & Chapman do now that they're based in California. Their first alien production is the new album by Bo Donaldson & the Heywoods, which I recommend, since it includes "Teenage Rampage", "Hello It's Me" and some other rather unexpected things. The single from it is "Oh Boy" (Capitol 4237), the old Buddy Holly song, and it's the same arrangement used by Mud—slowed down to the point where it becomes a chant. Interesting.

A couple of veteran English groups return to American shores this month with new records. Marmalade, back together but probably without leader Dean Ford who now makes solo albums, have actually entered the charts with "Falling Apart at the Seams" (Ariola 7619) a rather plain Bee Gees type disco song. But then that seems to be the thing to do. And believe it or not, Brotherhood of Man is back (they were a studio group who made the Top 20 in 1970 with "United We Stand") with a pleasant, though ordinary English bubblegum-pop number called "Let's Live Together" (Pye 71066), Britain's Eurovision entry for the year and already a #1 hit back home.

Randy Edelman, who may yet make it, brings back one of my favorite obscure oldies with "Concrete and Clay" (20th Century 2274), and surprise: it's not a disco version. Then there's J.J. Light, a mysterious figure who hasn't made a record since 1967 when he did the utterly obscure "Heya", surfacing again with "Baby Let's Go to Mexico" (PBR Intl. 502). It's the first and best Johnny Rivers imitation I've heard, though not what I'd call a natural hit. The only really local record worth mentioning this month is "Night Life" by Savannah (Savannah 815), with a polished kind of English heavy metal/boogie sound. They're as good as Uriah Heep or REO Speedwagon, I suppose, though I'm no judge of that sort of thing. Write to 301 Lone Tree Rd, Hollister, Ca 95023. And remember gang, keep sending those local records. Can't promise to review 'em all, but if they're good, we will. At least you won't be able to say no one was willing to give you a listen....

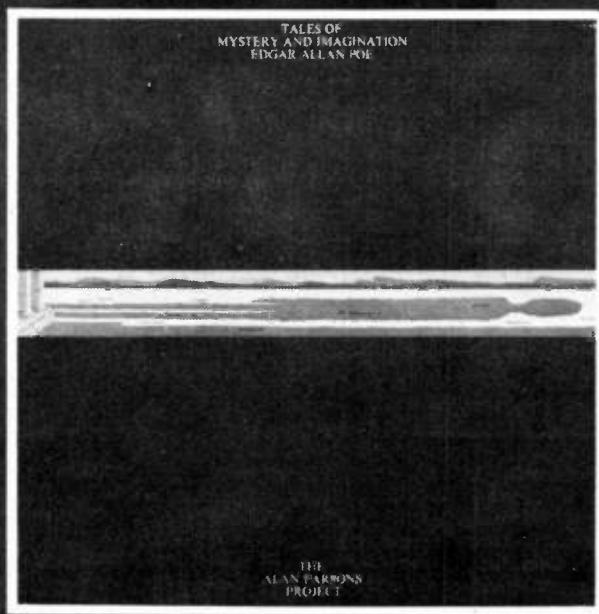
"Music when combined with a pleasurable idea, is poetry. Music without the idea is simply music. Without music or an intriguing idea color becomes pallor, man becomes carcass, home becomes catacomb and the dead are but for a moment motionless..."

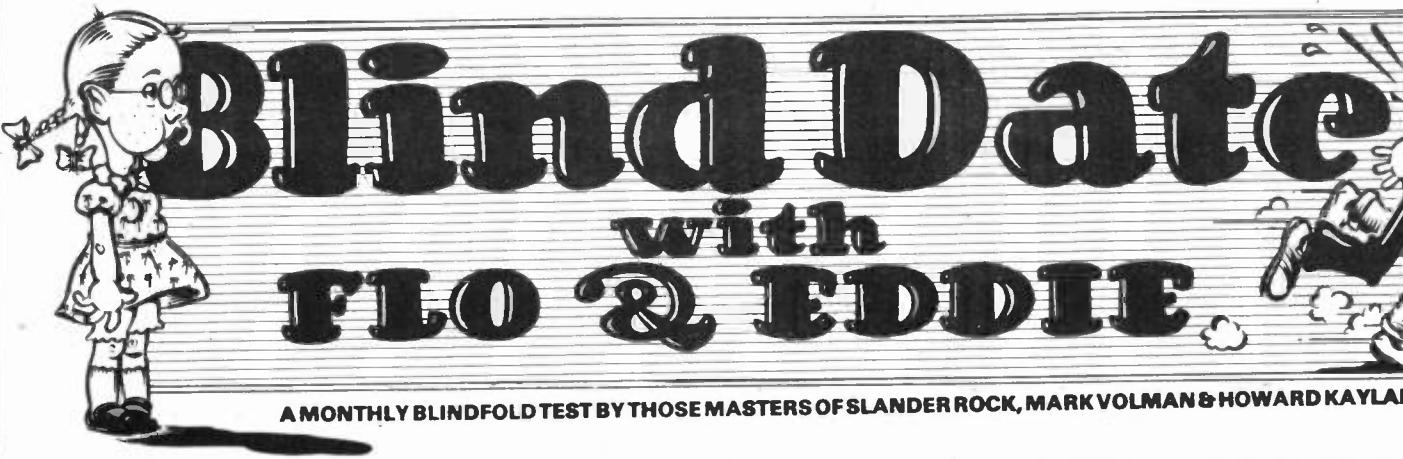


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T-508





# Blind Date

with

## FLO & EDDIE

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

Edited by KEN BARNES

**Excerpts from *Back to Back*—  
The Brecker Brothers (Arista)**

A brother duo? Sparks! Bud and Travis. Bjorn & Benny. The Brecker Brothers! Before we even heard it! (Needle drops; Flo & Eddie helpfully supply assortment of discoed grunts, groans and exclamations to supplement instrumental track). "The Brecker Bump"—I don't know. This is the same cut you played first. It's more progressive AWB is all it is. More credible to the jazz audience. The Brecker Brothers are great! Would you buy that record? No! It all depends on whether you ever want to feel like this. I never want to feel like this. I hope I never hear the Brecker Bump again, that's for sure. Randy Brecker played a great trumpet part on "You're A Lady" on our second album. We discover all these people. It doesn't mean we'll stick by them throughout their careers, though.

**Excerpts from *At The Sound of The Bell*—Pavlov's Dog (Columbia)**

Freakish sort of group? The Fugs. Because of the vocals?

Michael Quatro. Pavlov's Dog. We're hot! They can't put one over on Flo & Eddie! Let's give it a break. Is that the right speed? Sounds like Russell Mael with helium. Anybody who likes Sparks and helium will like this. Can you listen to this voice? ABC spent half a million, Columbia spent \$2 million and this one better break. Strange that they'd put a dime cover on a \$8 million group. The return of Quasimodo after his "Sidewalk Surfin'" hit. Paul Williams has proven that hunchback rock is a reality. What is this? Get him away from me! I'm sorry, everybody upstairs. But I told you the first day you played this stuff for me, I hated it. But I could be wrong.

**"Crazy On You"—Heart (Mushroom)**

A Ken Barnes pick to click? (spontaneous display of tumultuous apathy). Bud & Travis! P.F. Sloan. Mathews Southern Comfort. Not unlike a Stevie Nicks feel to it. I can picture her twirling her little cape to it. She'll put on her long wig for this one.

(Gratuitous PRM aside: Stevie Nicks was in my high school class!)

So what? Anyway, someone else could do this and have a bigger hit with it, make the choruses more of

a big deal and make it a little spookier. Kiki Dee. It's under-produced. It doesn't sound finished. Three Dog Night could do it. Heart! Sisters—Ann and Nancy Wilson. I'd go on the road with them. The old man's probably... one's the roadie and the other probably owns the label. That was a pretty good song. They could definitely be as big as the Cake. I love to see ladies make it—especially together (degenerates into bout of mock sniggering).

**"The Boys Are Back In Town",  
others from *Jailbreak*—Thin Lizzy (Mercury)**

British group starting to break? Strawberry Studios sound. The new Ian Band. Ian Hunter, Janis Ian, Ian Lloyd...Steely Dan-oriented. Springsteen-oriented. I know who this is. Thin Lizzy. It's unfortunate they might succeed doing Springsteen. This sounds like a hit to me. I like this. Sci-fi rock. Good sound. It's inventive. I'm not thrilled with that guy's voice when he's Springsteening himself into oblivion.

**Excerpts from *The Pousette-Dart Band* (Capitol)**

One of the hottest groups in

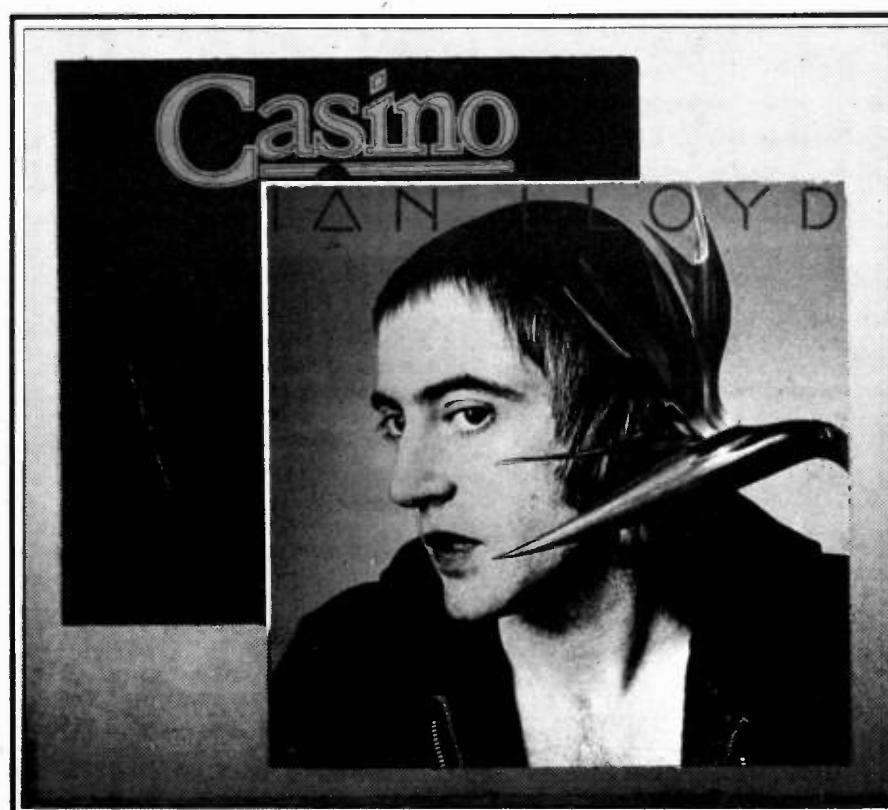
Boston? Aerosmith. Ultimate Spinach! We'll never let Boston forget! Folky! Dave Loggins. The Pooneil Band. Definitely Jesse Colin Young/Kenny Loggins/Dave Gates. J.D. Souther's solo album. The Pousette-Dart Band. Who the hell are they? How would I know that? I can understand his appeal to the Boston audience. He looks like he works on a boat, that's why. It's pretty good stuff. I'm not really thrilled. It's too acoustic.

**Excerpts from *Yankee Reggae*—  
The Shakers (Asylum)**

Berkeley reggae? "Baby Come Back." Equals! This is a white reggae band. Big phenomenon in Berkeley? They're called the White Reggae Band? The Shakers. They're not black and people can dance to the reggae like they've always wanted to do. Tom Dowd could have produced this. Really pop vocals. They are cute, right? I think that's the idea. Is this Bay City Rollers reggae? Not bad. That's cute. It's a marketable phenomenon.

**Excerpts from *Marriott*—Steve Marriott (A&M)**

Former British vocalist's solo album? Lulu? Cliff Richard? Chris Farlowe? Steve Marriott, it sounds like. I think he's getting a little too Afro in his old age. There's no doubt he's got one of the greatest voices ever to grace pop music. But his material is still in trouble, and with the chicks there he's still Humble Pie-ing himself out. If the Small Faces don't reform there's no hope. One of our Blind Date picks came home to become a big hit? Which one? "Shannon!" We knew it. And we like it when people volunteer their records for the Blind Date, like Nektar last month. It was cut out?? Oh well.



## May Meat: Casino & Ian Lloyd For Hard-Core Flo & Eddie Fans Only

**Ian Lloyd [Polydor]**

Former lead singer on a super hit of 1973? Eric Burdon. Hudson Bros. Steve Marriott. No no—oh oh oh! I've got it. Yeah...right...uh...uh...uh...sure...one big hit... "Brother Louie." Stories! Ian Lloyd. All right! It must be terrible to sing good and sound like somebody. People are gonna ask how come he sounds like Rod Stewart? A little Rod and a little Eric Carmen. I like it. When he sounds like Rod singing his gravel, I don't like it. This is great. So far I've liked everything. I think he sounds better than Stories ever did. He doesn't sound like Rod Stewart—You've got to clarify that. Rod Stewart would never make a

record that sounds like this. Now that sounds like Rod Stewart. I want Polydor to send me one.

**"Crazy"—others from—Casino (State/MCA)**

Nouveau British band? Not the Ian Hunter album? Love it! This is terrific! My favorite record of the month! I hate the string machine, though. Good—he got me back. "Mr. Businessman." "Unwind." That's a good cut! It sounds like early Manfred Mann, which I love better than life itself! The guy's got a great voice. Casino? Look for this. I like it better than the Rubettes. It's better than Marriott. Good month!

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# EIGHT OF THE LATEST

1.

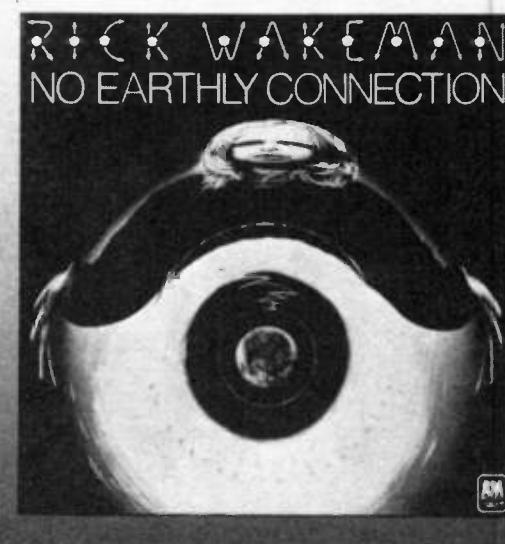


## THE TUBES

### YOUNG AND RICH

"Young And Rich" is the 2nd album from the Tubes, a musically-sophisticated and thematically-original rock & roll band. "Young And Rich" is a startling musical experience. The Tubes sound astonishing. Even up against the sounds with which their new producer, Ken Scott, has been associated (Supertramp, The Beatles white album, and Ziggy Stardust-era Bowie). "Young And Rich" is the technically amazing compounded by the creatively unexpected. Beware. Produced by Ken Scott

2.



## RICK WAKEMAN

### NO EARTHLY CONNECTION

Rick's latest introduces his new band, The English Rock Ensemble. According to Rick: "All the music is based on a futuristic, autobiographical look at music, the part it plays in our pre-earth, human and after life. Accepting that music is incorporated in our souls, it is up to the individual body in which it lives, to nurture and develop this unearthly sense as he is told, in order that upon its return, another life may use it to advance the only true sense in this world of No Earthly Connection." Produced by Rick Wakeman

5.



## HEAD EAST

### GET YOURSELF UP

Head East is five young Midwestern rock & rollers whose individual sound has already emerged and resulted in a Top 20 single, "Never Been Any Reason," from their debut album, "Flat As A Pancake." Their new album, "Get Yourself Up," is 10 new songs of their blazing brand of rock & roll. They've become such a strong regional attraction that other local bands are learning Head East originals to include in their own repertoires. Produced by Roger Boyd

6.



## SHAWN PHILLIPS

### RUMPLESTILTSKIN'S RESOLVE

Shawn's latest album deals lyrically with the subjects of love, hate, death, life, war and peace—all set against a musical framework that encompasses rock, ballad, R&B, and cant forms. This eighth album, however, is probably the most basic Shawn has ever recorded. Devoid of the usual soaring symphonics, multi-overdubbings, and electronics, Shawn's new emphasis utilizes no more than seven musicians and one Phillips vocal track on any one cut, all featuring his incredible vocal range. Produced by Shawn Phillips

# & GREATEST FROM A&M.

3.



## GARY WRIGHT / SPOOKY TOOTH

### THAT WAS ONLY YESTERDAY

In the late '60s, a British band called Art met up with an organ player from New Jersey named Gary Wright and Spooky Tooth was born. Later Gary left and did 2 solo albums, one in '71 and another in '72. This 2-record set includes 6 selections from those solo albums, 8 selections of Spooky Tooth featuring Gary on vocals, and more. Includes material that Wright freaks rate as some of his very best.

Produced by Gary Wright, Jim Miller, Chris Stainton, Chris Blackwell, Andrew Johns, and Spooky Tooth

4.



## JOE COCKER

### STINGRAY

Joe Cocker is the classic rock interpreter whose music brings it all to the surface. Joe Cocker is the penetrating voice that picks up on a song where others leave off. Joe Cocker is the one-of-a-kind phenomenon whose every release becomes a major event. Joe Cocker is out now with a classic, penetrating and phenomenally eventful example of what he's always been about. Joe Cocker is "Stingray." And "Stingray" is Joe Cocker.

Produced by Rob Fraboni

7.



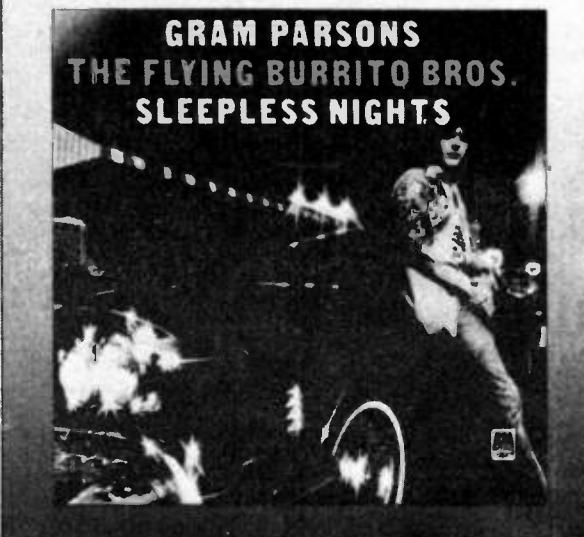
## NAZARETH

### CLOSE ENOUGH FOR ROCK 'N' ROLL

After their smash single "Love Hurts" from their powerful "Hair Of The Dog" album, this hard-rocking quartet from Scotland is back with more of their distinctive music that *Rolling Stone* describes as "bridging the gap between folk and heavy metal." *The Los Angeles Times* calls Nazareth "exceptional" for the way it "hammers songs by writers as diverse as Woody Guthrie, Randy Newman, and Joni Mitchell into a Zeppelin-flavored attack." Truly among the world's most fiery and flamboyant.

Produced by Manny Charlton

8.



## GRAM PARSONS / THE FLYING BURRITO BROS.

### SLEEPLESS NIGHTS

Nine of these 12 tracks were recorded by the "Original" Flying Burrito Brothers in early '70, shortly before Gram Parsons left the group. The remaining 3 tracks were recorded during sessions for Gram's '73 Warner Bros. album, *Grievous Angel*. Reflecting on Gram in her liner notes, Emmylou Harris says "...they came to see this young man and to hear the voice that would break and crack but rise pure and beautiful with sweetness and pain."

Produced by Jim Dickson and Gram Parsons

**ON A&M RECORDS & TAPES**





"The music is restrained, wistful, pretty... In the face of disco, Latin rhythms, jazz-fusion influences, Camel has made an album of dreams and clouds..."

Lita Eliscu,  
**Phonograph Record Magazine**

"A band to reckon with... Andy (Latimer) will be a guitar hero ranking with Clapton, Beck and Page."

John Tobler,  
**New Musical Express (London)**

(On their current British tour debuting *Moon Madness*) "Camel broke through into that indefinable sunlit area where a group becomes a supergroup."

Chris Welch,  
**Melody Maker**



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(Sebastian: Cont. from Pg. 20)



into a senescent bag, a label saturated with folkies and solo singers boasting secure cult followings, and saddled, seemingly accidentally, with a few heavy British bands about which everyone seemed faintly embarrassed. Single hits were seldom, and always registered as flukes.

Then a catalyst in the form of a production deal with Mike Curb, the controversial former MGM president, sparked the changes. Think what you will about Curb, his pop touch is practically unexcelled, and all of a sudden, aided by a revitalized promotion force, he brought the label smash hits by the Four Seasons, the Bellamy Brothers, and even Larry Groce. Inspired, the singles promoters managed to master the difficult art of breaking hits off FM-favored albums, with two solid contenders by Fleetwood Mac and a colossal smash by Gary Wright. The company was red-hot, and they decided to further their new pop credibility by luring ABC staffer Steve Barri, who has a track record of hits a mile long since 1965, to the fold.

Barri kept things fired up. It was he who convinced Warners that releasing "Welcome Back," which had been aired in truncated form since September 1975, was a commercial proposition.

"Welcome Back" is an impossibly infectious tune, and there are as yet no practical methods of immunization. Once it's entered you can't dislodge it from your mind—it's every bit as hopelessly catchy as the most nagging chewing gum or McDonalds jingles. But it also has the classic John Sebastian qualities—verbal economy pinpointing a universal emotional chord, and an underlying warmth, sentimental but wryly so.

"Steve Barri and I share an important thing in common—we make hits," says Sebastian. Indeed, Barri's Grass Roots/Tommy Roe/Hamilton, Joe Frank & Reynolds-wrapped pop expertise has jelled admirably with Sebastian. Nothing on the *Welcome Back* album sounds like Barri's trademarked past efforts—"The horns and production sound Steve

is usually known for aren't emphasized," says Sebastian; "it's closer to being a Spoonful record in feel and mood." But there's an immediate feeling about the tracks that wasn't apparent before, so you're forced to agree with Sebastian's own assessment: "My new album is the best thing I've done in a long time, and it's commercial and it's got hits."

"Hideaway" and "You Go Your Way And I'll Go Mine" (not the Dylan cut) remind me of an easy-going, gentler Chuck Berry, a lot of Lovin' Spoonful and real hit potential. There's even more

Spoonful on "Didn't Want To Have To Do It," "Daydream's" old flip side recut, but this version sounds even better, a beautifully melancholy performance. "I Needed Her Most When I Told Her To Go" has a similar, attractive ballad feel; and "Let This Be Our Time To Get Along", a deliberate, throbbing largely-instrumental track sounds like Sebastian's translation of Pet Sounds.

There's still a discomforting proportion of insignificant filler, stabs at reggae, limp jazz, country sludge, and so forth, but *Welcome Back* has enough strong material

and overall aura of confidence rekindled to please just about anyone. "Welcome Back" has a section that goes, "Was there something that made you come back again/What could ever lead ya/Back here where we need ya." Sebastian's talking about Kotter, but the lines work just as well applied to his own situation. This is going to sound maudlin(hard to avoid when discussing Sebastian), but whatever it was that led him back, it was most welcome.

**research and inspiration: BOB FUKUYAMA**

**20-20 NEWS:** Leon Russell and Mary McCreary have teamed up and it looks like we've got a major new duo on our hands. They're Hall & Oates. "Sara Smile" is a great record, and see them the minute they hit your town...Something different is always welcome on my turntable and that's why 2112 (Mercury) by Rush was just removed. This is a concept album set several decades into the future, and if Rush's prediction of what music is going to sound like then is accurate, I'll kill myself.

The last time they jumped on a trend, we got 'Their Satanic Majesties Request,' and now we have *Black & Blue* (Rolling Stones) in which the "World's Greatest Rock 'n' Roll Band" trades in their title for the honor of being known as "Another Disco Group." There's absolutely no question about it: *Starcastle* (Epic) has mastered the sound that Yes created. There is a question about why on earth they'd want to, since it's just about the worst sound ever created, with the possible exception of the air hammer that's being drilled into the street outside as I write this. But somehow it's making this record sound better, so I won't complain...

**LETTERS, LETTERS, LETTERS:** Pipeline's mailbox has been jammed ever since I returned to this wonderful publication, and it's very gratifying. Your comments, advice, criticism, drugs, etc. are always welcome around here, and you can write me in care of PRM at the address in the front of this issue. A couple of this month's more interesting letters: Bill Thompson of Miami, Florida wants to know when I'm going to say something good about Elton John. The minute he deserves it, Bill... Mary Jackson of St. Louis, Missouri requests that I "go to hell" for saying a few critical things about Johnny Winter in the last issue. I don't have to, Mary, I've already been to St. Louis...Before I go, I want to say that I've once again enjoyed sharing my knowledge, insight, and awareness with each of you, and I hope you appreciate the fact that my analysis of this month's albums may have saved you upwards of \$50 in record purchases. Is 10% too much to ask?...See you next month.

