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David Bowie Film Debut

By Lita Eliscu
prn staff writer

New York—David Bowie's film debut in Nicolas Roeg's *The Man Who Fell To Earth* opened to the fanatical response typically associated with Bow-

ie's concert audiences. As block-long lines struggled for position on Manhattan and, across the country, Los Angeles pavement, the anticipation was frightening: Not even the knowledge that Bowie

doesn't sing or play, only acts, could squelch their enthusiasm.

This film stars Bowie as a space

visitor who comes to Earth to find a way to save his planet which is dying for lack of water.

[Cont'd. on page 16]

By Michael Barackman

Beverly Hills, CA—"The association with Elton is fine by me," begins Kiki Dee. "I like it. On occasions, though, I've felt, 'Oh no, here we go again.' Everybody always asks me about Elton. I don't like telling everybody what Elton has for breakfast."

"Elton has presented me with a lot of opportunities and has helped me a lot. So now, it's up to me to prove to him that he was right, and prove to the public that there's something there apart from me being Elton John's friend."

Kiki hopes that proof will be found on her

Kiki & Elton: In Radar Love Again



next album, to be recorded in September. It will be produced by Elton John. "I won't let

him sing on any of the backing vocals," she says jokingly, suddenly realizing that Elton's involvement might make reaching her goals a little more difficult. "He's a wry little weasel and he'll be desperate to sing, but I'll say, 'Nope, back in the box!'"

ROCK CINEMA

The First 21 Years ★★★★★★

1955-1976

21 years ago, almost to the very day, the medium of film in fact introduced rock 'n' roll to the masses. It's not commonly known that rock's birthmark, "Rock Around The Clock," was conceived simultaneously on wax and film. In August of 1955, during the opening frames of Richard Brooks' *Blackboard Jungle*, the world was first dumbfounded by Bill Haley and his fabulous Comets' "One, Two, Three-O'Clock, Four O'Clock Rock." Phonograph Record presents this month our first documentation of the role film has played in rock music, and vice versa: Coming to terms with the *Rockcinema Phenomenon...*



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Carly Simon · Another Passenger

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David Bowie in **The man who fell to Earth**

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14 Spokane, Wash.

Aug.

15 Seattle, Wash.
26 & 27 Detroit, Mich. Cobo Hall
28 Chicago, Ill. Outdoors w/ZZ
Top & Robin Trower
31 New York, N.Y. Madison
Square Garden

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ROCKCINEMA: *The First 21 Years*

Hit artists of the late '70s and early '80s will announce, simultaneous with the release of a long-play recording and two-year world tour, their latest full-length feature film, available in video-cassette, of course.

Twenty-one years ago, almost to the very day, the medium of film in fact introduced rock 'n' roll to the masses. It's not commonly known that rock's birthmark, "Rock Around The Clock," was conceived both on wax and film at the same time. In August of 1955, during the opening frames of Richard Brooks' *Blackboard Jungle*, the world was first dumbfounded by Bill Haley and his fabulous Comets' "One, Two, Three O'Clock, Four O'Clock Rock."

Phonograph Record Magazine presents this month our first documentation of the role film has played in rock music, and vice versa: from Little Richard screaming "Good Golly Miss Molly!" at Jayne Mansfield through "Help, I need somebody!" to the present.

Coming to terms with the Rockcinema Phenomenon...

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BOWIE FILM: *The Man Who Fell To Earth*

Rock's sci-fi specimen, David Bowie, makes his acting debut in Nicolas Roeg's metaphoric study of rock-star life, *The Man Who Fell To Earth*. Coupled with the recent popularity of *Tommy*, Bowie's rock-musicless vehicle suggests that the subject of rock (and its principle personalities) have gone from trendy cult item attended to by hack Hollywood producers/directors and a handful of fans to become a mass marketable and aesthetic object of visual presentation.

Mr. Selznick, please meet Mr. Bowie.

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KIKI DEE: *The Sunny Side of Elton*

In a revealing interview, Kiki explains why Kiki went away—"paranoia," "woman problems," "being identified as Elton's little girl"—and why, apparently, Kiki's back to stay. While her duet with Elton, "Don't Go Breaking My Heart," is Top Ten and a likely #1 (her first hit since 1974's "I've Got The Music In Me"), Kiki insists that it is time she establishes her independence. While Elton is producing her next album (due September), she asserts: "Elton's a wry little weasel and he'll be desperate to sing, but I'll say, 'Nope, back in the box!'"

Kiki's Dilemma.

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BOB SEGER: *Detroit's Darling Dagger*

If it's the Music of Detroit you're concerned with, forget there ever was a Motown: Heavy-metal boogie rules the city and no one exemplifies the working man lifestyle/songstyle better than Bob Seger. While the man is hero of the motor-city masses, he is little-known in, say, Rodney's Hollywood. Why so? Detroit's own music-historian explains.

A Pontiac Smash.

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FROM THE LAND OF THE RISING SUN: FELIX PAPPALARDI.

Felix Pappalardi, former member/producer of Mountain. Producer of the Youngbloods and Cream. And now backed by a blazing young combo from Japan called Creation.

Felix Pappalardi and Creation is one of the most extraordinary and musically rewarding collaborations of Felix Pappalardi's legendary career.

Felix first performed with Creation in Japan and invited them to America to play on his new album.

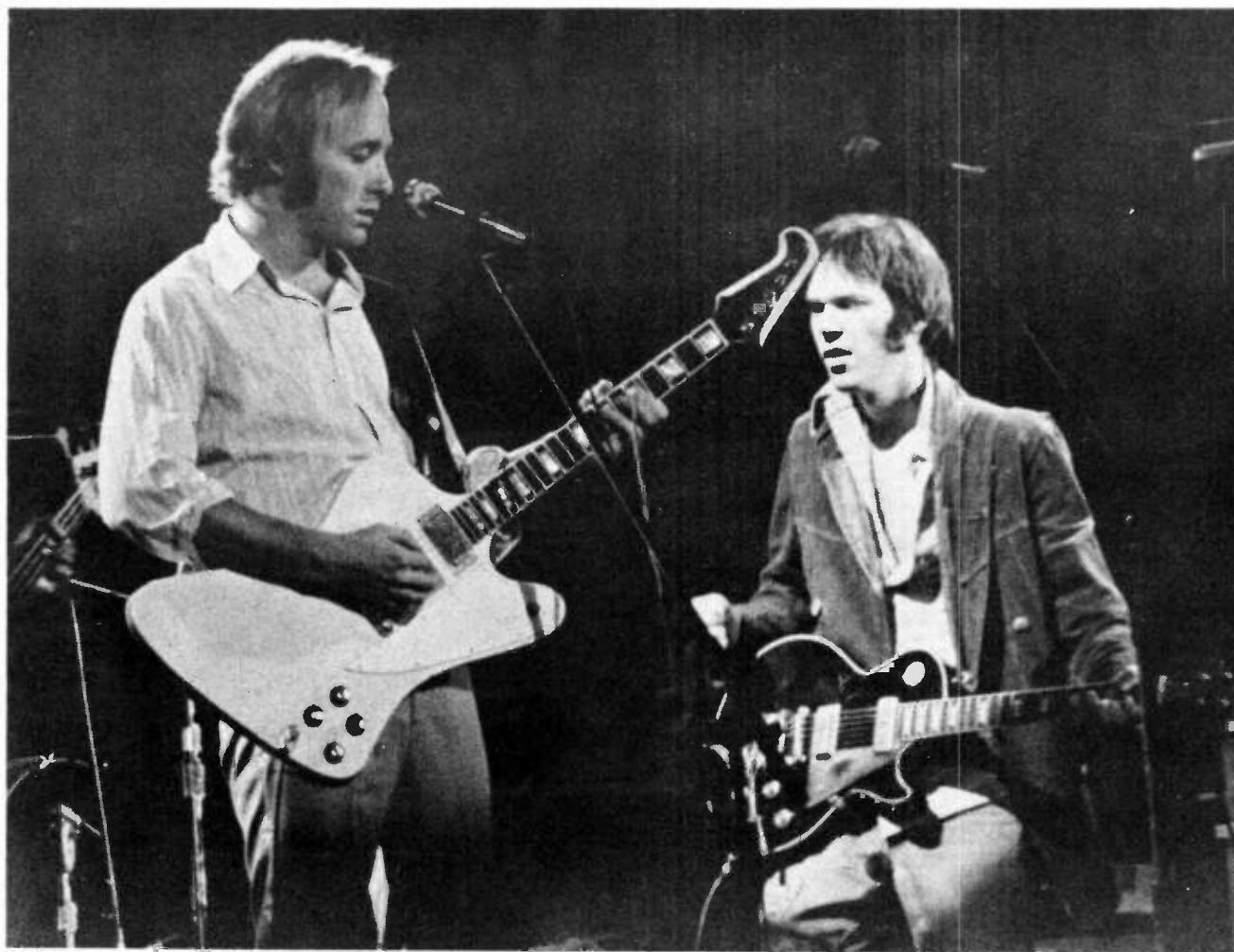
The music Pappalardi and his young discoveries create together is powerful and joyous.

For Felix Pappalardi, a new creation.



"FELIX PAPPALARDI & CREATION"
ON A&M RECORDS & TAPES
Produced by Felix Pappalardi & Gail Collins

Performances



Stills & Young: "The most authentic since Springfield days"

STILLS/YOUNG
The Spectrum
Philadelphia, Pa.

By Michael Tearson

Bi-centennial. Philadelphia. End of June. So, understandably there were those occasional very annoying explosives catapulted hither and yon. A gift from one tier to another. Red Devil victims notwithstanding, this crowd was a very casual, squeaky-clean, Tuesday-night bunch-a Philly thrill-seekers. This was, be aware, the opening of the exalted Stills/Young reunion tour.

From the dark stage came the opening chords of "Love the One You're With," the spotlight hit Stills, and there he was, just like he described himself in "My Favorite Changes"—"The kid with the big white guitar." Next Young stepped into the light, joining in on the chorus for some tentative harmony. Clad in perma-pressed, patched Levis, hair trimmed short to 1964 length, Young seemed fresh, healthy—he was even clean-shaven.

Young's "The Loner" followed,

Stills singing the first verse, Neil the second, with an equally impressive trading-off of guitar licks. Then, symbolically, they clasped hands strongly—the tour was on.

There has always been a complementary contrast between Stills and Young, seeing them perform together makes this very clear. While Stills uses lots of guitar notes and glides randomly on vocals, Young is curt, rifle-like and precise in his guitar work.

"This is dedicated to my car," announced Young, introducing "Long May You Run," a country influenced title and one of the show's few new songs. It signaled a brief transitional country-flavored segue in the set which ultimately led to the most authentic version of "For What It's Worth" since Springfield days. Stills' political diatribe stopped mercifully short of the pits reached in the song's CSN&Y interpretation. A surprisingly overt burst of audience recognition must've encouraged Stills to deliver a more worthy vocal treatment than thought possible and, impossibly, the words meant more this time. The night's first standing-ovation followed.

Stills performed an extended guitar solo during his "Black

Queen," which evolved into a celebrated Stills/Young guitar-duel— "Southern Man." The Stills/Young (STILLS) back-up band— Joe Lala (percussion), Joe Vitale (drums), Big George Terry (bass) and Jerry Aeillo (keyboards)—contributed as much fervor, energy and noise in general during "Southern Man" 's guitar war. It was both logical and necessary that the band take five (or whatever the proper adult-dosage is these days) at this time.

The inevitable acoustic penance followed a brief intermission. "On the Way Home," the show's second and last Springfield keepsake, led-off the segment. "After the Goldrush," featuring a solemn and sad Young, alone—forever alone—on piano (very Dory Previn), was certainly the set's emotional and aesthetic zenith. The second standing-ovation followed.

Then the band returned for the finale; "Buying Time" (from *Illegal Stills*)/"Cowgirl in the Sand." The night's third standing-ovation followed. Stills/Young obliged with the anticipated encore, "Suite: Judy Blue Eyes."

This reunion has goaded the most honest performances I've seen either of them deliver in

years, honest. They're obviously enjoying one-another's company/ talents once again. Based on this Philadelphia opening, The Stills/Young Tour is one of the summer's main events.

TOMMY JAMES

Troubador
Los Angeles

By KEN BARNES

It was incredibly good and it was incredibly frustrating. Tommy James was stunning. As a terminally addicted Top 40 fetishist I've come to expect the worst when an AM pop idol comes to town. Either they go to extreme lengths to deny their past and stress how "contemporary" they've become, or they clank onstage like a rusty hit machine, grinding out embittered versions of former glories. But Tommy James is no animated jukebox. He had a hot band who played and sang superbly. He rocked out on new material. He rocked out ferociously on his hits.

"Draggin' The Line" (transformed from catchy bubblegum to throbbing hard rock), "Tighter Tighter" (old Alive & Kickin' hit Tommy wrote/produced; now his powerful new single), "One Track Mind" (smashing new LP cut), "Crystal Blue Persuasion" (still a relative turkey but easy enough on the ears). When he did "Crimson & Clover" it was without a doubt one of the supreme rock & roll moments in my experience—and I wasn't alone. He followed with a thunderous medley of "Hanky Panky" (heavy-metalized, infinitely stronger than on record), "I Think We're Alone Now" (never sounded like this), and the primordial disco stomper "Mony Mony." He closed with a fabulous "Sweet Cherry Wine." All great songs, no question, but live they were shaped in a new, unexpectedly thrilling dimension.

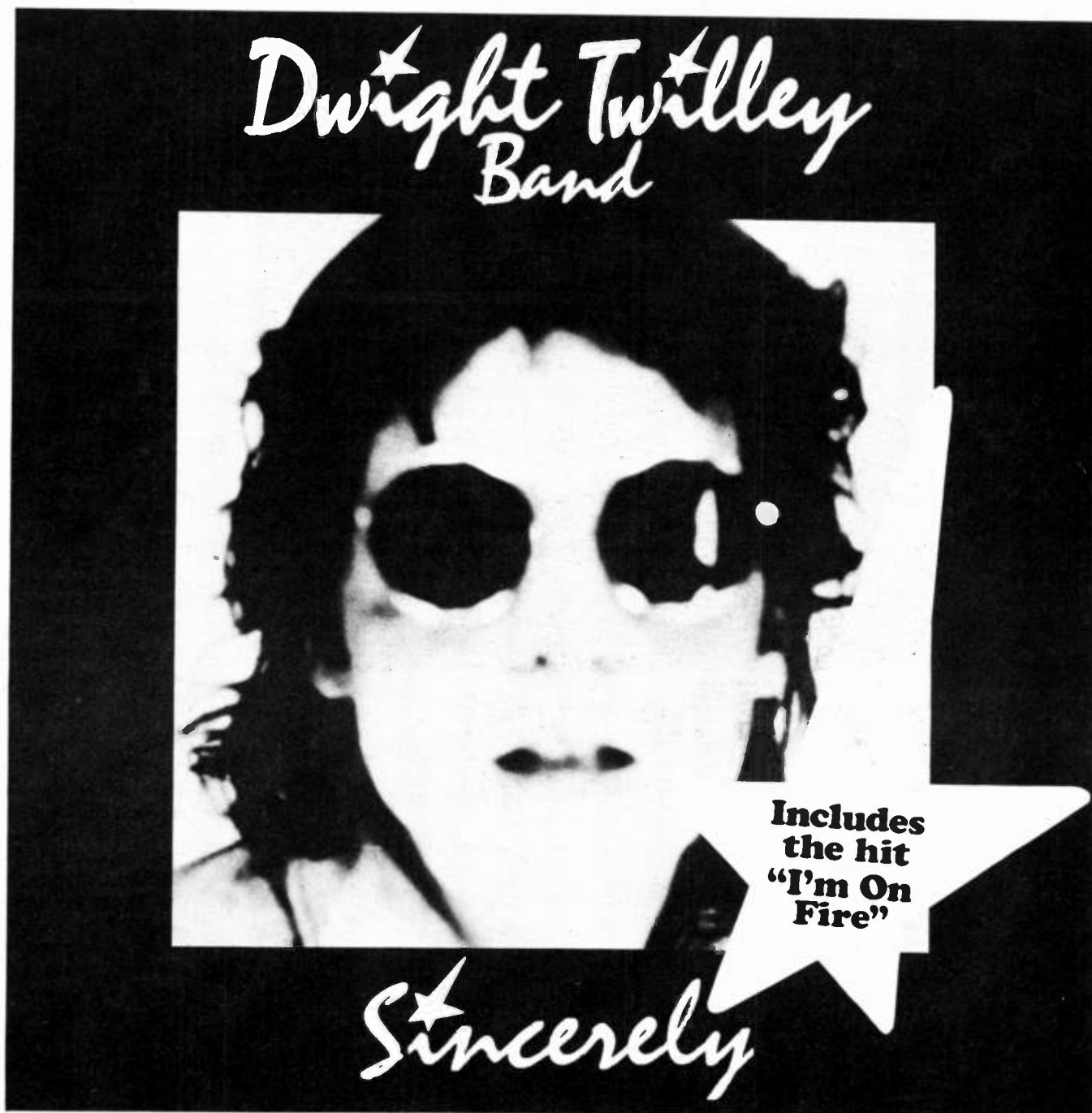
That was the good part, here the frustrating part. Tommy James laid down this incendiary set to (count 'em, and I did) 40 people. They may have been an enthusiastic 40, blessed with great taste (in fact they were definitely the Top 40 people in Hollywood as far as good taste went), but the total was disgraceful. Of course Tommy was up against some heavy competition at Hollywood's other plush niteries—*Blacksmoke* (Donna Summer's backing group) was at the Starwood and *Camel* was at the Roxy.

"This is tragic," a record exec in attendance said. "Tommy James should be up there on any rock & roll stage in the world, with the best of 'em." Look at Neil Diamond, I suggested (currently taking home six-figure paychecks

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"If you've ever wondered just how diverse—compositionally and musically—a four-piece pop unit can be, you must make it your business to get this record real soon."

MARTIN CERF
Phonograph Record, June, 1976



SUPERPOP

**The Dwight Twilley Band
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and it's fresh.**



**On Shelter Records
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and GRT Tapes.**

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VICIOUS DIRT, RUMORS and SCANDALS from



Finally, the holidays are over and *Parents beware*—your teenage girls will be coming back to Hollywood and their Prince. I *must* have them back!

The *only* happening on the 4th, my dears, was the Beach Boys concert at Anaheim Stadium. Not only was Brian Wilson there, but just hoards and hoards of sun-tanned teenage girls glistening in bikinis. Oh so tempting. Rod Stewart obviously thought the occasion ripe to, shall we say, break-in his new axe-player, a luscious 17-year-old blonde (female) who was backstage, who wasn't backstage, who was on-stage and who was under-the-stage.

My, my, isn't dearest Rodney taking this "Night On The Town" promotion a little too far? Rod met some female fans at Nick's Fish Market and then took them to the Paradise Ballroom (very gay in-crowd disco) and, and...well, I guess it's that old line, *while Britt's away, Rod's at play*. (Speaking of which, my young and delicious ball fans, Rod can be seen every Saturday morning playing soccer with Chris Jagger and other English pals at a Beverly Hills park.)

Just a kick away from the Beach Boys concert was an even more historic event (at least Tony Kaye, David Bowie's keyboardist thought

so): The Monkees, now Dolenz, Jones, Boyce & Hart, played Disneyland, and guess who came to din-din...Peter! In full Charles Manson drag, no less. It was just so fab, I mean there he was, *actual* Peter Tork, playing bass on "Last Train To Clarksville." I had to rap: when I asked Peter why, oh why, hadn't he rejoined Mickey and Davey, he said, "No one ever asked me."

Godzilla Comes To America or *Japanese Teenage Trample Hollywood*: Go Hiromi, the number one teen star in Japan—if you think Your Prince is a child molester, this guy's got the 5-15 year-old set messing in their diapers—met and was entertained by, sigh, Rock's Eternal Goodwill Ambassador, yours truly. The Japanese press and thousands of Japanese teenage girls—even the older ones look so young, innocent and edible, yummy—also came, and, well, in-crowd is in-crowd in any tongue. I couldn't resist taking all my foreign friends down to see the Runaways at the Topanga Corral... Here was their first introduction to teenage rebellion, American style, and even with very so-so translations, Go told me that Cherie was a fox (*Oishi karada motteru-ne!*). Your Prince then took everyone to Hollywood and to Rodney's Roost, the Rainbow. In all their glory were

Japanese pretend-alikes parading around the table in kimonos, flaunting, wondering who this teen idol was. All they had to do was go to the Shrine and see Go make sukiyaki out of the Bay City Rollers, whose "Saturday Night" he does pre-pube-punk perfect. Oh yes, the concert was taped for a live album and it stars Rodney on introductions. You must get the Toshiba Records import. (I shall autograph on request.) And the Japanese, who know a great buy when they see one, offered me a gig making commercials. Dear, dear....How can I advertise Datsuns when everybody knows I only drive Cadillacs?

Promises, promises: Runaway Cherie and I have been promised a very big dinner from David Bowie because of mishaps between David's publicist and myself. (Your Prince shall forgive.) That lobster at The Palm sounds very good. Meanwhile, David is in Paris now, back from his top-secret Russian adventure, working with Eno and Robert Fripp on the all-new Iggy Pop album, hopefully released this autumn. Afterwards, David will pursue his friendship with Eno and Fripp on other sundry projects. (Insert yawn.) David starts his tour of America in January '77, and it's likely that Mr. D will play the Aladdin in Las Vegas.

Our very own Hollywood Stars signed to Arista, but the boys had to change their name to Escape, which was, if you dears would kindly remember, a tune from Alice's "Nightmare," written by the lovely and talented Marc Anthony. What with the Starz (Capitol) making such a smashing debut, who needs the confusion? Not Rodney.

Oh dear, it's hard enough entertaining all our rock 'n' roll in-crowd celebrities, but now it's the movie folk. Mind you, they are interesting, but they are usually a little too...old. I was very pleased, however, by my luck at the Toni Basil show at the Roxy, where I did some very serious across-the-table and...(you know) flirting with

Tatum O'Neal while my date did some of the same with father Ryan. Ricky Nelson and Dustin Hoffman were also at the table, and seemed very disgusted. (Your Prince needn't make apologies.) Also, I enjoyed the nymphet company of Linda Blair at the Rainbow. Over a long coke, Linda told me she just finished doing *Exorcist, Part 2* with Richard Burton. (I was extremely jealous.) On the subject of dear Richard, it seems he and David Essex have finished yet another version of H.G. Wells' *War Of The Worlds*.

The Boob-Tube: The Runaways have been asked to do the music on the NBC-TV documentary "Dawn: A Portrait Of A Run-away," all about runaway teenage girls who come to Hollywood looking for gay boys (now I'm very jealous), a show actually filmed at the Gold Cup. Eve Plumb, ex-*Brady Bunch*, will reportedly be network TV's first nude girl. How gear.

Maels & Dolls: The original New York Dolls have reformed and are planning to record an album. (David, whatever's happened between you and I, I still think your lips are the *cutest*.) And when it comes to *cheeky* chic, the Maels have everybody beat—fab photographer Richard Avedon designed the album cover for their September release, *The Big Beat* (produced by Rupert Holmes). No "Sparks," just *The Mael Brothers*.

More Starwood Sneeze: It seems that Roxy Music's Eddie Jobson, who's hanging out at the Starwood, wants a job (Roxy will not tour for at least 12 months). Frank Zappa and Ron and Russ Mael are interested. (If they have a coin flip, will they ask Your Prince?) If you had kept your eyes open (shame on you), you would have noticed that Wings recently played bouncer at the door of the Starwood.

Beyond this, boys and girls, I cannot say. What with the wretched beastie, the sun, coming up, Rodney must say beddy-bye. After all, strange as it may seem, even I must have my beauty-rest.



The Return Of Terry Reid

Terry Reid was one of the 60's most popular rock and roll prodigies. He was fronting his own band in England at the age of 15 and at 16 he was on the road in Europe with the Rolling Stones. He made his first appearance in this country at 17 as opening act for the Cream Farewell Tour. And later that year he was back on the road in this country with the Stones. He recorded several albums during that time including the classic "Bang Bang," and became a cult figure to a large audience.

Following his performance at the 1969 Isle of Wight Festival, Terry withdrew from the rock and roll spotlight to write and immerse himself in Third World musical consciousness. Now he emerges from his self-imposed retreat with his first album for ABC, produced by his friend Graham Nash. It features his amazing guitar, some beautiful Reid-Nash harmonies, and eight new songs written by Terry while he was away.

ABCD-935



"Seed Of Memory:" An unforgettable return. On ABC Records & GRT Tapes.

Produced by Graham Nash.

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Dion bounces back: "I'm singing the way I talk—street language."