## Pipeline

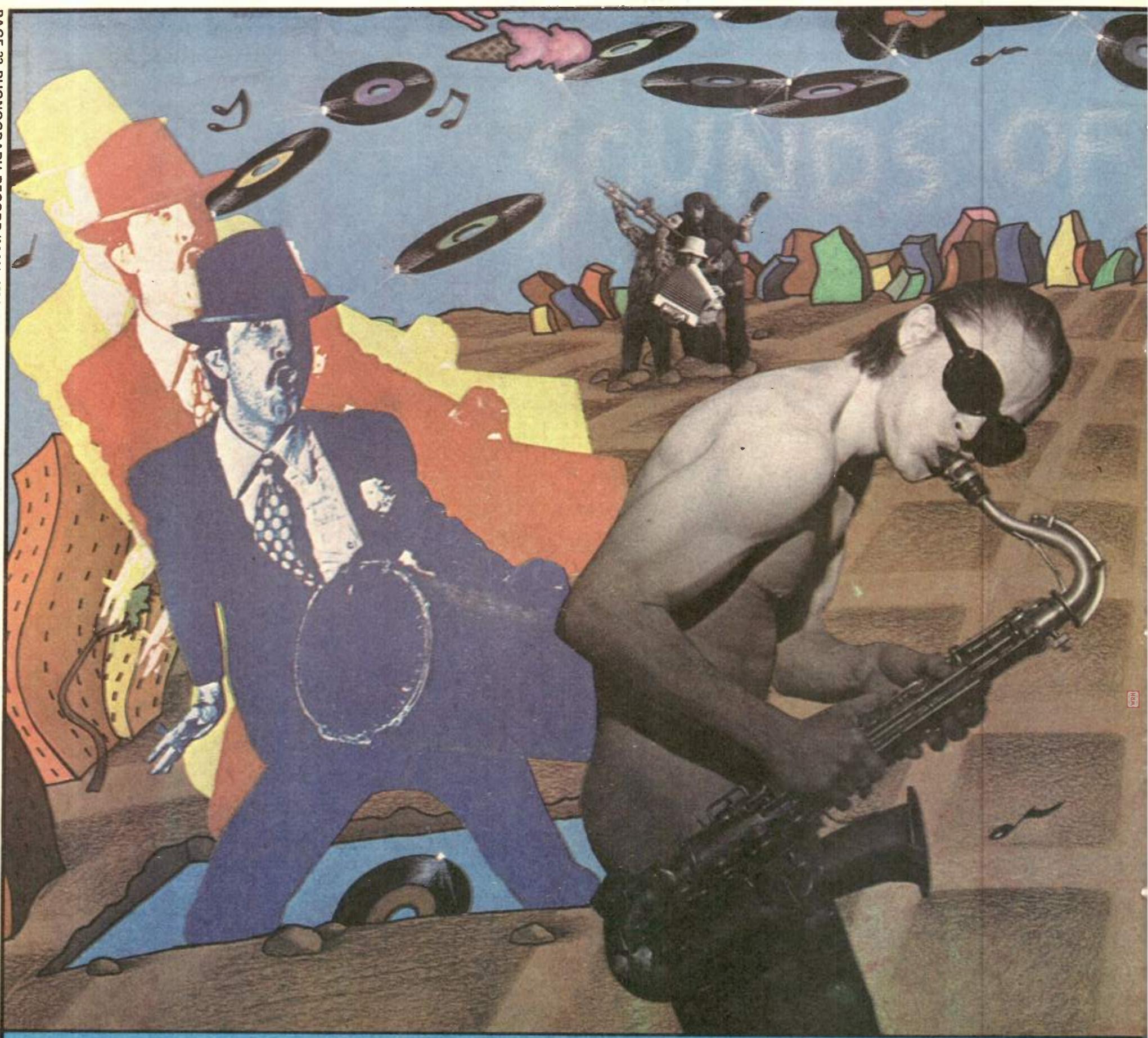
By MARK SHIPPER

Every once in a while, something happens that really makes you *think*, makes you question values that you once took for granted as being correct. It happened to me last week. I was walking down Sunset Boulevard minding my own business when I was recognized by one of my many fans. This one was a UCLA coed with a voluptuous body and perfect teeth. After several minutes of highly flattering comments about my unerring musical taste, my perceptive genius, and my instinctive feel for what makes music 'good' and 'bad' she popped a question that stopped me dead in my tracks. "Don't you think," she wondered, "that in the position of power you have (as arbiter of musical taste for an entire nation) that you also have a responsibility to be a little less caustic, a little more tolerant of records you dislike? Other people's careers literally depend on your opinion of their music. How can you sleep at night knowing that you've probably ended hundreds of careers with your writing?" I began to defend myself, on the grounds that the truth was more important in the long run than any individual's future, but I didn't really believe it. In fact, I was depressed and filled with remorse after she got in her car and drove off. And not only because she wouldn't give me her phone number. I had visions of hundreds of singer-songwriters standing in unemployment lines, their families starving...all because of me. I swore then and there that never again would I crucify an artist in print, never again would I make a cheap joke from an album title. This column may suffer, it may not be as "funny," but that

just isn't important anymore. What's important is the way I feel about myself, and I know it'll be a lot better now that I've made this decision...Well, onto this month's records:

Boy, the new America album is sure a loser, isn't it? They'd better find a *Hideaway* (Warner Bros) before their fans come after them with bayonets. Who do they think they're kidding with this garbage, anyway? I used to like them... **LITTLE KNOWN FACTS:** This is America's seventh album, and the title of every one has begun with the letter "H." Cute, huh? They should have called this one "Hopeless"...Three Dog Night's *American Pastime* (ABC) is no let-down. We weren't expecting anything, and we didn't get it either. This album is so bad, it couldn't have been released, it must have escaped!

Well, the record stores didn't want it, so the Doobie Brothers are *Taking It To The Streets* (WB). Check out that hippie you see standing on the corner with a stack of albums under his arm. He might just be in the band. There's no way to be sure, of course, since nobody knows who these guys are. It should be noted that their fans won't be disappointed with the new album, though. When you're that stoned, nothing disappoints you, not even traffic accidents... There's nothing pretentious about the debut album from *Firefall* (Atlantic). Unfortunately, there's nothing good about it either. The group is made up of former members of the Byrds, Burritos, and Spirit, and if this record is any indication, they'll also be known as former members of *Firefall* in the very near future...



A Report on the Domestic State of the Art

LOCAL SCENES, USA:

POP FROM BOSTON TO BERKELEY



The history of America is the history of its cities. New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, New Orleans, San Francisco...the heritage of a nation so vast as to encompass a range of cultures hardly less diverse than one would find in, say, all of Western Europe.

If civilization is built on the knowledge men share in common, then culture is built on the differences—regional, local, and individual—that contribute to a steady stream of new influences in our lives and our art. In rock & roll, the dominant art form of our time, this process is all the more vital. This music, the music of youth, of experiment, of discovery, owes its continued existence to an ongoing process of renewal that depends on a constant upsurge of inspiration from the roots; those same grass roots that are the traditional backbone of American life.

And now, after years of domination by England and other foreign influences, rock & roll is coming back from the roots. All across

America, local groups are reaffirming their regional culture in their music, as people work to build the kind of local scenes that can prosper, independent of any patronage from the national nabobs of culture.

This is the third year we've attempted this sort of survey. In 1974, we examined the "Club Scenes of America." In 1975, we looked at the influence of local media in various cities. Since that time, several of the then-unknown groups we reported on have gone on to achieve national acceptance [i.e. Aerosmith/Boston, Eric Carmen/Cleveland, Head East/St. Louis, and more]. This year, as the nation prepares for an outburst of local spirit, the catalogue of talent to be discovered in every corner of the land is almost enough to convince anyone that a true revolution is, once again, just about inevitable.

-Greg Shaw  
May, 1976

# THE SOUND OF THE CITIES 1976

NEW YORK  
By Elliott Murphy

New York is a scotch on the rocks in the Oak Bar at the Plaza Hotel at six-thirty on a chilled March evening. You're sitting there hoping that nobody is noticing that you are the only male in the room with long hair and you're trying to make some connection between all that is around you and rock 'n' roll (you know there is one). You're thinking that life became somewhat easier since you started drinking scotch but then it became somewhat more difficult again when you started drinking scotch with a twist of lemon because your waiter always forgets the twist and when you ask for it he says (smartly) "Right Away!" but he's not quite sure how to serve a lone twist of lemon to an already served scotch. But your man at The Plaza has been working in the Oak Bar long enough to truly know his trade and in one swift motion he twirls your twist around the edge of your glass and deposits it in your scotch before you could even check if his nails were clean.

There is a certain level of background conversations in good New York hotel bars that hints of what was won or lost on Wall Street that day and for some reason this particular noise tends to fill you with a sense of belonging to that fraternity of New Yorkers who know in their hearts that it was a sad day for sophistication when their favorite restaurant stopped requiring gentlemen to wear ties. New Yorkers know what beautiful thin ice sophistication is. It really has nothing to do with elitism or snobbery. When you live in a jungle it is very important to hold tightly to the smallest bit of evidence that can prove how long indeed we have left the trees.

New York is the only town I know of that has truly 'crisp' days. It has something to do with the natural speed in the air and the nip in the wind and when you order your next round you know that the waiter will not forget the twist and he doesn't. You are looking at a man about fifty or sixty in a perfectly fitting black pin-striped suit. And you are looking at his slightly receding blue-gray hair and his silver moustache and you are wondering if you too will age as gracefully. For New York is certainly not a city dedicated to youth which I think may be the single most contributing element to that brushfire of anti-New York sentiment which burns steadily in the minds of most Californians. In this city one spends his youth breaking his back so that when the day comes when you have burned all the speed out of your system, you are ready and prepared for the townhouse and limousine life where you will spend the twilight years. In the most expensive city in the country, graceful aging does not come cheap.

And then you notice that the George Sanders vision in the pin-striped suit is joined by the type of girl who jumps out of Vogue

magazine and you can tell by their greeting that theirs is not a spiritual relationship. As you order another round you begin to wonder what happens when they leave the bar and go to his Park Avenue Penthouse. Perhaps he puts *Beggars Banquet* on his ten thousand dollar stereo system and asks her if she would care to join him in a "one 'n' one" of pharmaceutical Merck cocaine that his Swiss business advisor happened to drop off for him. And you know, she will indeed join him.

Out the window, the horse and carriages that line Central Park South are getting harder to see as the night comes closer. The drivers are putting blankets over their horses as they stamp their hooves and breathe hard through their noses. And you only need to raise

into a rich friend at the door who tells the truly professional looking bouncers with bulges under their sharkskin jackets that you are "O.K." because not just anybody is let into this titanic of decadence that hides between the Bowery district where burns keep warm around trash fires and Greenwich Village where aging hippies play chess in coffee houses and talk about the sixties in much the same way that their counterparts talked about the Spanish Civil War thirty five years ago. This Gulliver sized disco is not located in any area that you know the name of. It is surrounded by factories that reek of a depressed economy. You are dumb enough to ask your rich friend if this is all run by the mafia and he says "Of course, who else handles the distasteful with such

the same people twice. I like that too. New York is a good town to hide in. Patty Hearst and Greta Garbo know this. I like the fact that I might bump into Garbo in Bloomingdale's. But this will never happen because as much as I like Garbo I dislike Bloomingdale's. Feeling safe from crime has never been as important to me as feeling safe from boredom. I still haven't gotten a good answer out of anybody in L.A. as to what they do after midnight.

I think New York is more romantic than Paris. The trick is to look up. That way you don't see the garbage, only the Chrysler building. I have been frightened of this city ever since I can remember. It was this kind of fear that created Suburbia, U.S.A. New York intimidates and does not remember Bob Gruen



your eyebrow to get another round.

And somewhere in the corner sits Dorothy Parker and F. Scott Fitzgerald and as they share a toast to each other Dorothy says something about if they can make it through the twilight, they can make it through the night. And they drink to that many times and give each other knowing smiles. And after too many drinks later, Scott stands up and demands silence in the bar repeatedly until he finally gets it. And the Wall Street gossip has stopped and not even the waiters dare move and Scott holds his glass high in the air and in a hoarse whisper says "To Zelda".

But you know that you have stayed too long at the Plaza and you ask for your check right away because in this town it is so important to know when to leave and the cold wind gets that New York speed working again and soon you're in a bright yellow checker cab and you put your feet up on the jump seat, right under the sign that says 'KEEP YOUR FEET OFF SEAT'.

As fast as you can say Velvet Underground you are heading downtown to the newest discotheque that is rumored to have a dance floor the size of a football field. Luckily you happen to bump

discretion!" You're forced to agree.

And the mafia does not exaggerate because the dance floor is indeed the size of a football field and the music is louder than the whole last Rolling Stones tour put together. Your stomach has been turned into a Fender Precision Bass Guitar and to keep from dancing is to ignore a tidal wave. You recognize famous models and photographers and clothing designers and they are all thin and rich and beautiful and laughing a little too hard and as they dance you notice that many of the girls are wearing garter belts and seamed stockings and you decide that if the music stayed loud enough and you just kept dancing that this may be the perfect way to wait for the end of the world.

And New York is ten limousines lined up on lower Broadway in front of what looks to be just another factory with no name on the door.

I have never really felt at home in New York City. I like that. I felt truly 'at home' on suburban Long Island for almost eighteen years. Enough is enough. I am still shocked and excited by the prostitutes that line the 'Minnesota Strip' on Eighth Avenue. When I go out to get a paper I rarely see

one's name easily. I think there are better places to be poor in. But few better to be rich in.

It is a town of rock 'n' roll landmarks from the Brooklyn Fox Theatre where Murray the K and Alan Freed held their historic shows to the Warwick Hotel where four bright eyed Beatles looked out of the windows to screaming crowds of kids below. Although hardly the same now there is a Max's Kansas City where Jim Morrison relieved himself into an empty bottle and then told the waitress she could take the rest of the wine home if she wanted.

There is Fourth Street (Positively). There is the elevator in the Americana Hotel where Brian Jones was stranded with his harmonica during the big blackout. There is Electric Lady Studios where you can feel (on a good night) Jimi's presence in the men's room. And there is a living monument to N.Y. Rock in the four a.m. vision of Lou Reed scribbling madly into his notebook at Ashley's. I could go on and on but myths are better passed on mouth to eager ear than on the dullness of black and white print.

"Somewhere in these Night Lights lies the answer  
And you can get diamonds

by the yard  
And *Tiffany dreams* and  
*Porcelain Dancers*  
And *An Old Black Man*  
playing blues guitar'

© 1976 Tender Night  
Music/Sunbury Music

RCA recording artist Elliot Murphy  
specializes in New York prose-poetry.

NEW YORK  
By Lito Elieen

Talking Heads	Judith Cohen
Ramones	Marilyn Sokol
Shirts	Nick Holmes
Tuff Darts	Cathy Chamberlain
Television	Mercedes Hall
August	Elizabeth Corrigan
Miamis	Linda Glick
Mumps	Holly Woodlawn
Planets	Jane Oliver
Heartbreakers	Brian Cullman
Mink de Ville	Ellen Green
Outer Space	Garland Jeffreys
Wayne County	Wayland Flowers
Blondie	Paula Lockheart
Milk 'n' Cookies	
Day Old Bread	
Mong	
Poppees	
Just Water	

This list is made up of names which may have been seen before, many which have not, and it represents the current New York scene—musically and, of course, ephemerally. At this minute, there is another group playing in a family's basement or a friend's garage. That group is about to set out for the city, to audition, get a gig and become stars. Get a record contract. Be famous. Because that is what making it here is all about. This double-headed list does not represent disco or jazz or soul or R&B, the roots of all American music, of rock and roll, of the people that these acts admire so much. Instead, the music here and now is a distillation and a pose. Musicians here tend to believe in Fame, the kind that is an amalgam of Beatles and Broadway and blather, as alumni Bette Midler, Bruce Springsteen and Patti Smith can all prove.

Almost all of the acts listed here can be found playing various clubs and cafes within any two week period. There is an audience for the music, an audience fiercely protective of its right to make stars happen to create their own day dreams and make others accept them. Although there is little radio or media coverage of any of these groups or of this music, the audience provides support without any other encouragement. Clubs have picked up on this, record companies have noticed, papers are flourishing. Even *The N.Y. Times* and *The Village Voice* make sure to cover the new groups, give them "official" sanction. This audience does influence the record company presidents who now drop in to dingy, dirty clubs as a matter of course.

C.B.G.B.'s, perhaps dingiest of all, is the undisputed top showcase

Circus' Al Globokar & Phil Alexander [left], are still prime Cleveland meat. Boston's Foxpass [right] are looking for a little national action too.



## Boston: A Place for Music with Ethnic Roots & Hard Times

for new acts. That group out there on Long Island, playing in a garage, dreams of playing here, in the smoke and cramped space and dreadful acoustics. Max's Kansas City, recognizing a market, has begun to showcase new talent in earnest, and has just finished an Easter Rock Festival featuring many of the headliner acts of C.B.G.B.'s. Club 82 specializes in the more sensationalized acts: Holly Woodlawn, Cherry Vanilla, each with a personal brand of raunch and sophistication. Uptown, JP's is more relaxed, maintaining its bar as a focal point rather than food, and offers singer-songwriters such as Brian Cullman or Nick Holmes or well-known artists like Chip Taylor. Tramps is a less-established Reno Sweeney's and is looking for its own chanteuses and performers to attract a following and make its cabaret known as a place to hear new talent before. Judith Cohen and Cathy Chamberlain are two of the club's most appreciated finds. Reno Sweeney's itself maintains an audition-night policy, open to the public of course, as does The Other End, but these two clubs, with The Bottom Line, are reserved mainly for major artists and groups.

If there is a New York sound, it will have to be these new groups, the ones who most definitely could not come from any other city. I say that carefully: what makes the sound quintessentially New York is the *pose*, the dream offered. The hottest groups of the moment—any of them could be signed by the time you read this—are Miamis, Tuff Darts, Talking Heads, Television (yes! still not signed!) and Heartbreakers.

The newspapers which have sprung up to cater to this interest tell the story: *Punk*, *New York Rocker*—the titles say it all. The effect on stage is of kids who have heard about "tough" and who have seen James Dean movies and who have grown up in an atmosphere of "cool" and "calculated." There is a movie being made here right now called "The Blank Generation" and, while that is a bit of an overstatement, it is true that this is the first generation to feed off the '50s as source material.

The Ramones, who are still breaking in their live act and therefore still appear both in local clubs and on our list, have actually made it: a manager, Danny Fields;

a record contract with Sire (distributed by ABC Records); and an album, just released. Danny, long associated with discovering The Stooges, The MC-5, Nico, and Loudon Wainwright, and others, shakes his head when asked about the *how* of a group and manager getting together. "There just is no one way. Each group has, and will have, a different story. The Ramones were very cunning—they kept after me. They called me up all the time to come hear them play, and they kept calling Lisa Robinson, and finally, we both saw them and...so on." The words "calculating" and "contrived" appear in various mouths when discussing the Ramones, and all of it admiringly.

The basic scheme seems to be that a group somehow emerges into being, as a group. David Byrne of Talking Heads says, "So why don't we make a band?" and they do. Eventually, a friend gets carried away by the glamour of it all and becomes the manager, having no amps or electronic instruments or musical ability with which to enhance the group. By the time the group is ready to be presented to the city, the manager is also enough. That's how it happened for the group Outer Space, still playing openers at C.B.G.B.'s, but getting ready to go into the studio to make a demo. Ah, demos. Tuff Darts have been approached by Ian Hunter who has expressed interest in producing a demo with them. The Dolls, that most-perfect New York-everything group, are also re-formed and have even put in a recent gig at The Beacon Theatre. The group now consists of indispensable David Johansen and Syl Sylvain, the writing team as it were, plus new musicians. Will The Dolls actually rise?

And so it goes. What has changed does not seem to be so much the names of groups—Television, Mumps, Dolls—or the clubs and cafes where it happens, and certainly not the way in which things happen. What has changed is the seriousness, the purpose. Patti Smith changed this, much more so than Bruce Springsteen or Bette Midler or any of the others. She proved it can happen.

Lita Eliscu is co-editor of Phonograph Record and an author of screenplays.



Boston-Cambridge has for some time been known as a folkie and boogie-bloozie center. With its tradition as an intellectual watering place and the college kids' appetite for music fraught with ethnic roots and hard times (satisfied in the past three years by the reggae boomlet), most of the fans in the two cities on the Charles want their rock with a dash of blues, a double dip of danceable John Lee Hooker-J. Geils-Duke and the Drivers boogie and an absence of "la-la-la" high harmonies and sartorial splendor.

There has been, however, a rock 'n' roll "scene" in the Hub for over a decade, dating back to the heady days when the Remains and the Lost were filling the Rathskeller (fondly known as "the Rat") in Kenmore Square, Boston, and the Barbarians posed the musical question, "Are You a Boy, Or Are You a Girl?"

During the past year or so a new rock 'n' roll milieu has sprung up in Boston and its non-posh suburbs. The musicians roots are in the hard rock-pop of the mid-'60s but, like two splendid local bands from the earlier part of this decade, the Modern Lovers and the Side-winders, they inform their work with a sense of '70s flash and humor. For lack of a better term, I have dubbed groups like Reddy Teddy, Fox Pass, Willie "Loco" Alexander and his Boom-Boom Concert Band, Mickey Clean and the Mezz, Third Rail, the Infliktors, the Atlantics, the Boize, Thundertrain and DMZ, plus Marc Thor and Nola Rezzo, "punk nouveau."

The majority of the *nouveaux* are in their early 20s and hail from working-to-middle-class suburbs like Arlington, Watertown and Somerville. These groups do not genuflect to the black musical heritage, placing a premium on a suburban kid's *weltenschauung*, through self-deprecating lyrics and the aspiring popstar look. "Good playing," says ex-Modern Lover Jerry Harrison, "isn't real important." And, one might add, neither

is on-key singing.

The patron saints seem to be Velvet period Lou Reed (the Velvets, of course, definitively eschewed "good playing."), Jagger-Richard (for style and general cockiness), Peter Townshend (who perfected the power chord) and Natick's Jonathan Richman, whose songs with the Modern Lovers and as a solo artist on Beserkley Records are short stories set to elemental chord changes that celebrate the shared experiences common to the Boston kid's (and Boston adults, for that matter) cosmos.

Richman's oeuvre, like films in Walker Percy's novel *The Moviegoer*, "certifies" said experiences and locales ("Route 128 when it's dark outside) for the listener.

Some of the *nouveaux* have managed to find their way into recording studios to cut singles for cottage industry labels, often operated by the musicians themselves. The most popular of these 45s at this point is Willie Loco's heartfelt panegyric to "Kerouac," backed by the tune that is becoming the movement's anthem, "Mass. Ave." It's on Garage Records.

Also slated to be cut for Garage is "Bad Ass Bruce" (about a pilferer of rock 'n' roll licks) b/w "Lost In The Subways" (concerning Governor Dukakis) by Third Rail, the most theatrical of the *nouveaux*. The elegant foursome Fox Pass just completed their inaugural single, a characteristically depressed number entitled "I Believed In Your Love," b/w "Prized Possession," for Paradise. Their writer, Jon Macey, is most promising.

Reddy Teddy's "Novelty Shoes" and "Goo Goo Eyes," a pair of bright, anti-rockers came out in late 1974 on Flexible. Marc Thor and Nola Rezzo's Indy has the delightfully unruly "Boystown Boys" by the Boize, co-authored by the label's proprietors, with pianist-vocalist Thor's own softer, Kinks-flavored cinematic fantasy, "Holiday Fire," as the flip.

The 45s are sold primarily through the mail and each one, while sounding less than polished, has energy, commitment and, most importantly, a point of view. To its credit, WBCN, Boston's foremost FM rocker, has seen fit to play these records now and again,

but there isn't another station in town, with the possible exception of a college outlet, that will go near their raw sound.

Jelly Records, based above a Woolworth's in Maynard, has issued a pair of commendable singles. "Magic City" b/w "I'm In The Mood," by Radio King and his Court of Rhythm, are *dancers* delights. "Ain't Nobody's Business If I Do," by Barbara Holliday and James Montgomery (she is a jazzy, bawdy performer, he fronts the crowd-pleasing James Montgomery Band, which cut two Capricorn LPs) is a scintillating call-and-response blues. The flip is a Holliday cover of Aretha Franklin's "Baby I Love You." Radio King handles the charts on both sides. Another rousing female singer is Annie McLoone, whose initial album was released by RCA in February.

Roomful of Blues, a seven-piece Kansas City jump band (*a la* Basie and Lunceford) led by the superb guitarist Duke Robillard, has cut a 45 for their own Roomtone Records, "Don't You Want To Roll With Me" (a Robillard original) and a re-make of Sam Theard's "I'll Be Glad When You're Dead" You Rascal You."

With a comparatively small black population, Boston-Cambridge has never been a hotbed of artists making what was once known as "soul" music. There are however, two black popular musicians who stand out: Composer-vocalist Ralph Graham, who fronts a cracking seven-piece band and has just been signed by RCA, and Ellis Hall, a keyboardist-composer-singer who leads an estimable jazz-rock band.

Country-bluegrass-rock has a vociferous following, especially in Cambridge, and the two leading exponents of the styles are John Lincoln Wright (ex-Beacon Street Union singer) and the Sour Mash Boys and Jim Rooney, who once ran the Club 47, and his partners in Crime, who have a sunny bluegrass LP out on Somerville's Rounder.

The efforts of singer-songwriters are no longer viewed as being quite so "significant" as they were during the Golden Age of the Club 47, but some still have enthusiastic claque. Unquestionably the most interesting writer to emerge from Cambridge in years is Joel Zoss, whose rather dreamy, mystical work may be found on his Arista



# THE SOUND OF THE CITIES 1976

## San Francisco: The Most Local Action Since 1967

debut LP. Also blessed with devotees are Jean Pousette-Dart (whose country-tinged LP on Capitol is a good start), Richard Johnson, Peter Johnson (no relation) and the duo of Ocasek and Orr (who have just formed a rock band, Cap'n Swing), plus musical mountebanks Travis-Shook and the Club Wow, Chance Langton and David Misch.

Predictably, there are not enough clubs and halls to present the hundreds of bands and solo artists seeking The Fortune in Boston-Cambridge. Nevertheless, the local listener can take comfort in the knowledge that there is a surfeit of gifted musicians hereabouts.

James Isaacs contributes a weekly column, "Cellars By Starlight," to the Boston Phoenix.



### SAN FRANCISCO

By J. McDonough

A survey of Bay Area people who keep in close touch with the local band scene to ask which acts these people thought most worthy of recording contracts turned up, as might be expected, a wide range of favorites varying with the person's taste and geographical locale.

However, some names appeared quite consistently on a number of lists: Carrie Nation, Stoneground, Eddie Money, Yesterday and Today, Obeah and Little Roger & the Goosebumps.

Let's begin with those recently-signed bands who are the front wave of a new San Francisco renaissance that has drawn more attention to this city than it has enjoyed since the span of time that encompassed the death of Janis, the fragmentation of the Airplane, the dissipation of Sly, the breakup of Creedence and the switch in Santana's musical style.

Those new bands include the Tubes, the art/video/theatre crazies who have just finished their second LP for A&M; Pablo Cruise, the extraordinarily classy quartet who likewise have just put out their second A&M package and who are appearing in concert locally with the Doobies; Les Dudek, the Allman-styled guitar whiz who has just appeared with his first solo effort on Columbia, produced by Boz Scaggs, with whom Dudek has played for three years; Sammy Hagar, the fiery, Daltrey-curbed ex-lead singer of Montrose, whose Capitol effort was produced by John Carter; and the Shakers, now on the racks with an Asylum LP of California-style reggae.

There is also the Don Harrison Band, which is actually some Creedence-connected people behind singer Harrison; Lee Oskar, War's harmonica player whose new solo LP was produced by local drummer Greg Errico; and Mingo, managed by Lou Bramy and Walter Herbert's Spread eagle Productions, who have been signed by Columbia but who have not yet appeared

with product.