By KEN BARNES

MIAMI, FLA.—"Frankie Valli turned my head around. I was in Westbury (Conn.), where he was playing, and he said, 'Watch, this.' He introduced me and the whole crowd stood up!" Dion DiMucci tells the story. "There was something about how the people responded that night. They gave me something...I felt I gotta get out and record a good album for these people, I want to give them good music, record it well, and execute it well."

Dion is truly awed by his audience's long-term fidelity. Not awed enough to submerge his own musical aspirations to their oldies-oriented expectations, but deeply moved nonetheless. The feeling emerges again when he discusses the live LP *Reunion* with his fabled backing group the Belmonts in early 1973—his last U.S. album, recorded at a rock revival in New York.

Dion knew all along that it was his hits of the 50's and early 60's that people came to hear, but he fought the oldies stereotype-casting for years. It was a brave, perhaps foolhardy thing to do. How could anyone throw away songs like "Ruby Baby," "The Wanderer" (currently a hit again in England), "Runaround Sue," "Lovers Who Wander," "Sandy," "Drip Drop," "Love Came To Me," "Little Diane," "Donna The Prima Donna"—merely typing the titles brings back the immense impact of those mythic, brilliantly-sung archetypes of an era.

But Dion did throw away those songs—for years he ignored them in live performance, occasionally condescending to offer a jokey, almost contemptuous "Wanderer." He also bypassed the smooth harmony workouts—by necessity, since he was working along. "I felt boxed in," he explains. "Now I think it's gonna help me. I'm using it as a springboard now, I'm getting a kick out of it."

"I'm looking to get accepted in the now for who I am now, and I think I can have even more fun with those songs. When it's a hard-core nostalgia show it tends to turn bitter after the first three or four songs. When people relate to me in that one dimension, I relate to myself differently and I resent it."

Thanks to a personal change of musical direction, and some uncomfortable habits, coinciding with the British Invasion, Dion's hits stopped cold after "Drip Drop" peaked in early 1964. During a five-year dry spell he cut exceptional personalized blues singles ("Spoonful," "Hoochie Coochie Man"), Dylan songs, and a brilliant, years-ahead-of-its-time 1966 B-side, "My Girl The Month Of May," which sounded like Steeleye Span forcibly transplanted to the streets of the Bronx.

Then he was given Dick Holler's "Abraham, Martin & John," and turned it into a moving elegy and a Top 5 hit in late '68. Success again, but it was short-lived. A novel acoustic translation of "Purple Haze" was a minor hit, but nothing followed. Dion embarked

on a four-year tour of the folkie circuit, singing Fred Neil, some blues, and his own folk-styled compositions, showing off superb acoustic guitar mastery and a limber scatting vocal style, all of which went largely unnoticed. He made four albums for Warner Bros., which on the whole failed to match his live prowess (notable exception: the deeply personal, idiosyncratic "Your Own Backyard" in 1970) and got progressively blander.

"Where I was at the time, it was kind of therapeutic with the acoustic guitar, sitting down here in Miami. Very selfishly, it was good for me," Dion says. It was not good for Warners, however, and they cajoled him into reuniting with his New York street mates the Belmonts for the *Reunion* album. Despite Dion's displeasure ("I thought it was really unprofessional. We didn't rehearse"), it was an enjoyable set which displayed to good effect Dion's new vocal maturity. But sales were unspectacular and Dion languished on Warners for a couple of years.

Then Phil Spector formed the Warner/Spector label in late 1974, and the most exciting project had to be his teaming with Dion. Both

from New York, from the same era—expectations sailed to the moon. Dion's did too: "I grew up with the Spector sound, the feeling that he captured. There was no way anything could hold be back from singing on top of that sound."

But the album was a disappointment. Like all recent Spector,

productions, it was conducted at a dirge-like pace, and panoramic Spector effects, still plodded where they used to charge. "It was basically Phil's album," says Dion. "That was my most indifferent album. I thought there was a place we could meet musically, and there really wasn't. Spector wanted to spin me, and I had to ask myself, 'do I want to be spun or not?' I sang songs I like, but it was very frustrating hearing the tracks, knowing I could have done harmonies here, or the dynamics could have been more intense there..." The album was never released in the States (it's available in England); two singles from it were issued on Warner and Big Tree/Spector.

"It just goes on in a drone. I like to have fun with music, I like to get light...you either grow or you go. I wish he had the confidence in himself that I have in him or that other people have in him. If he were in touch with the people who really loved him...but he cuts himself off from things. That gets you into a longing mood, I think..."

Some time after the Spector experience, Dion plunged into a new project, working with Steve Barri and Michael Omartian, the new Warners wizards of Sebastian and Pratt & McClain fame. The new album, *Streetheart*, represents an important turn in Dion's career and attitude. "I stopped singing about mountains and honky-tonks and I'm singing the way I talk—street language."

The music and arrangements may strike some as embedded too deeply in a slushy contemporary MOR vein, but the LP has considerable subtle second-and-third-time-through impact. The strongest immediate appeal belongs to the old Temptations hit "The Way You Do The Things You Do," a casual, relaxed version with suave scatting along the cool Smokey Robinson rhymes that brings "Ruby Baby" back to mind. "That's a song I've had in my head since the day I heard it," Dion comments. "It was a live take; I think it was a little too casual, though."

The first single, "Hey My Love," is lush but light-hearted, with vocal power to spare around the choruses, and sounds thoroughly contemporary. There are plenty of other 45 candidates, "The Way You Do," for one and perhaps "Queen of '59," an affectionate tribute to Dion's first generation fans.

One might ask for a higher proportion of upbeat tunes, but as a bid for success in today's market it's a potent set. To support it, Dion is putting together a band—"I've never had my own band; this'll be the first time"—and planning a showcase tour.

Dion would like to move into acting—"If I could get some credibility on records, I'd have my name submitted to *Kojak* and *Baretta*, any of the street shows." If his music/comedy guest shot on one of the last Cher solo shows was any indication, he's got a promising thespian future.

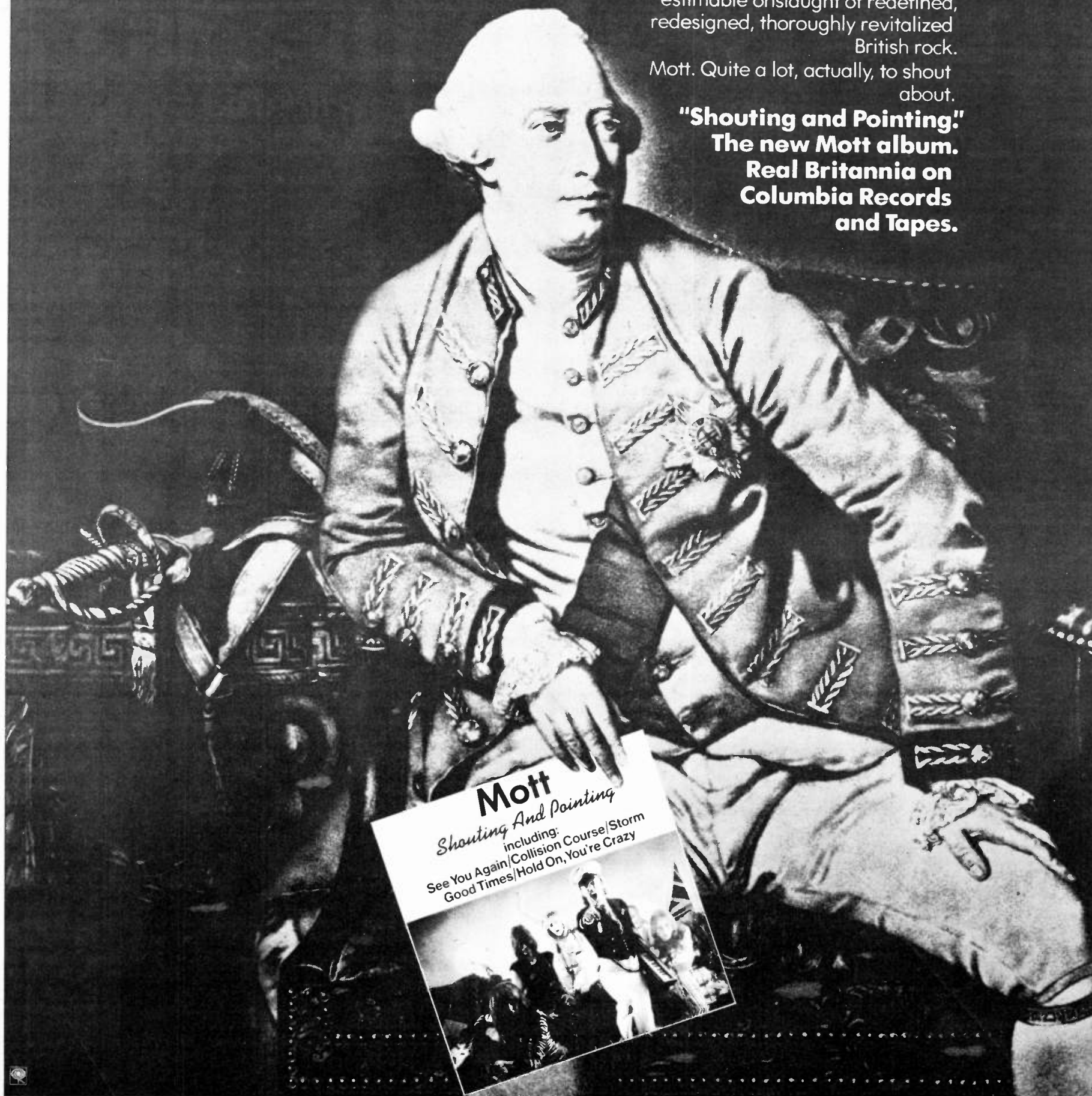
King George's Revenge.

George III may have been careless enough to lose all those colonies, but Mott won them back, and right royally, too.

With a bang-up, star-spangled American tour even Francis Scott Key couldn't have resisted. And with a gleeful new album called "Shouting and Pointing," a highly estimable onslaught of redefined, redesigned, thoroughly revitalized British rock.

Mott. Quite a lot, actually, to shout about.

"Shouting and Pointing."
The new Mott album.
Real Britannia on
Columbia Records
and Tapes.





Point Blank: ZZ's Boogie Brothers

By JOE NICK PATOSKI

DALLAS, TX.—For the past three years, ZZ Top has been unchallenged as Texas' leading boogie-barbarians—Houston's answer to The Allmans. Now, the *Big D* (Dallas), introduces Point Blank, an act which could be the first real home-grown threat to the ZZ Dynasty.

Point Blank grew out of the same suburban Texas ranks as did ZZ, and, until now, their early careers have had an incredibly similar sequence. Like ZZ, Point Blank has spent several years developing what's now a rather large local following throughout Texas, parts of Louisiana and Oklahoma. First a club band, then second-billed act, and finally—in some Texas communities—they're headlining major venues. This, all without benefit of the proverbial, so-called mandatory 'chart-record'—in this instance, there's no record at all.

Regional rock: Music created, promoted, supported, celebrated and eventually purchased by local yokals has always been a strategic factor in the ultimate success, sell-through of any new act. Moreover, since 1972, some form of local and/or regional following has become a prerequisite if a new act is to survive, prosper.

Point Blank's career is one long-range, master-plan, the science of which was devised by famed Texas rock czar, Bill Ham—also the prime-mover behind ZZ Top (he produces and manages both acts). Ham's grass-roots, direct-to-audience presentation over the years, has caused ZZ to become one of 1976's biggest concert draws. Ham has enlisted the band's many thousands of boogie-fanatics in an effort to provide Point Blank a head-start in areas outside the Texas border. Point Blank will open most of ZZ's concert dates throughout their current *World Wide Texas Tour* extravaganza (which runs through the end of the

year). It's projected over 1,000,000 will have attended these concerts.

It's not unlikely then that nearly all who've seen *PB* inevitably compare them to ZZ. They were molded from that same *whaat-boy* blooze base; a relentless, pounding, all-guitar orchestra, sans melody.

The Ham-Master-Plan now necessitates release of *PB's* long awaited first album—long awaited in Texas that is. Ham brought the band to Clive Davis' *Arista* label (ZZ Record for London Records)—*Arista's* accounting and A&R Departments (Davis), must have been acutely aware of the band's broad-based Texas following, and rapidly spreading popularity therefrom by way of the ZZ Top connection—this would be the only logical explanation for such extra digit negotiation for the band's debut and future recordings.

As for the music on *Point Blank* (*Arista* 4087), released in mid-July; their token, full-blown down-and-out-in-Texas trauma, "Lone Star Fool," cautiously avoids ZZ riffs in favor of gnashing the guitar potency of "Rock & Roll Hoochie Coo" (Derringer version) together with a vocal style akin to BTO's "Let It Ride." In contrast to ZZ, singer 'Big John' hasn't Billy Gibbons' low-toned growl, nonetheless, he surpasses Dusty Hill's node-scraping half-holler. John's voice gets *PB* past their weakest moments—the romantic ballads—and adds an edge to potentially lifeless lyric images.

Whereas ZZ as a power-trio has taken high-octane rumblings to the limit, *PB* as a five-piece have room to expand. Still in all, the ZZ shadow looms heavy, no doubt it will for some time to come. That's not to say the long-range benefits of a ZZ endorsement is anything but the most helpful service a *little-ol-band-from-Texas* could dare hope for. It's as James Brown once so prophetically observed:

"Open da door,
an'I'll git-it
mah-self...."

WHEELIN' and DEALIN'

ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL

Goodtime, down-home,
fancy pickin' and pluckin' music
swings its way through
Asleep At The Wheel's
new Capitol album,
WHEELIN' AND DEALIN'!
Includes Bobby Troup's
ROUTE 66
and Doug Kershaw's
CAJUN STRIPPER!

*"Western Swing Isn't Dead
It's Just Asleep At The Wheel!"*

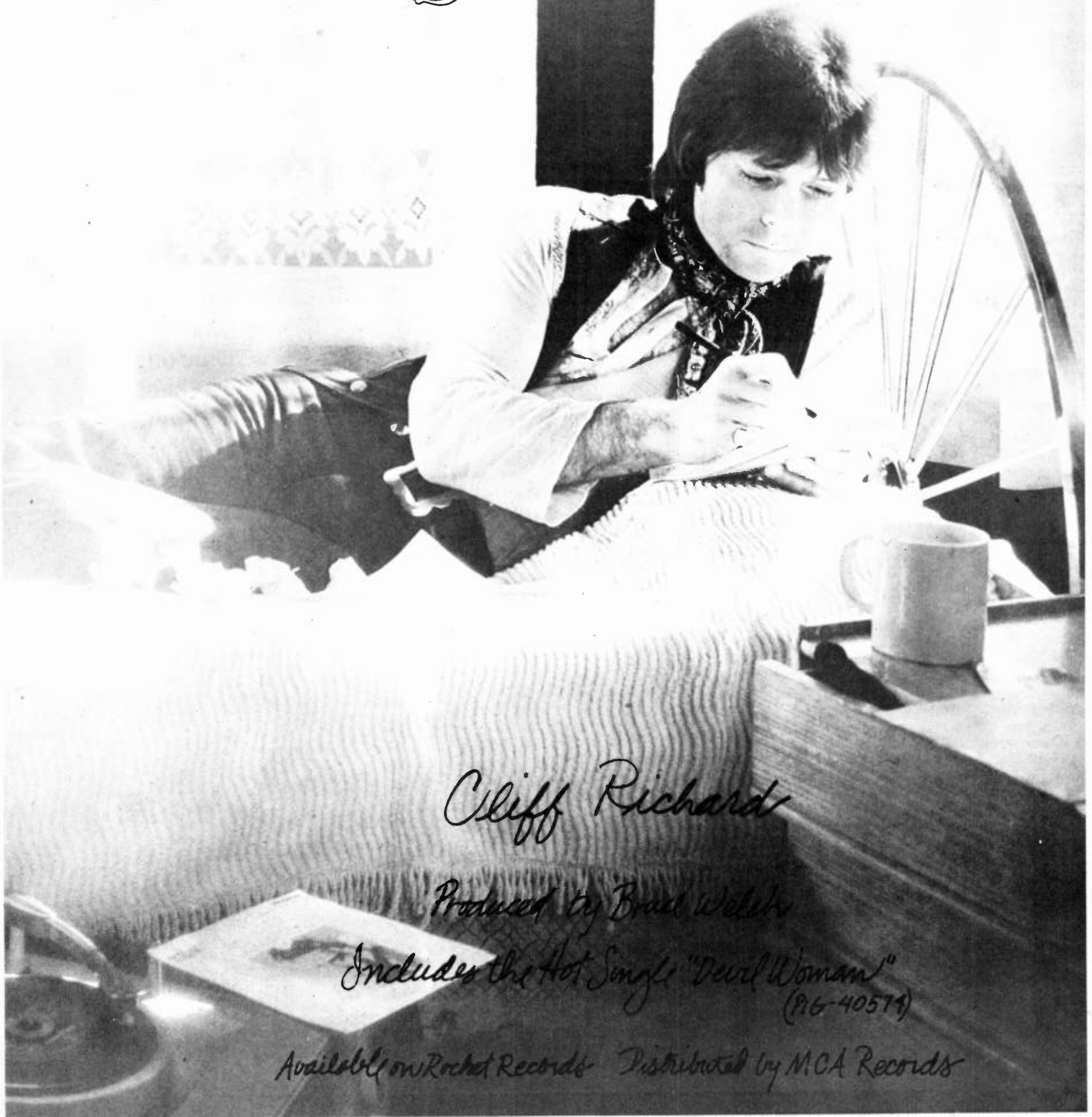


—John B. Earnshaw
Unicorn Times, Washington, D.C.
May 1976



I'M NEARLY FAMOUS

(P/G-2210)

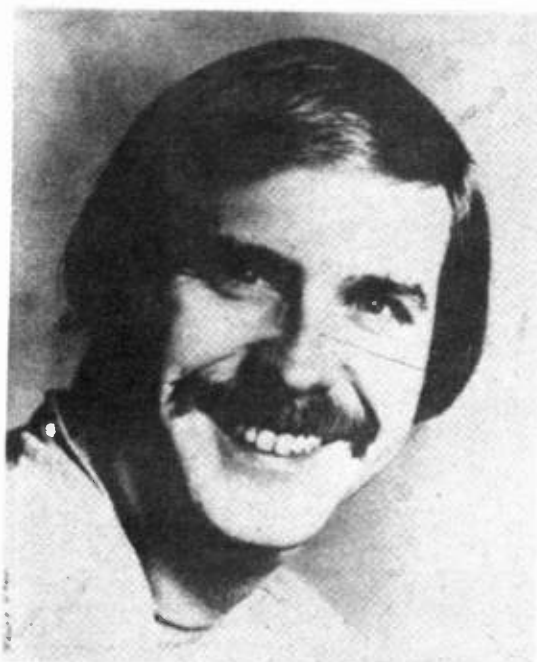


Cliff Richard

Produced by Brad Welch

Includes the Hot Single "Devil Woman"
(P/G-40574)

Available on Rocket Records Distributed by MCA Records



RICHARD NEER

Richard Neer began in college radio at Adelphi University, and, at the same time, pursued an acting career. Upon graduation, he became program operations director for a Long Island station, creating one of the first FM progressive formats in suburban radio.

In the spring of 1971, he came to WNEW-FM as Music Director, and three months later became a member of the full-time on-air staff. He is still involved in theatre, as well as film and most recently a nationally syndicated radio series.

Wed.-Thurs.-Fri.	2AM-6AM
Saturday	2PM-6PM
Sunday	12N-4PM



The Musical Collaboration of the Decade!

GO

STOMU YAMASHTA



STEVE WINWOOD



MIKE SHRIEVE



Against a gently simulated background, as distant stars, planets, and constellations stream by and disappear, you are entering the world of GO. The musical genius of Japan's STOMU YAMASHTA, and the brilliant vocals and keyboards of rock's superstar STEVE WINWOOD along with drummer MIKE SHRIEVE.

S T O M U Y A M A S H T A
S T E V E W I N W O O D
M I C H A E L S H R I E V E



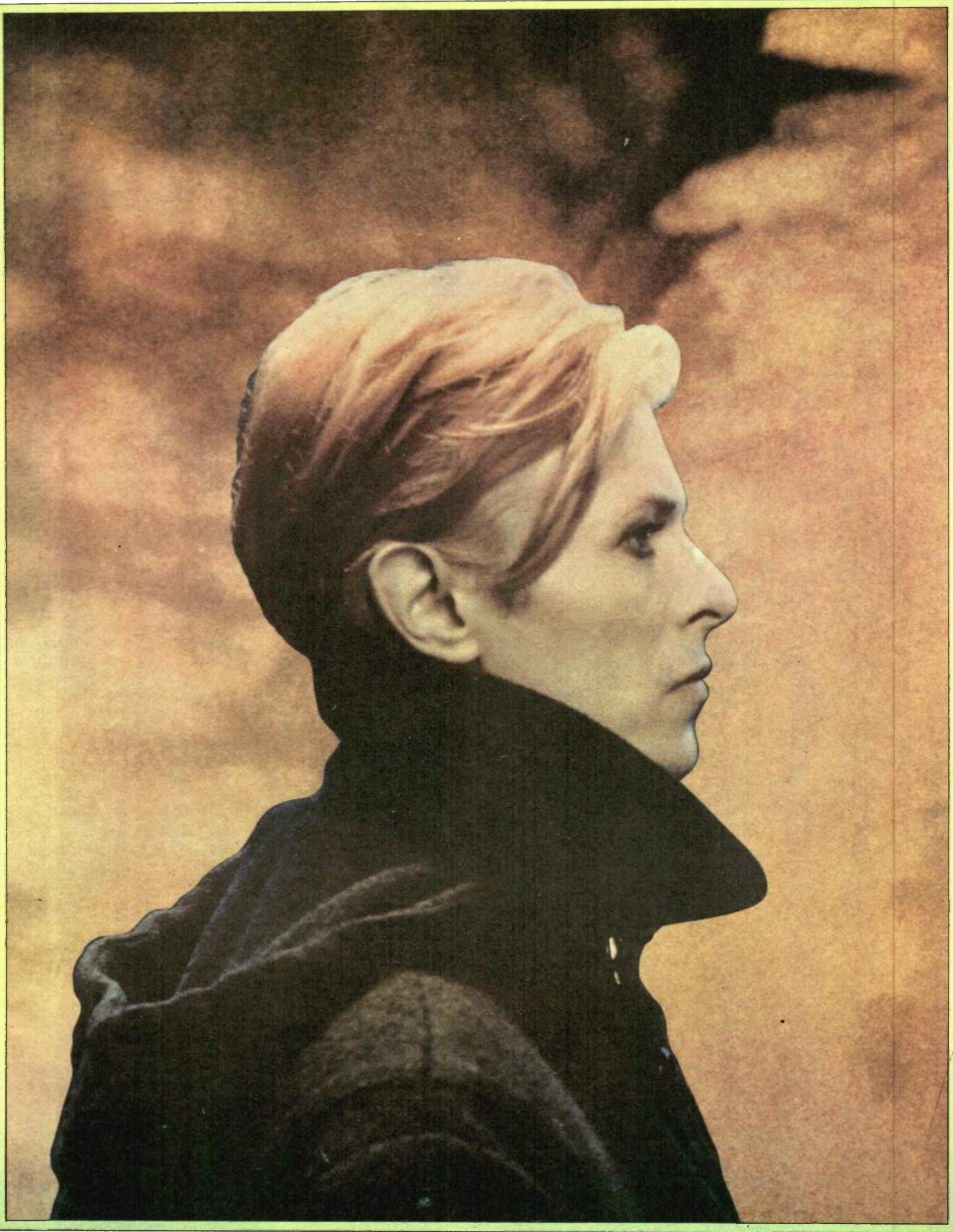
ILPS-9387

The album that takes you as far as you want to GO. Also featuring KLAUS SCHULZE, ROSKO GEE, and AL DI MEOLA.

Only on Island Records and Tapes.

Produced by DENNIS MCKAY, STOMU YAMASHTA, and PAUL BUCKMASTER.





David Bowie in "The Man Who Fell To Earth"

By LITA ELISCU

This film stars David Bowie — a logical choice — as a space visitor who comes to Earth in an attempt to find a way to save his own planet which is dying for lack of water. In flashes of recall, we see his family Out There, dying. They may be the only people left, we do not know. Part of his attempt to save his home includes the amassing of a rather remarkable fortune on Earth through several inventions he has patented and around which he builds a huge corporate empire.

How he will save his family is not really clear, but we do know that he is not going to have them join him on Earth because they would have come with him. He casually points out, early in the film, that his people have been visiting Earth for some time as sightseeing tourists. Only he could come this time, and he will return home to get them. And then, will they all stay there? Come here...?

At some early, undefinable point, the film stops being logical and starts to waver, unable to make up its mind whether to tell the story of an alien trying to meet his fate in a real and proud way or to tell the story of a strange-looking rock star (known for his songs about space visitors)



"Bowie brings only a flatness to a role which should be a piece of cake for him..."

who is trying to make his way in a world nearly as alien to him as it might be to a real space visitor. Heavy metaphor. Because of its meandering direction, the film stops being enjoyable or even likable and becomes rapidly more wearisome and cliched.

When one is dealing with as nebulous a character as an alien, one must provide a logical story to balance the whole. Instead, all subsequent plot is sloppy, concentrating on moments which in themselves are beautiful and understandable but which do little to explain the story. The Theme is reducible to this: The Bowie/Newton character is used to symbolize the parallels between an Alien and an alienated Rock Star.

As Newton, an alien whose people have been visiting here for some time, surely the character ought to understand Earthlings well enough to know that an orange-haired, super pallid creature who refuses to talk to anyone, rides around in a heavily customized Lincoln Continental, and who is wealthy beyond imaginative capacity... is bound to attract attention, not all of it favor-

able. Of course, as a Rock Star, one of a breed who does things such as this every day, it is perfectly understandable that the Alien might not see that people would find him...irritating.

For each twist in plot, the reaction of the Alien makes no sense, but the reaction of the Rock Star fits perfectly. Both plot twists and reactions are heavily cliched, all told with a very heavy hand: The Evil (stupid) Scientists who can't stand not poking, probing, mauling and hurting; the Evil Them who control all our lives anyway and are gonna control that orange-haired Alien; the innocent, puppy-like Young Girl with the heart of a

whore/mother/child — the typical modern heroine in all too many films; and so on and so forth.

There are moments. Rip Torn as Dr. Brice, the Cynical Scientist who betrays the Good Innocent Alien, manages to make the absurdities of this character work for him. Candy Clark as Mary Lou, the Girl who also betrays the Alien, has many fine moments. Buck Henry, as Farnsworth, the man who runs Newton's empire for him, has perhaps the most interesting and undeveloped character. But Bowie himself only brings flatness to a role which should be a piece of cake for him. I am at a loss; Mr.

Bowie uses plenty of theatrics in his own concert performances and does so

brilliantly, so why he does not transpose any of it to the screen is difficult to understand. For a character who has risked a fall to Earth — the effects stay with him a long time, and the risks must have been great — and has the determination to find a way to save his family, he spends too much time being a frightened, silly, insipid and spoiled child given to tantrums and cruel boredom.

One wants to like the film. Director Nicolas Roeg's talent is all too obvious in the beauty and splendor of his visuals; truly stunning sequences of sex, showing its erotic, delicately ambivalent nature as well as the more vulgar and pornographic. Much of Mr. Roeg's work in the past featured these same talents and emphasis *Don't Look Now, Walkabout* and *Performance*, which he co-directed with Donald Cammell), but in this film his cinematic stylizations are ends in themselves.

I wish the movie had taken as inspiration the very real beauty and power of rock — as it exists in Mr. Bowie's own work — rather than this tired illusion of Rock Star Life.



"Happiness is a warm gun; bang, bang, shoot, shoot."

THROW A COWTAIL PARTY



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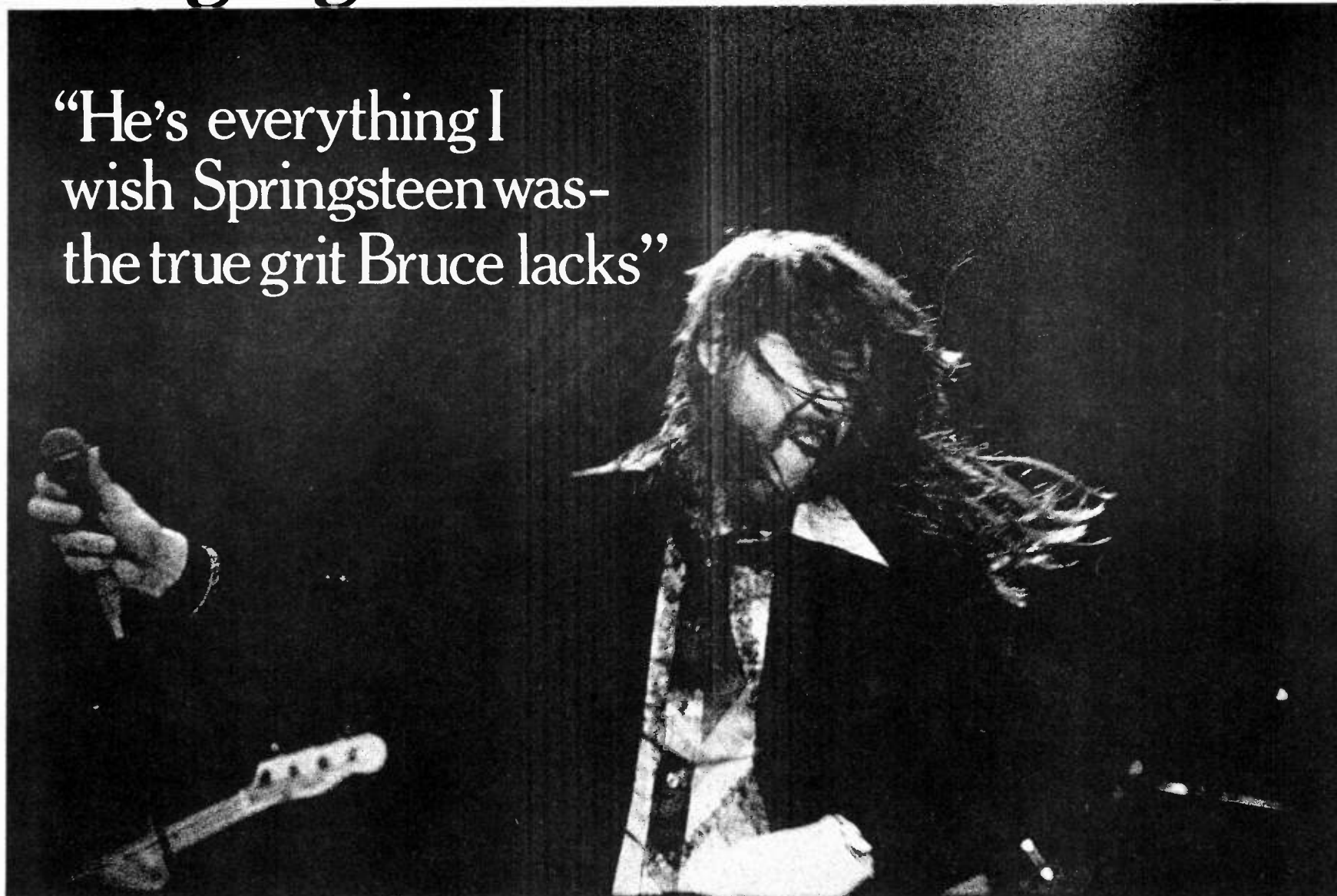
Aberdeen Cow, the new, smooth, 30-proof drink in six delicious flavors: Chocolate Mint, Mocha, Banana, Coconut, Strawberry and Walnut.

Serve our creamy, new taste sensation chilled, on-the-rocks or heated (for those chilly evenings). Whether it's an intimate evening-for-two, or a big bash, you'll drink it down . . . and party it up.

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Bob Seger: Bringing Detroit Back To Michigan

"He's everything I wish Springsteen was—the true grit Bruce lacks"



By LESTER BANGS

DETROIT— Pontiac Stadium is bigger than the Houston Astrodome. When they have football games here, they seat 80,000. When the Who played this joint, they sold between 76-78,000 tickets. Aerosmith, with the aid of Ted Nugent and Foghat, did 74,000. Bob Seger didn't sell out Pontiac Stadium, but he did move 65,000 tickets, forget seats, it's festival seating, in other words squat and bear it. Even if this place is, as the scoreboard kept reminding us, "The world's largest enclosed structure," with "The world's biggest sound system."

I've seen Bob Seger open for "heavies" at Cobo Hall, I've seen him headline all sorts of medium-size local halls, because he's a local hero and everytime he plays here it's *old-home-week*....But I've never seen nothing like *this* before.

Just picture yourself in the typical festival-seating charnel house rock-a-rena venue, everyone sweaty and staggering and even

the little girls in their halter tops losing a bit of their magnetism through the magic of steam-heat environment; stringy hair, psychotically glazed eyes, etc. The first thing I saw as I trekked across acres of parking lot was a fat kid, with rumpled shirt tails out, stumble and fall proboscis first into the pavement. You gotta understand that a lot of these kids were here since 5 P.M., by 8 the toxicity level began to separate the survivors from the sorry jacks. By the time Seger finished his third encore it was 2 A.M., and these kids had been 7 hours camping-out in this place.

Don't let anybody tell you, ever again, that rock and roll is *people's music*—rock and roll is \$8.50 a ticket for Bob Seger, and there *is* an elite, and so what? Understand, I'm not complaining about my assigned press-box, not on your life, when by the simple expedient of walking through a door flashing a pass, you move from the Chicago stockyards to a country-club with fully stocked free bar,

over-stuffed couches, all the elite of Detroit media, radio, etc., shooting the bull, drinking, and staying as far away from Rundgren's synthesizer as possible. My only complaint is that they didn't pass out lorgnettes, because you could hardly see the guy up there where, outside the press-box bar, we lounged back in swivel-chairs with our legs upon the counter next to our drinks, idly taking in the rompinstompins. There was one of those big screens above the stage that makes a close-up of Todd Rundgren's face which makes you think he is a Negro. To see you had to be out there on the floor of the charnel house, to hear too.

Bob Seger, here is a guy who has a lot of grit and soul and rock and roll power of the most primal sort. Trouble is, it's spread butter-thin over several albums and long out-of-print singles. If somebody was to put together the following Seger songs on one LP, it would be one of the all-time killers: "Persecution Smith," "Sock it to Me Santa," "Heavy Music,"

"Ramblin', Gamblin' Man," "2+2=?," "Lookin' Back," "Lucifer," "Mongrel"—That's one side, add most of the rest of *Mongrel* for the other. All these songs are rock and roll classics, right up there with the best of the Stones, Berry, you name it. They'll floor you. But they're mighty hard to get. Contrary to his recent live double-album, Bob performed nearly all these titles in one *long* medley. This was *old home week* indeed, and for the medley, the energy level in the room rose so measurably it made toes curl and hair singe. It was rock and roll dynamism animalism perfect. It was everything I wish Bruce Springsteen was—those few elements of true-grit he lacks. It was also a bunch of songs written upwards of or more than a decade ago. Next to them, "Katmandoo" and "Beautiful Loser" just don't cut it. In fact, much of the rest of the set was downright *competent*, which is worse than bad, any Detroit A-hole can be competent, but it

(Cont'd. on next page)

JOEY MOLLAND

Great guitar from Badfinger

MARK CLARKE

Big bass from Uriah Heep

JERRY SHIRLEY

Dynamic drummer from Humble Pie

PETER WOOD

Keyboard from The Sutherland Brothers & Quiver



Put them together and you've got
the new rock force to be reckoned with—

NATURAL GAS!

Produced by Felix Pappalardi



PRIVATE STOCK
RECORDS, LTD.



Detroit '77: Seger's Open For Business

cont'd. from pg. 20

takes nerve to be *bad* in front of 10-billion locals, and not give-a-damn. Competence is just a code-word for mediocrity. And at his worst, Bob Seger is as mediocre as they come. For instance, he over relies on oldies, and the most obvious ones to boot: "Bo Diddly," "Let It Rock," "Little Queenie." Now he's added Ronnie Hawkins' "Mary Lou" but adds nothing to it, or any of the others. So why do 'em? Because the rest of his originals he don't do don't cut it? Because nobody ever heard them before?—No, I'll even give him that excuse, these kids *are* young. This juke-box jive has been done to death by everybody from Stones to Ramones, Bo Diddly to Bill Medly. Anyway, if none of these kids remember anything, why not just hit 'em with "Sock It To Me, Santa," "Persecution Smith," "Lookin' Back" and all those other self-penned Seger classics.

Also, Bob has absolutely no sense of stage presence. His idea of on-stage physical projection is to rock back and forth slightly, clapping hands and bobbing head. He *has* made music with more teeth than Ted Nugent's wildest dreams, yet ironically he projects this utterly depressing sense of restraint. I just don't know what's wrong with the man. But I do know this—when he did the standard, "Do You Like Rock and Roll?" and "Say Yeah!," ALL 65,000 PUNKS SHOT THEIR FISTS AT HIM LIKE BATTERING-RAMS; "YEAH!!!" I never saw anything like it since Slade in England in '72 but then, I haven't seen Kiss in two years.

Frankly, I think Seger does deserve all the adulation he's getting and more. Not just because he *paid his dues*, because he is one of the last of a dying breed; unaffected, ungreasebrowed, unhoked-up true-born disciple of rock and roll. But I also feel this boy is *lazy*, I know he can do better.

JEFF BECK. "WIRED."



AN EPIC ALBUM.

Produced by George Martin.

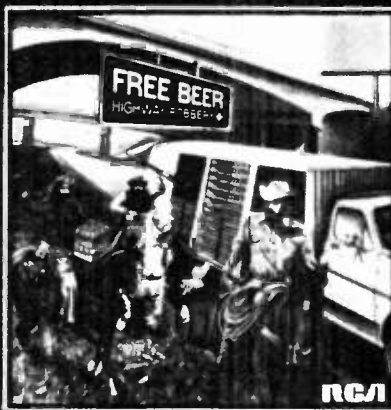
Also available on tape. © EPIC. MARCA REG. © 1976 CBS INC.

A New American Beauty. From Poco. On ABC Records and GRT Tapes.
[ABCD 946]



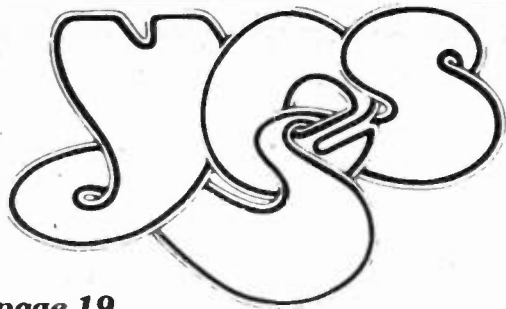
PUT A LITTLE FOAM IN YOUR LIFE.

FREE BEER'S NEW ALBUM WILL GIVE YOU A GREAT HEAD.



Produced by Alan Lorber for Lorber Scheer Productions, Inc

RCA Records



con't. from page 19

another concept release, but unlike *i*, Anderson wasn't content on confining his fiction to *this* planet—so he invented one of his own, and called it "Sunhillow." So then, this is the story of make-believe people (Olias, Ranyart and Qoquac), traveling through an unspecified Universe in their make-believe spaceship, "Moorglade Mover" ("Shesa bouta moova"). This neo-mythological fantasy is a prime example of Anderson's vivid imagination unleashed. Unequivocally, this is a far out record.

Yes originally intended performing on tour, selected portions of each solo album. They rehearsed and actually did perform much of this material the first few dates of this tour. Audiences are not familiar with the solo material, as Yes quickly discovered—so most of the planned solo performances were phased out in view of the weak

audience response. Consequently, all that remains of the five albums' worth of solo stuff are mini excerpts, creatively camouflaged in basically a Yes greatest hits set with but few surprises (an encore of the Beatles' "I'm Down" proves a rare treat).

In Philadelphia on June 12th, Yes performed before 105,000 Yessfans—their largest audience to date—at JFK Stadium. Most people, Yessfans included, have no idea just how vast the band's popularity is in certain regions of the US. Like many of the Mid-Western and Southern boogie bands, Yes consistently perform to larger audiences, and sell more records each year than they're given credit for. But the fans know them as a tight band of thoroughly accomplished musicians—and it should be clear, however frightening the prospect may seem, that the best is yet to come.

ON TOUR

July 30 Coliseum El Paso, Texas	Aug. 11 Mississippi River Festival, St. Louis, Missouri
July 31 Phoenix, Arizona	Aug. 12 Gardens, Louisville, Kentucky
Aug. 1 Aladdin, Las Vegas, Nevada	Aug. 13 Kaminsky Park, Chicago, Illinois
Aug. 2 Civic Center, Bakersfield, California	Aug. 15 Civic Arena, St. Paul, Minn.
Aug. 3 Selland Arena, Fresno, California	Aug. 16 Auditorium, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Aug. 6 Convention Center, San Antonio, Texas	Aug. 17 19 Cobo Hall, Detroit, Michigan
Aug. 7 Tarrant Coliseum, Fort Worth, Texas	Aug. 20 Market Square Arena, Indianapolis, Indiana
Aug. 8 Hofheinz Pavilion, Houston, Texas	Aug. 21 Coliseum, Cleveland, Ohio
Aug. 10 Fairground Coliseum, Oklahoma City, Okla.	Aug. 22 Coliseum, Fort Wayne, Indiana

con't. from page 6

Performances

for sold-out Vegas gigs). "He's better than Neil Diamond!" No argument there; he's better than just about anyone, I thought to myself. For pure rock & roll he makes peabrained poseurs like the Ramones look sick. He makes—but I'd better kill this before I get really really offensive.

Instead I think I ought to establish that my critical faculties and impartiality were not knocked completely out of commission by noting that the dapper James Brown-style announcer who at the end of the show intoned "The Great Tommy James, ladies and gentlemen! Do you want to hear more? Tell him you want to hear more!" (while Tommy languishes fetchingly just offstage ready to return at the slightest sign of any encouragement). A bit more decorum in the matter of shirtwear is in order, and the defensive, ingratiating introductions ("I want to thank you"—all 40 of us—"for making this song a two-million

seller and one of our biggest hits!") could be retired. The bit in the middle of "Mony Mony" where Tommy leapt into the audience and shook hands with every patron in the club (not such a difficult feat when there's only 40 in attendance) was on the surreal side, but somehow in keeping with the ambience of the gig.

Still, he was just great—on the basis of this performance one of rock's all-timers, as good as anyone I've seen these past few years. Maybe, if his brand-new (and excellent) album, *In Touch*, gets good radio reaction, if "Tighter Tighter" becomes a hit, and if he plays more suitable venues than the old folkies' haven that is the Troubadour, and if everything gets coordinated better in terms of timing for maximum impact, Tommy James will not have to face acres of empty seats next time he presents his supercharged show.



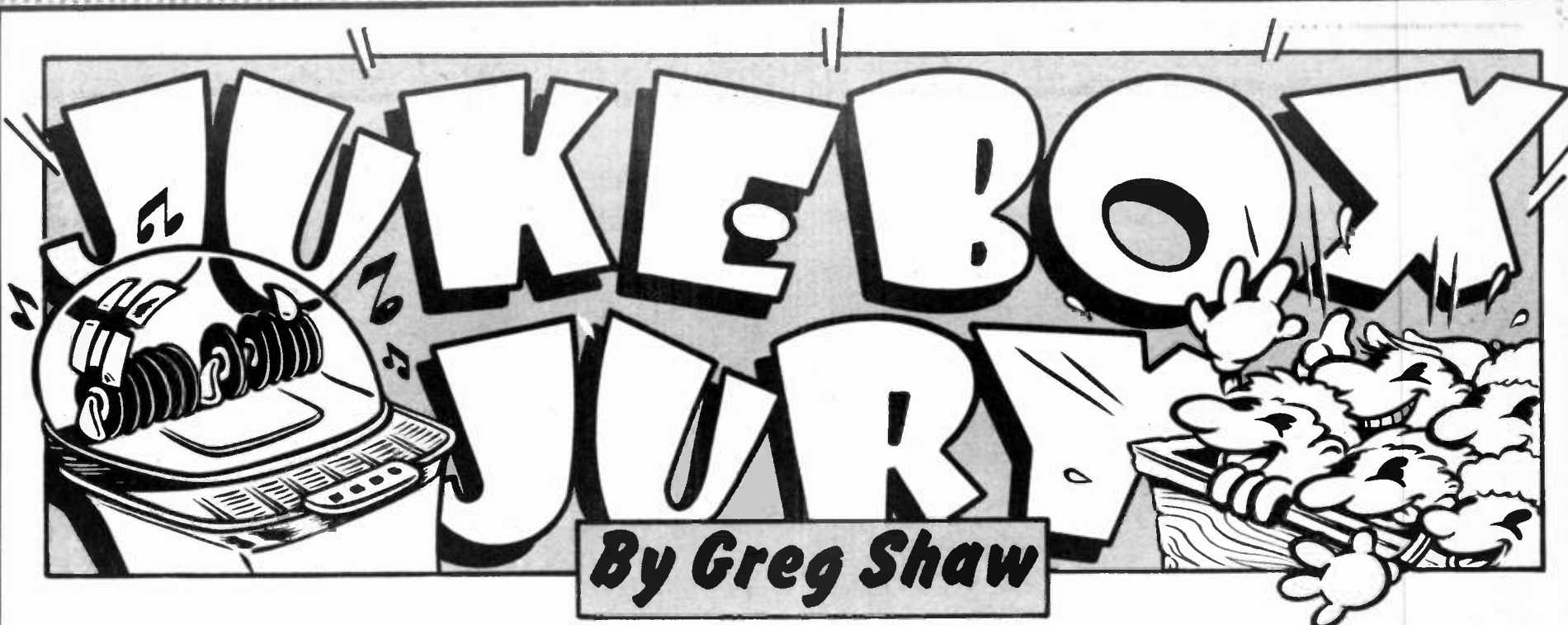
Take him or leave him.

He's been called abrasive, because he's honest to a fault. He's been called a beauty, because he's Waylon to the core. He's been called a hard ass, a pussycat, an outlaw, a sweetheart and a whole lot more. But there's only one thing you can really call him. Real. And for a lot of people that's a pretty tough act to take.

Listen to his new album, "Are You Ready For The Country" and find out if you're ready for the man.



RCA Records



By Greg Shaw

FOREST

"Do Ya, Do Ya Want My Love"
Midland Intl. 10696

A real surprise from the disco label that gave us Carol Douglas and Silver Convention. This unknown group gives a faithful and highly-charged rendition of everyone's favorite Move song; not quite as powerful as the original, but too close to quibble. Highly recommended.

CLIFF RICHARD

"Devil Woman"
Rocket 40574

Over the years, Cliff Richard has had nine albums and countless singles released in America. Worldwide, he's consistently been the most popular rock singer since about 1959—everywhere but here. Now he's joined forces with Rocket, the little company that can almost always break artists whose careers are thought to be hopelessly blocked. And it looks like they're gonna do it again. "Devil Woman" was a smash in England not long ago, and it's the kind of dramatic pop ballad America has always exhibited a taste for—"Witchy Woman" for instance—so chances here look good.

DONNY OSMOND

"C'mon Marianne"
Polydor 14320

Gotta give credit where it's due. Donny has turned in a solid, punchy treatment of the old Four Seasons hit, and now that his voice has changed it's a lot easier to take. The production is very Motown (early Supremes) and the record holds up to repeated play. And Marie is nowhere to be heard...

I'm not impressed with most of the hits on the charts this month. Nice songs, pleasant melodies, clean production, and lots of money being spent by a record company do not add up to greatness—only sales. I'm disturbed by the complacency of the people who pass for stars these days. It's so easy to make passable music with a beat guaranteed by a computer in Dallas to have an 86% chance of going Top 10. And it's so rare to hear a record that sounds like anybody, anywhere along the line, believed it was important. If music is important to the fans, why can't it be important to the artists? Maybe it is, but you'd never know it from the utter

absence of intensity in most of what you hear on the radio. It's not triviality I'm objecting to; I love it in records like "Making Our Dreams Come True"—studio records that were never meant to be anything more. What I mind is the state of affairs where apathy and artistic laziness are looked up to as the epitome of what rock can be. I don't have to say who I'm talking about—you know who they are, every time their hits come on the radio. I just hope they all remember what happened to Bobby Rydell, Fabian, Joey Dee, Frankie Avalon, Paul Petersen and the rest of their spiritual ancestors....

But enough editorializing. There are new records to tell you about, and you're gonna be real excited when you hear what's out. Like a new one by Mary Hopkin, "If You Love Me" (RCA 10694). Produced by Tony Visconti, not Paul McCartney, but who knows, maybe she has some fans in her own right. Buckingham-Nicks was the group Stevie Nicks was in before she came along to pull Fleetwood Mac out of their slump, and now Polydor has reissued their obscure album and put out "Don't Let Me Down Again" (14335) as a single. It's not bad, not great. Sutherland Brothers and Quiver, once one of my fave English pop bands, excite me not with "When the Train Comes" (Columbia 3-10362). Again, nothing really wrong with it, except it sounds like the Doobie Bros. with a wet disco beat. Speaking of which, the Bee Gees have a new one out, "You Should Be Dancing" (RSO 853), which is so mechanical it might as well have been made by Kraftwerk.