Add to this the phenomenal singles and LP success of the Starship during the past year; the ascendancy of the Doobie Brothers to the level where they are second only to the Eagles in the real heavyweight class, American division; the chart activity of the Dead and the continuing proliferation of Dead-related bands—Kingfish foremost among them—on the Round label; the growing national potency of Boz Scaggs with his new LP, *Silk Degrees* climbing higher on the charts than any previous set; the Top 10 single by Elvin Bishop's group; the gold records earned by Graham Central Station; and the continued strength of the careers of a wide host of locally-based stars like Neil Young, Joan Baez, Tower of Power, Herbie Hancock, the Pointers, Montrose, Jesse Colin Young, Steve Miller, Crosby-Nash, Country Joe and others, and you have overall a very sleek and healthy scene here at Baghdad-by-the-Bay.

The people contacted were given a maximum of five slots to fill. Herewith their list, with some annotation of who these people are and what their prejudices might be. Comments on the bands (some of whom this writer has encountered, some not) are appended at their first mention.

Let us begin with Jerry Pompili—who oversees operations at Bill Graham's Winterland—and his list: Eddie Money, Yesterday & Today, Stoneground, Little Roger & the Goosebumps and the Neilson-Pearson Band. Pompili also mentioned that John Cippolina has a new group with a tape circulating although this aggregation, whoever it may be, has not appeared yet in public.

Eddie Money formerly sang lead with a now-defunct local band called the Rockers, and he was then known by his real name, Eddie Mahoney. Money has a leathery, non-stop set of pipes, a tasty little band that he sometimes fronts instrumentally himself on saxophone, and one consuming ambition: as his best known song puts it, "I Wanna Be a Rock & Roll Star."

Yesterday & Today is a basic hard-rock quartet that is so committed to burning up the metal at a sizzling temperature that once they shut down mid-set and went home rather than accede to the request of a bar manager to turn down a few notches—and this in a bar that regularly hosts some of the loudest bands in the area.

Little Roger & the Goosebumps have been getting exposure locally as an integral part of "The Dick Bright Show," a Johnny Carson/Tonight show parody. The Goosebumps serve as the opening act; Bright plays violin in the group; and Little Roger appears as a "guest" on the Tonight show. Led by the witty and smooth Roger, the band shares the psycho-social sarcasm and oddball musical approach of Frank Zappa without being as heavy.

Stoneground, four male instrumentalists fronted by two very hot female singers, Jo Baker and Annie Sampson, is probably the most

consistently favorite club/dance band in the area and has just finished recording an LP for their own Flat Out label with Roy Segal at CBS studios. (There are any number of local acts who have taken to cutting their own records—another indicator of the vitality of the scene—and a distinction should be made here between the one-shot homegrowns like Flat Out and Steve Seskin's Bald Ego Records, and a homegrown like Beserkley, which has a four-artist roster and national distribution now through Playboy. Because of that national distribution I am considering the Beserkley artists—Earth Quake, Greg Kihn, Rubinoos, Jonathan Richman & the Modern Lovers—as having recording contracts, although they are still close enough to the grass roots that they should at least be mentioned in an article such as this. Head of Beserkley is Matthew Kaufman, a rather notorious figure; he is assisted by Steve Levine.)

The list of Joel Selvin, who covers the local rock scene for the San Francisco Chronicle, includes Money, Y&T and Little Roger, plus Ron Nagle and Richi Ray. Pablo Cruise, the Tubes and Sammy Hagar have all recently cut Nagle songs. Nagle does not perform himself. Richi Ray is a genius at 4-track recording and Ray has indeed come up with a most admirable demo of his own tunes on which, John Fogerty-style, he does everything.

George Mangrum who writes for the Hayward Daily Review, plus papers in Fremont, San Jose and Livermore (thus reaching a majority of suburban-bedroom communities in the East Bay) lists Stoneground and Yesterday & Today plus Carrie Nation, Steve Seskin and Bold Truth.

Carrie Nation, who Mangrum says is far and away his first choice, originated in Nevada City, California, north of Sacramento and then spent several years in Atlanta where they picked up additional players. Jim Pettigrew, writing about them from Atlanta in last year's "sounds" survey, described them as "Specializing in a mellow, tasty, yet force-filled mix of Frisco honk and Southern feel." They are now back living in Nevada City and working the Bay Area club circuit studiously.

The Seskin group consists of Seskin on acoustic guitar, a bassist and a female singer. In performance the group does mellow, well-selected material from well-known songwriters, plus solid Seskin originals; the *Greatest Hits* LP they have just put out on their own Bald Ego label has 11 Seskin originals.

Bold Truth, according to Mangrum, is "a young, strong disco band with a big brassy, Tower of Power sound with a lot of funk."

Ken Baker, who runs a local publicity service that deals mostly with music/nightclub clients, names Stoneground, Seskin, Carrie Nation, and Mark Naftalin, with a tossup in the fifth spot between Little Roger and Country Porn. Naftalin, a highly skilled piano player, worked extensively in the

past with people like Mike Bloomfield and Nick Gravenites, before going out on his own to give "blues recitals" at clubs and college halls. Country Porn has decided to try to become famous by becoming infamous: their repertoire included sleazo/country bar-room originals like "Come Stains on My Pillow" and the high point of the performance is a topless dance by Gina Fornelli, who doffs a nun's habit to reveal several of the finest tits to be seen in all the land. They have a contract with the fledgling Penthouse records but nothing is on the streets.

Henry Viveiros, who manages the West Dakota club, formerly New Orleans house, names Seskin; two ethnic-style bands, Salsa de Berkeley (about the only band trying to develop the salsa style on the regular Bay nightclub circuit) and Obeah (a reggae band relocated from the Virgin Islands that is pointed to as the real thing by those who take exception to what they call the "bubblegum reggae" of the Shakers); plus Nite Flight and Lips & Fingers.

There was some fringe input from a few other sources. Michael Oster, who does booking for numerous local acts, singled out Tom Fogerty's group Ruby and David La Flamme's new band (La Flamme was founder/violinist of It's A Beautiful Day) as worthy of serious attention. Local independent promotion man Augie Blume put in a good word for the David Grisman Quintet, who play "acoustic hot string music." Mark Gangl, who works with the Elephant Company in Santa Rosa, called in with some bands popular up in Sonoma County: Obeah, 27 Dollar Snap-On Face, Dennis 'n' Hayes, Starfire Express and Bristlecone.

In closing it might be acknowledged (another indicator of the vitality of the scene here) that there are probably over 300 bands working the Bay Area. Someone is sure to be offended at having been ignored.

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support/perpetuate the healthy habits.

But it hasn't happened and certain staunch residents of the beautiful foothill mecca have been forced to check out other locals to survive. Poco's career would have probably fragmented altogether if the remaining foursome (sans Richie Furay, who stayed at home) hadn't sought L.A.-central to keep them in touch with the industry. Tommy Bolin was Boulder's premier rock guitarist for years but it's highly unlikely he would have spontaneously auditioned for Deep Purple on downtown Pearl Street. He and his bassist/best friend Stanley Sheldon finally packed their bags and moved to L.A. When Bolin latched on with Purple, Sheldon, the most respected bass player in Boulder for a long time, was signed up by Peter Frampton.

Other Colorado sagas follow the same scenario. Joe Walsh had to embrace L.A. to stay in touch with the pulse, after trying to regroup his sensibilities in Boulder following his James Gang days. Accordingly his bassist, Kenny Passerelli (a Denver native) soon linked up with Elton John.

Flash Cadillac long ruled the Boulder roost, but didn't find a good record deal until relocating off Wilshire Blvd. They have since made enough dough and gotten sick enough of the pace (or their act?) to consider moving back to Colorado.

And so it goes. Had Boulder been able to support these pickers with a cohesive club scene, some recording studios as competent (but not as elitist) as Caribou Ranch, music industry attention might have been drawn here as opposed to the forced migration of Boulder musicians to the west coast.

There are holdovers, of course, ranging from veterans making comebacks to newcomers establishing themselves. The vets are led by country-rock innovators Richie Furay and Chris Hillman (both Boulder residents) slowly working out the logistics of their solo debuts. Expect albums from both of them real soon. Along similar lines, Dan Fogelberg makes Boulder his home and although he's just completed a successful tour, his rapidly rising career has suffered a lull since he relocated in reclusive modesty in the mountains. Poco's drummer George Grantham recently moved back to Boulder but reports that the others will not. Guitarist Robben Ford just quit the L.A. Express to move to Boulder so that he could concentrate on writing his own material.

Of the newcomers carving out local reputations, most stick to either progressive country or country-rock. Waylon Jennings and Dan Fogelberg are gods to Boulder players and their audiences. The major name to watch for along the Jennings genre is Dan McCrory, who used to sing lead for the one-time hottest band in town, Dusty Drapes and the Dusters (the Dusters have never been the same since Danny decided to go solo). McCrory has a rich baritone and writes beautiful songs, some of

### COLORADO

By Ken Weissberg

The hottest thing musically in Colorado are the Denver Nuggets... and even they are currently trailing the Kentucky Colonels in the ABA semi-finals. As much as I'd like to be a Colorado chauvinist and use this column for blatant p.r., the truth is that the Rocky Mountain musical momentum has fallen off considerably in the past few years, although there have been recent signs of a reawakening.

As recently as 1972, there was a consensus opinion that Boulder was becoming analogous with Macon, Nashville, Austin and the rest... a medium sized city with positive musical energies, lots of talented people and bankwads to

# AN ILLUSTRATED GUIDE TO TEXAS ROCK

By Peter Green



which may show up on Waylon's new album.

McCorison's problem since going his own way has been finding a decent band to back him. So McCorison plays the local circuit with various sidemen and may be forced to leave to find suitable accompaniment for his amazing tunes and style. "I hope not. I love it here, but my patience is wearing thin." At any rate, remember the name Danny McCorison.

The best of the second generation Byrds-type bands calls itself Woody and the Peckers (ugh!), named after lead singer/songwriter Michael Woody. They make their way around the state playing bars and aspire not to L.A., but to Texas. "We're the kind of band that can stimulate a bar," Woody said, "but we've also opened concerts and stolen the show. We'll never turn our backs on bars...that's our birthright...but we'd like to do more concerts."

Tim Goodman, who doubles on organ and guitar, freelances, playing blues one night, rock the next and folk on Sundays. He recently financed his own 45 which he plans on using as his calling card with the record companies as opposed to a demo tape. The 45 ("Singin's Just the Same" b/w "Nebula Farm") is a great two-sided disc and, aside from generating certain interest on the corporate level, is picking up an abnormally large amount of local airplay for an independently produced item.

I've been dwelling on Boulder thus far, even though the heading for this feature for the past two years has read DENVER. The fact of the matter is that aside from having a self-contained folk scene, Denver is about as charismatic a musical entity as Iowa City. Radio is the worst (except a daytimer

called KFML), recording studios have dropped like flies (Applewood Studios in nearby Golden may pick up the slack) and the only major club, Ebbets Field, imports talent almost exclusively.

The only decent noise to emanate from Denver recently has been a lady named Katy Moffat, who is managed by Ebbets Field owner Chuck Morris. She has recently joined Billy Sherrill's stable in Nashville and is currently having her fate decided for her (country, pop or crossover?). Her first Epic album should be out by the time you read this.

Aspen is the only other viable musical center in the state. It's not all John Denver, I'm happy to report, but it's still laid back to the point of extinction. Denver has been quite supportive of certain locals and his Windsong label has just released a good album by a group called Starwood.

The Nitty Gritty Dirt Band live in Aspen and Golden, while ex-Floridian Jimmy Buffet recently settled in Aspen. Down the road a bit is Evergreen, home of Michael Murphy.

So the hub of Colorado reverts back to Boulder where, as mentioned, there is a resurgence going on. The two best local groups, Gerard and Firefall, have just released debut 45s and the response has been staggering.

Gerard is a Jimmy "Caribou" Guercio discovery. Promoter Barry Fey took Guercio to a Tommy Bolin concert which Gerard was opening. Guercio was floored by the ten-piece band that resembled his own protégés, Chicago. Gerard is centered around the material of 24-year old Gerard McMahon, a native of England who has lived in Boulder since he was 14.

Firefall contains lots of familiar

names (Rick Roberts, Mark Andes, Jock Bartley, Michael Clarke and two great newcomers in Larry Burnett and David Muse) and the combination works musically as well as in making a strong name-dropping presentation. The first album consists of five songs apiece from Roberts and Burnett and although the group risks obvious comparisons with the Eagles, Fogelberg, Poco and the like, they should hold their own.

The release of these albums coupled with the establishment of a new half-million dollar recording facility to be opened in May (Northstar Studios) has generated enthusiasm once again in Boulder and hopefully will make this city of 80,000 the major musical center it has always threatened to become.

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countrified Austin Sound up the Interstate into Big D and with it came a revival of local bands and clubs in the area.

Now any wizened two-bit picker can tell you that, sure, Austin may be the artistic seedling of New Country music in America, but the money tree's in Dallas. Certainly, those record company branch offices and studios they're wishing for down at the state capitol are already here in Dallas. Head honcho Willie Nelson has made his last two albums at Phil York's Autumn Sound and it was Michael Rabon's Knifewing Studio where Johnny Taylor cut the vocal tracks to his monster, "Disco Lady".

As of this spring the Cosmic Cowboy fever has subsided, but it still dominates all other forms of pop to the extent most musicians, customers, and clubs carry a dressed-up image of a waylaid hipster misdirected to Fort Worth. The local media has done a lot to encourage the phenomenon. Willie Nelson, Jerry Jeff Walker and other headliners have moved from the dancehalls to bigger halls like the 10,000 seat Memorial Auditorium, SMU's Moody Coliseum, Fort Worth's 24,000 capacity Tarrant County Convention Center, or the increasingly popular outdoor festivals to accomodate the new converts. But the scene essentially revolves around smaller clubs under 1,000 seats such as Fannie Ann's, Whiskey River, Faces, and Mother Blues where getting drunk and making noise are quite decorous.

Country rock's overnight success has brought out an odd assortment of ex—and would be—cowboys. Former stripper Bubbles Cash fronts not only a sizeable chest but her own band, the Bucks; Kenny Daniels, a '60s survivor from the explosive Kenny and the Kasuals

("Journey to Time"), opts for the mellow side of laid back country with the New Summerfield Band; then there's a fella named Wendall Atkins whose claim to fame consists of looking and sounding just like Waylon Jennings; nor can we forget Groovey Joe Poovey who kept the twang but neither his nervous madness or name from his '50s rockabilly career in his new role as Johnny Dallas. Still, it's Austin and Houston bands like Alvin Crow and St. Elmo's Fire who do the smaller club headlining. A solid second line of Dallas buckaroos to fall behind first wavers B.W. Stevenson, Willis Alan Ramsey, Mike Murphy, and Ray Wylie Hubbard has yet to materialize, the most popular exceptions being the Side of the Road Gang, under contract to Capitol and Calico, winner of the Best New Band category in *Buddy* magazine, whose first album for UA was a disappointment.

Z.Z. Top's mentor, Bill Ham of Houston, is busy with his latest project, breaking Point Blank, originally a Dallas band. A look and listen reveal the nature of Ham's contributions to the Top, for just like ZZ, Point Blank are on the move at all times on stage; their vocalist, a bearded character in pork pie hat and blue jeans named Big John, is particularly adept at shaking his face inches away from his fellow musicians when he's not howling out a tough piece of crotch rock.

The 5th largest radio market in the U.S. offers two distinct channels for local exposure—hard rocker KZEW's weekly Homegrown Concert series and live band broadcasts on KCHU, the new listener supported station that also regularly programs reggae, oldies, and the first Rhythm 'n' Blues show in

TEXAS  
By Joe Nick Patoski

Dallas' rock alumni roster has run the gauntlet from Steve Miller to the one time Six Year Old James Brown, Little Gary Ferguson. But ever since the late '60s string of Abnak hits—Jon and Robin, Scotty McKay, and the Five Americans—Dallas city music has been in a molting state. Until last year, that is. 1975 marked the spread of the

# THE SOUND OF THE CITIES 1976

## Cleveland: Things are Slow in the New Liverpool This Year

the market since Jim Lowe's Cats Caravan.

Fort Worth has always been Dallas' poor sister, formerly as a crude rough and tumble Cowtown, more recently as an overgrown suburb. Typically, most young bands either cover the Top Forty or mimic the overkill tactics of Bloodrock or Nitzinger, the only recent 'stars' to break out of FW. The best of these is one that bravely calls themselves Texas, led by Gary Oshier, an engaging singer, and Mace Maben. In the pre-Clive days, Texas had an album out on Bell and traveled the L.A. circuit, but since then, they've been back home trying to build up the excitement again.

Delbert McClinton (Bruce Channel's harp player on "Hey Baby") and his former partner Glen Clark, offer a raw combination of old line country-western with shuffling rhythm 'n' blues that makes their Dallas neighbors come off downright pedestrian. Clark and McClinton released a couple of albums (now cut-out) on the Clean label in the early '70s that were pre-progressive country statements on how to play real country rock without wimping too much about the ecology. Both stiffed. McClinton since formed his own band, the Polecats, signed with ABC and is working on his second album.

Best of the cerebral jazz bands is Balcones Fault, a daffy eight man band with a penchant for the eccentric. In the course of a set they switch from LaVerne Baker soul to Fats Waller jazz to South American cumbias to Middle Eastern bellydance music (with a real live bellydancer!) without missing a note or breaking wind. Closer to the basics of life is Zorro and the Blue Football, hailing originally from Arkansas and current heir to the Southern throne of musical lewdness once held by the Hot Nuts. Zorro's X-rated show climaxes with the waving of an alleged 40-inch walrus dong about the stage.

*Joe Nick Patoski is a contributing editor of Texas Monthly.*

**CLEVELAND**  
By A. Patoski

Things are so slow here in the new Liverpool, that people are starting to forget (at last!) that this burg was ever being so touted. A lot is going on in Cleveland, but most of it relates to out of town talent (E.G. national touring acts). Cleveland, for all its musical pluses (a topnotch progressive radio station, WMMS-FM), a major resident concert promoter, an array of rock 'n' roll bars and a distinct allergy to disco) has several important minuses, and most of them affect the growth of local talent.

Cleveland hasn't sent many artists into the big, bad world, considering the hype the area has received. The

Outsiders in '66, the James Gang in '69 and the Raspberries in '72 have been the only chart acts with staying power. Damnation made 4 albums in 69-72; Glass Harp had 3 in '71-2. Other acts have been one hit or one album "wonders."

Currently, only the Michael Stanley Band and Eric Carmen are out fending for themselves on a national level. Before them, the last acts signed were Rainbow Canyon and Left End in 1974, both of whom floundered on one album.

The very health of the music scene here has in some ways been its Waterloo. With local acceptance of so many new, breaking acts from elsewhere (Dr. Feelgood, Artful Dodger, the Tubes, Sweet before they actually played, are some recent examples), people get a constant injection of excitement. They don't need to look at local talent, which seems duller in comparison.

There's no actual LACK of support for area talent. WMMS has always been willing to play output of local acts, provided they offer something that at least pretends to be creative. Print media—the weekly SCENE and both dailies—cover local acts occasionally. The city's big dance club, the Agora, puts local acts on its Monday night concert bills.

Talent is split in two camps. One is the professionals, the most motivated people who work at music on a day-to-day basis. They play the city's many bars, covering a hideously predictable songlist which currently runs to Aerosmith, Bad Company and Lynyrd Skynyrd. These bands tend to put creative endeavors in the "some day" category while hustling to survive.

Then there are the basement bands, who may or may not be creative, but can't compete with the pros in presentation of their music. Not earning a living at music while others in town do, they often give their music less respect than it deserves.

Cleveland's main problem has always been that generally speaking, there are very few people with the ability to advise and guide a band in music, staging and business affairs. Bands learn totally by trial and error; local management is a joke. Local agencies can be downright evil, viewing bands as mass produced units to grind out whatever songs are on the jukeboxes this month.

Few bands are able, in this context, to function as working performers and still put out original music. Three bands in the area currently stand out in this respect.

Windfall, reviewed in the November issue of PRM, has, since that article appeared, applied itself seriously to songwriting and turned out a basketful of excellent, commercial material.

Windfall has been a model for Cleveland bands in coping with the welter of problems bands face. Instead of just kvetching, they kvetch and take action. Agencies are a problem, so Windfall formed its own agency. Though still fighting to loosen the stranglehold established agents have on some clubs, this agency encourages bands by looking at them on an individual basis rather than as potential jukeboxes.

Two other bands qualify as both polished performers and creative musicians. One is Jasper, a neo-Beatles band; the other is a funky, bluesy 7-piece unit called Freewheelin'. Jasper comes closer than any band

in town to fitting the image of the archetypal "Cleveland band" held by out-of-town Clevelandophiles. The band cut its teeth on Beatles, Beachboys, Hollies, Who, Faces, Stones and Raspberries material, and didn't learn "Tush."

Together for about three years, Jasper has overcome its too-light sound and developed a punchier one that can kick such music across in the 70s. Recently, they have knocked a bunch of their own tunes into shape, after shilly-shallying around for a long time with an occasional original. Their songs have an airy, soaring pop quality that harks back to the Beatles and the Beach Boys. Clever changes, strong melodies and good vocals are the band's outstanding points.

Often amusing is the band's adulation of the Raspberries. One of their tunes has strong echoes of "Overnight Sensation," (and it's called "Hit Record Man.") These guys never neglect to drag the names of ex-Raspberries into conversations. They even cover Eric Carmen's "That's Rock and Roll." Never let it be said we Clevelanders forget our roots!

Freewheelin' have been together a little more than a year, but most of the members have been around a long time in various other bands, in contrast to Jasper, all in their early 20s and in their first major band.

Originally, Freewheelin' leaned heavily towards bluesy material, Elvin Bishop and Gregg Allman tunes and blues classics like "Diving Duck." The band has become funkier and flashier, with stronger jazz and r & b influences. It now covers AWB, Brian Auger and the Cate Brothers, whom it sometimes resembles. But the closest it comes to standard bar repertoire is Springsteen—no Aerosmith spoken here!

Even so (agents, tear your hair), the band crams the Agora's downstairs bar, the Mistake, to the point of acute discomfort every Saturday, and the dance floor is always crowded. Freewheelin' has also begun to work seriously on its own material since the beginning of the year, now that its stage presentation is as tight as one could reasonably require. Its stuff is rhythmic and funky.

Several young bands are promising, but too young to be front runners. Most advanced is Rapscallion who, devote most of their energy to producing their own tunes, though they also play as a bar band. They don't devote enough energy to their playing and are often sloppy. They can be terrific! Some of their tunes are maddeningly catchy and all are in the approved Cleveland neo-Merseybeat style. The guys are adorable and they have photos of the Beatles all over the studio in their band house. Cleveland collectors, take note.

Two of last year's brightest hopes are in the process of radical revamping, but they show enough tenacity to make me stick my neck out to predict their ultimate triumph over their traumas.

Peter Panic is a rowdy, late 60s Faces/Stones style band who were brutally raided by ex-Raspberry Wally Bryson in his current helter-skelter attempt to throw together a band by importing musicians to L.A. from Cleveland. The band's remaining members, Randy Klawon & Todd Weaver, are diligently trying to reassemble and carry on, now that bassist Dan Klawson and singer/guitarist David Thomas have become the latest Bryson recruits. Peter

Panic's great rocking tunes had generated record label interest prior to the band's depletion.

Circus were the honeys of the Cleveland bars—they always had the cutest musicians. The band went underground last November in a dramatic attempt to avoid little girls begging to hear "Rebel Rebel" yet again.

Singer Phil Alexander, bassist Norman Isaac and guitarist Al Globokar and Mick Sabol retired to the company of their TEACS in their basements, planning to re-emerge as a concert act some time in the future. They haven't taken any steps in that direction, but if they do, they'll be good. The last Circus line-up (it had several) was a seamless unit, and Phil Alexander is the best performer/front man this area has seen in years, as well as one of the best singers. Hibernation is an unrealistic route for a band that's never performed and thinks it'll manufacture a stage show out of thin air when the recording contract drops from heaven. For Circus, who've proved themselves to be consummate stage artists, it's a practical step to encourage a flow of fresh ideas.

A few last minute, hopefully, success stories. 1. The posthumous signing to Buddha of jazzy rock band from Warren, I Don't Care, who will reform if the label shows any signs of support. 2. Warren's LAW now signed with Daltrey's Goldhawk records after a one album fling with GRC and about to depart for England to open a Who tour.

Cleveland's problem is not lack of support or opportunities, commensurate to what's available elsewhere. Rather, because so many possibilities exist here, musicians EXPECT success too soon and quit too quickly when it doesn't come.

*Anastasia Pantosios is a contributing music critic of the Cleveland Plain-Dealer and Exit.*



For the first time in several years, or perhaps in memory, Kansas City has a vibrant, exciting local music scene.

It may have evolved as a direct consequence of the failure of progressive radio to persevere. It might also be the result of a boom which is forging Kansas City rapidly forward. But, whatever the reason, music here is in the best shape ever. There is almost always a busy concert schedule, and within the last year or so, three new concert outlets have opened, bringing the total to six indoor and three outdoor. Kemper Arena, home of this summer's Republican convention, isn't exactly cozy enough for local talent, but two refurbished theatres, The Capri (Home of the Lyric Opera, capacity 1500) and The Uptown (capacity 2500, with full liquor license) promise to figure prominently not only in the attraction of national and international acts, but also as a showcase and springboard for aspiring local acts.

Kansas City audiences are unpredictable, but impressionable and eager to embrace other areas' acts as their own. The Dirt Band, Ted Nugent, Head East, Starcastle, Jimmie Spheeris, and GranMax, another trio being carefully and methodically groomed for success, have both evolved to the stage where serious approaches to major record companies can be made. Both Morningstar and GranMax are of the "high-energy" classification, with

and every band originating from any point south of here are always enormously popular. Z.Z. Top outdrew every band except the Rolling Stones in the last year, and even BTO outdrew the Who.

The club scene which two years ago was virtually non-existent has fallen head-over-heels to catch up with itself, and is in part a corollary of the astronomical proliferation of discos. There are two distinct types of clubs in the area: Missouri clubs serving liquor; and Kansas clubs, which can serve only 3.2 beer. In the search for identity and superiority, many discos have tried gimmick after gimmick, and among the more successful attempts were live acts, mostly drawn from the endless ranks of struggling local bands.

Summertime traditionally finds concerts in the parks which give lots of locals wide exposure. There are concerts in three types of parks: ball parks, city parks, and amusement parks, and it's the latter two which serve as local forums. The monthly Carney-Rocks are all-day affairs which offer local acts opportunities to warm up crowds who gather to enjoy the amusement rides and see bands like Santana perform after dark.