There is, however, one great disco record that I can't fail to mention. "Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman (Theme)" by the Deadly Nightshade (Phantom 10709) is ridiculous enough that you can laugh with it as well as at it. Not so with Lesley Gore's latest, "Sometimes" (A&M 1829) which is so pathetic I'm more inclined to cry—even though it's Lesley's turn.

Pratt & McClain's follow-up to "Happy Days" is a surprisingly gritty "Devil With A Blue Dress" (Reprise 1361) done Mitch Ryder style. Interesting. John Sebastian's follow-up to his TV theme hit is "Hideaway" (Reprise 1355), a listenable, danceable song without John's usual quota of good-timey whimsy, which means it probably won't do as well. Lou Reed produced "Wild Angel" by Nelson Slater (RCA 10703), which is the only reason anyone would want it. The guy can't sing and the song isn't much either. For that matter, neither is the production. Finally, Left Banke fans, check out Fire-Ballet's version of "Desiree" (Passport 7908). They take one of the Banke's greatest non-hits and transform it into a synthesized symphonic soup, with vocals that, for some odd reason, remind me of the Fifth Dimension. A minor curiosity.

If you've detected a note of boredom in this month's column, you're right. I am bored. But only with the major label releases. In fact, I'm very excited at the number and increasing quality of independently-made, local records. There are several that I would rank among this month's most notable releases.

"Milpitas Monster"/"Dining on the City Dump" by Bob Berry (Janell 387) comes from San Jose, and is from the soundtrack to the movie "The Milpitas Monster", made by a local high school. This record reminds me of the later Syndicate of Sound, a nice driving sound with weird reggae interludes and a "Day in the Life" finale. There's more inventiveness and raw spirit in records like this than anything you hear on the radio.

Fox Pass is one of the leading street bands in Boston, and their first homemade record is "Prized Possession" (Paradise 1001). Though produced under primitive conditions, it serves to display the group's style, which is very Angloid, very pop. Somewhere be-

continued on page 30



DeShannon Delivers

JACKIE DeSHANNON
"All Night Desire"
Columbia 3-10340

This is one to go out and buy, cause you won't find it on Jackie's album. A totally irresistible nouveau-disco beat sucks you into a seductively breathy DeShannon tour-de-force; it's no "When You Walk In The Room," but it's by far her most commercial outing in years, and a surefire treat for anyone who's ever loved that delicious voice.



Dear fans -
 Thanks for your loyal
 support. I've finally made a
 new L.P. with my group
 The Modern Lovers.
 Hope you like it.
 forever springtime,
 Jonathan

BZ-0048 Distributed by Playboy Records, Inc.

Derringer

Rock and Roll On The Loose!

Derringer. From the McCoys to Johnny Winter to Edgar Winter, guitarist Rick Derringer now joins Kenny Aaronson on bass, Danny Johnson on guitar, and Vinny Appice on drums to build a brand-new rock and roll band that already has quite a history. **"Derringer."**

**On Blue Sky Records
 and Tapes.**



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Blind Date

with
FLO & EDDIE

A monthly blindfold test by those masters of Slander Rock, Mark Volman & Howard Kaylan.

Edited By **KEN BARNES**

After extracting a firm promise from Flo & Eddie that they would not hype their forthcoming [August] album, Moving Targets, on Columbia Records and Tapes, which by now incidentally I've heard once and can attest that it's their best ever, we moved on to other equally significant topics—the possibility of Flo & Eddie collaborating on a movie script with David Bowie, their upcoming production of Starry-Eyed & Laughing in England [the songs in their rough form sound staggeringly good, like the Easybeats meet the Byrds—'nother words, damn important stuff], and, most important, the recent showcase gig of Paul Revere & the Raiders at the L.A. Playboy Club [a truly memorable occasion]. Finally tiring of this badinage, I refused several ostentatious offers of gourmet delicacies [more pretzels] and our latest Blind Date began...

BAKER GURVITZ ARMY HEARTS ON FIRE



Excerpts from HEARTS ON FIRE—
Baker Gurvitz Army (Atco)

Nils Lofgren. Is the stereo working? I think one speaker's coming out heavier than the other. One guy in the group is much heavier than the others. Ginger Baker's Airforce. The Baker Gurvitz Army! All right! I've been a Gun fanatic for years. Paul & Adrian Gurvitz are both in the group—and Snips is the lead-vocalist. Snips who, I hear the audience asking. Every body knows Snips from Sharks! Now they're trying to be Cream with a singer. The stereo was set right! So far I haven't heard anything close to "Race With The

Devil." They're doing soft songs—they don't sound like an Army. The Army's been demobilized! I wish I'd said that! You will have when this comes out. Baker-Gurvitz M.A.S.H. unit...

Excerpts from FELIX PAPPALARDI
& CREATION (A&M)

A former associate of Ginger Baker? Jack Bruce? The roadie with Cream! The guy who ties off Ginger Baker. Jeanette from Cake? Who else was associated with Ginger? Famous producer? Adam Faith. Heavy metal? Robbie Robertson. Felix! Solo Pappalardi, backed by a Japanese group. What? Their names are "Sugar," "Thunder," "Flash," and "Day-break." You can't pronounce their real names, which are—never mind. He got a bunch of guys who played hard rock in Japan and he paid them nothing. A&M gives them all the rice they can take home. (Lapses into regrettable Japanese accent) You produce Resrie Rest? You make us sound like Mississippi Kreen? Nantucket Sreigh-lide? I like Felix, and his famous cowboy voice. If A&M is putting out money for this, why did they pass on us? At least you don't have to play our album with chopsticks!

TERRY REID Seed Of Memory



Excerpts from SEED OF MEMORY
Terry Reid (ABC)

Heavy vocalist from the '60s? Rooftop Singers. Gram Parsons—I guess he wouldn't be making 'em anymore. British? English Dan Ford Coley and Reds! Shawn Phillips. He just had an album last month! Peter Sarstedt. Ian Matthews. That wasn't a bad guess,

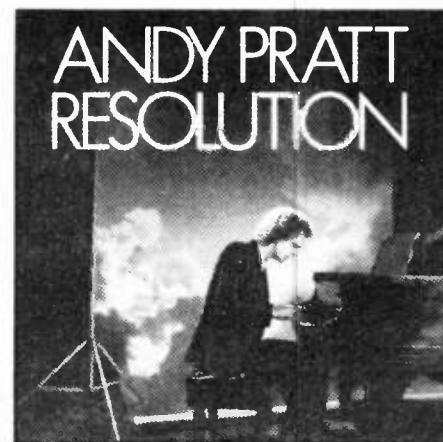
but it's a solo male. Ian Matthews is a solo male. Oh. Alun Davies. Andy Pratt. Donovan. Is that Tim Weisberg on flute? Andy Pratt. I already guessed that. Two wrong guesses for Andy Pratt. Graham Nash produced? Graham could get into it. Very down, meditative, introspective. Terry Reid—of course. He had a great song once, a rock song (after six or seven titles are suggested, to no response, we give up on that one). Maybe it was Terry Riley or Terry Moore. It's so mellow that my right foot is asleep. It shipped as a cut-out.

It was Tim Weisberg. It's a sleeper, and I don't mean it's going to sneak up on you—don't listen to this album if you're tired. For any of you who like Graham's more boring songs—think about that line—you'll like this one. He's great—I remember this one song he did...I like Graham, too, even if his eyes are sunken into his head. (Sings) "Willy is my corpse, he is my burnout..." Don't dare print any of this. (PRM: Try and stop me) I'll be out of the country, I don't care. Graham never asked us to sing on his albums anyway.

Excerpts from THE BECKIES
(Sire)

PRM official Pop Hero? Nils Lofgren. Elliott Murphy. Sounds cool. Steve Marriott. Not high enough for Neil Merryweather. Ian Matthews. Keyboard player? Nicky Hopkins. Zoot Money! Manfred Mann. I should know by the chords on the piano, right? Why am I not getting it? Chris White. Russ Ballard. Not British? Billy Preston. Don Preston. Preston Epps. Robert Preston. Mike Quatro. Mike Omartian. Michael Clarke. Michael Brown! I'm not hearing the vocal I want to hear. The Beckies? Who was singing on "Walk Away Renee?" Steve Martin? The voice here is not as good, but the music's great. Nobody will ever hear this, will they? The Beckies? That is a problem. Why would they look like that? Michael Brown's written some of the greatest pop songs of all time. These probably aren't them. This sounds pretty good. I'd like to listen to it. He's never let anybody

down. Have you heard the Hot Parts album—that's the best. "Love Songs In The Night"—killer tune...



Excerpts from RESOLUTION—
Andy Pratt (Nemperor)

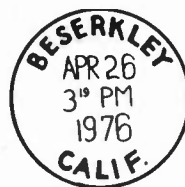
The recent rumors about me (Eddie) going out with Louise Lasser are not true. Eric Carmen. The Raspberries without Eric. Boz Scaggs. Nils Lofgren. Carmen Appice. Dan Fogelberg. Eric Goodhand-Tait. Phillip! Noogy Klingman's solo album. We've already guessed it earlier? Larry Raspberry. I like this guy. Jay Ferguson. It's gotta be Andy Pratt. Andy Pratt V, right? I like this. I concur. A guy like Andy Pratt will never get to write a TV theme and nobody will ever hear him. Buy Andy. Let me make it perfectly clear that Andy Pratt is not related in any way to Pratt & McClain. They wish...This is right up there with Phillip Goodhand-Tait.

Excerpts from WIDOWMAKER
(Jet/UA)

Did you know that Howard and I are guest hosts of the Kiss concert in Anaheim? We're commenting on the aerialists, we don't have to play. What's this? Zoot Money on piano? That's enough. Yeah, Zoot! Widowmaker. That don't sound like one of those names that will go down in history (it might go down on history). Zoot is not in this band. It's just a guest appearance. He played on "Where's My Check?" When you go see Widowmaker don't expect to see Zoot in person. What does this cover represent? It represents a photo session. There's a lot of tubes and

EARTHQUAKE

85



Dear Cindy
 Sorry for not
 writing but we've
 been working hard on
 this L.P.D. and appearing
 all over,
 Saving my love
 Earthquake

P.S. Say hi to Jessie
 for John -

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- ★ "Theme From Mahogany
 (Do You Know Where You're Going To)"
- ★ "Ain't No Mountain High Enough"
- ★ "Remember Me"
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- ★ "Good Morning Heartache"

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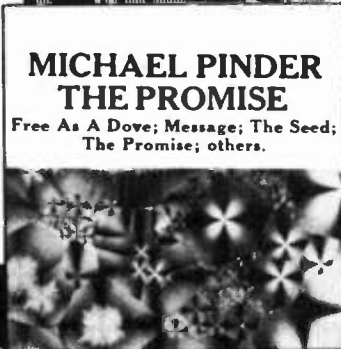
We're trying to stop drug abuse from
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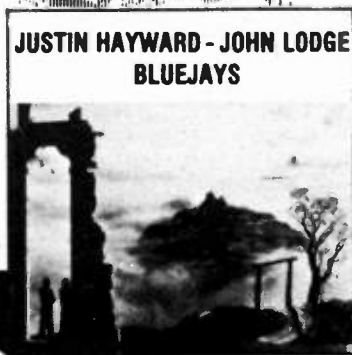


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INDIVIDUALLY AND TOGETHER...

THE MOODY BLUES TODAY.

By Michael Barackman

Elton & Kiki: In Radar Love, Again!

As the most publicly accepted rock music artist of this decade, Elton John has lent both his talent and the value of his name to several other performers, and watched them reap benefits as a result. Neil Sedaka credits Elton for sparking his comeback last year. Bernie Taupin sells books and Nigel Olsson makes solo albums largely because of present and past relationships with Elton.

Elton has personally assisted Kiki Dee most of all. A cabaret singer from Britain Kiki had made a series of unsuccessful records, including one on Motown, *Great Expectations*, before Elton signed her to his label, Rocket Records, in 1972. He produced her first Rocket LP, *Loving and Free*, exposed her as an opening act for him on national tours, and gave her literally free access to the family jewels: Gus Dudgeon as producer, his

own band's instrumental support and numerous Taupin-John collaborations.

The latest gem is the John-Dee duet single, "Don't Go Breaking My Heart," which has bulletted quickly up the charts. It's a terrific record; simple, breezy, with a stirring orchestral arrangement by James Newton-Howard. Elton, a tired soldier musically on his last few records, sounds revitalized. And Kiki, away from the music scene for two years, gives a sparkling, exuberant performance. Somebody aptly described the song as the "I've Got You Babe" of the seventies. It's the rare type of single you don't easily tire of, even when the Rocket Records' publicist plays it for you four straight times at the company's Beverly Hills office.

Kiki arrives shortly after the fourth run-through. She looks great. Dressed modestly in a long Indian-gauze striped dress and

white blouse, her strikingly bright red hair somehow complements her light blue eyes. A barrage of phone messages are waiting for her. "That's what a hit record can do for you," she quips, accepting a glass of Fresca.

We chat about her current success, and she is very gracious

ed her as "that girl who sings with Elton." I ask if she's ever felt smothered by Elton, and if she would like to be viewed more independently.

"The association is fine by me," she begins. "I like it. On occasions, though, I've felt, 'oh no, here we go again.' Everybody always asks

former, and if she goes about it right, she would be a valuable asset. Rock music is in dire need of gutsy white female vocalists. With the exception of Stevie Nicks of Fleetwood Mac, most of the current crop of songstress are either intellectually overblown folkies or lush, MOR-type singers, e.g.,

Janis Ian and Olivia Newton-John. Some, like Linda Ronstadt, try to convey some musical *umph*, but their attempts usually sound sterile. Kiki's voice combines natural ragged black-R&B intonations with fairly standardized white polish. Her stylistic repertoire is far reaching, spanning folk-pop to bruising rock. On a powerful uptempo song like "I've Got The Music In Me," Kiki captures an energy and excitement that's rarely generated by her contemporaries.

Kiki comments: "There's no reason why females shouldn't be able to come across strongly. The main

problem with girls nowadays is their bad choice of musicians and material. With the right combination, it could be really hefty. I'd like to achieve that."

While stressing a strong musical sense, Kiki, refreshingly, doesn't deny that she is a female.

"I want to project femininity, but in a very liberated way," she explains, her voice a stage whisper. "The important thing for me is that whatever I do be totally in keeping with the music. I won't go out and stress cleavage or swagger around because, first off, I'm not that kind of person, and also, then people would be so busy looking at my body that they wouldn't listen."

"Obviously, if you're a female, you will attract males onstage. I get on with guys well. I like men. So if they think I look nice onstage and move well, great."



and responsive. Unaffected. But judging by the way her fingers are battling her hair and neck, she seems a little nervous. "I've got to learn to relax," she says, acknowledging a case of the jitters. "In interviews, I've tended to come across a bit self-analyzing and paranoid. I've got that side of me, but with people I know very well I'm very silly, lighthearted, and crazy."

Nerves were the main reason Kiki retreated from an active career after scoring 1974's top-twenty hit, "I've Got The Music In Me." A developing romance was another factor, but Kiki admits now that she had trouble coping with all the increased attention and couldn't handle the pressure. As a conse-

an ideal opportunity to establish herself outside the Elton-context. At this point, she remains without a real identity of her own, and this latest single has further stereo-typ-

me about Elton. I don't like telling everybody what Elton has for breakfast.

She takes a drag from her first and only cigarette and continues. "Elton has presented me with a lot of opportunities and has helped me a lot. So now, it's up to me to prove to him that he was right, and prove to the public that there's something there apart from me being Elton John's friend."

Kiki hopes that proof will be found on her next album, to be recorded in September. It will be produced by...Elton John. "I won't let him sing on any of the backing vocals," she says jokingly, suddenly realizing that Elton's involvement might make reaching her goals a little more difficult. "He's a wry little weasel and he'll be desperate to sing, but I'll say, 'nope, back in the box!'"

After 13 years as a singer, Kiki, 29, is still serious about establishing herself as an individual per-

(cont'd. on pg. 34)

The Light at it's Brightest.



Olé ELO. Their greatest hits from 1972 to 1976. Electric Light Orchestra. On United Artists Records and Tapes.



"I Feared Everyone Would Forget Who I Was"



Photo by Bruce Osborne

[Cont'd. from pg. 13]

"It can be frightening, too. If you're unsure of yourself as a woman, you can feel overpowered. For me, it's no good looking nice if I don't feel good inside. It's not so much of a problem anymore because I'm more confident in who I am and understand myself a lot better."

She calls herself a "fat teenager" when reminiscing about her early days as a professional singer. She started at 16, playing at a number of unusual functions, including an all-male cabaret show at 10:00 AM on Sunday mornings. There'd be a drummer, a pianist, along with strippers, and Kiki would sing "Bridge Over Troubled Water." She had a contract with Fontana Records, but her situation really wasn't unique. England abounded with pre-pubescent females who wanted to be stars.

"Lulu started about the same time I did," Kiki recalls. "Cilla Black and Dusty Springfield too. I didn't really come through. I was saucing it out. I don't regret it at

all now, but I used to feel a bit out of it. I was always considered the baby."

Fame may have eluded Kiki as a teenager, but then again, she didn't become a has-been at 21. In the U.S., Motown took an interest, and signed her in 1969. She was the label's first white artist. Her album didn't sell, but an executive there liked her a lot. His name was John Reid. Reid went on to manage Elton, who in turn had heard Kiki's past records, and a connection was eventually made.

Kiki's second Rocket album, *I've Got the Music In Me*, was produced by Elton's producer, Gus Dudgeon, and included the title hit. But suddenly, there was no Kiki. "It seems like a strange time to withdraw from the carousel when you've just had a big hit record, but I didn't know quite what to do," she says. "I didn't know what my music was. I struggled a lot of years to get acceptance, then it came suddenly, and I had to ask myself, 'What do I really want?'"

1½ years later, she still didn't know, and still felt pressured. Out

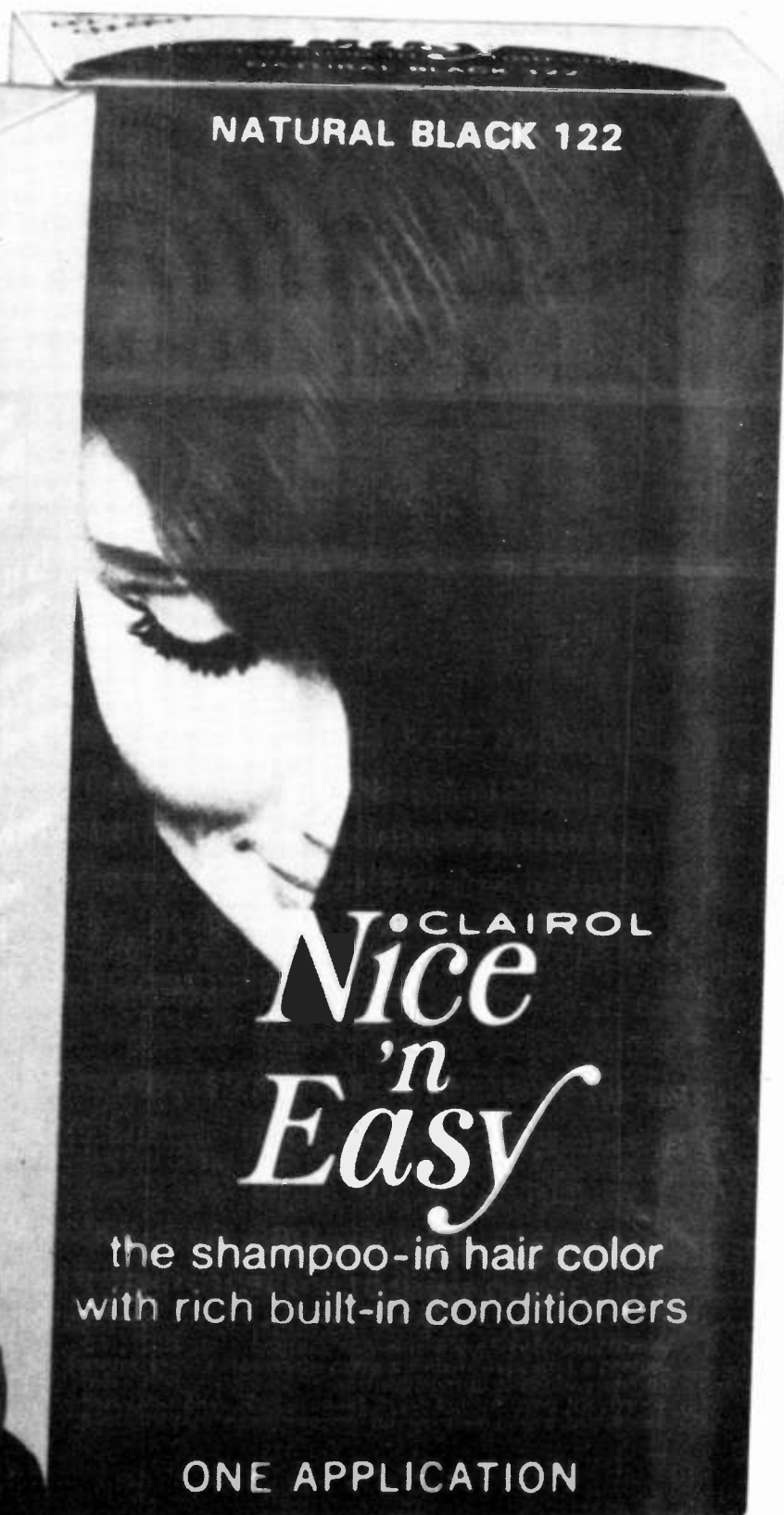
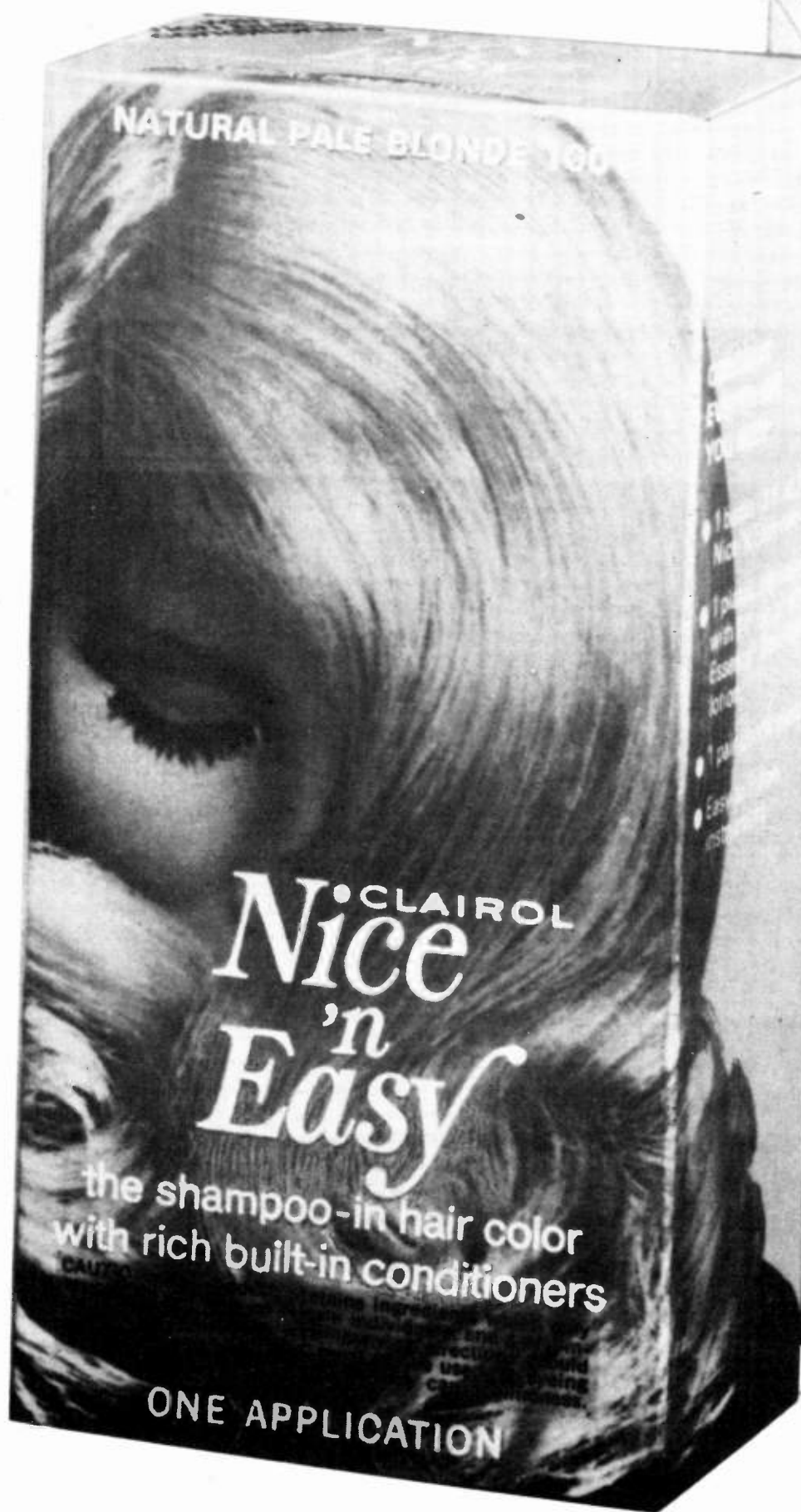
of fears that "everyone would forget who I was," Kiki returned to the studio early this year with Neil Sedaka's producer, Robert Appere. Rocket was severely disappointed with the album they came up with. "I didn't have any of my own material, and just wasn't in the right frame of mind," Kiki explains. "It didn't work out. There were lots of hoos and haas in the organization, but I had the final decision...and I decided I'd rather start over."

Kiki and Elton will record the upcoming album in England. This time, Kiki's got some songs ready. She says, "The producer is such a large part of a record nowadays, so you have to present him with a clear picture of who you are. I've done my homework so I can give Elton something to produce, as opposed to having it his little party game. I've got to be the reason we're making the album." The LP will include the Dee compositions "Night Hours," "Walking" and "A Woman For a Man." The latter tune's chorus proceeds: "She's got a lot of style and grace, like she's

never known before/She walks down the street and moves so sweet, until she closes the door."

Kiki once submerged her career partly because romance was brewing with Elton's guitarist Davey Johnstone. Is she a Woman For a Man? Her reply: "I've been self reliant for so long that I can never see me as much as I care for someone—just existing for them alone. Davey is the last person in the world who would want me to do that. But some people's careers are their whole existence, and I can't see that. I need outside things too...If things are meant to be, they'll happen."

Time for a photo session. We're out the door and halfway down the hall when Kiki is called back: Another phone call. A minute later, she's racing back down the hall, past John Reid's office, jumping down the stairs. She's just received word that "Don't Go Breaking My Heart" has reached the national Top Ten. "My first Top Ten record," she gushes. She seems silly, light-hearted, and crazy.



ROCK CINEMA

The First 21 Years ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

1955-1976

By Mitch Cohen



"...I remeber going to see Blackboard Jungle. When the titles flashed up there on the screen, Bill Haley and his Comets started blurching 'One, Two, Three O'Clock, Four O'Clock-Rock'. It was the loudest rock sound kids had ever heard...Blackboard Jungle represented a strange sort of 'endorsement' of the Teenage Cause."

Frank Zappa
LIFE Magazine
June 28, 1968

Richard Brooks' film actually did not have very much to recommend it in cinematic terms. The movie, released in 1955, was much more important sociologically than aesthetically. Rock 'n roll was just beginning to become popular on a mass scale and this was the first attempt by the film industry to portray and explain the soon-to-be phenomenon.

Films had always been an accurate barometer of social pressures, and this new music appeared to offer all sorts of possibilities, possibilities which would take years to explore. *Blackboard Jungle* was as close a Hollywood could come to presenting the real thing. A few scenes in the film are dramatically effective while

representative of the emerging cultural force. One such scene takes place in a schoolyard where ghetto kids are feverishly dancing to the music of the Comets on the radio as Glen Ford, who portrays a tight-ass high-school teacher, looks on in disgust. Another scene establishes a relationship between the teenagers' rock 'n roll "perversion" and violence: A bunch of Ford's student-hoodlums smash up his priceless collection of Swing Era 78s, in homage-slash-celebration of rock and roll.

Hollywood sensationalized and greatly exaggerated the negative influence of the music under the guise of telling the truth for the 'Good of the Community'. Ironically, while denouncing the music, the film helped irreversibly spread rock and roll's influence throughout the land.

The motion picture establishment realized it had stumbled on a profitable commodity but were totally ignorant of how best to record rock 'n roll on film. So, Hollywood's small-time movie moguls spent the next couple of years churning out one quickie rock 'n roll episode after another. *Rock Around The Clock*, a weird and interesting piece of trivia from Sam Katzman and Alan Freed, served as the prototype. It was notable for the collection of absurdities that made up the "plot" and for the interruptions in dialogue nearly every five minutes for a song. Freed's pattern was quickly set, then endlessly repeated by others in film after film. *Don't Knock The Rock*, *Big Beat*, *Go, Johnny Go*, *Rock, Rock, Rock*... The message always the same; Rock and Roll is a healthy adolescent outlet, and contrary to parental fears, would neither cause teenagers to go deaf nor blind.

Raunchy exploitation films, the type presided over by Albert Zugsmith and starring the likes of Mamie Van Doren and Conway Twitty, were typical of the rock 'n violence genre. A handful of worthwhile films sprung from the species--*High School Confidential*, *Teenage Doll*, and ever-so tragic *Reform School Girl* (a killer).



...it took a lotta balls to cast the all-time greasy meatball on a Hobie at Malibu Beach...

Rock films certainly lacked thematic substance and technical quality, but no more than any of the mini-musicals rushed to market by Hollywood since *The Jazz Singer*—Ruby Keeler thru Mickey Rooney. The critical establishment, without exception, dismissed rock 'n roll as unworthy subject matter. A popular film-history book, *All Talking! All Singing! All Dancing!*, stuffed with fluff as it is, includes not one reference to the era's rock musicals. Sarris' *The American Cinema*, a comprehensive catalogue of American films, doesn't even list *Rock Around The Clock*.

In 1956, Fox released *The Girl Can't Help It*. On the surface, it was just one more predictable formula film that afforded a bunch of rockers an excuse to perform a couple current chart faves. Dances, concerts, TV shows, they had all become so much stock-footage—groups like The Platters did the exact same number ("You'll Never Know") with the exact same choreography in both *The Girl Can't Help It* and Roger Corman's immortal *Rock All Night*. However, Director Frank Tashlin introduced a few new tricks in *The Girl Can't Help It*. While others examined the rock-equals-violence equation to death, he emphasized the more basic rock-equals-SEX postulate here. The title song sequence was scandalously performed by the completely outrageous Little Richard, as succulent Jayne Mansfield bounced tormentingly down the street, wreaking havoc at drive-ins from Boston to Berkeley. A brilliant combination of visual and aural images; parents were irate.

Tashlin also realized that this whole business of rock, with its jukeboxes, gangster connections and fast-rising/fast-falling hits, was a rich untapped source of humor. *The Girl Can't Help It* was the first *intentionally* funny rock musical—the finale had Edmond O'Brien(!) singing his memorable smash "Rock Around the Rockpile" on TV, a satiric gem. The rockers, particularly Gene Vincent and Eddie Cochran, were extraordinary. It was a *very* successful film, unfortunately one-of-a-kind.

1956 was also the year of Elvis Presley. Now the King of Rock and Roll, he was expected to carry the weight of a film on his sacred, hillbilly shoulders. In retrospect, his movies are nothing more than personality-vehicles in the ancient tradition, settings for the Pres to belt out meaty hits to thousands of ravenous fans of all sexes.

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His First Big Dramatic
Singing Role!

HE SINGS 7 NEW SONGS

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FIGHTING!
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ROMANCING!

7 NEW SONGS:
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Treat Me Nice
Young and Beautiful
I Wanna Be Free
Don't Leave Me Now
Baby, I Don't Care
One More Day

M-G-M PRESENTS

Jailhouse Rock

in CinemaScope An Avon Production

CO-STARRING WITH JUDY TYLER MICKEY SHAUGHNESSY DEAN JONES JENNIFER HOLDEN GUY TROSPER RICHARD THORPE PANDRO S. BERMAN

There *were* those Elvis movies that managed to rise above mediocrity. *Jailhouse Rock* had a more substantial plot than most; about a convict-turned-singer, it featured an excellent hit-record segment with genuine Memphis musicians. *King Creole*, directed by Michael Curtiz and set in New Orleans, was also a better-than-average film with first-rate songs throughout. Don Siegel's *Flaming Star* was an unusual project with Elvis extremely believable as a sullen half-breed, and *Wild In The Country* succeeded due to a very literate script by Clifford Odets and a fantastic performance by the hot Tuesday Weld.

Aside from the aforementioned exceptions, Elvis in movies—particularly those early to mid-'60s location flicks—was strictly from Turkey City. Elvis as pilot/racer/gambler/surfer in *Hawaii/Acapulco/Seattle(?)*/Florida, complete with interchangeable Girl—Shelly Fabares/Sandra Dee/Debra

Walley. It took-a lotta balls to cast the world's all-time greasy meatball on a Hobie at Malibu beach. But they did it with a straight face, in more than one Spaghetti Beach Party, too. Fortunately the surfing craze had all but passed by this time, so only Southern-Californians and a few GIs in New South Wales, Australia noticed he'd so obviously only been out in the sun just long enough to shoot the film. If the scripts and casting weren't sick enough, the music got more and more frightening—"Do The Clam," "Spinout," "US M-A-L-E." Elvis expected a great deal of his fans.

If the early '60s produced the worst rock 'n roll records, then just imagine what bombs rock 'n roll films of 1960-'63 were. Beach party/ski party/twist party/sorority-party pictures were technically more professional than rock films of the '50s, only because the studios could

justify larger, more realistic production budgets. Although commercial successes, they were actually very amateurish, the acting and directing an insult to a *thinking* audience. But these films weren't intended to serve any function other than mirroring what are now considered naive and silly trends of that time. Films like *Muscle Beach Party* (Frankie Avalon-Annette), *Where The Boys Are* (Connie Francis-Paula Prentiss-Yvette Mimieux) and *Gidget Goes Hawaiian* (Debra Walley-James Darren)—with sun-tanned, bikinied virgins writhing in the sand at Where Its At, U.S.A.—were pleasurable if not arousing distractions. But ultimately, all these films amounted to no more than a teenager's interpretation of their parents' *doris day* fantasies.

Broadway's *Bye Bye Birdie* finally made it to the screen in 1963, but by this late date, 'Birdie', an Elvis prototype, was pretty much irrelevant. What's more, the score was weak imitation-rock 'n roll to begin with. *Birdie* co-star, Bobby Rydell was never great shakes in the shakes department, but that didn't stop him from attempting a few pathetic twitches. More logically, Paul Lynde was cast as a typical parent, terrified of what rock 'n roll might do to his daughter's virgin status.

Pop stars often found themselves in the most embarrassing, ridiculous roles. Paul Anka once played a peeping-tom. Fabian went to college with Bing Crosby. Frankie Avalon was the only survivor at The Alamo. These were, needless to say, tough times for rockcinema. There were few exceptions—Rick Nelson was a natural in Howard Hawks' *Rio Bravo* but then he did grow-up in front of the camera.

As rock 'n roll got older and more accepted, film-makers began to contract rock writers and performers to work on sound-tracks of non-rock movies as well. When MGM wanted to know who could tell Connie Francis *Where The Boys Are*, they went straight to the source of course, Neil Sedaka. Bacharach needed a loud, but polished, *young* dramatic voice to deliver his "(The Man Who Shot) Liberty Valence" theme song—Gene Pitney was a brilliant choice. It wasn't long before television was affected. Suddenly, *Donna Reed Show* regulars, Paul Petersen and Shelly Fabares became *gifted* singers overnight. Jimmy Boyd, *Batchelor Father's* boy-next-door, also took a shot; even Patty Duke herself got a top-tener with her United Artists Records' release, "(Please) Don't

...by the time Beatlemania struck, there were film-makers ready to record the phenomenon properly.

Just Stand There."

In 1962, Richard Lester, an American living in England, directed *It's Trad, Dad*, a low-budget musical which resembled many American rock films in plot and personality. "Trad" is British slang for a type of traditional jazz popular in the UK during the '50s. *Trad*'s star, England's answer to Patti Paige, with her puffed-up sleeves and slightly burned, greatly-teased Henna coiff, was a cliché in the Trad-Jazz vernacular. By its very nature, Trad-Jazz was an awfully poor basis for a script, regardless, there was much imagination going on *behind* the camera. It was during this film's musical scenes that Lester first utilized the montage, split-screen and negative images which would soon revolutionize rock-film-making. Here at last was a director who could conceive musicians filmed away from the standard one-dimensional close-ups.

People in their twenties during the early '60s had grown-up with rock and roll. Among them were young film-makers who refused to perceive rockcinema from the vantage-point of a Katzman or Zugsmith. So, by the time Beatlemania struck, there were film-makers ready to record the phenomenon properly.

In the summer of 1964, coinciding with the Beatles' first American tour, Richard Lester's *A Hard Day's Night* hit. It proved to be one of those magical-connections that indelibly affects an entire generation of film-making.

Before starting production of *A Hard Day's Night*, George Harrison was asked if they had decided on a leading-lady for the film. "We're trying for the Queen," Harrison exclaimed, adding; "She sells—Ya know?" Lester didn't even try to turn the Beatles into actors. He let them be Beatles; spontaneous, cheeky, irreverent Beatles.

Lester's brilliance was his ability as a film-maker to recognize the fact that rock has a rhythmic grammar and syntax different from other styles of music: Rock 'n Roll is frantic, irregular and often confusing to the uninitiated. So, he adapted the film to it. In *A Hard Day's Night*:

—Instruments appeared from nowhere into hands of Beatles.

—"Can't Buy Me Love" became a running, jumping, standing-still panorama.

—"This Boy" was commentary on Ringo's solitary nature.

These visual images of the Beatles' music never let-up, running right up to, and through the film's final credits, where those four faces are flashed in multiple, contorted expressions.

Lester's stylistic framework was immediately imitated. Some early variations included John Boorman's *Having A Wild Weekend* with the Dave Clark 5, *Ferry Cross the Mersey* starring Gerry (Marsden) & The Pacemakers, William Friedkin's *Good Times* featuring Sonny & Cher, and who would dare forget dear, huggable Peter and his fluffy Hermits in MGM's epic, *Hold* (not hard-)On.

Help! was not the landmark that the first Lester/Beatles film was, possibly because of a more specific story line. Still, it outgrossed *A Hard Day's Night*, and was an immensely enjoyable film. Of course, color helped alot, as did the expanded use of outdoor locations.

And, needless to say, The Beatles' music had evolved to its most creative level by mid-1965.

In *Help!*, Lester devised still more unusual methods to depict Lennon-McCartney music on the screen. In the "Ticket To Ride" snow sequence, a piano mysteriously appears, there's out-of-sync mouthing and frequent jump-cuts. During one scene on the beach, there's John on drums, George on bass, Paul on Gurl, Ringo on guitar and then variations on same; this puts to rest the movie-nonsense of pretending to play live music which is obviously hermetically canned.

Help! was more the extension of Lester as Director than The Beatles as Performers. His celebration of

youth's revolt-into-style is reiterated

1965 also was the year American International Pictures [AIP] realized young people attended rockcinema to *hear* the music and couldn't care less about snatches of filler dialogue poorly disguised as plot. So AIP staged a real concert—*The T.A.M.I. Show* [Teenage Music International]—filming the whole magilla in *Electronovision*. A distant cousin to video tape, this process cut production time and bucks in half, allowing fans to see hits, performed at neighborhood movie-houses while still fresh on the nation's best-seller lists. Jan & Dean hosted excellent performances by The Stones, James Brown, Lesley Gore, Beach Boys, Miracles, and The Supremes (*Diana, Mary and Flo*).

Steve Binder, a young TV producer, directed *The T.A.M.I. Show*. He had all the credentials necessary since he was right at home with all manner of *Shindig*-clutter; the garish sets and, of course, that all-important element, without which rock mania would be just meaningless: *Girls*. Gyrating, boob-bouncing (insert Johnny Rivers single of your choice here), prick-teasing, dancing-girls. Yes, and plenty of 'em. And, in cages. Binder was an artist.

T.A.M.I.'s sequel was *The T.N.T. Show*. Jack Nitzche was arranger and conductor for both films, but 'TNT' had Phil Spector as musical-director and talent-coordinator. It's a safe bet *TNT*'s budget ran just a few extra bucks, but Spector was worth it. This was the first time we got to see what them Byrds looked like, close-up. Joan Baez spoke some of her first political slander on this very stage, folk-rock was an item. Strumming to the beat of a thousand Greenwich Village folk-heroes, The Lovin' Spoonful's John Sebastian—with autoharp-in-ear—convinced us this music was indeed, magic to believe in. Tina Turner, well, it was the 64th time she'd split seams, but this was the first time she cracked and peeled in front of 14½ year-old boys from the West San Fernando Valley. They were impressed.

The *piece-de-resistance* was mind-boggling Ronnie Spector and her flaming Ronettes. Those who'd seen the gurls on the first Stones tour earlier that year, were crouched in antsy expectation of their ripe, capitol F, Female-New York Style—all screaming, all scratching, all kicking. All of which felt especially good when the camera came in on Ronnie's moist lips as she, *Be my, be my, Be My Baby*'ed mercilessly.

Together, *The T.A.M.I. Show* and *The T.N.T. Show* were a sneak-preview of most of rock's next ten years' development. The influences, direct and indirect, are undisputable. These films are uncelebrated highpoints in the history of the rock and roll art form.

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"I'm not a postage stamp you just cancel out!"

"You're wild, just like me ...that's why we belong together!"

"I'm yours... for the rest of my born days!"

...After "The Graduate", rock composers were employed more readily on film soundtracks...

The post-Beatles rock era produced an awareness in mainstream and art-film directors alike. Antonioni was probably the first of the latter group to realize that awareness on film. In *Blow-Up*, a contemporary story set in London, there's one scene in which David Hemmings enters a rock club where the high-intensity of the band is contrasted against the passivity of the silently gazing audience. There are glimpses of Jeff Beck and Jimmy Page in rare form—smashing instruments in a wide-screen rave-up—outdoing the Who, Antonioni's original choice for the part played here by The Yardbirds.

Antonioni treats rock merely as a curiosity in *Blow-Up*. He realizes rock's power yet it's obvious he has little or no real affinity for the form—or else why Herbie Hancock's jazz-muzak background?

According to Paul Williams in *Outlaw Blues*, Antonioni planned to delve deeper into the rock-pile: "...it looks very much as though Michelangelo Antonioni will direct the Beatles' third film, *Shades of a Personality*...The story line involves four faces of a man—himself as dreamer, as seen by the world, as a member of mankind, as seen by himself—each played by a different Beatle."

Antonioni's next project actually turned out to be his first American film, the seriously-flawed *Zabriskie Point*. In this film he used rock as a commentative: Jerry Garcia's solarized guitar complemented perfectly the long love-scene in Death Valley; the electronic whine of Pink Floyd served as background for the final explosion. The Youngbloods and John Fahey also applied appropriate sound effects. The only real musical clunker was the turkey-Mike Curb-penned title cut which gobbled all the way from pressing plant through return-authorization as did all 45 prints of the film.

A number of directors experimented with rockcinema with varying degrees of success/failure. Preminger wasted The Zombies' incredibly valuable time performing a pub scene for the kraut in *Bunny Lake is Missing*. A suspense film, *The Mad Room*, utilized screeching rock records by Todd Rundgren's fabled Nazz to heighten tension. Alice Cooper and Moby Grape performed obligatory discotheque scenes in *Diary of a Mad Housewife* and *The Sweet Ride*, respectively. Richard Lester proved he hadn't lost the

knack in *Petulia*, a brilliant film set in San Francisco, featuring Big Brother and the Holding Company and The Grateful Dead. Godard employed the Stones in *One + One* and Jefferson Airplane in *One A.M.*; they served as symbols of political upheaval and the (glorified) revolutionary outlaw, a pose not uncommon for the Stones from their early aborted planned-film *Only Lovers Left Alive*, to Jagger's solo

roles in the unlikely *Ned Kelly* and the apocalyptic *Performance*.

Mike Nichols scored a breakthrough with *The Graduate*. The background music for the film, as composed and performed by Simon & Garfunkel, consisted of previously recorded material with the exception, Mrs. Robinson. Most felt Paul Simon's folk-rock style immeasurably added to the mood of Nichols' film and communicated a great deal

about Dustin Hoffman's character, Benjamin Bradley.

After *The Graduate*'s tremendous success, rock composers were employed more regularly on film soundtracks. John Sebastian & The Lovin' Spoonful added thematic and often humorous definition to a pair of frantic comedies, Woody Allen's *What's Up Tiger Lilly?* and Coppola's *You're A Big Boy Now*. The Turtles featuring Mark Volman and Howard Kaylan suffered one of their many in-between-hit stiffs with the title recording to the swinger-marketed *Guide For The Married Man*, written by Harry Nilsson. A couple of Beatles ventured into the field; McCartney with lushy romanticism in *The Family Way* and Harrison's first chance to spread affection for Ravi Shankar and Eastern music in general (World Pacific cut-outs), in *Wonderwall*.

Donovan/*Poor Cow*, Traffic featuring Stevie Winwood and The Spencer Davis Group/*Here We Go 'Round the Mulberry Bush*, Manfred Mann/*Up the Junction*; many more rock-related composers were asked to do music for film—Barry Mann and Cynthia Weil/*Wild In The Streets* ("Shapes of Things To Come") and *Privilege* (featuring Paul Jones of



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"Gimme Shelter was the flip side of "Woodstock"

Manfred Mann). Both films presented the rock-star as manipulating (and manipulated) demagogue. Then there was *Easy Rider*, which was comprised of already popular songs performed by Bob Dylan, Jimi Hendrix Experience and Goffin & King (not simultaneously be aware). There was also a growing tendency to equate rock with drugs as in *Revolution* (Steve Miller/Quicksilver/Mother Earth) and Dick Clark's hippie-odyssey *Psych-Out* (Seeds!, Strawberry Alarm Clock!, Jack Nicholson!!!). The Psychedelic Experience was also depicted in the ill-timed but no less fantastic *Head* (which featured the \$10 collector classic 45RPM, Goffin-King's "The Porpoise Song" recorded by The Monkees).

The Beatles' animated *Yellow Submarine*, borrowed pop and op art (Peter Max to the max), to interpret Lennon/McCartney/Harrison songs.

1967's rockumentary *Don't Look Back*, a film of Bob Dylan's tour of England two years earlier, was one of the earliest descendants of *The T.A.M.I. Show*. Filmed in a staged *cinema-verite*-like manner by D. A.

Pennebaker. *Don't Look Back*, rather than sticking Dylan with a pseudo-plot or simply filming a concert, followed him through hotel-room confrontations, interviews with naive/logical (your choice) reporters, business maneuverings. In short, all elements unique to the contemporary troubador. *Don't Look Back* is a portrait of a modern *artiste*, his life on-the-road and his friends, business associates (Albert Goldman, Donovan, Alan Price), and hangers-on.

That same summer ABC-TV hired Pennebaker to shoot a television special at The Monterey International Pop Festival, the first mass tribal-gathering of post-Beatle generation—the first *Woodstock*. ABC abandoned the project due to budget complications, consequently, *Monterey Pop* was released to select independent theatres.

The film opens with short daytime scenes of organizer John Phillips making telephone-arrangements, David Crosby checking the sound system, and the festival's various make-ready functions; suddenly the film cuts to night, the festival blasts into music. Pennebaker took the camera off the performer to high-

light crowd (*psychotic*) reaction, the clusters of flower-children getting high on free-love, etcetera and so forth. Quick flashes of regally-outfitted Brian Jones, jolly Mama Cass Elliot and other living pop stars of that time were interspersed throughout. Eric Burdon would later celebrate, in roll-call fashion, the performances of many in his 1967 MGM hit, "Monterey."

"The Byrds and the Airplane did fly!

Oh Ravi Shankar's music made me cry!

The Who, exploded into fire-flight!

Hugh Masekela's music was black as night!

The Grateful Dead

Blew everybody's mind!

Jimi Hendrix bay-be, believe me set the world on fi-ya!

His majesty, Prince [Brian] Jones smiled as he moved among the crowd...