Indoor, outdoor, drinking, non-drinking, dances, concerts, one-nighters, or six month engagements—they're all widely available to local bands. But, for a local band whose ambitions include fame and fortune throughout the country and/or world, there is an abundance of honest, hard-working managers and promoters who recognize that their best interests are the bands' best interest, but the paths are not so clear-cut. Except for Brewer and Shipley, who adopted Kansas City as their home several years ago; The Ozark Mountain Daredevils, who come from Springfield but got their first big boost towards fame here; and Danny Cox, who is now living in Mexico, no other local acts would be household words anywhere else. Significantly, all three of these acts share the same management, Stan Plessner's Good Karma.

Since there aren't many local artists who have been recorded, local FM stations don't help much, but the occasional record does get fairly frequent exposure. Amdahl Wolfe recorded a single last fall which was played on both stations, and the established acts, especially the Daredevils, get played.

Surprisingly, despite the rapid growth of a local musical environment, it exists almost without recognition in the print media. *Greenhouse*, the area's only cultural magazine, tries desperately to cover all the arts, so the space given to local music and musicians is limited, but it is considerably more supportive than the Kansas City Star, which limits its coverage of the local music scene to an occasional concert review, often incomplete or incorrect.

There are presently three or four genuinely local bands with national potential and aspirations. Amdahl Wolfe, a trio expandable to five pieces for concerts, suffer from a lack of original material. Shooting Stars recently signed with Arista. Morningstar, a long-standing local attraction, and GranMax, another trio being carefully and methodically groomed for success, have both evolved to the stage where serious approaches to major record companies can be made. Both Morningstar and GranMax are of the "high-energy" classification, with

# A Visual Explanation of the LA Rock Phenomenon

Illustration by Tim Clark.

Morningstar incorporating dual lead guitars, and GranMax concentrating on electronic effects.

The three members of GranMax and their manager, Chris Fritz, have developed an intelligent, mature attitude about their future. Rather than rushing ahead with recording contracts they plan to take their time and really polish up their music and their live act (already tightly programmed with different special effects for every song). A fascinating thing about GranMax is that they and their resident electronic gurus build most of their equipment themselves. In a town given almost entirely to loud boogie music, it's not surprising that GranMax have chosen a style of metal music somewhat reminiscent of many other bands. But, with time, and work, they hope to carve a niche for a distinctive GranMax sound in a seemingly-glutted market that always has room for more.

Kansas City is definitely a city on the move, and another couple of years of continued growth should solidify its position as a national music community.

*Rick Chafin produces an import show on KY-102 and is a contributing editor of Her Majesty's Request.*



Los Angeles - Local talent is never taken seriously in England; a yesteryear example is the phenomena of Love being worshiped in London and Savoy Brown being venerated in steamy West Hollywood.

In 1976, the Runaways are more talked about in New York city than in LA's Rainbow parking lot. And New York's Television is the big deal at Record Paradise on Hollywood Blvd.

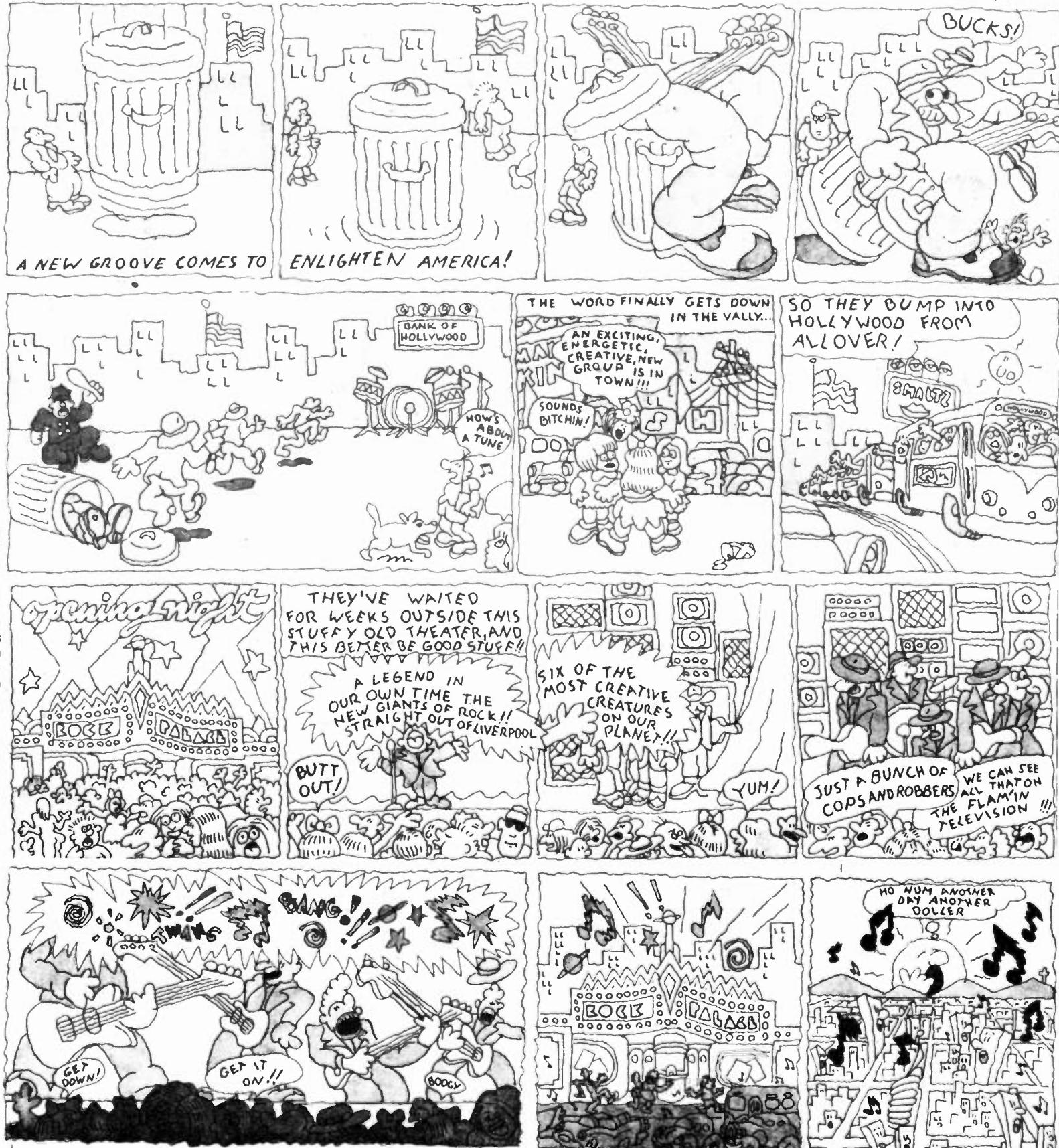
So what?! What's the big news from the Coast this year? The big news is that disco, MOR, and industry created acts are out and young underdog rock is in. But there is no circuit for these underdogs to develop their limited potential, because as industry wags will tell you over and over, "in a fragmented marketplace, only the strong survive." In 1976, the strong are the crossover artists."

Rock by its very structure is not capable of crossing over the quaalude earwaves into any other subculture. Nor should it. Imagine our parents gasping over the latest Kiss single at a suburban cocktail party. Does my 26 year old sister really care that Slade have 8 LP's in release? There's nothing more important to her peer group than the weekly antics of Mary Hartman.

Gary Speranza, of the hard-hitting rag *Shakin St. Gazette*, has said to me more than once that teenagers do not care about anthems, statements, or solutions in their music. Speranza has also mentioned that if the vast unwashed have rejected Sweet, Quatro, T Rex, and Mud then why bother.

My Kim Fowley argument is Kiss, Aerosmith and the Linda Blair movies for TV. LA; overrated, backdated, stinks with bisexual overkill. The Eagles may be locally based, but couldn't create a riot here. Greg Allman couldn't get laid at the Rainbow last summer. His biggoly pose wasn't fey enough for those weekend warriors from Taft High school.

What the bottom line seems to be is NON MAGICAL RECORD



EXEC'S ARE REFORMING SPLINTER GROUPS OR PLAYING IT SAFE AND UNSOUND.

Most men of authority don't like rock and roll, hard rock, cock rock or any rock. They don't live the rock life-style, have no style and don't smile. The exceptions to these pathetic figures are a handful of brave record guys who get out on the street and wade through the bull grease with the rest of us rock and roll explorers. These lucky souls from a street visibility point of view turn out to be Clive Davis, Pat Scoliano, and Roger Watson.

Ray Stayer of the Starwood is the only patron of rock in Hollywood. He has played the following unsung groups with these truthful comments: *Quiet Riot* - "Too loud to tell"; *Drivin Wheel* - "Needs development"; *Giants* - "Unfair to comment, first time on stage";

*Pyramid* - "Definite improvement"; *Christopher Milk* - "Material dated; at times entertaining"; *Killer Kane* - "Too much emphasis on bizarre theatrics"; *Stars* - "Definite improvements over the Hollywood Stars"; *New Order* - "Lacking direction, loud rock and roll."

Who knows these bands' brief histories? Or the extent of their management if any? There is no acceptance from the radio level as there is no product. There are no interesting experiences and anecdotes from these acts as there is no substance inherent in their composition.

Local promoters and concert halls play national acts only. They are in business and what we are attempting to discuss is fun.

Local print tries but cries too much about the past. Ben Edmonds plugged deserving local

groups at Record World, but landed a gig at Capitol for his insight. Who will fill in the gap from LA on a national trade magazine level now that he is gone?

Groups like Hero, Silver Spoon, Eulogy and ROZ, talk a good game but none of us have ever seen or heard them live. Oh well, we've never been to a Nilsson concert either.

Dan Tackenhoff at Golden West ballroom in Norwalk has the grandest spot in Southern Calif. outside of Hollywood. His comments:

*Sorcery* - "Most exciting theatrics", *High Wire* - "Most promising", *Van Halen* - "Most popular good drawing power."

LA audiences like everything. LA audiences won't buy it or try it unless it is on the radio. Good luck.

My predictions for the kings and

queens of LA rock in 1976 are the only two groups who have a gold record shot on a national level.

*The Quick* - Five 19 year old boys who boast a Syd Barrett-Peter Townshend style writer fronted by a pre-Disco Bowie in miniature, backed by a Roxy Music styled bunch of music commandos. The Quick are just now entering the Starwood arena and in their first gig are topping the bill over national chart entrants Crack the Sky. The Quick have played such diverse venues as Avery Schreiber's party for Jane Fonda, Marywood Catholic High, a torrid girls school in Tustin, Calif. and Paul McGregors Hair Salon for James and the shampoo set, overground.

Called "elegant punks" by their admirers, they play a brand of "Nordic Rock" which appeals mostly to young girls and foreign



# THE SOUND OF THE CITIES 1976

## Detroit: Reflecting the National Mood of Boredom

import freaks.

The Runaways - Praised by everyone from Robert Plant to Rodney Bingenheimer, their first album is released this month on Mercury records. The street is waiting to see if anyone cares in Hershey, PA., and Port Arthur Tx. about West Coast rock life from the overview of five girls who are breaking out from the "invisible ghetto of tract homes in the lonely zone."

The key in understanding why the Runaways and their brother band The Quick are "the white hopes" is their ages. THE RUNAWAYS ARE 16-17 YEARS OF AGE. THE QUICK ARE ALL 19.

As Bob Dylan said in 1929. "He who is first will later be last. The times they are a-changin'".

*Kim Fowley is the legendary producer-songwriter-talent scout who is also the guru of the Hollywood In-Crowd.*



Music City scuttlebutt says you must live here two years before the town's record moguls believe you're serious. Such an attitude makes the term "new" talent a crude joke—the people we'll discuss have paid all the requisite resident dues; though somewhat seasoned they have ability and audience to interest major labels.

Nashville is topheavy with guitarists and writer-performers. The dearth of venues prevents most bands from surviving; the good ones back up successful acts on the road, become studio pickers, or work the town's numerous tourist traps.

Our status as a music capitol continues to lure thousands. They venture to 16th Avenue South from all angles and musical directions. The gifted and determined artists succeed eventually; the ones who don't, go back to Kanakee or drive tour buses, fry franchised food, sell shoes, or scuffle for lesser jobs.

The discovery of talent here is an ongoing process. Guy Clark, Mac Gayden, John Hiatt, Chris Gantry, and Linda Hargrove released major label albums in 1975. (You'll notice all five are writer-performers.) The town likes to claim Charlie Daniels, who hangs his habits in nearby Mt. Juliet, and was a studio favorite for many years.

Enough old memories. Let us now proceed to newer performers with no label affiliation. They represent the forefront of what many believe will be a entire New Wave of Music City music-makers.

The Contenders stepped into the ring in March and quickly gained a sizeable rooting section despite routine shakedown problems. The quick acclaim is deserved for the group has musical dexterity and flexibility, a sackful of new songs, and beautiful harmony. Not only that, they're not bad on the eyes.

Champ Hood, the blonde lad who looks 16, will leave damp seats behind when the ladies get a close look at him. The group believes in their own material so much they've only worked up two outside numbers.

Champ and Walter Hyatt were 2/3s of Uncle Walt's band, an acoustic trio with a respectable following in Tennessee, Texas, Atlanta, and the Carolinas. "Just say we were ousted off by every major label." Before parting they issued an LP, *Blame It On The Bossa Nova*, on their own Lespedeza Records. It is a sparkling album filled with good picking, excellent harmonies and an incredible Champ Hood song, "High Hill," which brings back Simon & Garfunkel's "Homeward Bound." There's a bit of Dan Hicks, bluegrass, blues, and folk artfully blended into a record no doubt destined for reissue someday.

Peace & Quiet travel and record for Buffy St. Marie. In between they play the tightest r&b-tinged rock you're likely to hear. Constant practice can do that—the band originated in W. Palm Beach in 1969. They play exceptionally well together and feature Chris Leuzinger, a guitarist of uncommon taste. They play the best reggae I've heard from white boys, write some good songs, and when Jamie Nicholl sits in on congas they rock off into all sorts of rolls and Caribbean rhythms.

Jack Clement and Harlan Howard aren't exactly undiscovered. Both have been penning country hits for fifteen years but neither has enjoyed raves or huge record sales as an artist. And both are working on speculative LPs; Clement with Waylon Jennings producing and Harlan with Allen Reynolds at the controls.

Clement, or "Cowboy," is one of music's zaniest figures. People here keep their eye on him whether he's standing atop the Exit/In bar serenading the ladies or starting the first true progressive country label, JMI Records. As a songwriter his hits include "Miller's Cave," "The One On The Right Is The One On The Left," "Ballad of a Teenage Queen," "(I Don't Like It) But I Guess Things Happen That Way," and "Let's All Help The Cowboy Sing The Blues." As a producer he started with Jerry Lee Lewis and Johnny Cash. Cowboy is readying a road band; given his genius and eccentricity, the results should be extraordinary. I've heard his finished tapes. Superb. He knows how to sing.

Harlan Howard wrote a few ditties like "Busted," "Streets of Baltimore," "She Called Me Baby," "I Fall To Pieces," "Too Many Rivers," and "Heartaches By The Number." As an artist however, he's failed to break sales figures for three companies. You see, he was in the habit of giving his best songs away. He's cured this habit; he and Reynolds have created several fine tracks, particularly "Two Ships That Pass In The Night."

Townes Van Zandt is threatening to move here. With his drug problems behind him this Texan is again writing his unique brand of

songs. He's still several years ahead of his time but producer Chuck Cochran plans to remix the tapes of Townes' unreleased seventh album and go shopping. This kid could stand some good luck.

Look for somebody to pick up on Billy Ray Reynolds soon. Handsome as a matinee idol, Reynolds has also played lead guitar for Waylon and written hits for him and Tanya Tucker.

Arizona Star is a walking wet dream whose repartee would give Mae West new ammo. A local favorite for years who seems to specialize in near misses, Star has an LP recorded for Johnathan King's Pye Records in England. However, when that chap plans to release the record is anyone's guess.

Steve Earle is a young (21) transplanted Texas who's assembling his first album. He's a kid in a hurry whose dark good looks and San Antonio/conjunto background mark him as a comer with a unique style. In addition to all this he is a fine writer already; his song "Darling, Commit Me," could be cut by anyone from Conway Twitty to Little Feat.

That's the current cream for this Buy-Scream-Tedium year. The keynotes here are musical versatility, solid songs, and a distinctive style. All of the above acts possess these qualities and I would not be surprised if all of them have their own albums out by the end of 1977.

*John N. Lomax, son of noted blues historian John Lomax, Sr., is a free-lance writer based in Nashville.*



I know many of you are wondering what could possibly be so interesting about what a bunch of cowpokes and injuns do for fun, but we've sprawled and smogged our way right up alongside the best of you.

For instance, Phoenix used to have a disc jockey on KOY named Steve Allen and, yes, we're talking about the same Steve Allen, star of tube and an excellent musician too.

Phoenix used to have a group from local, Cortez High called the Spiders, with a lead singer named Alice Cooper—Now he lives right down the hill from Barry Goldwater.

Phoenix used to be the home of The Beans, a rock band who eventually went to the coast to become the Tubes.

Phoenix was the place where Wayne Newton started his singing career on the local TV show, The Lew King Ranger Show, aimed at all the little buckaroos, and Wayne was one of the cutest, too.

So you can see that we've contributed in our own peculiar way, and we continue to grow at an outlandish (running out of land, that is) rate and even thrive on it. But, then, it is one of the premiere

winter resort communities on the continent and it shows—boy does it show, sometimes. The urban sprawl that curses these western cities like here and LA spreads the city itself like soft margarine, all over the hills; not up, ya understand, out.

On the plus side, Phoenix does have excellent radio programming, specifically, FM dial, neighbor stations KXT and KDKB. KXT, to talk a little about it, is a jazz station with a good and growing audience, servicing the needs of those who enjoy what Herb Johnson, the station's daddy calls, "...authentic American music..." and in this town, those people and their percentage of nitespots and concerts is important. With the Doubletree Inn and its restaurant, the Boojum Tree, they have brought many top jazz names into the valley, in addition to bringing local attention to the college jazz programs and people and the local likes of The Armand Boatman Trio, The Charles Lewis Quintet, Pete Magadini.

KDKB, on the other hand, is unquestionably, one of the finest progressive rock radio stations in the country. It's no small feat when you consider it's only existed for a handful of years or so. Still they have grown-up with this rapidly spreading area. "Progressive" that is progressive/commercially successful FM radio, while maybe an endangered species nationally, is alive and well here, and the credit should go to KDKB program director William Compton. KDKB is an important contributor to the local talent scene too!

That brings us to concerts and such, which we have more than our fair share of, thanks largely to the aforementioned radio stations and Doug Clark, the only consistent, major promoter in town. Facilities include the Coliseum and Civic Center Exhibition Hall, cavernous barns, both (10-15,000) and the smaller Civic Center Exhibition Hall, the nouveau-completed Scottsdale Center for the Arts, and Frank Lloyd Wright's architectural wonder, Grady Gammage, set in our college town, Tempe, also the site of Feyline Fields (it used to be the home of the Milwaukee Brewers), now the home of many a warm weather extravaganza.

Now presenting the local nightlife: whatever might be lacking in quality is more than made up for in quantity. We've got dining clubs and discos, all thriving or folding in a city built largely on tourism, and changing faster than it even knows.

A word about the Tucson contingent, from whence come the two top bands in the state at this time. Both acts are just beginning to make strides nationally, Bob Meighan Band and The Dusty Chaps. The Chaps are the more hard core country, with Bob Meighan leaning to more progressive country. Bypassing the usual channels, both acts (who are under the same management) cut albums and pressed them on their own label (Bandolier Records). Heavy local support (sales and airplay) has given both The Bob Meighan Band

and The Dusty Chaps better bargaining power: currently, both are negotiating deals with major labels. If you can't wait, or are interested, write to Bandolier Records, 1022 25 E. Glen, Tucson, Az. 85705.

In the valley, the two characters that spring to mind are Hans Olsen and Joe Bethancourt. As opposite as can be, Hans is a pirate bluesman (he wears a patch over one eye-his only musical teacher said he was tone deaf) who has an album too, and leads a band at the local biker bars and beer joints as well as bigger concerts here, and Joe sings for folks at a family sandwich joint, plays statewide bluegrass festivals and has a weekend radio show, "Folk-Music Occasional". The longest lasting band around has to be Autumn People, who I can remember at battles of the bands during fog-machine daze. Autumn People recently cut their debut album of original material, and with Mr. Clark, gave their own debut concert to the area at the Celebrity. Bluegrass and country flourish too, with the Blue Goat Pub standing out as presenters of the best available, mostly the Norman Brothers and Joshua Stone, and AM country at numerous, punched out dance bars (I try to avoid these places unless I've had my hair cut recently).

In review, let's just say that Phoenix has been cursed with not being able to keep their local talent and make it for them, though many enjoy local notoriety and deservedly so, most times, but it makes the music scene painfully local too...As far as a Phoenix sound goes, Doug Davis, a songwriter-singer-publisher-producer is doing all he can to synthesize a sound out of the other recording studio, Pantheon, in Paradise Valley. We need more clubs for pop, more valid forums encouraging local performers of merit, Vegas or discos or more mediocre local attempts. Phoenix still waits for the messiah to deliver them, at least musically, in some important respects, but at least we're looking, which is enormous progress from a state that has the Grand Canyon, Sun City and A-1 beer. Do come visit us, won't you?

*Dennis Ronan is a promoter of local concert shows in the Phoenix-Tucson area.*



Reflecting the national mood of boredom and exhaustion is one talent that the Detroit musical scene as an entity has displayed a particular facility for of late. In other words, after banging away at the same three chords to these nigh ten years, we have burnt out our points. Our plugs are fouled by disco-oriented bar bands everywhere, playing a shell-shocked version of watered-down, extremely

Shown at right are The Quick, LA's newest way to hang-tough. Below Kansas City's blonde sex-pots, Granmax demonstrate same.



## Philadelphia: Developing a Diverse & Exciting Local Music Scene

derivative semi-flaccid rock jams. We are in such dire need of a tune-up that our guitar players uniformly are playing minor chords, and local commentators are relying on ganja alone to sustain the illusion that this scene still exists at all. In other words, this is no place to be a working or an aspiring musician in the year of our doldrums 1976; If the MC5, Stooges, Frost etc. ever meant anything to you and you live in Dubuque, Arizona, don't come here. If you do live here, you already know. If you've got good sense, you get the hell out and go to Cleveland or New York (CBGB's!) or LA. If you don't you freeze. And summer is coming, and that's the worst time to have your buns in the ice tray.

Not that anybody can fault the audience. Touring bands still love Detroit because our crowds are maniacs whose thirst for noise seems unslakable. It's possible that a half-a-million-dollars changes hands weekly in the music scene here—bars are packed on Thursday nights and concert biz is more boffo than ever. But it doesn't mean a thing, because this is the Midwest, which means flat drab plains just loaded with rubby lots and yellowing Woolworths and the inevitable Cunninghams valium dispensary, which all means that there is nothing to do in this place. Cultural deprivation in extremis, the American Gulag. Somebody is getting all the bucks mentioned above, but it sure ain't the musicians, who by and large are so depressed they make Leonard Cohen look like Fonzie. For the working musicians in Detroit, it's down to a matter of playing a gig, grinding out shit music they despise, dragging home the bucks to feed the kids. Which is not exactly conducive to any kind of renaissance, Chamber of Commerce brochures to the contrary.

Remember, this used to be known as the home of heavy-metal high energy rock. Well, there is still a living spark of energy, a germ of positive possibility in this bleak scene. As we write, Jimi Hendrix comes on the box singing "I Don't Live Today" ("Maybe tomorrow"), and it seems like some kind of key. There are musicians around here

who are keeping the old Detroit spirit and energy surge on ice, waiting out the oppression with a peculiarly Midwestern brand of patience. Let us only hope that that patience does not or has not already, somewhere down the line, transmuted into resignation.

Building on the shattered remnants of the last big blitz are a few people with the desire to transcend the very scene they evince an uncompromising loyalty to. Like Honeyboy, a band comprised of Jimmy McCarty (ex-Mitch Ryder, Cactus, etc.) on guitar, Johnny "Bee" the Badanjek (Ryder, Alice Cooper's "Welcome to My Nightmare", and the best live soloist on his instrument LB has ever seen) on drums, John Fraga who was the mainstay of the Danjek's and McCarty's old band, The Rockets, on bass, and North Carolinian emigrant Dennis Robbins on guitar. They play straight-ahead boogie woogie bop.

Rising from the ashes of the MC5 is the Sonic Rendevous Band, starring Fred Smith on lead guitar, Scott Morgan of the legendary Rationals at the microphone, and Scott Ashton late of the Stooges on drums. Fred still has his image, his flash and his chops together, recently played an encore with Patti Smith at Ford auditorium, and it seems a damn shame that this all-time meister fret whiz shouldn't have a national venue.

Wayne Kramer, his former partner in the MC5 has been gigging around the Midwest, keeping his own flame alive. He has also been busted bad (and bogue) and by the time you read this should be up the river for four years, friend. You can send him rock and roll reading matter, records and tapes care of Sam Miller, 19184 Coventry, Detroit, Mich., 48203.

Up in Ann Arbor, once a hot bed of Michigan blastoid rock, there seems to be a budding scene centered around Pete Andrews Road House, and Chances Are, Ann Arbor's showcase bar for local and semi-national talents. A perennial Ann Arbor favorite the Mojo Boogie Band, raves on with

James Tate on lead vocals, J.C. Crawford of Grande Ballroom/MC5 "Let's hear a little revolution out there" fame on drums, Bill Lynne on guitar and Steve McKay of Stooges *Fun House* historic jams on baritone saxophone. They describe their sound as derivative R&B with a reggae flavor. Owing to Brother J.C.'s several years in Jamaica.

About the only really fertile music scene which Detroit is currently supporting is it's ever-vital local interest in jazz and rhythm 'n' blues. A lot of this music doesn't have much to do with the pursuit of big money, but it does have commercial roots in the sense that the musicians are no longer after the "avant garde" sonic turmoil of the 60's, but are playing a cross-generic black music that is jazz but borrows heavily from people like Stevie Wonder. Donald Byrd, who hails from Detroit, has helped do a lot to define this music, and around here it's always a pleasure to attend a gig by the six-piece Tribe, the moodily soulful Lyman Woodward Organization, the never ending explorations of Mixed Bag, and the New Detroit Jazz Orchestra headed by trumpeter Marcus Belgrave, who has worked with such luminaries as Ray Charles and Charlie Mingus at their respective pinnacles. The kind of music these people are playing is not elitist—it's jazz for everybody. In clubs, in the park for families having Sunday afternoon picnics...a free, open feeling. Oakland University contributes its cultural share by sponsoring jazz clinics and workshops featuring such heavyweights as Clark Terry, as well as locals like Sam Sanders and Visions, and the explosive Harold McKinney, in jazz clinics where they play and share their experience and musical insight with youngsters yearning to bop.

Among the lists of disco bands playing in Detroit's suburban record hop lounges are: Holy Smoke, Randy Reed, Catch, White Wolf, Kurbstone Beauteaze, Badge, Juicy Lucy, Mind, Body and Soul, and the Tamponichs.

Lester Bangs is the senior editor and Rob Tyner a contributing editor of Creem.

### PHILADELPHIA By Ed Seiaky

Other artists originally from Philadelphia, include Jesse Colin Young, the late Jim Croce, Andy Robinson (one LP on Philips, one on Janus), Essra Mohawk (one early Verve LP as Sandy Hurvitz, the brilliant "Primordial Lovers" on Reprise, and a recent LP on Asylum), and the Brecker Brothers (now on Arista).

Aside from Woody's Truck Stop, Nazz, and Gulliver, other now-defunct Philly bands that recorded bargain-bin specials include: Thunder and Roses (UA, with Hall & Oates' Chris Bond), Sweet Stavin' Chain (Cotillion), Edison Electric Band (Cotillion, with Bonnie Raitt's Freebo, Mark Jordan and T. J. Tindall), Good God (Atlantic), Elizabeth (Vanguard), Alexander Rabbit (A&M, Mercury, with Duke Williams), Duke Williams & the Extremes (2 on Capricorn, with Duke and T.J. Tindall), Jacob's Creek (Columbia, with Lon and Derrek Van Eaton, later Apple, now A&M), Forest Green (Capitol), American Dream (Ampex, with Nick Jameson of Foghat), and Mandrake Memorial (three on Poppy).

For some time now, the hottest local band by far has been Johnny's Dance Band, originally formed in 1969, and in its present (and most successful) form since 1973. Through the years of hard work, constant writing and performing, the band has developed a really original blend of musical styles and refined their performances to a tight professional level. They've done hundreds of gigs in the area, two WMMR radio concerts, opened for J. Geils at the Spectrum and for Patti Smith at the Tower, and regularly pack Grendel's Lair every Wednesday night and John & Peter's Place every Sunday night with an ever-growing mob of fanatical followers.

Johnny's Dance Band consists of original members Tony Julian, vocals, guitar & harmonica, Chris Darway, vocals & piano, and John Jackson, vocals, guitar, bass & horns, joined by Bobby Lenti, lead guitar, Courtney Colletti, guitar & bass, David Mohn, drums (formerly of Randy Burns' Sky Dog Band), and Nanette Mancini, vocals. Original material is written mostly by Tony Julian and Chris Darway, giving the band its overriding satirical viewpoint, and performed with great humor, enthusiasm and appropriate choreography by

Todd Rundgren played briefly in a band called "Woody's Truck Stop" (which later made an album for Smash), then formed a Beatlesque heavy-pop band called "Nazz", which produced two excellent and now-rare LP's on SGC (the third was a quick-buck package of leftovers). After "Nazz", Todd went solo and produced many albums, including his masterpiece *Something/Anything?* one of the greatest pop albums of all time.

Tim Moore, who starred in an RCA band, "The Muffins", and was in "Gulliver" with Daryl Hall, won last year's American Song Festival with "Charmer", and is preparing his third Asylum album as he counts the royalties from the Bay City Rollers' cover of his second-album song "Rock and Roll Love Letter" (tough break).

# Chicago: Not Since The 'Ides of March' has it been So Intense

## Philadelphia con't from previous page.

Juliano, Darway or astounding singer Nanette Mancini, or any combination of members on any particular song. Much of the impact is visual, but great success on WMMR of songs like "Alfredo", "Avenue of Love", and Mancini's recent knockout performance of "I've Been Pushed Around Too Long" point to the high quality of their material and their potential as record-sellers. To the amazement and dismay of the group and their fans, no record company has yet decided to take a shot with this talented bunch of lunatics. Meanwhile, they party on, getting better and better all the time.

Also getting some local attention are two other lunatics, Jim Stanton, a former music teacher, and Kurt Shore, his former student, known as Dialogue, who have created an unusual concept of Bizarre humor and original music, implemented by their voices (often falsetto), piano, vibes, and punctuated by their own films, cleverly edited visual representations of their music. It's a bit strange, but totally unique and ultimately appealing. Dialogue recently set the Guiness World Record for longest nightclub performance in a remarkable all-day marathon at the Main Point, and play a lot of club and college dates. So far they've produced one album on their own Cold Studio label (Jamie released "Think Father Think" as a single nationally), and they're working on a second.

Other local talent constantly appearing on the college coffeehouse and club circuit are: singer-songwriters Emmet Robinson, Alan Mann, Jim Drum, Al Bien, Perry Leopold, and Doshie Powers (who recently moved to Boston); bands Scarecrow (with Michael Garrett), The Larry Ahearn Band, Spiral (remnants of Forest Green), Snow (with Hank Ransome of Good God), Slim Pickens, Able Cane, Slaves, Sunrise, Threaza Crowd, Abbey Road, Duck Soup, and Kenn Kweder & his Secret Kidds; bluesman Jesse Graves (one LP on Gazebo), classical guitarists Linda Cohen (2 LP's on Poppy) and Joseph Mayes, Kevin Roth (dulcimer), jazz artist Byard Lancaster, and folk performers Saul Broudy and Wanamaker Lewis.

Another unusual group is Musica Orbis: David Clark, electric and double bass, voice, percussion, synthesizer, keyboards, Kitty Brazelton, voice & flute, Tom Stephenson, drums, vibes, percussion, synthesizer, cello, Susan Gellely, piano, organ, melodica, bells, and Caille Colburn, harp & keyboards. Influenced by classical, folk and jazz styles, Musica Orbis have created a brilliant and instinctive musical repertoire in different genres, arranged as separate concerts, with specifically appropriate instrumentation, the schedules of which are published and mailed to media and fans in advance. It's a complex and offbeat

concept which has a large local following raving, but has yet to convince a record company of its, to quote Zappa, "commercial potential".

Primary places for exposure of new talent are the small clubs and coffeehouses: the Main Point, first and foremost, with a tradition of auditioning and hiring new artists, has recently started a monthly new talent showcase in which audition-winners compete for a paid gig at the venerable venue in Bryn Mawr, Pa.; Grendel's Lair, the Bijou Cafe, the Foxhole Cafe and A Little Night's Music (both on the Penn Campus), and Just Jazz, plus occasional opening act shots at the Tower, Spectrum, Academy of Music, Cathedral, Trenton War Memorial, Irvine Auditorium, and numerous college concerts in the area.

*Ed Sciaky is a top-rated air personality of Philadelphia's leading progressive station, WMMR-FM.*



The Chicago sound: Is there such a thing? Yes, says Jim Peterik, who used to be the lead singer and chief writer with the Ides of March and whose debut solo album on Epic will be released this summer. "Dave Arellano, the Ides' old keyboard player, was a sightless cat, and he perceived things that a lot of people who see can't. He could always tell a record that was done in Chicago when it came on the radio, without knowing who it was. So I asked him, 'What is the recognizable ingredient?'

"He said, 'No offense, but it's a lack of soul. The vocals are just laid on there real hard.'

"Chicago always has been in that stage of being neither New York or L.A. Therefore we try harder, and that comes across on record. We're singing so earnestly into that microphone. Our harmonies are bigger, our echo is echoier. We don't have a sense of cool."

That has summed up Chicago rock in the past, and it still applies today. From the first-generation bands like the Buckinghams, Cryan Shames, Shadows of Knight, American Breed and Ides of March on up to today's Rufus, Styx and Eddie Boy Band, Chicago rock has been mostly punk and pushy. But Chicago is probably the least monolithic music city in the country, with the possible exception of New York. Every kind of music seems to find some audience here, via both national touring bands and local bands. Chicago has given birth to the jazz-rock of Chase and Chicago; the progressive soul of Earth, Wind and Fire; the cool soul of Jerry Butler, Gene Chandler, the Impressions, Curtis Mayfield, the Chi-Lites and the Ramsey Lewis

Trio; the guitar soloing of Harvey Mandel; the progressive rock of H.P. Lovecraft, the folk-rock of Friend and Lover, the pure pop of the Arbors and Minnie Riperton, and the progressive folk and country of Steve Goodman, John Prine and Bonnie Koloc. Of course, Chicago has the blues, from the classical (Muddy Waters, the late Howlin' Wolf) to the progressive (the late Magic Sam, Junior Wells) to the white (the late Siegel-Schwall Blues Band). And some will maintain that a fellow from St. Louis, name of Chuck Berry, started rock and roll's golden age with the essential help of a certain funky Chicago recording studio.

But what about today? Well, at the moment it looks like Chicago is in the midst of another golden era, the kind of time that isn't really appreciated until it's gone. The local music scene is booming and some strong young artists are getting their final seasoning before they're launched onto the national scene. Rock and folk and jazz and pop are co-existing, with no one segment dominating.

This is all happening, as I said, with little real recognition. A few of the musicians may realize what's going on, but most of them haven't been around long enough to know that it was ever otherwise. Besides that, the media hasn't picked up on the scene either, so all those bands and audiences don't know about each other. Chicago has a lot of FM rock stations and one AM (WLS; after being trounced in the ratings, the other AM rocker, WCFL, switched to "beautiful music"), but with an occasional rare exception, they don't boost local bands. The only publications that cover the local scene are the *Reader* and *Triad*, and both of these concentrate on the big touring band's local appearances. The *Illinois Entertainer*, a statewide publication, doesn't have enough clout to get the big interviews, so it does more local coverage than the others put together. As for the daily newspapers, it's rare that they'll look in their own backyard.

The name of the game is clubs, and they come in all shapes, sizes, and locations. In the city, most of the clubs feature jazz, folk, and blues, but there are several important rock outlets, too. Suburbia is rock paradise. Far-out outlets for local bands provide continuous work at pay that ranges from \$100 to \$1200 a two-night weekend gig. "It's the best club scene in the United States," says Peterik, who's had a chance to observe most of the major cities.

For rock and roll, perhaps the best club in the country is B. Ginning's, located in suburban Schaumburg. Owned by Chicago drummer Danny Seraphine, the club has a house PA system that puts the systems of most major concert bands to shame, lighting fancier than many theatrical bands carry, a velvet curtain, stainless steel dance floor and nice dressing rooms, where local bands are treated like celebrities, with pizza and vats full of beer provided. The club occasionally is also used by major bands to tune up for tours.

Chicago likes heavy-metal rock, boogie rock, basic rock and theatrical rock best. Led Zeppelin, the Who, the Rolling Stones, Foghat, Johnny Winter, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Kiss, Genesis, Yes, ELP, Jefferson Starship, Bad Company and, of course, Chicago do well here. But every kind of music pays in this town, and promoters claw for the right to present everyone from Joni Mitchell to Queen and of course, the soul audience is tremendous for acts like Stevie Wonder, the Ohio Players and Earth, Wind and Fire.

The diversity of tastes illustrated by the concerts of major bands spreads healthily down through the local scene, as you'll see by the following list. In no special order, here are some of the Chicago singers and players that you'll probably be hearing more about in the months ahead:

**JOHNNIE BARNETT:** Originally from Sumpter, S.C., Barnett has taken "outlaw-country" one step further, into psycho-country. He sings in a growl reminiscent of Johnny Cash, but his songs are a bit different. One called "Cowboy's Last Ride" is about an 87-year-old man who died in a Reno whorehouse (true) and features the line, "As he slipped from the embrace of Rita the whore, he fell into the arms of Jesus forevermore." Another song is about a flasher who thinks about traveling but decides to "stick it out in town." Barnett had a small part in "Nashville," and provided one of the movie's few good musical moments when he sang about "my baby's the high-priced spread" during a scene at the Exit-Inn. But he's more than just a humorist. His straight songs have fire and guts, and he's ripe for backing by a good rock band. No record contract yet, but the buzzards are circling.

**JIM PETERIK:** Born in a Chicago suburb, Peterik is a likelike denizen of the local scene. At 14, as a high school freshman, he and his pals formed the Ides of March and immediately had a national hit with "You Wouldn't Listen." Four years later, in 1970, Warner Bros. picked one of his songs out of an Ides demo, and "Vehicle" became a No. 1 hit. In 1973, the Ides broke up, and since then Peterik has been going through a succession of musical experiments on his way to pop-rock. His first solo album is full of tuneful songs and strong playing in an Elton John-Barry Manilow bag.

**BONNIE KOLOC:** A singer who has wasted her magical voice on poor material, much of it self-composed, Bonnie has signed with Irving Azoff, mentor of the Eagles and Dan Fogelberg, and just completed an album in Los Angeles, also for Epic. With the right handling, she will yet make it big.

**CORKY SIEGEL:** Maybe the best mouth harpist in the country outside of Larry Adler, Siegel will never make it big because he stopped trying several years ago. First coming to prominence with the Siegel-Schwall Blues Band, Corky went through two incarnations of that group, and the second time around the band was blowing

everyone off the stage. Yet the members chose not to hit the road, and Corky is still content with just an occasional out-of-town gig. He's got a solo album coming out on a small label.

**BARABOO:** Formerly a backup band for Tanya Tucker, this group won the last Chicago Reader poll as the best local band. Plays country-flavored rock.

**JIM POST:** Back from Colorado and living on a farm near the city, Post displays his golden-throated singing frequently at local clubs.

**PAULETTE McWILLIAMS:** The first lead singer with Rufus, she has sung with Quincy Jones and has been recording an album in Chicago, although she now lives in Los Angeles.

**FRANNIE GOLDE:** Chicago's answer, sort-of, to Bette Midler, she has an album about to come out on Atlantic and has been playing the gay circuit, although her shtick is not camp.

**KEN BLOOM:** A multi-instrumental virtuoso, he has recorded almost everywhere with almost everyone. He puts on dazzling club shows.

**THE BALLS:** A group put together by local rock critic David Witz out of four Italian-American rock and rollers, they are presently in the studio with Witz doing their first album, "a marriage of '60s punk and '70s technology" (Witz). After the tape is sold, the band will take the stage for the first time.

**CHEAP TRICK:** Says Peterik, "They play heavy metal rock and roll with a sense of humor. This crazy guy named Rick Nielson, the lead guitarist, looks like a refugee from a mental institution. You hate to look at him, but you're drawn in anyway."

**STREETPLAYER:** "Good soul type rock and roll" (Peterik)

**KITTY HAYWOOD:** A black singer with an incredible voice who is much in demand for singing commercials. Charles Stepney of Earth, Wind and Fire is working on an album project with her.

**BONNIE HERMAN:** Another jingle singer, who has lots of soul.

**BILL QUATEMEN:** Still another musician who has maintained himself on the Chicago jingle scene, he had an unsuccessful album on Columbia, but is now ready to release a second album on a new label. Quatemen was able to keep together bands that included musicians of the calibre of Caleb Quaye and Denny Seiwel by getting them lucrative gigs on sessions for radio and TV commercials.

**STREET AND DAWTRY:** A folk-type duo, Russ Daughtry and Kip Street specialize in a Buffalo Springfield-early Byrds feel, emphasizing Daughtry's five-octave vocal range. "He's the male Minnie Riperton," says Peterik.

**KENDALL KARDT:** "A terrific songwriter and terrible performer," says Witz. Kardt's compositions have been popping up all over the folk-pop scene.

**RUFUS REID:** A jazz bassist who leads his own group, Reid shows up playing behind almost every famous name jazzman who shows up in town minus a band.

**ROBIN STEELE:** "This band features the rhythm section of the old

At left, Philly's hottest prospect, Johnny's Dance Band. Clover, a long-time Frisco area staple, are shown at right.



## Seattle: Local Bands Emerge Via Heart's "Crazy On You"

Wilderness Road (the Haban brothers), plus Lewis Ross, the Guitarist of the Skymonters, " SAYS ROCK CRITIC John Milward. "It's got lots of potential."

VICKY HUBLEY: "Somewhere between Bonnie Raitt and Janis Joplin," says Milward. She has a good voice but is somewhat limited by her current trio format.

Among the others I hear good things about--but for which specific information is unavailable--are Horace Monster, Redwood Landing, the Boyz (being produced by Ray Peck, the top punk-rock studio whiz in town) and the City Boys. The scene is so energetic and thriving that a new band emerges almost every other week, with a surprising percentage of them producing sounds worth listening to.

Despite the lagging of the local media, Chicago today is the center of a strong musical scene. It's a place where bands have the opportunity to play and develop, and good things are going to happen because of that.

Al Rudis is the pop music critic for the Chicago Sun-Times

get airplay outside of Seattle, they might have an AM teenybopper hit.

Bordersong, a mellow Loggins & Messina-type band, have recently sold their locally-produced album to Capitol.

Heart, a hot new band on the Mushroom label, is currently getting a big national push, including gigs across the country. The band has already had several hits in Canada, including "Crazy On You," which sold 50,000 copies. All of the band members are from the Seattle area save one (he's from L.A.), but the band is based in Vancouver, B.C., because one of them decided to split the States during the Vietnam War. The group has two sexy female members, Nancy Wilson, who plays guitar like Jimmy Page (or tries to), and her sister Ann, who sings and plays flute.

They do a hard rock live set but their one album, "Dreamboat Annie" is more laidback, some of it MOR. They recently did a short tour with Supertramp and, if you can believe their promo, will be doing a major national tour this summer.

Other locals currently on wax include Jim Page, a Dylan-esque street singer with a large local following; Brownsmith, a soft-rock duo who have survived by playing straight, adult-oriented saloons; Child, currently the most popular of the surviving hard rock tavern bands; the Uptown Lowdown Jazz Band, a funky and fun professional group, and a passel of country bands who have one release, "Songs from the Taverns of the Pacific Northwest," out and are preparing a second volume.

The local FM stations usually give these records some airplay and all the local rockers have at least one locally-produced music program a week, including KZOK, which has given a lot of help to Northwest bands, KISW and KILO-AM.

Perhaps the most popular of the local bands--that is, the one that works most and attracts the biggest audiences--is The New Deal Rhythm Band, a funky nostalgia band in Goodwill tuxedos who play swing music from the '30s and '40s. They perform behind stylish bandstands and fake palm fronds but although they strive for laughs

they play the material straight. They use only authentic charts and all the musicians are excellent.

They started out as a nonpro band playing for parties, gallery openings and dances but soon developed a fanatical following. They began to take themselves seriously, get some vocalists, work up some routines and learn a lot of Swing tunes. Now they're booked solid throughout the year, playing all over the Pacific Northwest and Western Canada.

Other popular local bands are roughly divided into three groups: Country rockers, soul bands and rock groups. The Country groups, most notably Rose and the Dirt Boys, Damp Saddles and Lance Romance and the Three-Minute Boogie, play a couple of Seattle taverns--The Rainbow and The Inside Passage--plus a lot of dives around Washington state, Oregon, Montana, Idaho and British Columbia, Canada.

The soul bands hold forth at the one remaining big dance tavern that hasn't gone disco--The District near the University of Washington--and some small clubs in the Central District, the kind that spring up one week and disappear the next.

The rock bands, playing their own stuff and popular songs, used to rule as little as two years ago, but now have only a few places left to play, the biggest and best being the Aquarius tavern (1,500 capacity) here. The biggest rock bands are Child, Bighorn, Gabriel and Kidd Afrika.

While most clubs have gone disco, a few have tried another route. The Pipeline, a rather small (600 capacity) tavern near the U.W., has become a "showcase" club, featuring new national acts that labels are trying to break. The label usually helps pay expenses or offers the group dirt cheap. In the last several months the Pipeline has had Merl Saunders, Bo Diddley, John Hammond, David LaFlamme, Kidd Afrika, and Jean-Luc Ponty.

Another new showcase club, to be called The Place, is being built near the Seattle-Tacoma Airport. It will open next month with seating capacity of 1,000.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

#### The Sounds of The Cities 1976

The Sounds of The Cities is an annual feature inside the pages of Phonogram Record Magazine, and appears each May. This series is compiled and edited by Martin Cerf.

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Like most cities, Seattle's local bands have come on hard times because of discos. A number of clubs that used to feature live music are now discos and as a result very few bands can make a living locally anymore.

One of the ways the bands are retaliating is to make albums. In the past few months about a dozen Pacific Northwest bands have cut discs, some of them together, most of them on their own. A few have gotten contracts with major labels but mostly they're private pressings the bands peddle themselves to local record stores.

Among them are Gabriel, which has a pop-oriented, commercial release on ABC called "There's a Star on Every Heel." If they could

Pat McDonald is a music writer for The Seattle Times.

(Tremeloes: Cont. from Pg. 14)

Framptons so beloved of FM audiences.

A few years ago, Paul Revere & the Raiders, sick and tired of being pigeonholed as a bubblegum band, sent a test pressing of one of their albums to a progressive station under the alias of "Pink Puzz." The station played the LP with great enthusiasm until they learned it was really the Raiders. The Tremeloes could be pardoned if they tried the same gambit—

(Phil Ochs: Cont. from Pg. 12)

made an appearance. His concept, An Evening with Salvador Allende, was hugely successful. Karen Berg, of Elektra, who was one of the organizers of the concert, speaks of it as "the best, most beautiful benefit I've ever seen."

There was no question whatsoever of Phil Ochs' magic. A little over two years ago, at Max's Kansas City in New York, Ochs broke house records.

But he was coming unstuck.

There were stories coming out of New York.

He felt that he was changing, and he made up a name—after trying other names—to suit his new self. It was gradual, but the name thing was conscious. Ron Cobb remembers that he took the "Butler" from William Butler Yeats, because it sounded strong. Phil Ochs had "died," according to Cobb. "That vacillating pacifist, Phil Ochs, whom he despised had died so he needed a new name."

It was as though he were re-writing his whole life in terms of the B movies he adored, and the he-man heroes he most admired—John Wayne, Clint Eastwood, Audie Murphy.

As John Train, he acted out his fantasies, however costly and wild, however violent and dangerous.

He lost great sums of money because of commitments he made to buy property which was far beyond his means. He bought an overpowered car, and promptly wrecked it—and six other parked cars—in an attempt to see how fast he could drive through Manhattan. He claimed to have met Bruce Lee, still alive and underground in New York, as well as the two dead Kennedys. He said that Howard Hughes was going to adopt him, to make him his son and heir.

This was in 1975, the year which he had said he did not expect to live to see. It was the year in which he said he intended to make a fortune, "to be a fascist." He had stopped writing altogether, had become a man of action—full of plans which erupted but came to nothing. He bought expensive sound and video equipment—and lost it all. He challenged a colorful backgammon champion to a high stakes game and lost again. He challenged bouncers in Mafia bars, with predictable results.

certainly their music would attract a more universally enthusiastic response, and this, after all, could be their last shot.

But they've chosen instead to play it straight, trusting that radio people and the public are mature enough by now to judge by the music not by labels. For my part, I'd like to add that the rewards of doing so are substantial, and I wouldn't be at all averse to seeing the Tremeloes given the encouragement to persevere for another decade.

He armed himself and hired a "bodyguard" of derelicts and hoodlums, and roamed the streets like a madman, enjoying the kind of immunity which primitive societies accord their crazies.

Finally, broke and still full of grandiose schemes, he flew to Los Angeles. He got off the plane and flashed the "perfect weapon," one which the metal detectors couldn't spot, a gigantic lobster claw. He rearmed himself with a samurai sword from his apartment, and shortly thereafter was arrested by the Beverly Hills police. A&M's Bob Garcia bailed him out, and despite efforts by friends and his brother Michael, Ochs was able to escape commitment for psychiatric examination.

He did a program at the Troubadour—one of his Phil Ochs and Friends shows, with Doug Weston. He was still John Train, still drunken and effusive, and it wasn't one of his better appearances.

With money which he had accumulated in Los Angeles, he flew back to New York. Ron Cobb remembers a phone call sometime in January. It was Jerry Rubin, who said, "Guess who's here?"

The voice on the phone was Phil Ochs, himself again. John Train was finally gone, and Ochs was back in a deep depression. His money was all gone, and many of his old friends were afraid of him. But he was himself.

His depression deepened over the next few months, until, as Andy Wickham, closest of his friends, puts it: "He made a definite decision, then carried it out."

One of his heroes died a few days before Ochs took his own life. He had identified strongly with Howard Hughes, and Cobb feels that there is a clue to Ochs' decision in the passing of the world's richest man.

Be that as it may, it is obvious that his pain and feeling of ineffectuality overwhelmed him. There were plans to have him institutionalized, but Ochs had been to shrinks, and one suspects that he lacked confidence in men who simply were not as bright as he was.

So he took that final, necessary step to complete the dying which began before any of us met him. *There but for fortune goes you and I.*

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## REVIEWS

# Top 40 Rasta: Marley at his most Mischievous



**RASTAMAN VIBRATION**  
Bob Marley & The Wailers  
Island ILPS 9383

By SAM SUTHERLAND

A few minutes into the new Wailers album, Bob Marley, righteous Rastaman and reggae incarnate to his growing audience, comments on commercial acceptance:

*Play I on the r&b  
Want all my people to see  
We bubbling on the Top 100  
Just like a Mighty Dread*

His voice is ripe with humor, teased by a sly guitar that illustrates "r&b" with a rapid yet offhand blues figure. If Marley understands the links between the pop charts and the economic machinery of Babylon, he isn't fazed.

The song is called "Roots, Rock, Reggae," which serves as a terse but accurate rundown of the sources Marley and a radically changed Wailers lineup have drawn upon for these ten new songs. The song itself is exemplary in terms of the current approach. It's feverish, funny, wired with energy, but it's also something else, a song of triumph celebrating the music and the tough spirit that propels it. The song is also one of prophecy, anticipating new conquests, and when Marley tosses back his dreadlocks in a rasping, exuberant shout, I believe him.

Last year's *Natty Dread* achieved much of its impact through the power of its songs, but equally significant were musical details that pointed up the band's adventurous musical evolution. Those details are consolidated here, and *Rastaman Vibration* is initially impressive as a musical experience, apart from its songs. On first listen, you're struck by precise, often subtle details that give the whole sound of the band a new depth and variety. In the skeletal context of reggae, broad strokes would only clutter the arrangements, blunting their immediacy; here, the band under-

stands those limitations and uses new tools sparingly to reshape their style without weighing down their lean, mesmeric rhythm arrangements.

Earl "Chinna" Smith builds on the departed Al Anderson's expansion of the guitar's role through longer, more assertive melodic leads. Added to these shifts in the band's

There may not be a ballad as immediately compelling as "No Woman, No Cry," but the new songs insinuate themselves into your listening habits just as quickly. Marley's passionate Rasta convictions are more explicit than ever, and these are his most strident political songs to date, yet his economy and persistent humor prevent them from collapsing beneath rhetoric. "Johnny W" achieves emotional force through a straightforward encounter with a bereaved mother mourning over her dead son. It's this ability to connect with a specific, personal event that lends his moral conviction.