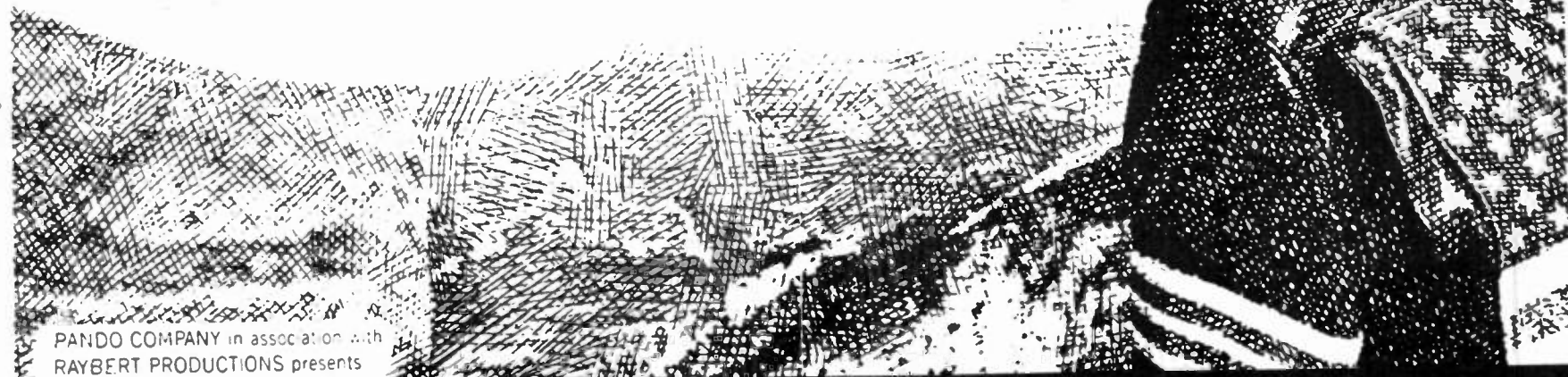
Like Dee Dee Sharp and her *Mashed Potato* dance hit(s) of earlier days, "Monterey" is a product of its time: It tends to embarrass those who lived through the period when reminded.

Woodstock was a nearly total representation of what happened that August, 1969 weekend in the Catskills. It is an important work due to the adventurous ways the film's techniques captured the festival's spirit. Faced with miles and miles of film to edit, Michael Wadleigh shoe-horned as best he could by splitting the screen, simultaneously showing multiple events from many perspectives. The directing is technically brilliant, night and day footage is juxtaposed fluidly and music is sound-stage accurate. Admittedly, many of the dope and nudity shots were a bit overstated. Still *Woodstock* recorded, for posterity's sake, many incredible performances—The Who, Jimi Hendrix, Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young—some of which helped propel careers—Ten Years After, Santana, Joe Cocker.

Gimme Shelter has been called the flip-side of *Woodstock*, a powerful film with two built-in hooks: the Rolling Stones and a murder—early snuff appeal. The Maysles who previously covered, in *cinema-verite* style, the 1964 Beatles tour, set out to make a documentary of the first American Stones tour in three years,

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Directed by
DENNIS HOPPER

Produced by
PETER FONDA

Associate Producer
WILLIAM HAYWARD

Executive Producer
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"American Graffiti" score was like a time-warp juke box...

the Tour and film climaxing in an instant-Woodstock free concert on the West Coast. Everything went according to plan until Altamont, where a black was killed by a gang of Hell's Angels.

The first half of the film is the usual stuff: the Stones doing an incredible act at the Garden, recording in Muscle Shoals, interrupted once in a while by scenes of attorney Melvin Belli making arrangements for the Altamont concert. Then, for benefit of the viewers, the Maysles utilize a *Blow-Up*-like framing device: Running the footage where the murder incident occurs many times in slow-motion in an effort to determine whether the murdered man was holding a gun. The violence of the overpowering Angels versus the helpless, pleading Stones (insert limp-wrist) "People, c'mon, c'mon, c o o l down, please"—unforgettable images in a terrifying movie.

The flood of festival, concert and road-show rockumentaries has become a boring formula. The Beatles' *Let It Be* was worthwhile for the music and the four personalities in conflict and interaction, but all the insight and tension that should have come from examining the group at that stage in their career's final days was for the most part, un-tapped/taped. *Mad Dogs And Englishmen* and *Celebration* rehashed the band-on-the-run and peace 'n' love good-vibes clichés respectively. Zappa's "surrealistic documentary" *200 Motels* tried many novel techniques

but was greeted apathetically. *Sweet Toronto* contains some energetic performances by great rock veterans, but little extra-musical substance. The same might be said of *The Concert For Bangladesh*, *Fillmore*, *Ladies and Gentlemen*, *The Rolling Stones* and *Let The Good Times Roll*.

There have been some interesting fiction films in the '70s that feature rock, connecting the music to our recent history and exploring the ways in which rock provides an outlet, an alternative direction or simply diversion for the young. *American Graffiti*'s omnipresent score is like a time-warp jukebox guiding its young protagonists through their motions, and *That'll Be The Day* and *Stardust* capture the excitement of another decade's rockbeat, but perhaps the most important example of '70s rockcinema to date is *The Harder They Come*, a stunning film with a pulsing reggae score that accompanies a Jamaican outlaw/pop-star on the lam.

By some coincidence, two of the most significant recent non-nostalgic (they speak in rock's *present-tense*) rock narrative films share a disturbingly contemptuous attitude toward what they perceive as the current audience. In Brian DePalma's *Phantom of the Paradise*, a parody of horror films that updates the story of

Faust, a concert crowd cheers wildly the on-stage electrocution of the campy star-performer. In Ken Russell's adaptation of the Who's *Tommy*, kids are shown blindly following the formerly handicapped boy. De Palma's film, although not an artistic or commercial success, is the better of the two, but *Tommy* will likely have further-reaching

consequences. For one thing, it was a big box-office hit, sending \$16 million back to Columbia, according to *Variety*, and in its use of top rockers and wall-to-wall music as screenplay, it is a definite step-up in the integration of the music into the "prestige" film, if some down in quality. Both films accurately capture the rhythms and tell us how the



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...it's ironic that Eric Clapton and Pete Townshend made their screen debut in an explicitly anti-rock venture.



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THE MOTHERS OF INVENTION RINGO STARR THEODORE BIKEL

MUSIC PERFORMED BY: THE MOTHERS OF INVENTION FRANK ZAPPA MARK VOLMAN

HOWARD KAYLAN IAN UNDERWOOD AYNLEY DUNBAR GEORGE DUKE AND THE ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

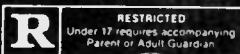
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music works in this age of Elton John, Led Zeppelin and Bowie.

Encouraged by his first real popular success, Russell went on to commit further artistic and this time commercial atrocities in *Lisztomania*, once again starring Daltrey, with Ringo Starr as the Pope(?) and a predictably bloody Rick Wakeman score. In other recent developments, producers are relying on tested properties to bring rock to the movies. Milos Forman is set to direct (oh yes) the balding, grandfather of rock-musicals, *Hair*. And the money-men behind *Tommy* will serve-up *Grease*. *Ode To Billy Jo*, directed by *The Beverly Hillbillies'* Max Baer [Jethro], currently in premiere engagements, is the first movie adapted from a single pop song since Arthur Penn-Arlo Guthrie's *Alice's Restaurant*. Elton John is planning an animated version of *Captain Fantastic and the Brown Dirt Cowboy*. Also due is Barbra Streisand and Kris Kristofferson co-starring in a rock-remake of the perennial *A Star Is Born* (the film features a live concert with Peter Frampton and others—staged especially for the film by Bill Graham).

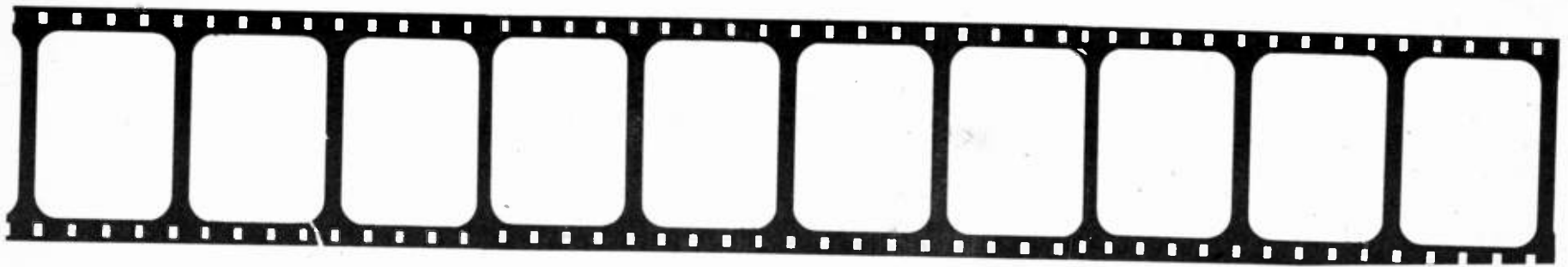
Sparkle could have been a well-observed examination of one aspect of the music business: the hope it gave to ghetto-kids in the '50s looking for a way out, but even with songs by Curtis Mayfield and Aretha Franklin, it deteriorated into black-soap opera. In *The Man Who Fell To Earth* (see in-depth review by Lita Eliscu this issue), David Bowie, under the direction of Nicholas (Performance) Roeg, reveals an interesting non-musical screen presence (John Phillips' score is a pastiche of various styles). Commander Cody and his Lost Planet Airmen have a cameo in the enthusiastically word-of-mouthed *Hollywood Boulevard*, an exploitation film about exploitation films that's hyped as "shamelessly loaded with sex and violence." In England they've never stopped grinding out cash-in product, tossing rock into a cheap quickie-package, the latest example is *Side By Side*, a comedy musical featuring the Rubettes, Mud, Fox and Desmond ("Israelites") Dekker.

There is also a tendency among pretentious artists on both sides of the Atlantic to churn out concert films, providing us with a succession of bores like *Yessongs*; Pink Floyd in the ruins, *Live At Pompeii*; Emerson Lake & Palmer's night-gallery, *Pictures At An Exhibition*; Alice Cooper's auto-biographical *Welcome To My Nightmare*. The Grateful Dead keep threatening to release a film of their purported (unfortunately, not final) farewell gig shot at Winterland in 1974. Meanwhile a notorious Stones documentary, Robert Frank's *Cocksucker Blues* is being suppressed for a number of

reasons, chiefly the possibility of multiple lawsuits and implied marquee liabilities.

It's ironic, and a bit sad that such artists as Elton, Eric Clapton and Townshend, for their screen debut, participated in an explicitly anti-rock venture. The result—more opera than rock and more splashy glitz than both—it's exactly what those familiar with Russell's earlier films in which he trashed the '30s musical (*The Boy Friend*) and the lives of classical composers (*The Music Lovers*) expected. It didn't help either that the film for *Tommy* appeared a good six years after the original 2-LP rock-opera. Townshend and Daltrey were obviously sick of the deaf, dumb and blind-boy by the time they were asked to adapt the score and star in the film. The two Whos acquit themselves passably; the atrocious sound-mix (vocals way up front in an effort to make the musical-dialogue understood), hampered Townshend, but the best songs still sounded at least good and he was Oscar-nominated, and Daltrey's mostly glazed performance showed some screen talent. Elton's "Pinball Wizard" is a well-staged sequence—there are few others, but generally it's a mess. The straight actors clash with the rockers, Russell has no feel for the material except in a most embarrassing, blatant sense. The screen is filled with such irrelevancies as Monroe-worship and an Ann-Margret orgy of chocolate and soapsuds. *Tommy* is, however, the most successful rock-associated film in the genre's twenty-one year history, and may be partially responsible for the flurry of activity now going on in the field.

There is lots of rockcinema action as the medium enters its third decade. None of the already released or scheduled films really have anything significant to say about the best contemporary rock and its relation to the way we are (or were for that matter). They're all either twice-removed visions of past rock experience or flat, unimaginative companion pieces to a group's concept album(s) and stage show(s). There are any number of strong musical personalities who could make the transition to film, and directors to guide them. Martin Scorsese, who in all his films, especially *Who's That Knocking At My Door* and *Mean Streets*, makes music a casual but integral part of his characters' lives, might be perfect for a Springsteen venture (maybe a *West Side Story*-like expansion of "Incident on 57th Street"). Arthur Penn was once going to direct Linda Ronstadt in *Ruby Red* and it still sounds like a great idea. Robert Altman revolutionized, or at least revitalized, the dramatic musical with *Nashville*, and while it would



Classic Moments: "Robert De Niro doing 'Mickey's Monkey' around a getaway car..."

be redundant for him to attempt a similar rock film, other film-makers might do well to follow his lead in using music as an outgrowth of atmosphere and character. Rod Stewart, Patti Smith, Bob Marley, the Beach Boys, Randy Newman could all contribute as performers and/or composers in a new type of fictional rock movie. But let's be thankful that the most obvious of all rockcinema concepts remains un-

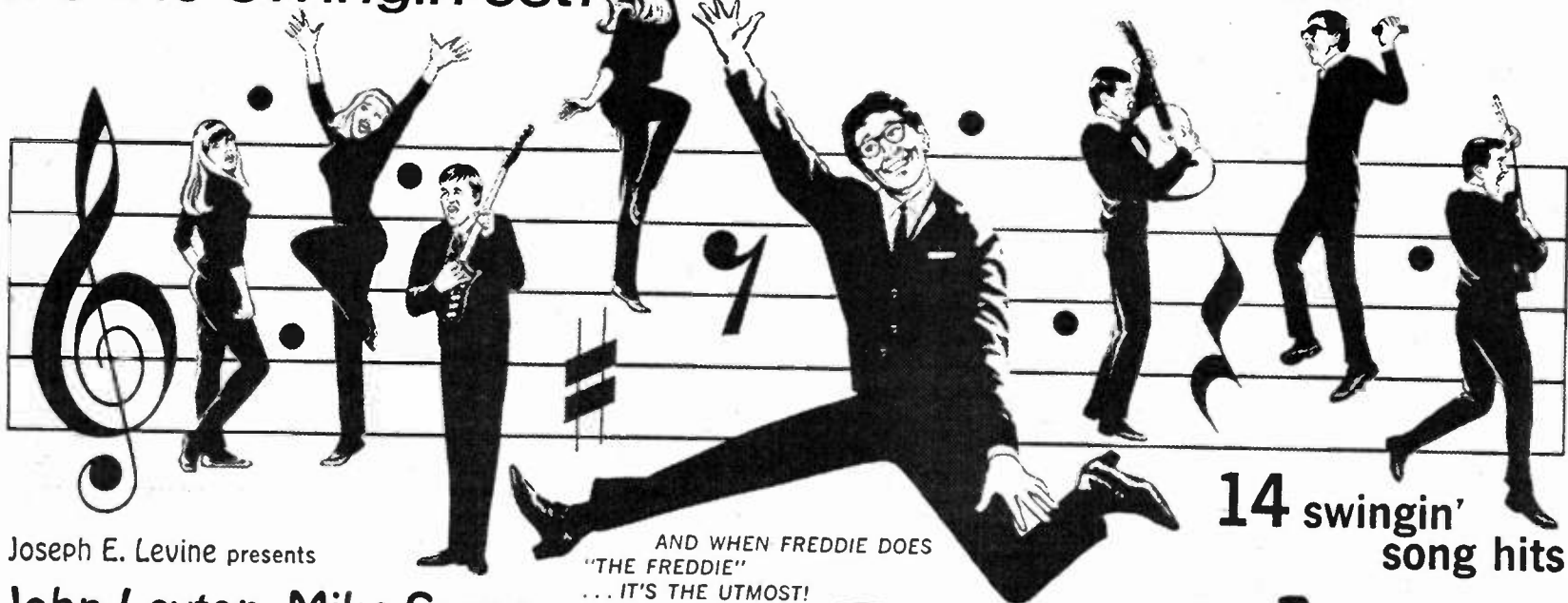
touched—That centered around the dreaded disco deluge has yet to "get up and boogie" onto film.

In the twenty-one year history of rockcinema, there's accrued a series of brief moments that say it all, sometimes in contradictory, self-referential ways: the very idea of Alan Freed trying to convince a small town mayor that rock is harmless, healthy diversion in *Don't Knock The Rock* and then bringing on

Little Richard to sing "Tutti Frutti"; Jerry Lee Lewis banging out "High School Confidential"; Elvis snarling and slamming his crotch against his guitar; the Beatles bolting for a door ("We're out!") and cutting up to "Can't Buy Me Love"; Ron (Opie) Howard and Cindy Williams dancing to "Smoke Gets In Your Eyes" (*American Graffiti*); Harvey Keitel waking up to the pounding drums of "Be My

Baby" and Robert DeNiro doing "Mickey's Monkey" around a getaway car; Jagger, slick and malevolent, singing "Memo From Turner" (*Performance*); Otis Redding in *Monterey Pop*; Joe Cocker making mincemeat of the peace and love vibes of *Woodstock*. These images of youth-culture are preserved for the fascination/horror of future generations because of film and music.

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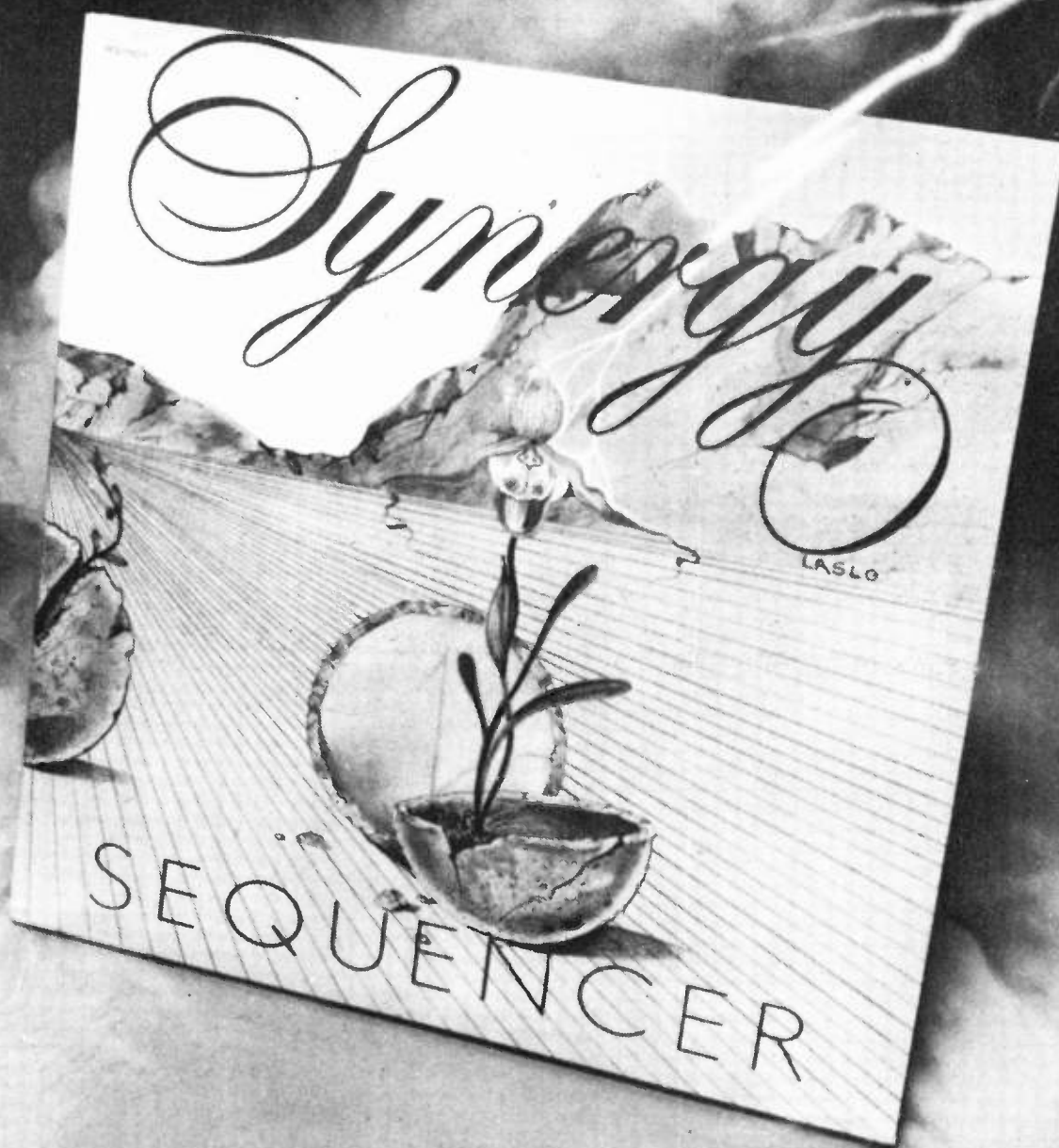
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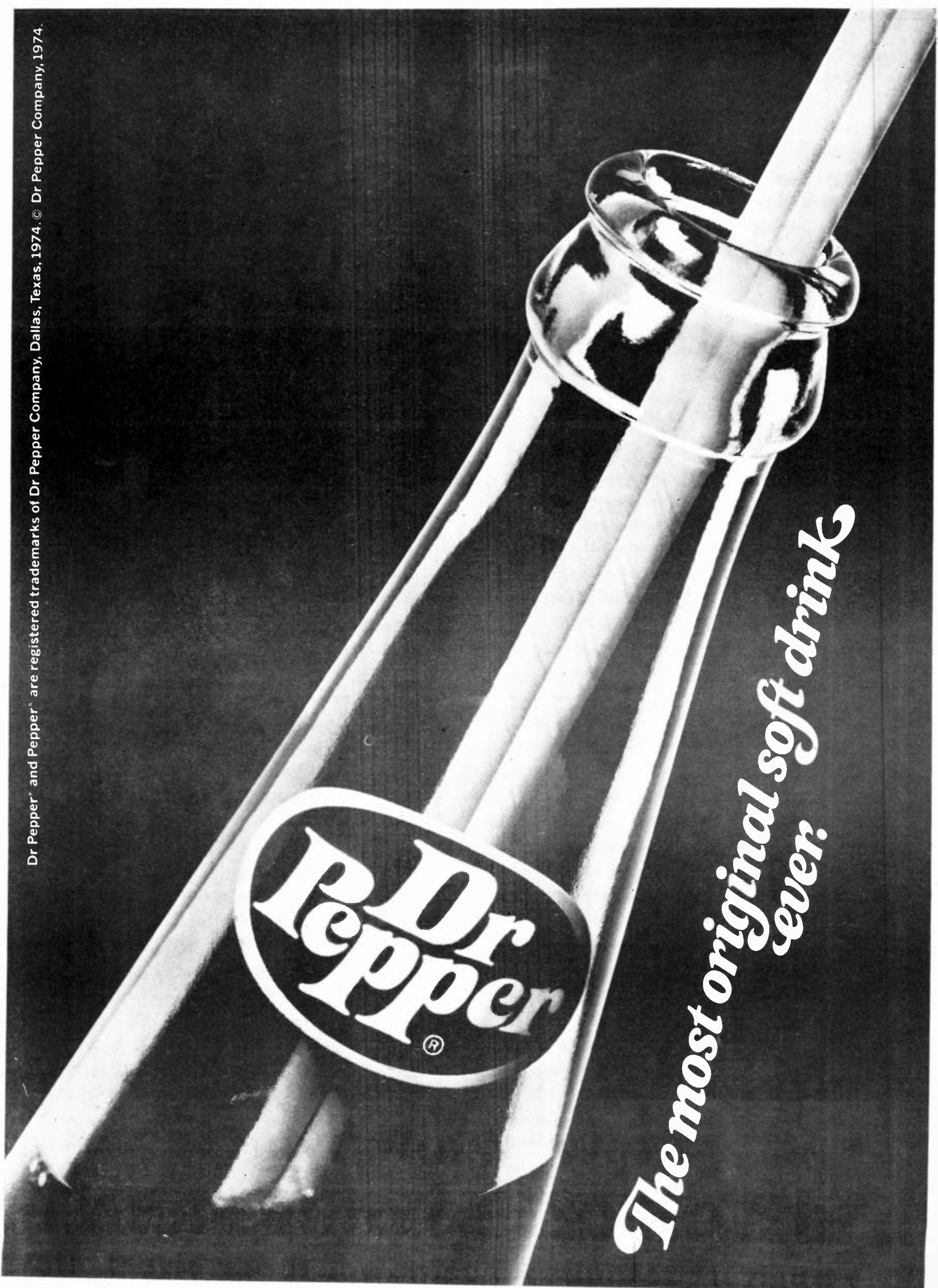
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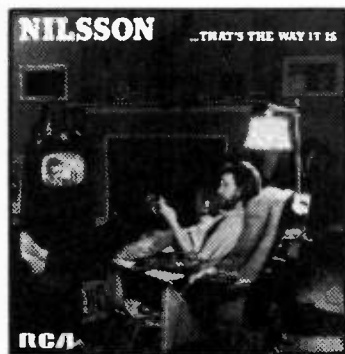
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Nilsson's Barfly Persona: Tongue trapped in cheek



...THAT'S THE WAY IT IS
Nilsson
RCA APL1-1119

By SAM SUTHERLAND

Conceived as a singer's album, rather than a new collection of original work, *...That's The Way It Is* is Nilsson's third longplayer devoted primarily to songs by other writers. Even the two originals are collaborations (with Dr John and Danny Kortchmar), but that in itself is hardly a flaw, as *Nilsson Sings Newman* demonstrated some years back; given the increasingly uneven quality of his own songs in recent years, the move would seem shrewd, if anything. Strong interpreters are far rarer than mediocre singer-songwriters.