His stoned grasp of irony continues to strike sparks, twisting a lyric to open new veins of meaning. "Cry To Me" begins as a lover's plea, oddly reminiscent of Sam Cooke in its lissome, plaintive chorus. What seems a romantic convention is then revealed as a political gesture; its anguish isn't that of the spurned lover, but the socially victimized. The song is a pointed, vengeful demand that would still sound wonderful coming over the car radio.

On "Night Shift," this approach is taken to a saltier extreme, one that sustains the ambiguity of the lyric long enough to touch on lovemaking, manual labor and Jah-knows-what-else. This is Marley at his most mischievous, toying with cryptic metaphors to transform a work song into an erotic set piece only to throw us off scent with typically off-the-wall variations at the fade. "Working on the forklift, in the night shift," he chants, finally baffling his chorus: As he rants on, the I Threes mutter, "Did he say that, why did he say that." The net effect is both intriguing and hilarious.

There are countless other moments when Marley's passions catch me by surprise, and I could probably lapse into a simple catalog: "Rat Race" is another vivid, ebullient diatribe that kicks off like vintage James Brown funk workouts with a leering "Ah! Ya too rude" from Marley; "Crazy Baldhead" is a menacing romp; "War" takes the text of a speech by the Rastafarian godhead, the late Emperor Haile Selassie, and transforms it into a feverish yet wide-eyed testament to Third World solidarity.

I won't plait my hair into dreadlocks, I can't afford ganja purchases of the magnitude necessary for true Rasta enlightenment, and, frankly, I haven't been to church in years. But I believe you, brother Bob.



As for the actual playing, a largely realigned Wailers succeed in advancing their style through coherent extensions of earlier lineups. The I Threes, who joined on *Natty Dread*, continue to add a sexy, playful tension to the call and response between singer and chorus. Donald Kinsey, the new lead guitarist, and rhythm player

approach are horn solos and choruses, deft percussion accents and even a chattering wah-wah guitar on "Want More" that evokes disco arrangements without succumbing to their slowness. Yet all these flourishes would constitute a hollow victory were the songs themselves insubstantial. They aren't.

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# Are There Tremeloes In Your Future?



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# The Tubes: "Doctor My Thighs"

Kent/Preston



**YOUNG AND RICH**  
**The Tubes**  
**A&M**

By RICHARD CROMELIN

On *Hunky Dory* and *Crisis, What Crisis?*, producer Ken Scott proved himself a master of soft-core avant-garde rock. Resourceful, imaginative, tasteful, able to clean and polish in one easy motion, he's

a real up-and-coming ace. But no producer, Scott included, can make a mediocre song anything more than a mediocre song, and the Tubes, perhaps succumbing to the sophomore jinx, took to the studio with a sheaf of mediocre songs.

The music on *Young and Rich* is fairly interesting (that's meant to sound dry) and sometimes vaguely disquieting, as the Tubes' musical structures and rhythm patterns

generate an effective subliminal tension. Scott has made every bubbling synthesizer spasm and oddly-clad guitar solo sound very good (though he should have expended the energy advising toward a more engaging repertoire), but he hasn't eliminated the remoteness which discourages one from entering Tubesville.

Esoterica is a vital strain in the Tubes' mystique, but here, without a sonic substitute for the live show's visual connectors, they remain entirely too oblique. That's fine for a band satisfied with an avid little cult, but the Tubes' grand joke will fade without a punch line if they don't make it big. They might do it on the show alone, but a few hit records wouldn't hurt.

The hits aren't here, but several of the songs do sound like surefire smashes for the stage act. "Slipped My Disco" could be a real bump-and-hustle production number (but on the record the band handles the music about as deftly as the protagonist does the dances: obviously white, and below average). "Don't Touch Me There" sounds like the successor to "Mondo Bondage" as the erotic centerpiece (musically though, it's an uncomfortable coupling of late 50s El Monte slow-dance romance and 60s Phil Spector production). "Proud to Be an American" is Bicentennial rockabilly, or Elvis joins Up With People and bristles with potential for the stage, as does "Stand Up and Shout,"

replacing "White Punks" as teen anthem for this fiscal quarter. Both, however, lack true rock power.

"Tubes World Tour," which could also use a little more muscle, is a pretty funny spoof of the road-band saga genre ("We got so dizzy with the interviews and radio shows," and the sound is like recycled BTO, a pretty nifty musical quip in itself). It's really the only place (except for a few cocktail piano bars of the *I Love Lucy* theme) where they sound as if this is supposed to be fun.

The Tubes debt to the Mothers is immense, both in musical feel and in their appraisal of young America's material glut (disappointingly, they retreat from the savage possibilities of that viewpoint, as if fearful of offending). The idea seems to be to antagonize and ingratiate simultaneously, but without spontaneity, musical wit, a distinctive aural personality and a firm melodic, vocal and instrumental style, the recorded Tubes' presence isn't assertive enough to make you care.

Left to their own devices come tour time, they might energize these songs into the intense rock numbers they could and should be. The Tubes are going to get us on outrage, not on art or musical respectability. The songs on *Young and Rich* are listenable, inventively devised, immaculately produced and thoroughly innocuous. It's a lot more like *Pete & Gladys* than *I Love Lucy*.

**THE RUNAWAYS**  
**The Runaways**  
**Mercury**

By BEN EDMONDS

"We're the queens of noise/The answer to your dreams."

That line, from "American Nights," says everything that needs be said about the Runaways. The only question is exactly whose dreams five 16 year old girls playing primitive, snotty rock & roll will plug into. Try this: Those of us old and wise enough to remember the MC5's *Back In The USA*, the first Stooges album and *Love It To Death* Alice. Punk rock archivists whose nirvana would be a double bill of the Troggs and the Count Five. Seventies kids who think that rock & roll was invented by the Sweet and Kiss. Middle-aged men with bulges in their pants (who'll no doubt put the album cover to the use normally reserved for a rolled-up copy of *Playboy*) and younger ones who haven't quite figured out yet what that bulge means, and anyone else who has faith in the eventual rock triumph of spirit over flesh.

In any discussion of the Runaways, you have to bear two things in mind. 1.) This is a first album and must therefore be judged as such, and 2.) The girls are only 16 after all, and for most

## The Runaways: Outraged & Up-Staged by the Underaged



of them it's their first band experience. These things noted and considered, the album holds up remarkably well. The group's limitations are perfectly evident halfway through the first song, but much of the album's considerable charm is that no attempt is made to mask the ground-floor level of this band's development. The record is an honest representation of who they are and what they do.

As might be expected under the circumstances, there are no instrumental virtuosos in this fold; if

humped to a Grand Funk record, but at least four of the songs—"Thunder," "Secrets," "Rock & Roll" (the Lou Reed standard, which follows the arrangement Steve Hunter whipped up for Mitch Ryder's Detroit in 1971) and the anthermatic "American Nights"—show that, even with their basic tools, they're capable of fashioning something that stands on its own.

They score their heaviest points on attitude. Their music is obviously born of suburban nights spent listening to third generation rock & roll and wishing they could do it, and then going to concerts to see an endless stream of old men do the supergroup shuffle and knowing that they could do it after all. It's cute at first to think about 16 year old girls strutting around the stage like rock & roll badasses, but it becomes much more when you realize that they mean it. And I'll take a band with genuine commitment to rock & roll, however limited their means of expressing it might be, over milquetoast "professionals" with no commitment to anything but union scale, any day. This first album by the Runaways succeeds on attitude alone, and offers more than enough germinal rock intelligence to suggest that they'll be a band to be reckoned with sooner than anybody expects. Welcome to the big leagues, ladies.

**ROYAL SCAM**  
Steely Dan  
ABC ABCD-931

By SAM SUTHERLAND

So you wanna dance? Steely Dan will oblige you, punching up their fast songs with hot guitars and bubbling rhythms. You say you like spectacle, flash, a bit of wide-angled pop theatricality? Mister Fagen and Mister Becker bring you a cornered madman, a murderously jealous lover, and a "lonely" divorcee, framed with brash fanfares in exotic locales and seasoned with mystical connections and the requisite erotic overtones.

This is the fifth Dan album and the second from a two-man band, Donald Fagen and Walter Becker, with a lot of help from Denny Dias and a roomful of crack musicians. The music is sleek, intelligent and infectious, informed by a dark, often bitter intelligence that's leavened by persistent humor. *Royal Scam*, like its title, is a funny, pointed album that looks at the world through perpetually freaked, wary eyes. In putting across this misanthropic pop perspective, Fagen and Becker craft tight, ingenious melodies, studding them with crisp instrumental hooks and propelling their lyrics with dazzling wordplay.

Once a working sextet that later expanded onstage with additional musicians, Steely Dan is now a studio image invoked by its two designers; they appear disinterested in any attempt at transferring this music to the concert hall. They have become invisible men, revealing themselves once a year with each new album.

I don't think Fagen and Becker are shooting for the limelight, but these new songs suggest they aren't unaware of their predicament. In contrast to *Katy Lied's* comparatively softer, jazz-lined style, *Royal Scam* reinstates some of the aggression that characterized the early Dan, with its flashy twin lead guitars and churning tempi. There's even a droll disco song, "The Fez," that sports a gothic organ figure lifted from Stan Kenton and recalls *Countdown To Ecstasy's* "Bodhisattva" by treating mysticism as if it were the latest dance.

The music's powerful enough, and the flawless Gary Katz production can't be faulted. But how can we justify these songs to Top 40? No one even gets the girl!

Instead, we have the protagonist of "Don't Take Me Alive," a counterpart to *Taxi Driver's* Travis Bickle. This is a chilling three-minute vignette of hair-trigger violence and its psychic origins, rendered with remarkable precision. Fagen's squirming vocal captures the tension of the situation; the lyric manages to set

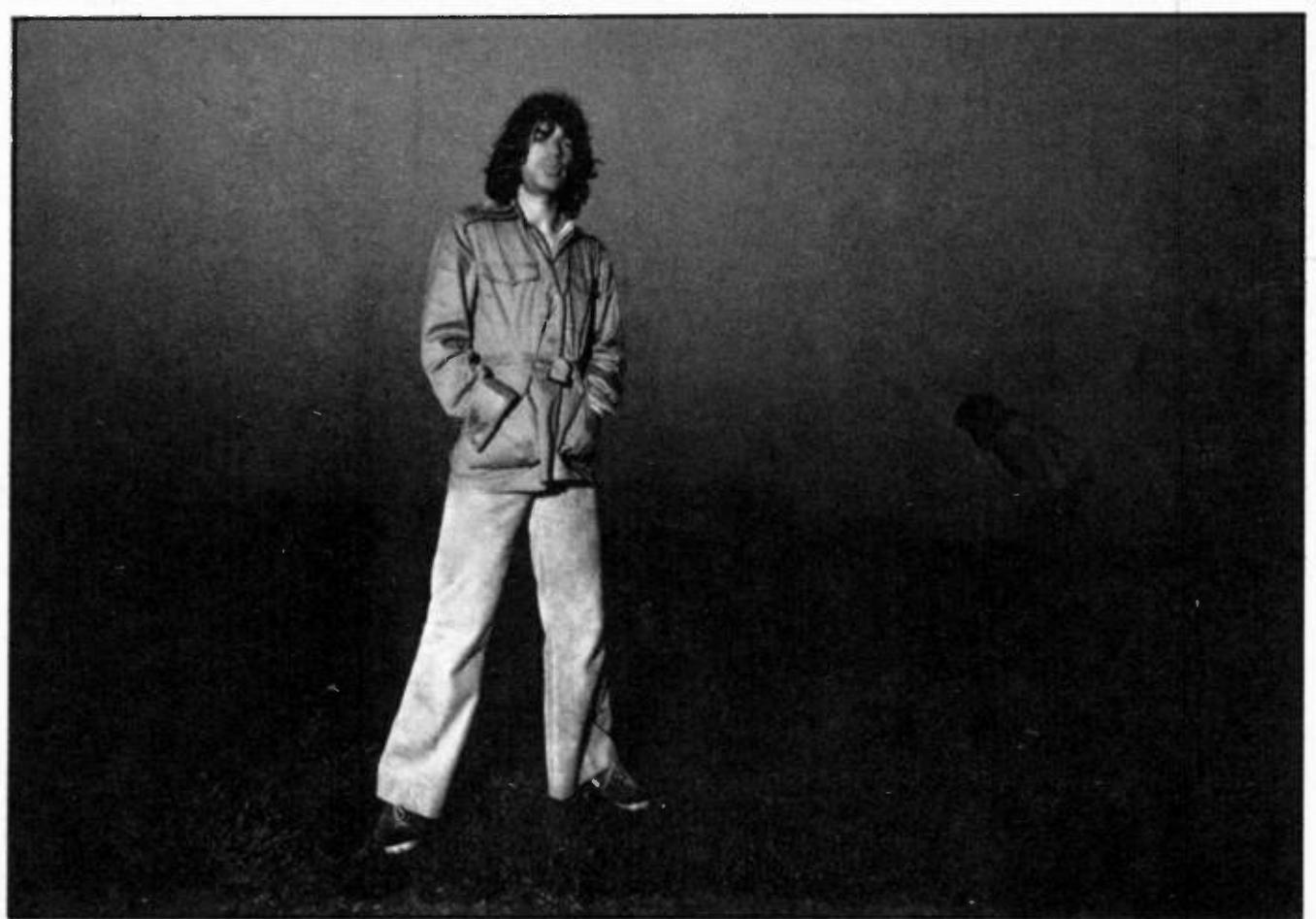
the mood and convincingly describe the personal history behind the confrontation, without diffusing any of the song's menace.

Should that prove unseemly, you might move along to "Haitian Divorce," a seedy narrative that announces true love in the first line, reveals its carnal essence in

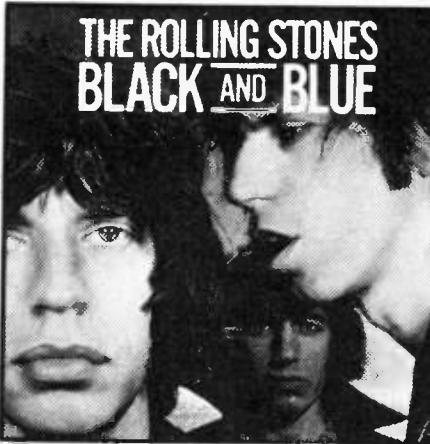
the second, and describes its disintegration by the end of the verse. Classic Dan music, the song is funny yet tragic. Its chorus compresses emotional exhaustion into neatly rhymed blows to the spirit.

These nuances are Steely Dan's main strength and chief obstacle to weekly TV shows and guest spots

in Vegas. The songs are laced with musical jokes—a leering guitar solo here, a wry piano line there—that achieve their effect without impeding the drive or cohesion of the musicians. And the musicians, all studio killers, don't just turn in good performances: there isn't a tired lick or perfunctory chord change on the record.



## STONES' BLACK & BLUE: Back in the Paddle Again



**BLACK AND BLUE**  
Rolling Stones  
Rolling Stones COC 79104

By BUD SCOPPA

In the four years that have passed since the release of *Exile on Main Street*, perhaps their greatest album, the Stones have managed to put together only two epics of new material, both minor compared to what they'd done before. Even so, there was a sense of adventure about *Goats Head Soup* and *It's Only Rock 'n' Roll* as the Stones headed up some previously

unexplored sideroads, all invariably leading toward a realism imbued with the pessimism of a diehard romantic struggling to find light in dark places. "Angie" and "Winter" presented one such sideroad, "Time Waits for No One" and "Til the Next Time" evoked another.

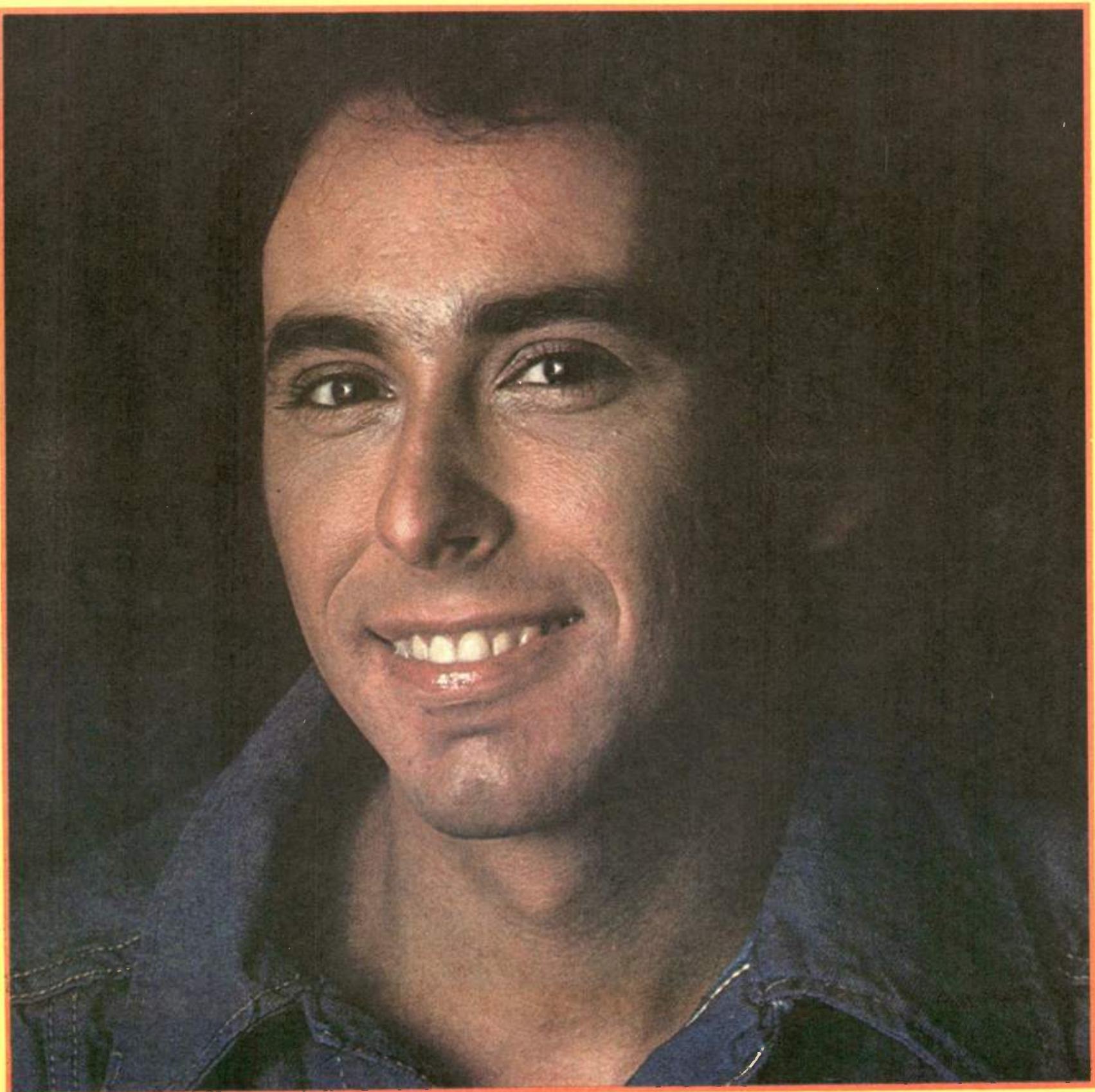
That buckling down, along with a characteristic refusal to buckle under, have finally yielded the minimal album the Stones have been working toward since *Exile*. *Black and Blue* is neither monumental nor seductive, but its spare, live, credibly honest tone disarms us nonetheless, in much the same way a high-quality bootleg of work tapes might. On the album, the Stones exhibit the emotional and dynamic underpinnings of their music by refusing to cosmeticize them. At the same time, these basic performances—especially the vocals—are so on-the-mark that the music carries more punch than anything the band has recorded since *Exile*.

The Stones' skeletal rendering of "Cherry Oh Baby" may not be authentic reggae, but its spirit is so pure that it achieves an authenticity all its own. The mad riffing of

"Hot Stuff" generates a steamy urgency that the lyrics don't begin to convey. And, bravely, the Stones have constructed the album around two ballads, the overly melancholy "Fool to Cry" and the panoramic "Memory Motel."

The latter track, unbearably lovely, is the most powerful piece of music the Stones have made in four years, recalling the great "Moonlight Mile" as it twists its way through the entangled reminiscences that make up the narrative. The song, done as a vocal duet between Jagger and Richard, achieves its most stunning moment when Mick sings, "You're just a memory of a love that used to mean so much to me," and Keith—in a flashback—follows with, "She's got a mind of her own and she uses it well, she's one of a kind," in a voice utterly laced with poignance. The impact of this passage may be difficult to explain (I won't try) but it's more difficult to resist. If the Stones are engaged in a confrontation with grim reality, as the album title and the songs suggest, then—in this bout, at least—they've managed to win a split decision.

# SOUL & JAZZ



**John Tropea: New York's New Jazz**

**RECORD** MAGAZINE May '76 / Vol 3 **2**  
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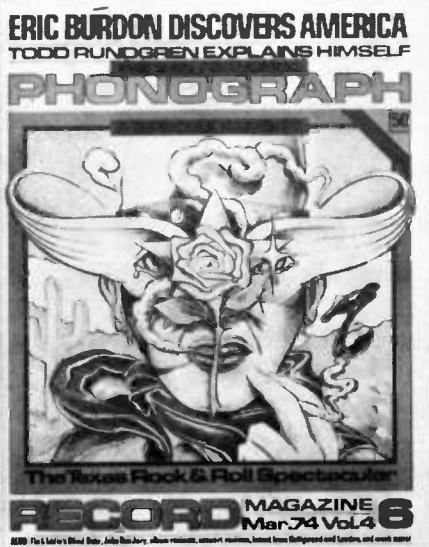


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## IN THE SEVENTIES

Jazz

By LITA ELISCU

The Ba-Benzale Pygmies and George Russell. The Lydian Scales and the Big Dripulator in the Sky System....I used to be friends with a man named Buck Wheat. He made drums for musicians, rock and Afro-Cuban and classical and jazz and custom jobbies that whirled and twirled. Naturally, he lived in Los Angeles. But his heart and soul belonged to that deep place where jazz and African rhythms first met and conceived musical fruit. Buck used to play tapes of Lester and Billie which were made while they were all just sitting around. Willie Bobo would drop by the workshop and play one-up with whoever was around. One night, Jim Keltner was on drums, Hugh McCracken on guitar, Wolfgang Melz on bass, and everyone so stoned on everything that fingers and minds were both in a blur. Musicians began to pop out of the woodwork, sweat hung in the air; who was gonna last out

this intensity?

In the midst of the incredible sounds going on, Buck took a look around, motioned a finger at me, and we went into one of the other little cubbyhole rooms that made up this rabbit warren workshop. He produced a record, and put it on an old phonograph machine. Sounds came out which were....alien....speaking in foreign tongues not known to this side of the moon. Pygmies, yes, playing flutes and voices and hands and drums. Most of all, drums, those instruments of the gods, played by the alien version of royalty. Poly-synchronization! Polyphony! Complex weaving patterns which existed only in the mind of the pattern-maker! Suddenly, a flute in antiphony: a funeral march in New Orleans; the cool dissonance of those early 60's quartets in dark clubs; the gates opened. I began pounding away on a huge conga, weaving a pattern....When I woke up, I discovered I was trading lines with Willie Bobo who was busy playing a huge set of stand-up congas. Horrified, embarrassed, I stopped playing, tried to go on, and of course could not. I no longer was in Africa.

Buck then pulled out a George Russell tape, and when Flying Dutchman released an album, *Sonata For Souls Loved By Nature*, I dutifully proselytized like I was supposed to do. But it was

only yesterday that I pulled down that same album and actually heard what Russell and the others were about. They were making a full circle, making the supposed boundary between music and sound disappear. For their music had the purity and rudimentary effect of the first sounds that a man tried to make in some imitation of nature. Using the most advanced electronics of the day (1969), the musicians were making comments on their own sense of history, their own perception of how sound had dripped down to them through time and space. Jazz is only one overview in musical perception, but it does have significance beyond the merely socio-psychological as does, say, rock and roll. Buck told me about all this, and a lot of other things I have forgotten, if I ever knew. I never did understand the Lydian Model Scale, or the Lydian Chromatic Concept of Tonal Organization, to give the full name. But I *felt* I understood something and that cannot be all bad. For the term "dripulator system" can be used to mean only that strong and pure ideas have been thinned and sweetened for popular consumption, but it can also mean that these same pure ideas have filtered down in pretty much the same quality, only taking what we call 'time' to do so.

So Buck, it's taken me this long to see something, even if only

imperfectly. And as you might say, see you in a minute.

So where are the young jazz players...? One of the more interesting albums I've heard recently is *Szobel*, put out by Arista Records. Hermann Szobel was 17 or so when he made this album, and according to his credit line, composed, arranged and produced everything on it. The music is intense, strongly rendered and technically excellent, reminiscent of Pharoah Sanders, latter-day Miles and Weather Report. As there have been very few 'compositions' in jazz lately which anyone knows by name or can identify upon hearing the first few bars, it really does not make sense for anyone to play other writers' material. In short, Szobel has imbibed and synthesized the sounds that music has been making, and he has in turn created his own commentary. Not so complex or rich as his later work will no doubt be, but worth mentioning because if he can do this well now, it is possible that he will prove to be one of those who actually get to hear something new inside their heads before they die—and let us know, too.