But that leaves us with Nilsson as a singer, and while some of his power as a vocalist has returned, little of his early delicacy survives. His tongue has remained in his cheek far too long, and now sarcasm intrudes on even the most straight-forward performances, an involuntary tic that undercuts any efforts at mere passion. That process trivializes Randy Newman's "Sail Away," presented here within a symphonic arrangement that amplifies Newman's own orchestral arrangement without particularly enhancing it. Where Newman's deadpan approach intensified the lyric's bitter irony, Nilsson can only go for the easy snicker.

The flipside of that wiseass style is at least as disturbing, as the opening weeper, George Harrison's "That Is All," quickly suggests. Here Nilsson pushes an already sentimental lyric far beyond bathos, riding a wide-angled symphonic arrangement toward a shrieking falsetto that mistakes hysteria for passion. The same sense of melodrama renders America's "I Need You" equally ludicrous.

Although the album's glossy, precise production (by Trevor Lawrence) restores some of the sonic lustre missing since Nilsson parted ways with Richard Perry, the net effect is merely cosmetic: The best moments from those earlier collaborations were the products of Nilsson's own sharp-eyed, if often jaundiced, viewpoint, not the epic scale of the production. While the

guitar section alone is bigger than Blood, Sweat & Tears on this session, and the string section tips the scale toward symphonic lineups, the singer's own lack of emotional focus undercuts the music's lushness.

Were these songs without any glimpses of Nilsson's earlier grandeur, it would be a painless process to simply write him off. But this is probably his best-sounding record in years, a fact made all the more infuriating by the music's ultimate sense of impotent whimsy. It appears Nilsson enjoys his barfly persona, and is content to let producers and strong session musicians supply any real human connections, and that seems a pointless gesture.



THE MOVIES
The Movies
Arista AL4085

By RICHARD CROMELIN

The Movies' debut release is a rather spotty, nondescript affair, more likely due to prematurity than to sheer lack of talent. The album reflects the versatility and competent professionalism of a well-seasoned, club-oriented performing band, but is deficient as regards identity, attitude and direction and comes across more as an audition or sampler than a forceful statement.

Three quite nice tracks appear at about midpoint, and isolated instances of deft pop mechanics occur throughout, but the inspiration is inconsistent, and unable to rescue several ballads and country-folkie ditties from utter drabness. As it's said, they just don't make movies like they used to.

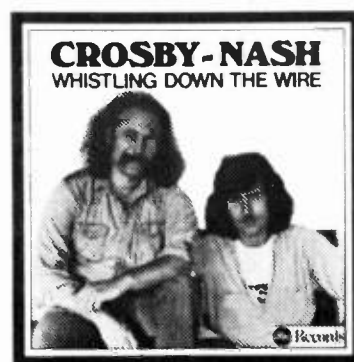
Michael Morgan and Peter Barnes, who worked as Morgan & Barnes after the breakup of Milwaukee's popular Messengers, are the core of the group, and much of the album's mediocrity rests on the team's sporadic composing talents and capable but anonymous and limited singing. Little imagination is evident in the arrangements, or dimension in Vini Poncia's production, and the influences (Simon & Garfunkle, jug-band/good-time music, Badfinger

and other Britons, et. al.) are a little too obvious.

The Movies' first album is actually a strong case for the idea of the debut EP. The songs preceding and following the three that cluster closest to the label are all of negligible value, and one gets the feeling that they were included not out of compelling musical urgency, but to fill out the required 12 inches.

Those three numbers alone, though, would be a winning package. "Satellite Touchdown," akin to "Starman" and the Sutherlands' "Love on the Moon," is a breezy, pleasant soft-core sci-fi piece of slick, inviting pop. "Better Wages Better Days," a sudden change of pace into a Bee Gees-like dirge, makes effective use of bowed cello and orchestral elements to spin some atmosphere around its strong melody, tight harmonies and vivid images of hard times. "Empty Room" then opens side two, with refracted Mersey visions evident in the Liverpool lilt and ebullient, Peter & Gordonesque vocals and arrangement.

Had Movies stopped there, or waited patiently for some equally enticing material to appear in their songbook, their initial album would be a delight. Instead, we're left with an occasionally promising but largely indistinct musical entity, perhaps even a hit single or two, and a band whose strongest feature remains its name.



WHISTLING DOWN THE WIRE
David Crosby/Graham Nash
ABC ABCD-956

By SAM SUTHERLAND

Last year's *Wind on the Water* caught more than a few cynics by surprise. Crosby and Nash pulled an inspired save, paring away the excesses that had made their earlier solo and duet efforts seem like textbook examples of rock's self-importance since the late '60's. The new strategy was unabashedly commercial, but no less attractive for it, and their mellowed hippie ethos was now spiced with bite and economy. Best of all, the duo had rediscovered their humbler roles as superb harmony singers, not just counter-cultural pundits;

the record's real emphasis was on its lissone, rich music, not the cant of its lyrics.

That album regained much of the commercial and critical ground lost since the dissolution of Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, so it's hardly surprising that *Whistling Down the Wire* adheres to the winning pop formula developed in its predecessor, right down to the basic studio band assembled for the sessions. That choice has already proven more satisfying than the all-star, mix-and-match approach taken during the first solo projects, and the seven-piece unit that appears on the new record has the added advantage of a year's seasoning; although each of the five added players has a separate career outside the Crosby/Nash band, live work has provided the interplay with a sense of focus that rarely surfaced on the earlier sets.

As for the songs, they follow the current, more disciplined path of the last album. While the lyrics still lapse into cosmic gibberish or flower-child romanticism at times, there's evidence of a restraint that parallels the band's sense of discipline. Thus the highlights prove to be the album's more straightforward pop tracts: "Spotlight," the opening song, is yet another slice-of-rock-life, but the melody's wry, the playing crisp, and the arrangement makes good use of Nash's wheezing harmonica and David Lindley's slide guitar. "J.B.'s Blues" is an L.A. reggae that doesn't take its Trenchtown lilt too seriously, achieving genuine charm as a result. Then there are several ballads that take full advantage of the frontmen's lush harmonies, among them "Broken Bird" and "Taken at All," both songs revert to heavy-handed metaphors, but the atmospheric playing offsets the bombast.

Underlying this sense of craft remains the ticklish issue of risk-taking, though, and *Whistling Down the Wire* may strike some as disturbingly safe in its attack. My own resistance to this pair's intermittent pretensions hasn't been completely neutralized, and the sense of caution implicit here detaches the music from the mythic "progressive" milieu which both Crosby and Nash have been part of. Though David Crosby still insists on his obligatory jive blues vocal, offered here in "Foolish Man," he now has the sharpened pop instincts to follow with the collaborative "Out of the Darkness," one of the album's richest pop confections. That song isn't "progressive" at all, but in its simpler concern for pop drama, it indicates a more down-to-earth, and likely durable progress.

ELTON JOHN

HERE—AND—THERE



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MCA-2197

Album compiled and produced by Gus Dudgeon.



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Johnny Guitar Watson • Albert King • Roland Kirk

SOUL & JAZZ



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Jarrett: 70's First Genuine Keyboard Star

RECORD MAGAZINE
Aug 76 Vol 3 **4**

Keith Jarrett: America's #1 Keyboard Star

By COLMAN ANDREWS

Keith Jarrett is the first genuine keyboard star of the seventies. Zawinul, Herbie Hancock, and Chick Corea are stars of a sort, and can certainly be astonishing players, but they are stars today largely because they are or were the leaders of stellar groups. Jarrett is a star as a pianist, whether he's working with a jazz quartet, a symphony orchestra, or nothing but an acoustic piano. Bayete Todd Cochran and Dan Pullen, who can certainly match and maybe exceed Jarrett technically, have released very few albums. Jarrett's output is formidable, both as a leader and a sideman: He has probably been on literally dozens of albums in the past six or eight years. Admirable, often brilliant veterans of the sixties, like McCoy Tyner, Andrew Hill, Mal Waldron, Paul Bley, Dollar Brand, Jaki Byard, and Roland Hanna—to name a few at random—have simply not earned much popular acclaim, despite a welcome resurgence in their recording activity.

No, it is Jarrett who is the star, both musically and commercially. It is Jarrett who can capture the popular imagination while still remaining true to his own richly variegated concepts of what good modern piano-playing should be.

Three evenings of Jarrett's music stand out in my mind:

The first time I saw him (and heard him) was at UCLA's Royce Hall in Los Angeles, with the Charles Lloyd Quartet. He was virtually unknown at the time, though Lloyd had already gathered a respectable following from his dramatic debut days with the Chico Hamilton group. It was, I suppose, 1966 or 1967. The drummer was another relative beginner, Jack de Johnette. Good sense tells me that the bassist was probably Ron McClure, but one little corner of my memory insists that it was the incredible Cecil McBee—the Koussevitsky of jazz.

Lloyd played well—strong, happy, almost chirrupy—but Jarrett was the star of the evening. His absolutely precise, firm gospel chords straying tantalizingly off into puckish dissonance; his broad stylistic vocabulary; his overriding sense of good-humored precision; his (at that point, for that audience) daring use of prepared piano and of plucked piano strings... Those who saw and heard him elsewhere during the same period

were struck with him quite forcefully.

The second time I recall particularly (though it was probably the fourth or fifth time I had seen him by then) was at the Milan Jazz Festival in 1971, with the Miles Davis group. Gary Bartz, Michael Henderson, Ndugu, and Don Alias were among the others in the ensemble. It was a spectacularly strong version of the Davis crew—a perfect harmony of energies and levels—and Jarrett was able to be both a confident improviser and a resilient foil for Davis' prodding sharpnesses. He was playing electric keyboards this time—a comparative rarity for him. Two of them—one a Fender Rhodes, I recall—were angled together to form a "V", and Jarrett sat at the crux. His body swayed, rose and fell, seemingly echoing (or influencing) the sinuous path of his lines. He had a way of coming out of the general electronic dazzle with pure, subtle notes that made you suddenly realize that you had been listening to him all along.

The third strong image I hold of Jarrett in person comes from the spring of 1975, when he did a solo acoustic piano concert, back at Royce Hall. It was among the last of these concerts he gave, and it was magnificent. The thing that impressed me the most at the time was how riveting, how demanding of attention, his playing was. A review at the time phrased it like this: "...one got lost in his music—but kept following, fascinated, wherever he led. He set up problems for himself rhythmically or harmonically, and then, just as... (the)... listener started to ask himself 'Now how will he get out of this one?', Jarrett would burst forth with some totally unexpected solution—a change from major to minor, a soft fade, a splendor of grace notes, a gradual speeding up of tempo, a bold and well-developed contrapuntal melody. He was almost literary in the way he threaded together plots and subplots, built climaxes, maintained the forward motion of story.

The most substantial part of Jarrett's fame thus far comes from his solo piano style. For the majority of his career, both as a sideman and a solo artist, he has been loyal to the unamplified, conventional concert piano as an instrument. And he has been recording and performing unaccompanied piano pieces in an idiom at least partially similar to his more recent pieces at least since his days with the Charles Lloyd

Quartet in the latter sixties. (See, for instance, "Sunday Morning" on Lloyd's *Love-in* lp, Atlantic SD 1481, and "Love No. 3" on *Journey Within*, Atlantic SD 1493.) But his first true public commitment to solo piano came with the release in 1971 of *Facing You* on Manfred Eicher's remarkable ECM label in Germany. (ECM 1017. The label is now distributed in the U.S. by Polydor.)

Facing You, still one of the high points of Jarrett's career, is a masterpiece of piano technique, but it is not a self-consciously showy album. Above all, it evinces Jarrett's tremendous respect for jazz piano tradition, and his unparalleled ability to assimilate, alter, revivify, and improvise upon other music without parodying it or becoming its slave. It could almost be called an impressionistic history of jazz piano, if "impressionistic" had not come to suggest something vague and unstructured and if "history" didn't have a dull, academic ring to it. The album is certainly neither vague nor dull.

The next solo release was, almost unbelievably, a three-record live set called *Solo Concerts* (ECM 3-10305). Recorded live in Bremen and Lausanne, these pieces are long—most take up an entire side—and seem to be only partially written. With this set, Jarrett approaches the perfection of his art as a solo performer. This is original music! The kind of fascinating almost-narrative intensity described above is in copious supply here. The beauty of Jarrett's improvisations is hypnotic but not soporific. One track even recalls the percussive energies of his Charles Lloyd period (talk about string attack!). Manfred Eicher was considered something of a fool, or at least a naif, when he released this three-record solo set. His foolishness may be measured by the fact that, by latest estimates, the set has sold for solo acoustic piano jazz, and, needless to say, absolutely inconceivable for three records' worth of same.

The third, and presumably the last of the Jarrett solo sessions is *The Köln Concerts* (ECM 1033/1034), and it is the most refined. The improvisations are close to the bone, tight, sometimes almost maddeningly logical. These recordings were not universally acclaimed. Marcello Piras, writing in the fine Italian magazine *Musica Jazz*, opined that the best musical ideas on the two lps could fit effortlessly onto a single 45. I don't agree. I find this to be one of those works

of art which reveals itself easily at first meeting, then seduces you into repeated further experiences, and finally begins to show you how little was actually revealed at first. There's a tremendous amount of music on these two discs, that is, and the ease with which some of it may be apprehended should not deceive the earnest listener.

Jarrett has, in fact, apparently given up this part of his music for the time being, precisely because he feels he does too much of the audience's work for them. At least, that's how I read his statement to Steve Lake in a recent issue of *Melody Maker*. He wants, instead, to explore new (to him) musical forms—solo organ music, improvisational pieces based on the melodies of European church bells, a suite for jazz quartet—or so he has told Lake. Meanwhile, he is working hard with jazz/symphony orchestra combinations.

Since these concerns reflect, at least in part, some of his early training, this seems like a sensible place to sneak in some background material on Jarrett:

He was born in Pennsylvania in 1945, and apparently started playing at piano-playing as soon as he could sit up on the bench. At seven, it is said, he was composing melodies and improvising on them in public. At 15, he began formal studies, and performed a concert of his own classically oriented pieces. He studied for a year on scholarship at the Berklee School of Music, and then elected to try jazz, in New York City.

He played briefly with Art Blakey and Rahsaan Roland Kirk (though, to the best of my knowledge, there are no available recordings of his work with those groups), and then joined Charles Lloyd. With Lloyd, he toured the world and first came to the attention of a wide audience. When Lloyd's group broke up in 1968 (Lloyd—encouraged by his success with "youth" audiences—wanted to move into an area of jazz-rock fusion), Jarrett formed a trio with former Bill Evans drummer Paul Motian (who plays with the fine hand of a watchmaker) and Charlie Haden, fresh from one of his tours of duty with Ornette Coleman. After Jarrett's tenure with Miles Davis in 1971, he added tenor saxophonist Dewey Redman—also a veteran of Ornette Coleman. The group has remained intact, despite its members' other musical pursuits, since then.

Jarrett's first lp under his own name, I believe, was *Life Between*

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Born, bred and educated in New Jersey, Vin attended Upsala College in East Orange, where he did his first radio work at WFMU-FM. He served as Program Director of WFMU-FM when it became the innovative Free Form Radio, then worked at

several major New York stations in positions ranging from that of DJ to producer to community service director. Vin has also worked as a research assistant/writer, Director of Promotion and Public Relations for a record company, and Adjunct Professor in Jersey City State College's media department.

According to Vin, the disc jockey is also a performer. "I like to do a show. I'm aware that the curtain rises and falls; I go on and off. Radio is, after all, entertainment."

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"Jarrett-as-keyboardist can do things that have not been done and cannot be done by others"

The Exit Signs (Vortex 2006)—a trio album released in 1968. Since then, his trio and quartet have appeared on further lps for Vortex, Atlantic, Columbia, and, for a particularly rich period which has only just ended, Impulse. Meanwhile, Jarrett started making other albums for ECM—the solo recordings, a duet recording with Jack de Johnette (*Ruta & Daitya*, ECM 1021), a quartet with Jan Garbarek on tenor, Palle Danielsson on bass, and Jon Christensen on drums (*Belonging*, ECM 1050)...It is said that Jarrett will record no longer for Impulse, and that, after the end of 1976, he will record solely for ECM—despite what are surely generous offers from other, larger companies.

Which brings us back to the orchestral writing and performing that seems to be Jarrett's chief concern at this point. Following studies on a Guggenheim Fellowship in composition in 1973, Jarrett recorded a two-record set called *In the Light* (ECM 1033/1034), which might be seen as a sort of glorified homework assignment. There's a little bit of everything on *In the*

Light—a chamber work with flute soloist, a "fughata for Harpsichord" (which is actually a solo piano piece), a brass quintet, a solo piano "hymn", a string quartet, and chamber works for guitar and strings; piano, gong, percussion and strings; and four cello and two trombones. Jarrett plays on three tracks, and conducts two; the rest, he has composed and no more. It is an impressive display of talent, but most of it, alas, is pretty academic, pretty stiff, and not especially original. It's an impressive thesis in musical studies, if that is what it's meant to be, but most of what Jarrett tries to do in these areas has been done generations ago, and done better. An artist of course has the right—even the duty—to continue to grow and to explore new forms in his art, but Jarrett can do things as a pianist, as an "instant composer", that have *not* been done and *cannot* be done by other people. (According to Leonard Feather in his review of a recent Jarrett-and-strings concert, members of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra were so

impressed by the structure of some of his solos that they "found it hard to believe that they were improvised.")

Jarrett's next orchestral lp was *Luminescence* (ECM 1049), described as "music for string orchestra and saxophone", and featuring, as did most of *In the Light*, the string section of the Sudfunk Symphony Orchestra of Stuttgart conducted by Mladen Gutesha. Saxophone soloist (on both soprano and tenor), whose contributions were at least partially improvised, was Jan Garbarek—lanky, angular Norwegian who sounds, too much of the time, like Gato Barbieri in the deep-freeze. (There is a scowling coldness about his music which is perfectly defined by the picture of him on the back cover of *Luminescence*.)

A more impressive recording, and one which seems truer to Jarrett's talents, is the pianist's latest, *Arbour Zena* (ECM). The album includes three compositions of Jarrett's, featuring him on piano (happily), and also featuring Garbarek and Charlie Haden. This time the string orchestra is composed of

members of the Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra, again conducted by Mladen Gutesha. There is a certain current of life on these tracks that I've found difficult to detect on the two aforementioned lps, and it must be admitted that Jarrett is one of the few composers who has tried this sort of thing successfully—who has been able to integrate the "jazz" with the "serious" elements and not just—like, say, Bill Russo—laid the former over the latter like a patchwork quilt on a Louis Quinze bed.

Whatever Jarrett does is worth listening to. Whatever he plays is worth feeling. I just hope he doesn't start to believe that he can make valid statements only through his own versions of more traditional European musical forms, or that, if he does, he can maintain the same respectful independence from these forms that he maintains from the stride and blues and gospel piano forms that he obviously knows so well. And I hope he remembers that there is no more "serious", no more exciting music than jazz.



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Produced by Creed Taylor

Albert King

Delineates the Blues—

Lita Eliscu Listens!

Everybody, including me, knows what jazz is, what the blues are. Everybody, including me, seems to have different definitions.

I had occasion to talk with Albert King the other day, and as he is certainly one of the world's more peerless blues masters, we discussed all this. Now, Mr. King's blues guitar-style is one of the most distinctive around, a personal signature of single, sustained notes of such raw power/steel delicacy that less accomplished fingers may take whole slews of chords to achieve the same effect. For the record, Mr. King is considered to provide a synthesis of Delta "bottleneck" blues and the urban, electrified Chicago blues. It is definitely a very sophisticated approach, using more horns than most others and revealing the influx of other styles, notably jazz. Mr. King shakes his head. He is 6'4", 250 pounds, so when he shakes his head, one listens attentively. Firmly and slowly, he says, "I am not a jazz musician. I play the blues." What is the difference, then? "It is all blues. The whole thing is from blues."

Warming to it, he continues at a slightly quicker pace. "Jazz is speeded-up blues; ya know that expression, 'jazzed-up' meaning faster? What was it they called jazz first, Dixieland..? That's a place, not a style. They wanted to make it new, they had to come up with a name to show it was new. It's all blues, speeded-up blues progressions." Talking about various musicians, he was adamant. "I listen to jazz. Woody Herman. Early Charlie Parker. Kenny Burrell. That's all blues." I nod my head: it is true. Mr. King motions to the radio, disco-music is on. "Listen to those chords, that progression. What's what?" Well...it sounds remarkably like the Stax sounds of the '60s, sax piled on top of R&B—much like Mr. King's own records, *Born Under A Bad Sign*,

Blues Power...only speeded-up. He nods approvingly. "Johnny Taylor just had a giant disco-hit out, right? Now, he's a blues musician, been one a long time. His music has *got* to have the blues in it." He continues, "Too much of what is called 'jazz' is just terrible. Just someone who wants to play faster without learning how to play slow...Look at music books, all the chord changes—the progressions are blues." It is true, that it is a compliment these days to say of a jazz musician, he *can* play the blues...But is it equally easy for a blues musician to then play jazz? Mr. King shakes his head, laffs, "Not me, uh uh. I can't play that stuff." So there *is* a difference! "Yeah. It's faster." That's all. "That's enough."

Standing by the door, waiting to go, Albert King suddenly breaks into a soft-spoken but deeply-felt monologue about blues and jazz musicians. Talking about how bluesmen are considered, not in the music world but by "everybody out there" to be lower than low, lower than laundry workers or taxi drivers, far far below jazz players. But he has never known a bluesman to miss a gig while all the jazzmen he has ever known are continually getting high, blowing gigs. He tells an anecdote about Grant Green staying across the street from his gig and *missing* it because he was too high to walk across...another about Ray Charles' band not answering the frantic calls, and finally being discovered all-pil(l)ed-up together in a filled bathtub in their hotel-room, too out of it to get up.

At first, he refuses to admit even the possibility that there was ever a blues musician who missed a gig, a jazz player who was on time. Finally, he allows for the exception to the rule. But his love and pride are obvious; he has been around a long time, a construction worker and bull-dozer operator while he

was learning his craft from the likes of T-Bone Walker, Howlin' Wolf, sweating it out in more ways than he cares to remember. Now, he is waiting for his latest album to be released, and he admits he has accommodated changing styles by playing some faster numbers, a few that he says are disco-sound. "But I *always* make sure to include a few *real slow blues*," giving the words equal emphasis.

He also says he has actually written some of the songs for this new album, due out in August, and guardedly alludes to the fact that before this, his publishing deal was the kind which made it financially ridiculous for him to bother writing his own material. In this age of musiciansboredwith the idea of retaining their own publishing, it seems hard to remember

that it was really not so long ago that musicians, particularly black musicians, often sold their whole repertoire for 50-bucks and a square meal. Albert King has survived all these changes, kept on making music, still loves what he is doing. And he has a right to love the blues.

But is that all jazz is, speeded-up blues? I know, deep inside, it is not. Fats Waller, of course, when asked, said 'If you don't know, don't mess with it!' (So it is reported). In *Jazz Talk*, Robert Gold quotes a psychological journal of 1931 which said that the word "first meant sex, then dancing, then music. It is associated with a state of nervous stimulation."

continued on next page



BOBBY & B.B. BLAND & KING TOGETHER AGAIN...LIVE



The first time they got together was 1950 when they were members of the Beale Streeters, a landmark blues group that also featured Johnny Ace, Roscoe Gordon, and Little Junior Parker.