Note: *Ba-Benzale Pygmies*:  
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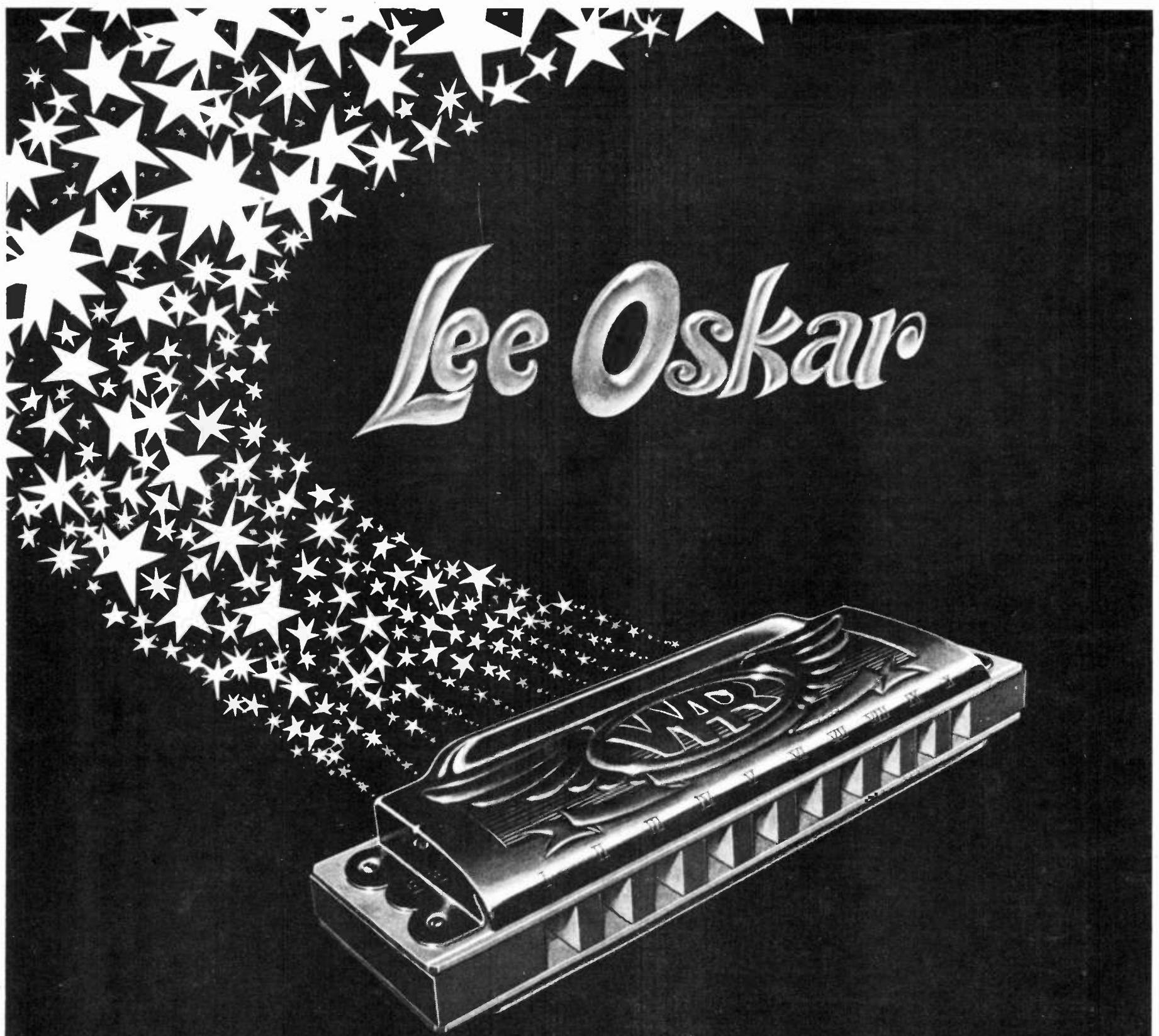
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# Bloodstone: Train Ride Back to the Top?

By BOB FUKUYAMA

Groucho Marx, in between squeezes of his nubile nymphet secretary, roars his approval—he's just seen "Train Ride To Hollywood," a musical-comedy starring the r&b group Bloodstone. He comments that the movie does justice to the Marx Bros. tradition it so unashamedly apes.

Overwhelming response also comes from the consumer corner—in the testing sites Omaha and Kansas City, "Train Ride To Hollywood" has played to full-houses eight weeks running. On May 19, the film will begin engagements at 10 major venues in Southern California—if the box office success follows suit there, watch out America!

Bloodstone, a steady but unspectacular seller of albums and singles for the past four years, is quietly launching their long-range plan to take over the media world.

\* \* \* \* \*

Bloodstone, known mainly for their 1973 gold single of "Natural High," is going for broke: not waiting to become as record-selling successful as the Beatles, Monkees, or even the Dave Clark Five, they've entered the film arena. Contrary to first expectations, however, it's not either a cheapie or your stock black exploitation flick. In fact, it's the most ambitious effort involving a popular music group since the classic Richard Lester-Beatles collaborations. And it's G-rated.

To add a new twist to the current practice of recording artists financing their own projects, Bloodstone and their management (with the help of several nameless investors) financed this film, which cost over one million dollars to complete. "Train Ride To Hollywood" so impressed independent distributor Tom Laughlin, the rebel hero of "Billy Jack" and the rebel outcast of the film industry, that he bought it, guaranteeing a massive campaign to launch the film.

Why Bloodstone, you ask. They are not your typical r&b group, be advised; Bloodstone is comprised of four zanies—Charles Love, Willis Draffen, Harry Williams and Charles McCormick—who have a natural flair for slapstick comedy. "All these years we've been gigging in night clubs," explains "Mack" McCormick, "we've always added funny stuff between songs and improvised routines. We were told to act natural by our director, Charles Rondeau (whose credits include "The Littlest Hobo" and a long stint with TV's "Love



Matinee idols mugged: (front) Charles Love, Willis Draffen (back) Harry Williams, Charles McCormick.

American Style"), and it worked."

According to George Braunstein, who produced the movie with Bloodstone co-manager Ronald Hamady, "Train Ride To Hollywood" is "a non-sequiter fusion of

comedy and music," "a parody of the MGM musicals of the 1940s," and with insistence, "not 'A Hard Day's Night.'" "If anything, it's a black Marx Bros. movie," Braunstein asserts.

All the songs performed in the movie are full, theatrical Busby Berkeley-type production numbers. Along with the six original tunes composed by Bloodstone, the group also interprets several nostalgia pieces—"As Time Goes By" on up to "Yakety Yak"—that soundtrack the musical perfectly; after all, "Train Ride To Hollywood"'s cast includes Bogart, Jean Harlow, Gable, W.C. Fields, Jeanette Mac Donald (impersonators thereof).

In the film, Bloodstone plays The Sinceres (the group's original name), as seen in the dream world of Harry Williams, knocked unconscious in a freak accident after watching and adoring a Ginger Rogers-Fred Astaire musical. Before Harry wakes up, Bloodstone has romped through the fantasia that was the Hollywood musical in the '40s. Real-life parallels are evident as the story follows The Sinceres as they trek out to Hollywood from the Midwest—all four Bloodstone members are actually from Kansas City, and did find their fortune in Los Angeles. However, the movie is not about a group in search of stardom—rather, it's an adventure plot that centers on the group's trip there, as they get entangled with the "Armpit Murderer" (who chokes people by pressing their necks under his armpits.). Along the way, Harry must box a gorilla (Harry wins), Willis plays Dooley Wilson to Humphrey Bogart, "Mack" and Charles face Count Dracula and the Godfather. Ridiculous, but it's good clean fun.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Train Ride To Hollywood" has potential for success in light of the recent popularity of revivals (e.g. "That's Entertainment"). The soundtrack LP, which has been available for a month, is selling even in markets where the film is yet unreleased. In the event that their movie fails, however, Bloodstone has a recording career to fall back on. At present, the group has an r&b smash with "Do You Wanna Do A Thing," the title track of their forthcoming studio album, produced by famed disco-maestros Bert DeCoteaux and Tony Silverstein. They replaced Mike Vernon, who had produced Bloodstone's four previous albums (five including the soundtrack). "Mike was cool, but Bert and Tony are black," comments Charles. If the single is indicative of the album's material, there's little doubt that Bloodstone is going to have a hit: as Harry says, "It's disco, funky and soulful—that's what's happening."

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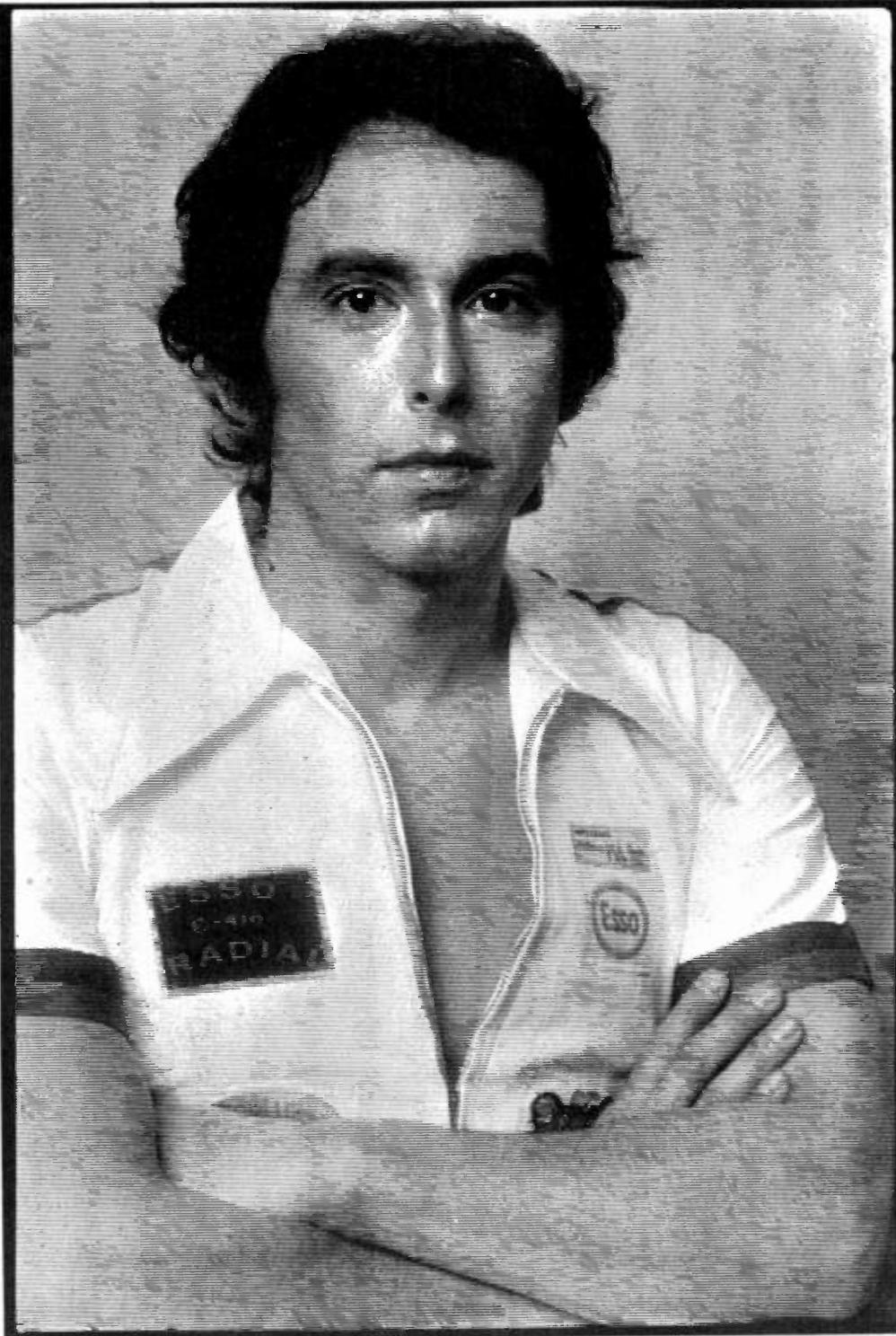
# John Tropea: New York's New Jazz

## by Lita Eliscu

This is John Tropea's year. He's playing guitar on tour with Laura Nyro, is watching his own first album climb steadily towards 100,000 in sales, and is in the very pleasant position of trying to find time for even half the possible tours and record dates he is currently being offered. He's hot. Two or three years ago, he was just another of the fine session musicians found in New York, and then luck had its way. He worked on McDonald jingles and with Michel Legrand, David Ruffin & James Brown. He worked with Deodato on the *Prelude* album, particularly "2001." More recently, he worked on Laura Nyro's *Smile* album, Phoebe Snow's *Second Childhood*, and Paul Simon's "Fifty Ways To Leave Your Lover."

The same names crop up on almost all these albums as well as a stack of other recent releases: Richard Davis; David Sanborn; Steve Gadd; Rick Marotta; the Brecker Bros. and various members of their band; David Spinoza; and

now John Tropea. Hardly surprising that these names and others all appear on Tropea's own album. But he says quickly, "It was special, the album. All the musicians on it were my friends, and they all played like it was their own record." Proudly, and with good reason for such feeling, he explains that he's only had one live gig so far fronting his own band, a one-night date at the Village Gate in New York. He thought he would have maybe 7 or 9 musicians with him, but 18 of New York's finest came to play, including the Breckers, Dave Sanborn, David Spinoza, George Young. "One of my friends called, said, 'You're getting ten horns, ten dollars apiece—and they're coming to play with you like it or not!'" Tropea is very proud of these friendships, this warmth and mutual respect he and the others have earned. His face breaks out in a rare smile, and for a moment, he looks like a kid, sitting in a corner of the big, overstuffed armchair.



He has come to T.K. Records' New York office to talk about the release of his new single, "Tambourine," and to mull over how he could go out on tour with Phoebe Snow, still have time to put together his own tour and band, record his next album, yet not cut back too much on producing and arranging and orchestrating..."

I don't know how I do it sometimes. I've been working 7 days a week. Just do it without thinking about it, I guess. What I'd like to do is put the band together, tour maybe once or twice a year to promote the album and get my rocks off playing, get to hang out with my friends. Do a moderate amount of recording, one or two sessions a day, and sometimes none at all—but I don't want to give up doing record dates. From the day I picked up the guitar, I was 12, I put it in my mind that I wanted to be a guitarist—a studio guitarist. I wanted to be the one who made the records."

His face, usually tense, relaxes a little. The words start to come more easily as he settles in. "When I was a kid, I had 2 tape recorders, used to do overdubs with them. I'd play one back with the mike close to the speaker—didn't have sound-on-sound back then! I've always been drawn to electronics."

Tropea's first break came when producer Bob Crewe discovered him and began to use him extensively on record dates. Then Deodato heard him and took him on tour, featuring Tropea's beautiful guitar work in all concerts. It was during this tour, while playing Miami that a T.K. Records' executive heard him and asked him to join the company. True to T.K.'s usual practice (unusual in the industry), Tropea was allowed to form his own record label, so his album, titled simply *Tropea* is released through Marlin and distributed by T.K.

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# Billy Cobham:

## "I'm playing with musicians I consider to be friends for the first time."



Kathy Clary

Billy Cobham with partner George Duke.

By BOB GLASSENBERG

Here is this musician who has made six albums under his own name since 1974 and has been the backbone of countless others in the past decade who says he would have been a baseball player if he hadn't been a percussionist. And he is believable, except for one thing.

It is understandable that Billy Cobham, perhaps the leading drummer in music today, might have been a baseball player, because he grew up in the Panamanian section of New York where you were either a boxer or baseball player. It's all logical until you see him on stage creating a barrage of rhythm with his drums, or someone plays one of his six albums for you. Then you see that Billy Cobham is not a baseball player, but still an athlete. You have to be in good shape to keep up with the musicians he's played with just in the past five years; The Brecker Brothers in Dreams; Miles Davis; Mahavishnu John McLaughlin; and of course now his own group which he co-leads with George Duke, a premier musician in his own right.

"I'm having a good time," says Cobham discussing what he's doing musically. "I am really trying to project my innermost thoughts, my heritage, the music that I like

to play, places I like to go. *Life and Times*, my newest album, is representative of some of the places I have been."

The title cut opens the album, with all the force of a man who has seen where he's been and knows where he is going. The moving rhythms carry throughout most of the cuts on the LP. In fact, Cobham's energy is endless and his melodic tones add great depth to the album and its individual tunes. This is Cobham's album and just one listen lets us know it. He dominates.

There is no fat to Cobham's composition or style. By the time "East Bay," the last cut on the first side, comes up, the listener is caught into the flow that is definitely Billy Cobham. And he has an advantage as a percussionist and a writer, because he can come from the inside out, knowing the entire rhythmic structure out front and placing the notes so they fit perfectly with that structure, while even allowing for the musicians surrounding him to take solos of unlimited proportions.

"I happen to be playing with people I consider, for the first time in my life to be my friends. You know, people I can sit down and talk to off stage as well as on stage." Seeing him live makes his point obvious. There is instant communication.

"The other evening, Alphonso (Johnson, the bass player) started playing a shuffle I thought was (Miles Davis') 'Jack Johnson', and, as it turned out, it was a shuffle off Stanley's (Clarke) album. That sounded so much like 'Jack Johnson' and there were some things Alphonso played that I had not realized," explains Cobham, "Then Paul Scofield started to play some McLaughlin licks off of 'Jack Johnson' because he thought it was that cut and Alphonso played Stanley's solo from his first album and that really freaked me out. I said 'You mean to tell me Stanley got some of that stuff from Miles?' And then it hit me that Tony Williams was playing drums on that cut and all of these things started falling together as to why certain musical thoughts followed one another in that particular shuffle which I had taken for granted." So his playing is communication not only with the audience, but with the group as well. And this leads Billy Cobham to endless realization. He sees an entire evolution of the jazz audiences from five years ago to today. How it has grown and some of the reasons why.

"There were certain things that I was doing with Miles that I didn't know then. There were certain things that Miles was doing the people didn't know then, that now

they are beginning to realize, and Miles was someplace else already and so am I. But now, the audience has a foundation to think about the music they hear, whereas before, when the Mahavishnu Orchestra was around and doing its thing a lot of people didn't realize it and were watching it and getting off on what they saw and not what they heard and really felt. Now that the Mahavishnu Orchestra is gone, they are really relating to what we did, but only through the auspices of Return to Forever, Weather Report. George Duke/Billy Cobham and whatever. Because now we're here and the Mahavishnu Orchestra is sort of like the foundation for people to really relate to this kind of stuff."

Cobham is "funny funk," as he calls it, something less predictable than the funk of the disco scene, but more funky than the music of Return to Forever which Cobham affectionately describes as classically decadent. "It's a much more concert oriented organization," he continues. "We do not compete with each other musically though. There is a musical parallel in which we don't get in the way of each other. We could be on tour together, if we didn't each have so much equipment. We are really two different groups."

Having played with the Mahavishnu Orchestra, in fact, being the only element of the group at the time who had no European roots, Cobham gave a balance to the other members and their music. He was the alter ego, the rhythmic element that gave meaning to the other elements of the Orchestra, setting the music into a position with which the audience could more easily identify. This is the side of the Mahavishnu Orchestra that has been overlooked. It is becoming more evident, however, as time passes that the members of the original Orchestra were each fine musicians in their own right, who banded together to bring people a new insight into instrumental music. And, along with Weather Report, the Mahavishnu Orchestra set a pattern which is followed today. Most of the jazz groups that are popular today contain several musicians who have albums of their own. They are together to tour and bring their audiences both their skills as individuals and as a group.

"I feel that we're trying to get the people to listen to any artist. Like a painter who has a painting in a museum will look at it," says Cobham. "He'll not only want the

people to buy his painting, but he'll want them to remember him. Not just when he's dead, but now. He wants to paint some more, he wants more people to come and look at his paintings. He wants acknowledgement. That's what we want. We want acknowledgement because we are artists. It's important. We have something to say. We're trying to express ourselves not verbally, but musically.

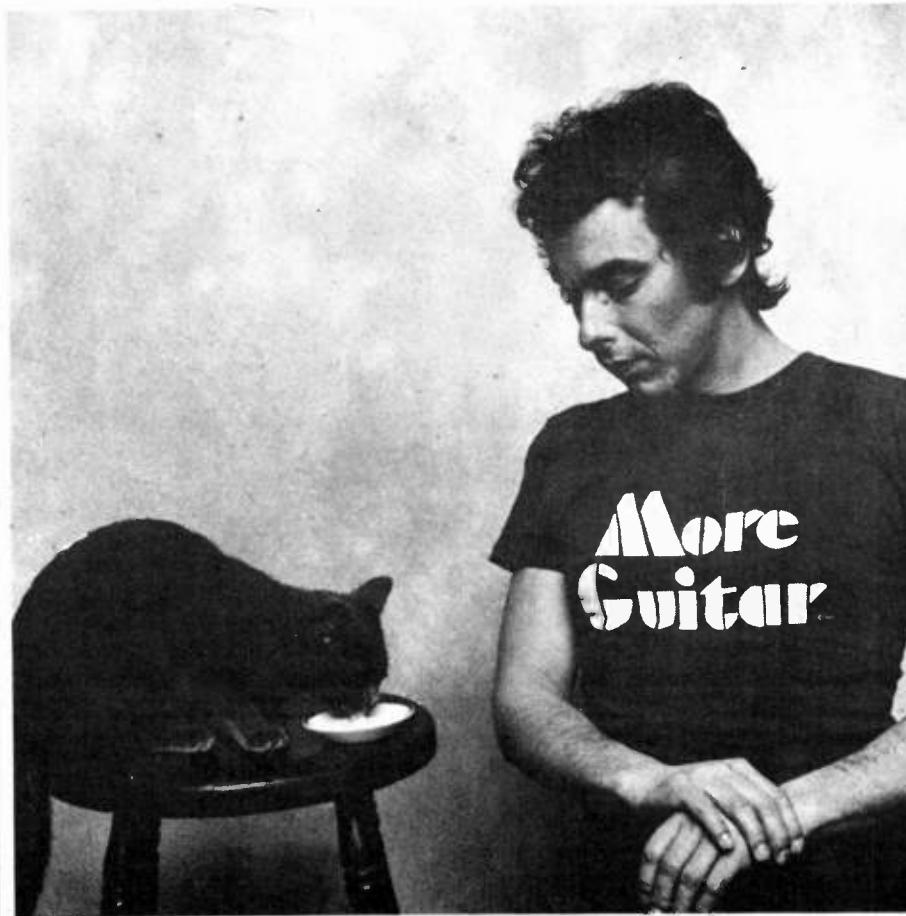
A completely different medium, another dimension. For me, I like being able to take people on trips that are head trips. Now that's possible for me because I've been able to go through maybe one or two myself. I've actually been able to play and play myself into a situation where I wasn't part of my body anymore. That hasn't been very often, but I have accomplished it from time to time.

"I make albums for the folks, but I make them for myself too, please. First, it has to come from inside me. I have to really feel that it's something I want to project. I just don't sit down and say, 'well, I think this is something they like,' and put it down. I have to feel something about what I'm writing. So I'll get inspiration from my daughters-anyone-and it could be something negative. And I'll get pissed off and write about it. That's how I may feel—and I'll turn it into something positive. I feel that everything I write is something positive, eventually."

It is easy to see from speaking with him, that this positivity has been his driving force for years, through all his commercials and playing as a sideman for many, many artists. It is easy to see that he was watching and learning whatever he could from every experience he had. He just kept moving ahead to the point he has reached today, a musician who can stand up and be out front of everyone else, but who is willing to take people with him and allow them to grow.

"I thought it always was inevitable," says Cobham. "From the standpoint of a percussionist, he gives a lot. He's always been the cat that gets put down when often times the other musicians have a very poor sense of time and cannot play alone. They use the percussionist as a scapegoat and I feel this is very wrong. And it's time for a change and it's happening."

Cobham has been instrumental in creating that change. And he will continue to be at the vanguard of whatever changes are happening in the music scene because he is a leader, willing to take chances and willing to help people understand what is going on. Since the artist should always have the last word, these are his: "Listen to music with open ears."



(TROPEA: Cont. from Pg. 57)

overt than its West Coast counterpart. "We did one track a week. Musicians changed stuff on the spot, but we worked out most of it beforehand. I used two drummers on most cuts, Steve Gadd and Rick Marotta. That's two bass drums in stereo, and that much bass created a skip in the grooves, we had to go back and lighten the whole sound." Once he is talking about the music and not himself, he continues happily. "We used to spend one whole night on a track and then, after finishing, I worked for about 4 weeks doing guitar overdubs then put on horns and strings. That all took about 4 months, and then 1 month for mastering—we had some problems there at first...I worked very hard on this album. Didn't do that much playing, didn't want an ego record—seen that before. The whole thing about the album is 'writer-producer-guitarist' and not just guitarist."

What kind of guitarist is he? "I like to play everything," he shrugs. "I don't think I'm a jazz guitarist or a funk guitarist. I'm certainly not a rock and roll guitarist. Usually, I play a Fender...but on Laura (Nyro's) gig, I used a straight jazz guitar, an L-5, but I put rock and roll strings on it. That sums it up right there!"

The album is beautifully conceived and played, and he has every right to be proud of the musicians and musicianship displayed. All cuts feature other musicians, no vocals. The two drums prove irresistible, creating a complicated rhythm while the horns and strings weave through and around, keyboards (usually Don Grodnick of the Brecker Brothers band) counterpointing

and commenting on the rest. The music is substantial enough to sound better after several repeated hearings, as one is left free to concentrate on various details and specific instruments.

Talking about the existence of an East Coast sound, he shakes his head, then nods. "It seems to me that the really busy New York musicians, many of them have roots in jazz and classical. Steve Gadd, a very funky drummer, has a degree in classical percussion, for example. But these musicians, many of them are on so many of the albums being released, and they definitely influence the sound you hear." Tropea himself went to the Berklee School of Music, "Graduated from there—wait a minute! What am I saying! I didn't graduate! But I was in Boston for 5 years, had my own band, played with The Three Degrees. I got studio work even up there. One date every two weeks. I was drawn to that."

How is it touring with Laura Nyro? "It's a ball. The main challenge is to get the music, the band, to be sensitive and not take away from her, because she can actually just go out there by herself and play, as she's done before. The hard part is not to make the band be too much, not to take away from it all....It's great, because we all just have fun, and there's no pressure at all. And the musicians are great! Richard Davis of course, and Andy Newmark, the drummer, is excellent. I won't mention any names but I know people who have gotten a lot of their 'ideas' from him!"

And what about his own tour. He shakes his head. "I'm afraid of it, the pressure. I'm really anxious. Now it'll be John Tropea they're coming to see, not Deodato featuring John Tropea."

## Alphonso Johnson's "Moon-shadows"

ALPHONSO JOHNSON  
MOONSHADOWS

including:  
Stump / Involuntary Bliss / Pandora's Box  
Amaritello / Unto Thine Own Self Be True



Alphonso is among the most outstanding progressive bass players in the world. As Weather Report's bassist, Alphonso has drawn a fantastic following, Billy Cobham and George Duke among them. He is currently on tour with Weather Report. The album is called "Moonshadows."

The musicians playing on it are in a class reserved for a very special few—the peers of Alphonso Johnson.

**On Epic Records and Tapes.**



# MIDNIGHT LADY

The Explosive New Album By

# RARE EARTH

Produced by Norman Whitfield



On Rare Earth Records and Tapes  
Distributed by Motown

©1976 Motown Record Corporation

# The Englewood, New Jersey Sound Discovering Gold at All-Platinum

By JOE McEWEN

Pardon my breathlessness but I just returned from a visit to that Englewood, New Jersey emporium of soul, All Platinum Records, where I met such glitter kings and queens as Chuck Jackson, Etta James and Sylvia, and also rummaged through three garage fulls of old records. Alas promotion woman Rowena Harris informed me that a big dump truck only recently came to discard most of the company's early classics, but I still managed to scoop up a copy of Titus Turner's "Get Off The Train" (written by NJ neighbors, the Isley Brothers), as well as a much sought after copy of the *Moments Live at the New York State Womens Prison*. The company has some exciting new things in store too, including two of this month's favorites. Ready?

1. All Platinum bought out Chess lock, stock and barrel and that included the rights to Solomon Burke. "I'll Never Stop Loving You" (Chess 401) is as close to old Solomon as the King of Rock 'n Soul has come since he left Atlantic. Thankfully this time around Solomon decided to stop being Barry White and get into some deep music instead. The self-produced ballad, slightly country in flavor, features a triple tracked vocal effort that builds in momentum just like "The Price" and "Tonight's The Night." An added bonus: If you ever need to get in touch with the folks at All Platinum, Solomon gives you the company's phone number at the beginning of the record.

2. How many soul harmony groups do you know that write and produce all their own stuff and always manage to sound different. The Moments have never got the publicity that a lot of Philly groups receive but they inevitably come up with something creative and good (who do you think wrote & sang the original version of "Sexy Mama" that Laura Nyro just covered?). "Nine Times" (Stang 5066) is brisk and up with Billy Brown's harsh lead (Harry Ray and Al Goodman take a rest) and a cute little novelty hook. You'll have to buy it to find out what "Nine Times" is all about and when you do make sure you play the 5 minute side with Seldon Powell's stratospheric saxophone solo. Hot.

3. Chairman of the Board seem to have broken up and former lead singer General Johnson is on his own. Johnson has always been an above average songwriter and "All In The Family" (Arista 0177) is one of his best. Oddly enough the feel

## SOUL & JAZZ SINGLES



of the song and even the vocal is a lot like something Swamp Dogg would come up with. Very uplifting verse about "blood being thicker than water" and the hard times the Johnson family went through in the winter of 1962. Clive Davis takes executive production credits.

4. Best funk record of the month comes from unknowns Gary Davis and the Vendors. "Funk Machine" (20th Century) is just a simple riff with heavy bass, chording guitar and a touch of synthesizer. Deceptively simply well mixed and a cooker. Vocal is little more than de riguer chanting but whoever it is sounds uncannily like Art Neville of the Meters.

5. Angelo Bond's *Bondage* was one of the underrated classics of 1975 and I never get tired of plugging it. ABC has finally released my favorite song on the disc as a single, "He Gained the World (and Lost His Soul)" (ABC). Bond is a former Invictus songwriter with a wispy falsetto that sounds quite apart from any I've ever heard. Taken at mid-tempo, "He Gained the World" is all about a singer who "started out in church singing in a gospel choir" and after success as a soul star is found dead in a motel room, "cause of death unknown." You can fill in the blanks.

6. Someday soon Paul Kelly will connect with another hit the size of "Stealin' In The Name of the Lord." Until then he'll continue to be one of soul's most ignored creators. "Play Me A Love Song" (WB 8187) is yet another in the Kelly groove; smart hook, staccato bass line and a great bridge. My only complaint is an overlay of strings that seems thick and unnecessary.

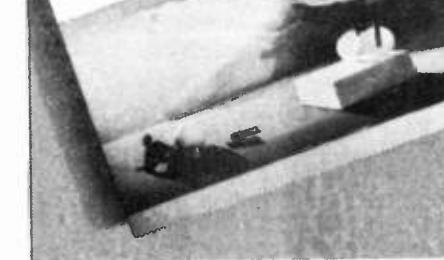
7. Oddball record of the month comes from New Orleans and a street band reminiscent of the Wild Magnolias. The Wild Tchoupitoulas "Meet Me Boys On The Battle

Front" (Island 054) isn't a Princeton fight song but some gut bucket second line music. Everything that Dr. John would like to be. So far no album is in sight, this could be a real collector's item. It's also great music. Island is to be congratulated for their experimental approach to black music; witness releases by Betty Davis, Swamp Dogg, Osibisa and all the reggae groups.

Instant trivia. What was the last record released on a Stax distributed label? If you guessed RB Hudmon's "How Can I Be A Witness?" on Truth, you're right on the money. It's on Atlantic now (Atlantic 3318) and deserves an audience. Very sparse arrangement with an enticing electric piano bridge and a slightly up flavor. Recommended for diehard William Bell and Eddie Floyd fans. Philly's Force of Nature sounds like Bohannon on "Do It (Like You Ain't Got No Backbone)" (Phila Int. 3586) but a bit more developed. Also from Philly and very disco is the Philly Devotions "Hurt So Bad" (Columbia 10292), which is sparked by a lead singer who sounds uncannily like Little Anthony. Notations revive New York City's "Make Me Twice The Man" (Gemigo 0506), slow and sweet for a late night treat. Salsa record of the month is Bobby Rodriguez' "Numero 6" (Vaya 5100), great for those looking to experiment with Latin music but not sure where to begin. Old favorites the Manhattans never disappoint, "Kiss and Say Goodbye" (Columbia 10310) is slow, sad and full of fire, quite the opposite of the Three Ounces of Love and their "Disco Man" (1X Chains 7017), a worthy successor to "Disco Lady." Isn't there anybody else out there who thinks Diana's "Love Hangover" sounds like a cross between Barbara Mason's "Give Me Your Love" and anything by Sylvia?

## The amazing transformation of David Sancious.

David Sancious & Tone  
Transformation  
(The Speed Of Love)  
including:  
Piktor's Metamorphosis/Sky Church Hymn '9  
The Play And Display Of The Heart



He can transform a stage-full of keyboards into one transcendent instrument. He can play guitar with the best of them.

Two years ago, David was playing keyboards and arranging for Bruce Springsteen. Since then, he's recorded with Stanley Clarke and Lenny White, he's produced two albums of his own, and he's astounded every other keyboard player on the scene.

David's latest album is called "Transformation (The Speed of Love)," and is the culmination of his leap from super sideman to super musician.

**On Epic Records and Tapes** 

# SOUL & JAZZ REVIEWS

THE BLUE NOTE RE-ISSUE SERIES

## FATS NAVARRO PRIME SOURCE

The complete Blue Note recordings by one of the true giants of bop and a prime source of inspiration for virtually every trumpeter player to succeed him. With Bud Powell, Tadd Dameron, Sonny Rollins, Wardell Gray, Howard McGhee, Milt Jackson, Ray Haynes, Kenny Clarke and others.



**PRIME SOURCE**  
**Fats Navarro**  
**Blue Note BN LA 507-H2**

By R. MELTZER

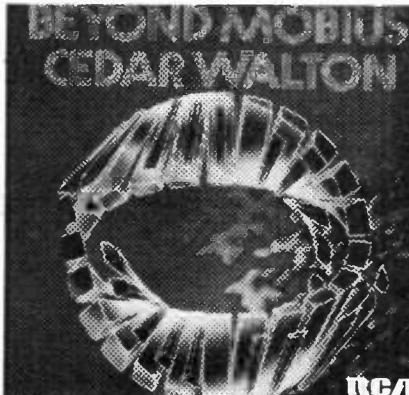
Man, like this is the *one*, the album that finally puts jazz reissues on the godforsaken map, daddy. Fantasy, Atlantic, Blue Note, Columbia, Capitol, Arista, all these companies who periodically dredge up their obscurest out-takes and hire Nat Hentoff if he's still alive to annotate the crap, *all* the companies are doing it these days (jazz finally seems mass-marketable so why not repackage a cellarful of syncopated wildebeest retchings into *Ike Quebec at the Club Bossa Nova Featuring Giuseppe Logan*, I mean why not?) and now *finally* we've got ourselves a good'un from, yeah, Blue Note.

Just to get a sense of the historical importance of this collection, why not take out your well-worn copy of (I'm sure you have it!) Ornette Coleman's turn-of-the-60s *Free Jazz*, y'know the one with the Jackson Pollock cover on Atlantic. An album *decades* more advanced in the cacophony department than the later and more positively received *Ascension*, whereon Coltrane attempts (successfully—and thus unfortunately!) to *orchestrate* all that haphazard texturing and intentionally directionless noise into some sort of praise for the boundless musical wisdom of Krishna or some such truck. Anyway *Free Jazz* (hope you're listening now) is the real thing, eight hotdoggers (well actually seven if you count Freddie Hubbard as the guest conservative) doing their best to violate whatever there is to violate, period. I used to get great mileage out of it in college, scaring prospective freshmen's parents away on visiting day. Anyway it just goes on and on and on being "experimental" and unlistenable ferocious and all that when all of a sudden after 17 unrelenting minutes or so they all come in in unison for a single blast of this theme that sounds a helluva

lot like "Swinging on a Star," their one "straight" moment on the entire disc (also on the second side).

Okay, yeah, so there was *that*, right? And so now you wanna know what Ornette's most forcibly off-the-wall genre outing has to do with this here record under review, correct? Well it *wasn't* "Swinging on a Star," it was Fats Navarro and Howard McGhee's "Double Talk"! Closer (*lot closer*) to "Double Talk" than "Swinging"! PROOF POSITIVE that bebop was historically THE all-time intersection of de rigueur avant-gardism and infectious listenability, rhythmically, harmonically, melodically, spiritually, you name it. (Like consider who you got here thematically appropriating it at its most obvious and for what purpose.) I mean like you had this emergence in the 40s of an all-new superduper FORM that really was *it* and still ain't been topped in the form department (Anthony Braxton for instance is just the much better version of Eric Dolphy whose only addition to the musical lore of the 30s is *irony*; and maybe I'm a fool but I *still* think of Ornette himself as a bop musician...).

Anyway this album is a *whopper* of an archetypal bop anthology. You want bop per se (without the strings or Buddy Rich or Dizzy gone Hollywood), this is it. The late Fats himself paving the way for that *humdinger* of a great cornet solo by the once-great Thad Jones on "Jackie-ing" (5 by Monk by 5, Riverside). The late Bud Powell just being Bud Powell (the notes list a specific Powell session as having occurred on 8 May '49 while my ancient copy of *The Amazing Bud Powell* which Blue Note culled it from begs to differ: claims it was May 9th of that year but I'll let it slide for now). Ernie Henry blowing a more Bird-orthodox alto than Sonny Stitt ever dreamed of. And even an appearance by Milt Jackson on piano sounding as Monk-like as he ever does on vibes (proof of something). Good stuff, Jack!



**BEYOND MOBIUS**  
**Cedar Walton**  
**RCA**

BY BOB GLASSENBERG

Cedar Walton is a pianist raised in the be-bop tradition. The story goes that Walton's reputation was so great at one time, he was

recommended by trumpeter Clifford Brown to bandleader Paul Gayten before Brown had ever heard Walton play.

Walton's list of credits include stints in Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers, a group which has produced more than its share of now well known musicians. He's also played in groups headed by Kenny Dorham and J. J. Johnson, who does a great deal of television scoring.

But with this album, *Beyond Mobius*, Walton moves away from his roots, casting aside the acoustic piano for the electric piano and synthesizer and moving into hip, modern tunes.

His sidemen give Walton a great deal of help in this transition. Eddie Harris, besides simply lending his name to the list of musicians on the album, gives the music a good dimension, through his now patented saxophone sound. Then there is Cornell Dupree, rhythm guitar, ex-King Curtis Kingpin and rhythmic mainstay of many Atlantic Records singles sessions in the past decade. And Blue Mitchell's trumpet is always a welcome addition to an album such as this.

It is obvious that Walton is still feeling out the electric instruments he uses on this album, especially the synthesizer. But he is moving in the right direction with it and creates some very good, funky tunes that loosen up as they move.

"Beyond Mobius," the title tune of the LP and one which Cedar Walton wrote, is the best mover. Although a little more punch could have been used in the mix, the rhythm carries the music well and there are some fine solos. The funkiness of Charles Collins on drums, lends a great deal to Walton's version of "Bad Luck," which has already been a disc hit once this year.

The slower tunes on the LP are also done quite well, especially "The Girl with Discotheque Eyes," which was obviously written to be a single. Walton also had his hand in writing that piece.

In "Lonely Cathedral," there is something quite unique. The tune combines the disco sound with straight ahead jazz, creating a very outstanding and moving piece. It is here that the musicians finally seem to completely relax and using the context of a disco rhythm and refrain, move out into some very good improvising. This is the most fun cut on the album and might be the best cut as well, if it is understood for what it is.

If there is a drawback to *Beyond Mobius*, as an LP, it is the vocal arrangements. They simply are not needed and tend to clutter up an otherwise well done project.

Walton is taking a good step into the sounds of today from the solid jazz background which he possesses. We can look forward to many fine tunes from Cedar Walton beyond the confines of *Beyond Mobius*.

## Horace Silver Silver 'n Wood

Includes: Keep On Gettin' Up  
Assimilation/Creation

**SILVER IN WOOD**  
**Horace Silver**  
**Blue Note**

By BOB GLASSENBERG

Horace Silver is one of the most unheralded, prolific composers of our time. Like many musicians born in the 20's and 30's who are finding new audiences today, Silver has kept his main drive and ability which he has developed, and changed with the times.

This album does not indicate any departure from what he's doing. Silver has obviously felt the need to make a statement about positivity and creativity, two things which really walk hand in hand.

"The purpose of 'Tranquillizer Suite,' is to inspire positivity, faith, courage, call it what you may but we all need it desperately..." according to Silver's liner notes.

And the suite does just that, in four parts. Through the use of bright horns, Silver wakes us up and gets us moving on the first tune called "Keep on Gettin' Up." With the second part "Slow Down," we are leveled off into a mellow place where we can think about what's to come. Then there is a segment of change with "Time and Effort," where we are treated to some polarization and tension. Finally we get another shot of energy that ends the suite on a very up note.

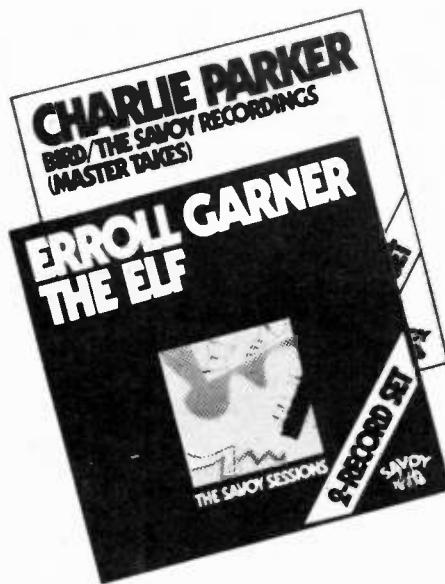
The other composition, "The Process of Creation, Suite," gives us, in music, Horace Silver's concept of how a person goes about making things. "This suite was written to inspire conscious awareness of the process in order that we may create better material things and better atmospheric conditions," writes Silver.

This is also divided into four parts. "Motivation," "Activation," "Assimilation," and "Creation." Each part musically goes through movements which correspond, in Silver's mind to how he finally comes up with the finished product.

Some people explain their thoughts with words. Some explain with pictures, and some, like Horace Silver use music. In this case, Silver put together a large musical ensemble and arranged these tunes for them. The result is an explanation and illustration of positive creativity, a totally entertaining experience.

# SOUL & JAZZ REVIEWS

## SAVOY



### SAVOY RE-ISSUE SERIES

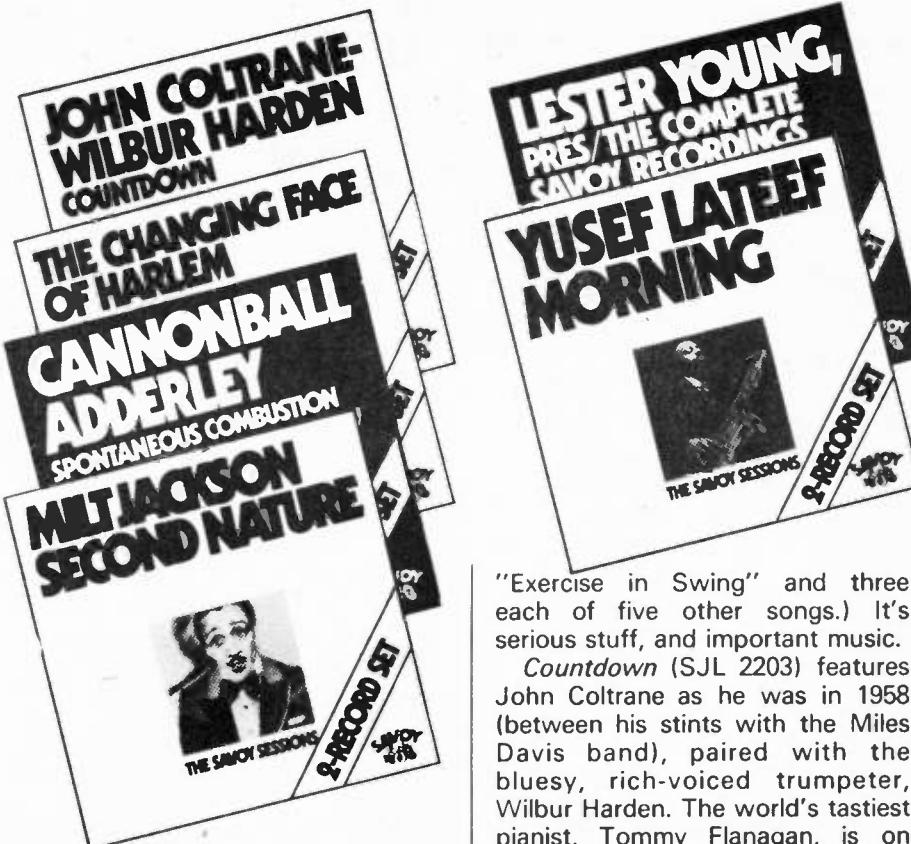
Various Artists  
Savoy/Arista

By COLMAN ANDREWS

Is any jazz record made more than a decade ago safe from disinterment? Will none be allowed to rest in peace? Can any record company hold its head up high these days unless it has at least one double-record representation of Charlie Parker in his Birdland days? Has the record industry been infected by Twofer Fever?

All of which is another way of asking whether there is room on the market, in mid-1976, for another series of double-pocket "historic" jazz reissues. The answer to that is yes, if it's as good a series as this one is. Arista, whose artistic credentials are very much in order, and which had already begun reissuing recently-recorded contemporary jazz on the English-based Freedom label, came into possession last year of the Savoy catalogue. Savoy was one of the strongest and best of the independent jazz labels of the forties, and a number of the most important jazz players of the time (and of the fifties) recorded for it—Parker and Lester Young among them.

Jazz reissues in the past few years have been of varying quality. Some series are excellent; some are mediocre, lacking proper personnel listings or recording information, or are cheaply pack-



aged, or were simply not very exciting music to begin with. None of those criticisms applies to Arista's new Savoy reissues, at least based on these first eight LPs. Packaging is attractive (though I would have preferred documentary photography of some kind to those middling magazine-type illustrations), historical information is complete and accurate as far as I can tell, and—though only three of the LPs are what I'd call essential (Parker, Young, and *The Changing Face of Harlem*)—three more are definitely worth having and the other two are, at the very least, good, strong representations of their subjects' work.

*Bird/The Savoy Recordings [Master Takes]* (S JL 2201) is first-rate material from a period of great power for Charlie Parker. Included here are the famous "Charlie Parker's Reboppers" sides from late 1945, and the usual forties' Parker sidemen are mostly evident, including Miles Davis, Max Roach, and Dizzy Gillespie. Piano players include Bud Powell, John Lewis, Duke Jordan, Tadd Dameron, Sadik Hakim (who was Argonne Thornton when the sides were cut), and—Dizzy Gillespie, occasionally forsaking his trumpet for some strong, blues-bop piano lines. Bop classics abound here—"Billie's Bounce", "Ko-Ko", "Donna Lee", "Chasin' the Bird", "Milestones", "Half-Nelson", "Parker's Mood", "Steeplechase", etc.—and these are high-quality studio recordings—not the radio broadcasts or noisy-nightclub wire-recordings so often made available on LP.

*Pres/The Complete Savoy Recordings* (S JL 2202) is a fine representation of Lester Young's playing in the late forties. There are 35 tracks here, many of them with the Count Basie orchestra, and a good lot of them alternate takes. (There are four versions of

"Exercise in Swing" and three each of five other songs.) It's serious stuff, and important music.

*Countdown* (S JL 2203) features John Coltrane as he was in 1958 (between his stints with the Miles Davis band), paired with the bluesy, rich-voiced trumpeter, Wilbur Harden. The world's tastiest pianist, Tommy Flanagan, is on hand, too.

*Second Nature* (S JL 2204) shows vibraphonist Milt Jackson in a swinging mood, with Lucky Thompson's tenor (as clear as smoky crystal) to spur him on. There are a number of standards on this LP, and a beautiful Duke Ellington medley.

*Morning* (S JL 2205) is a reissue of Yusef Lateef's first sessions for Savoy. Lateef was, in 1957 when these were cut, firmly entrenched in his bop-exotica phase—later refined into his classic "Eastern Sounds" LP on the Prestige Moodsville label. His tenor, flute, and more exotic instrument-playing are both firm and whimsical. Among his assistants are a young Curtis Fuller on trombone (his place was later taken by the above-mentioned Wilbur Harden), and bassist Ernie Farrow, who was, for the benefit of jazz trivia fans, Alice Coltrane's brother.

*Spontaneous Combustion* (S JL 2206) by Cannonball Adderley (with Nat Adderley, Donald Byrd, Jerome Richardson, and Paul Chambers, among others) and *The Elf* (S JL 2207) by Errol Garner-cum-rhythm section are the most expendable parts of this first Savoy release, but they're solid and enjoyable. Take *The Elf* home to Mom.

*The Changing Face of Harlem* (S JL 2208) is an energetic, uneven, fascinating compilation of mid-forties swing and "jump" music. There's plenty of Hot Lips Page, Pete Brown's band with the superb guitarist Al Casey, Ben Webster and Oscar Pettiford playing "Honeysuckle Rose" and "I Surrender Dear", Charlie Parker with Tiny Grimes, Earl Bostic and Don Byas in the same front line (Buck Ram's All-Stars), and more. If I had my way, you'd have to commit this stuff to memory before you were allowed to buy *Weather Report* or *Return to Forever*.

## Lee Ritenour's "First Course"

Lee Ritenour  
First Course  
including:  
A Little Bit Of This And A Little Bit Of That  
Sweet Syncopation  
Theme From "Three Days Of The Condor"  
Canticle For The Universe/Caterpillar



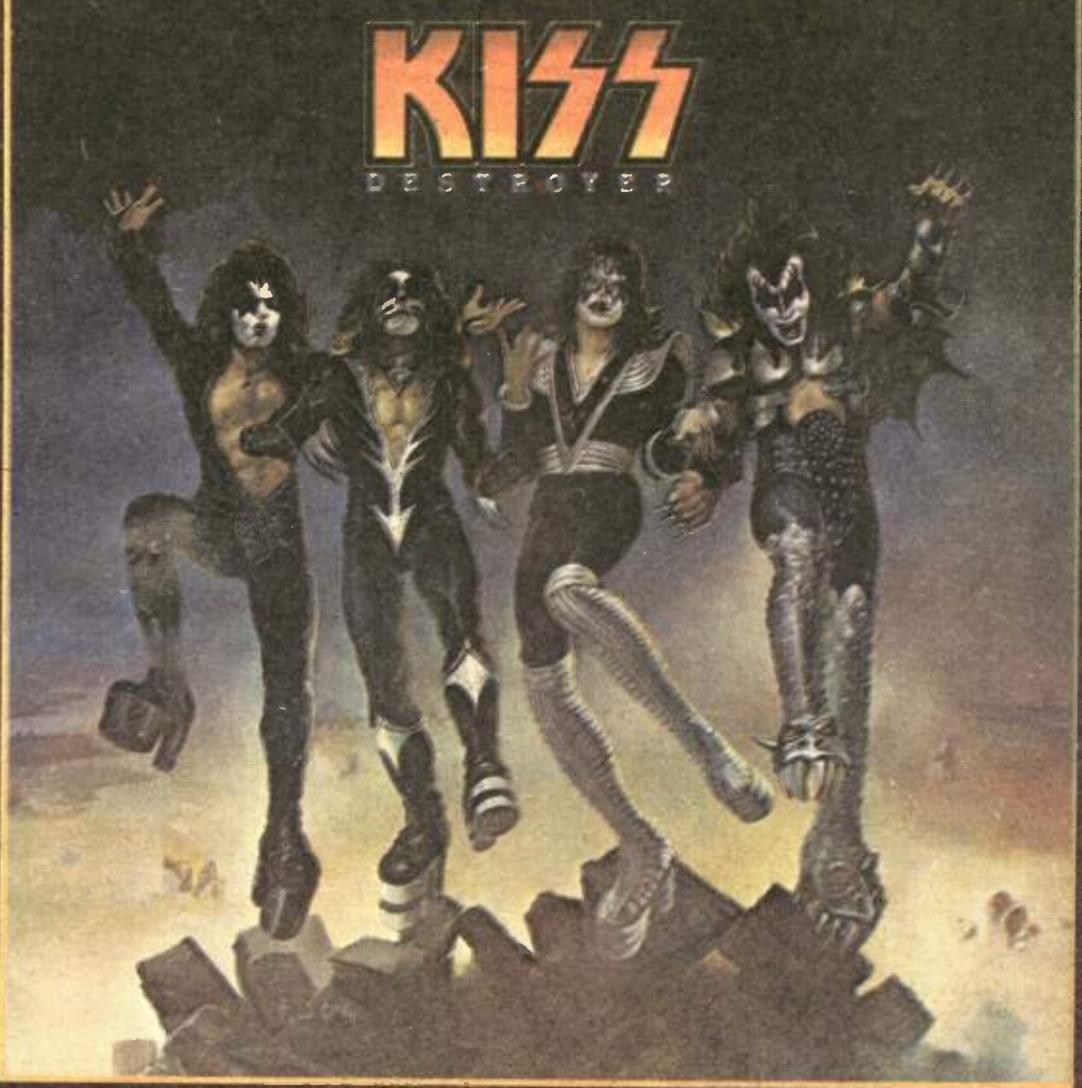
Leonard Feather has written in *Downbeat*: "Lee Ritenour has more going for him at 22 than many musicians can hope to accomplish at twice his age." Lee has played on more than fifty different albums, and with some of the biggest names in the business.

His guitar playing is one of the cleanest—licking around and his debut album features Lee and a solid corps of super musicians.

**On Epic Records and Tapes.**

**THE NEXT ONE:**

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DESTROYER NBLP 7025

PRODUCED BY BOB EZRIN

**THE LIVE ONE!**

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**DRESSED TO KILL** NBLP 7016

**THE ORIGINALS**

**HOTTER THAN HELL** NBLP 7006

**KISS** NBLP 7001

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