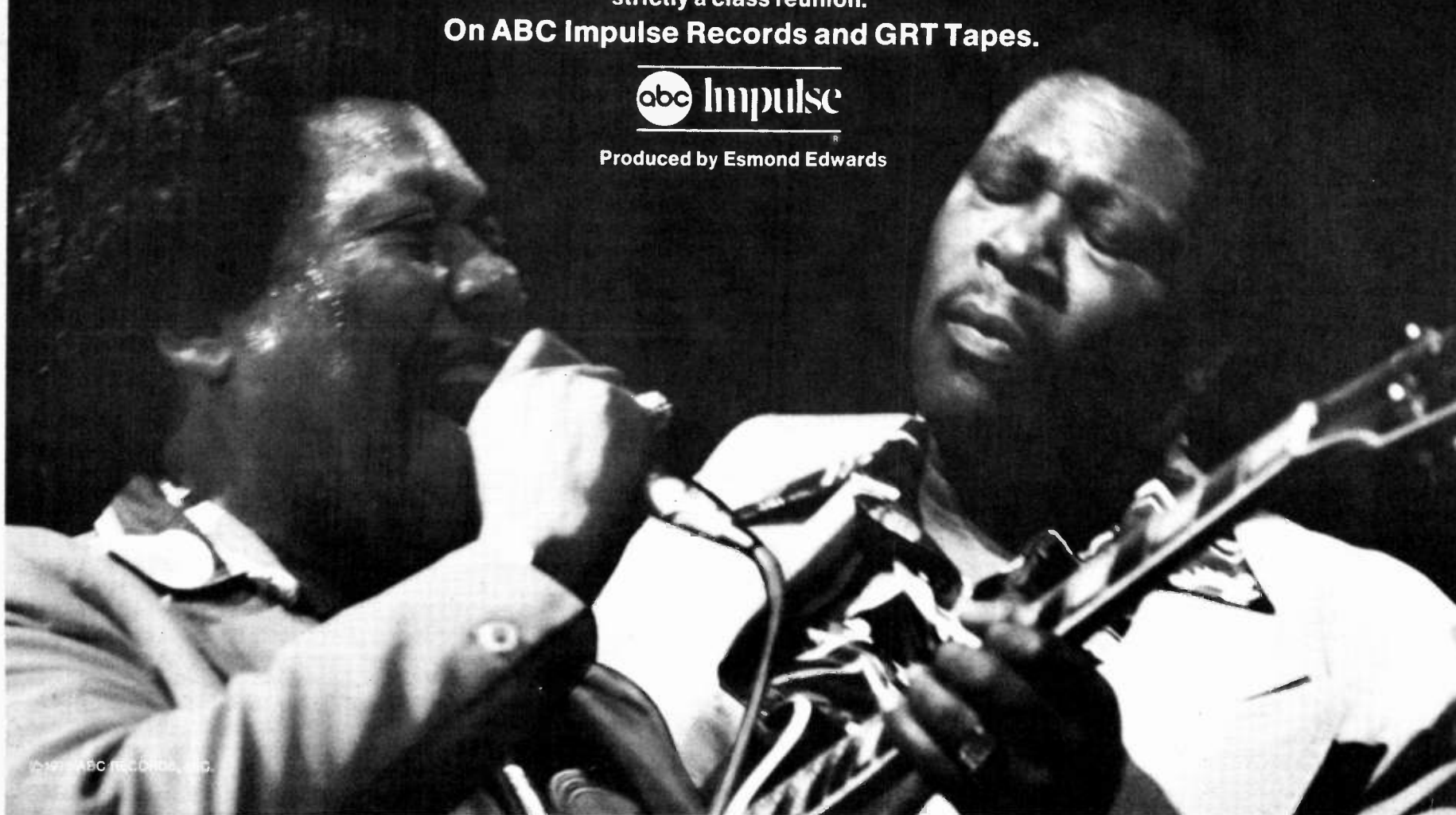
Next time was two years ago when they recorded their first album, "Together For The First Time . . . Live" and made blues history.

Now they're "Together Again . . . Live" and it's strictly a class reunion.

On ABC Impulse Records and GRT Tapes.



Produced by Esmond Edwards



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Albert King

Delineates the Blues—

Lita Eliscu Listens!

Now, okay! I'll buy that one, the idea of nervous stimulation, a state of. Because blues is an unchanging form; no matter how much someone may make up new verses or new chord changes, they are based on an exact and rigid system of making music. Mr. King's own signature style is the result of refining a technique, not making changes in the basics.

"Too much of what is called jazz if just terrible. Just someone who wants to play faster without learning how to play slow..."

—Albert King

Jazz musicians are trying to break new musical paths, fuse other genres and traditions with the blues. The kind of musician attracted to jazz is someone in love with change. In the name of making new history, of course much terrible music has been made, but that is necessary. Who knows what sequence of sounds will spark off a new pattern in someone's head 50 years from now? or 25? Or even right now, only it is not me?

I went to hear Benny Carter and group play last week. His tenor sax playing has been audible for a long time, back past the 30's, past the early days with Fletcher Henderson's big-band, past countless groups, bands, records where his presence was always felt, always welcome, always respected. At some point, he decided starving was not everything in art or life, and he began to stop worrying about putting together the group and appear on other people's records, do session dates. Today, he is quite well-off and probably best known to a new audience for his work on Maria Muldaur's last two albums. He was back in New York to play with Milt Hinton on bass, Ray Bryant on piano and Grady Tate on drums, all at Michael's Pub. It was a strange evening. I am told he took the gig

in order to get his lip back into shape because he has laid off for a while. He played old standards — and I do not mean jazz standards, necessarily. "Three Little Words," "Misty," some Tin Pan Alley stuff. He played trumpet, too. Ray Bryant pretty fairly stole the show, playing better piano than he does anywhere on his recent Pablo album, *Here's Ray Bryant*. The highlight of the first set was... "Misty," which says something about the whole set. Carter's sax finally found its tone, notes swooping and glowing, crystal blown right before one's eyes. The best moment of the evening, however, was during the second set. Billy Taylor, one of the outstanding piano players around, walked-in to his ringside table and with that, the quartet decided it had a reason to play jazz. His request for "On Green Dolphin Street" made everybody stretch out a little, especially Ray Bryant who played incredibly, making whole tone poems fly out of his finger-tips, doing double-time riffs

he probably didn't know he knew before he sat down that evening. At the end of the solo, he made an airy wave at Taylor, but he could not help grinning: he knew Taylor knew he knew. It was nice, it was what jazz can be about.

On another key, Dave Burrell's album on Arista, *High Won-High Two*, is a favorite for these days. Burrell is an extremely talented, extremely fast pianist. Listening to him play with various groups over the past few years, I have learned more about the new "free" jazz than I thought one musician could demonstrate. Interestingly, the liner notes by Stanley Crouch have a whole section on Blues, which he states are part of Mr. Burrell's roots. The album contains four sides, and features Sirone on bass, Pharoah Sanders on tambourine, and Sunny Murray or Bobby Kapp on drums. Other than Sander, these are all fairly unknown but excellent musicians. Side Three, "East Side Colors," features Murray on drums and at the moment, is my favorite section of the album. Burrell ranges all over musical genres and traditions, really displaying not merely his own ability but the changes jazz has been going through these days. There is a combination of intellect, sensitivity and pure gift here which is just lovely to have on a record which can be played again and again, and is.



FOR L.T.D., THEIR NEW ALBUM IS THE BIG STEP TO CENTER STAGE THAT HAS BEEN YEARS IN THE MAKING.

The love, togetherness and devotion of L.T.D. is finally paying off.

One night last year, they opened for the Average White Band. After that one date AWB asked them to open for the entire tour.

Since that experience and others with the Isleys and the O'Jays, L.T.D.'s sound began to take on a new, sharper focus. In short, with new incentive from the group's lead vocalists, Jeff and Billy Osborne, they got streamlined and supercharged and got together with the production team of Larry and Fonce Mizell (the Blackbyrds, Donald Byrd, Bobbi Humphreys). And now, after brilliantly refining and solidifying their sound, L.T.D. has made "Love To The World."

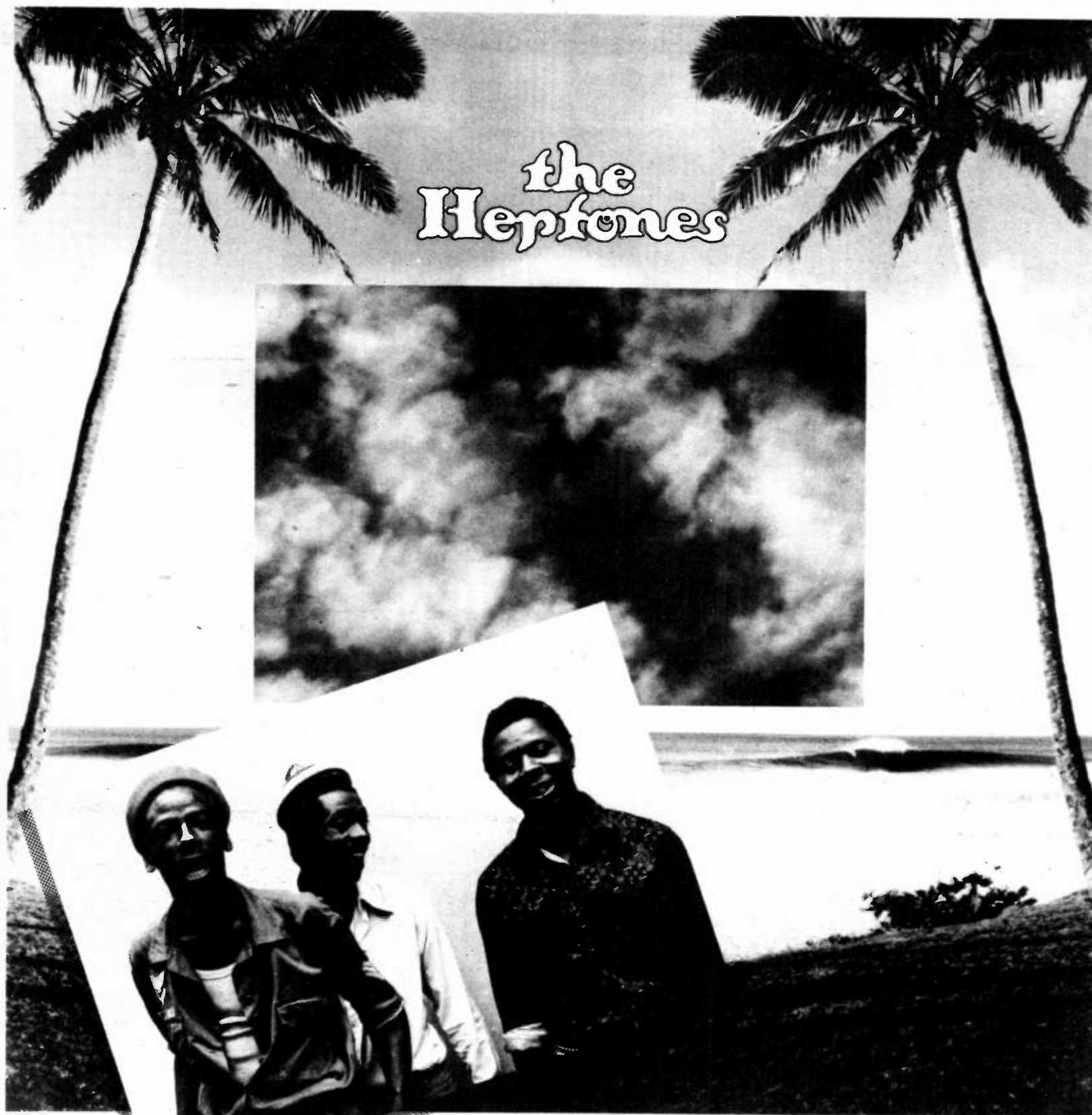
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SOUL & JAZZ SINGLES



Reviewed this month:

*Aretha Hall & Oates, Bootsy Collins/
Blue Magic Don Covay/First Choice & More*

By JOE McEWEN

In the last few years, the release of a new Aretha single hasn't been the earth shattering event that it used to be (though "Mr. D.J." did cause a small furor on my turntable). But by the time you read this, I'm sure the Curtis Mayfield produced "Something He Can Feel" (Atlantic 3326) will already be scurrying up the soul charts and hopefully will provide Aretha with her first pop success since "Until You Come Back To Me." Slow, with a prominent, off-tempo bass line and particularly attractive hook, "Something He Can Feel" elicits a fired-up performance, full of the vocal idiosyncracies that made her one of the leading female vocalists of our time. Oddly enough, though Aretha's album advertises itself as music from the movie *Sparkle*, those who've seen the film know the score was sung by the fictitious (and delightful) Sister and the Sisters.

Also, from Atlantic, and over two years too late, is the re-release of the original "She's Gone" (Atlantic 3332) by Philadelphia songwriter/singers Daryl Hall and John Oates. The song was a hit for Tavares, but I've always been partial to the Hall & Oates version (obviously released to cash in on the success of "Sara Smile").

The Funkadelic/Parliament remain the most unpredictable and adventurous black group around and bassist Bootsy Collins' "Stretchin' Out (In A Rubber Band)" (Warner Bros. 8125) is yet another spinoff from the mind of George Clinton. "Hallelujah, they call me Casper/Not the friendly ghost/But the Holy Ghost," is how Bootsy's record opens, in mock-Hendrix voice with a sharp funk bottom. Ed Ward calls this "new heights in stupid," which is another way of saying that the music is unpretentious, fresh and ridiculous. "Well glory be/The funk's on me."

Close to Bootsy Collins on the scale of absurdity is Joe Tex' latest, a demented, homespun ditty

called "Mama Red" (Dial 1157). Joe takes his "country girl friend" Mama Red on a tour of the world in hopes of teaching her culture through music. While a Buddy Killen produced, "I Gotcha"-type funk track provides the anchor for the trip, Joe and Mama Red travel to the likes of the Grand Ole Opry, Shelly's Manne Hole and Jamaica and each stop brings the appropriate musical atmosphere from the band. Finally after the world tour, Mama Red tells Joe to take her home so she can show him what kind of music she really gets turned on by. Not surprisingly she takes JT to the Dew Drop Inn, where she squeals and howls through a super blues vamp, while Joe calls for "crackers, bologna and red soda water." This is refreshingly weird and not unlike some of the great Coasters records of long ago.

Finally, let's not forget "Freak-N-Stein" (Atco 7052) by Blue Magic, guaranteed to destroy any preconceived notions of this Philly, soft soul group. A harsh lead has replaced Ted Mills' wavering falsetto, a perfect match for the busy guitar accompaniment and monster screams that wind through the song. "They call me Freak-N-Stein/They say I'm out of my mind." At least somebody in Philadelphia, besides Bunny Sigler, has a sense of humor. Written by Bobby Eli and Len "1-2-3" Barry.

This month also marks the debut of Don Covay at Philadelphia International. "No Tell Motel" (P.I. 3594) seems to have been inspired by Don's own "I Was Checkin' Out (While She Was Checkin' In)" and contains several choice vignettes ("Out of nowhere he walks up to your car/A short fat man, smokin' a large cigar/He says, 'Welcome to the No Tell'/Cash in advance/No checks or credit cards/Love over you pay"), on top of a hot, Philadelphia funk track.

This seems to have been a banner month for Philly soul. People's Choice "Here We Go

Again" (TSOP) is more of the raw, bare organ-led sound that marked "Do It Anyway You Wanna Do It." This time the sound has been honed even sharper and hotter, with crystal clean production and a beefy, booming bottom. Norman Harris is responsible for Double Exposure's "Ten Percent" (Salsoul 2008); a gruff lead, delightful lyric ("Ten percent of something/Is better than one hundred percent of nothing") and hot band accompaniment. Ron "Have Mercy" Kersey borrowed a few chords from "Mickey's Monkey" to open up Shelly Black's "Free, and Red Hot" (Vigor 1730), a successor of sorts to the Honey Cone's "Want Ads." Ms. Black demands satisfaction, "If you need experience/You know I'll train you...cause I want you part time, full time, all the time love." Lots of First Choice feel here but with a funky flavor. Highly recommended. Speaking of the First Choice, "Gotta Get Away" (WB 8214) is their bristling Warners/Philly Groove debut, bursting with energy and certainly one of the more inspired Stan Watson productions of recent years. Will appeal to fans of "Armed and Extremely Dangerous."

Miami guitar virtuoso Little Beaver pops up after a long absence with the soft, Betty Wright penned "Little Girl Blue" (Cat 2003). Only a few bars of guitar and perhaps a little too soft

for Beaver's style, still it's good to have him back. An album is due shortly. Ashford and Simpson's "Somebody Told A Lie" (WB 8216) is my favorite from their *Come As You Are* LP, a very uplifting song about having your heaven right here on earth, would also do well as material for the Dynamic Superiors. Bay Area saxophonist John Handy has changed his style quite a bit and "Hard Work" (ABC/Impulse 31005) will surprise fans of his Columbia disc of several years back. Handy has aimed for a commercial groove and has succeeded in coming with a catchy vamp, minus electronics or gimmicks. Two disappointments this month; Curtis Womack's messy "Boogie Woogie Jones" (Playboy 6071), disappointing production from brother Bobby and the Young Senators (formerly Eddie Kendricks' band) "Boogie Music" (Epic 50218), listless, sub-standard bar band funk.

At the bottom of the heap, but not at the bottom of my heart; Sir Wallace Wales "People Sure Act Funny" (Now Sound 101)—a driving, Chicago band and a vocal that recalls Tyrone Davis (produced by Willie Henderson), Nasty (formerly Black Nasty on Stax) and the cheery, bouncy "It's Summertime" (Mankind 12024), Sly's Sister Rose "Whole New Thing" (Motown 1383) and George Benson's remake of the Leon Russell standard "Masquerade" (WB 8209).

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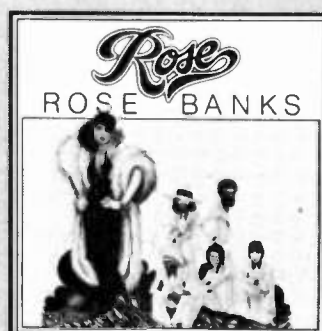
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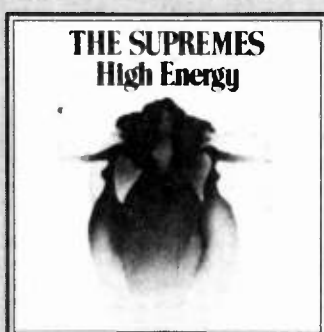
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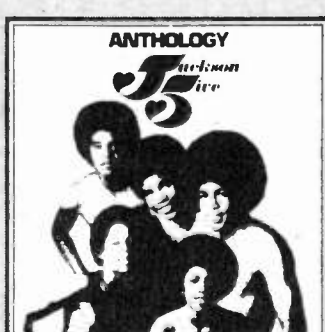
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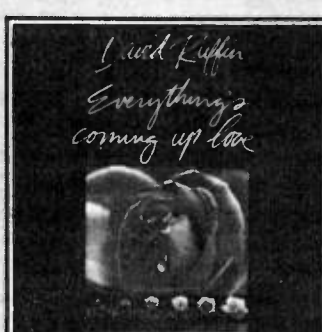
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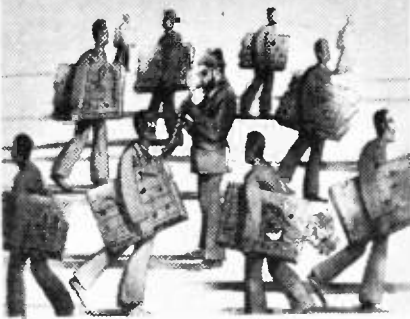
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RAHSAAN ROLAND KIRK OTHER FOLKS' MUSIC



OTHER FOLKS' MUSIC
Rahsaan Roland Kirk
Atlantic SD 1686

By **SAM GRAHAM**

Call it "African-American art music" (as author Stanley Crouch insists in his liner notes), call it "Black Classical" music, call it simply jazz. Think of its principal exponents in the past thirty years, its composers, leaders and virtuosi, and names like Parker, Ellington, Mingus and Davis spring to mind. Chances are multi-instrumentalist Rahsaan Roland Kirk's name will never reach that stature. He is not the major innovator those men were and are, and even among aficionados his work does not bear instant recognition. But Kirk's place in the annals of this music is secure nonetheless, for he is jazz' aural custodian: the keeper of a tradition. In his many recordings can be heard the roots of jazz in ragtime, blues and R&B, ghosts of the swing, bop and other eras as well as popular contemporary trends. This, his fourteenth and final Atlantic release, is another notch in a belt marked by consistently high musical standards.

Kirk's one composition on the obviously titled *Other Folks' Music* is the opening "Water for Robeson and Williams", a tribute to performer and inspirational leader Paul Robeson and bluesman Robert Pete Williams. Though written before the former's recent death, "Water" is a fitting requiem. Rahsaan's mournful, weeping harmonica is joined by harp and cello in a unique spiritual/classical setting that represents the heritage of Robeson himself. Kirk's harmonica style shares the feel for unorthodox phrasing and strange sonorities common to his work on various other instruments.

The remainder of side one consists of basically "traditional" jazz sounds: no emphasis on electric instruments, with lyrical melodies followed by improvised, swinging solos supported by intricate rhythm accompaniment. "That's All" has a lovely tune, some mellow "reed trumpet" by Kirk and a display on tenor sax of the amazing circular breathing technique that enables him to blow seemingly endless runs without pause for breath. Charlie Parker's "Donna Lee" takes off into a joyful

sea of Calypsoid percussion punctuated by the muscular shouts of the musicians and other celebrants—and a good time was definitely had by all. "Simone" features some inspired drumming by the veteran Roy Haynes, challenging and propelling the other players, constantly teasing and poking the accents. Through-out, Rahsaan himself employs his instruments as surrogate eyes; they are the light he shines, his signature, his heartbeat and his voice as well. Running the gamut from the whimsical to the fierce, from tenderness to shrieking, he rarely fails to express himself.

The second side showcases the writing talents of some of Kirk's associates. Trudy Pitts adds some nice, full piano to her "Anysha", a lightly swinging track again including harp and cello. Bassist Mattathias Pearson's "Samba Kwa Mwanamke Mweusi" reflects its title in verses laden with crisp Latin rhythms which melt into more rounded, relaxed bridges. Finally, "Arrival" has another lively and singable melody and good solo and ensemble work by Rahsaan, trumpeter Richard Williams and the song's composer, pianist Hilton Ruiz. What a relief to hear soloists play over real chord changes instead of the single-chord regurgitation so abundant in music today!

Stanley Crouch writes of Kirk's "musical optimism", his humor, his leadership and the resulting unity of his group of musicians. These are qualities well displayed on *Other Folks' Music*. Few barriers are crossed here, few trails blazed. Just good playing, good songs and some fine listening for connoisseur and newcomer alike.

AIN'T THAT A BITCH
Johnny Guitar Watson
Amherst/DJM DJLP-3

By **BOB FUKUYAMA**

Many black artists in need of a hit have turned to Disco, hoping to capitalize on the trend (although it is already fading). Johnny Guitar Watson has been cutting records (most of them as a sideman but many his own) for 20 years, yet he has had no appreciable success recently. So I figured this: Watson would succumb to Disco and abandon the King Records brand of rhythm & blues/jazz that made him a minor star in the early '60s. How else could he become "timely"?

Happy to say, Watson has stayed respectable, but, at the same time, flexible. While remaining faithful to his '50s r&b roots, Watson adds a slick finish to this record (he produced) that is unmistakably '70-ish. The balance of street social consciousness and street frivolity, of r&b, jazz and, yes, disco stylizations, make *Ain't That A Bitch* uniquely interesting.

continued on next page

Go Bananas... Pick a Wild Cherry!



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Watson's voice, which is without much range or emotional punch, would be anonymous in almost any context. Here, however, it stands out just right against a cool jazz-funk backdrop. He never over-extends his voice and uses it as he does his famous guitar: sly, off-color, sensual. Because of this perfect relation of form to content, Watson's vocal shortcomings become an unexpected asset.

Watson not so much sings to you but *raps* to you—all the snickers, moans and other vocal fluctuations seem spontaneous, improvised. Aside from "I Need It," which is the 45 rpm concession to Disco (it even comes in long and short versions for radio stations and discos), Watson doesn't rely merely on melody and linear movement: the subtle changes and polyrhythms suggest jazz, not r&b. But if you've ever heard Watson's classic, "Cuttin' It" (#6 on Billboard's r&b charts in March, 1963), then you'd expect some grit and sweat. This time it's not in the vocal delivery but rather in the lyrical sentiment: Street poetry that hits—"I was in the bologna section/Man, you couldn't've reached these prices with a sky-hook." (From the title track, "Ain't That A Bitch.")

Johnny Guitar Watson as producer is guilty of filler horn arrangements that are cushiony and fat, not *cool* and *bad*. However, the total sound is incredibly sinewy and smooth, and, in certain parts ("Superman Lover" and "We're No Exception"), has an inescapable live feel. Watson's compositions—all seven songs are self-penned—reveal a black spokesman who is beyond simple revival-tent preaching: He's taking it from the streets to the FM elite. And it goes without saying that, 20 years on, Watson's guitar still does a lot of talking.

THE HAPLESS CHILD

Michael Mantler

Watt 4

By JOHN PARELES

Morbidly fans, this one's for you. *The Hapless Child* is a collaboration that should have been Hell-spawned. Compositions are by Michael Mantler, a depressed sort who named his own record label after Samuel Beckett's bleak novel *Watt*. Lyrics come from *Amphigorey* by Edward Gorey, who writes and draws "children's" books designed to amplify the "Miseries of childhood." This is not a combo destined to bring sweetness and light to anybody.

Mantler and Gorey's project is executed by an unlikely gang of American jazz-makers and European rock mutants. It unites Watt co-owner Carla Bley (a fine composer herself) on keyboards, Jack DeJohnette on drums, and Steve Swallow on electric bass, with Robert Wyatt's vocals, Terje Rypdal's guitar, and Nick (Pink

Floyd) Mason's production. Since Mason has final sonic authority, the knob-job on *Hapless Child* makes it sound on first listening like the Brit-rock presented by Yes, Genesis, and related arty types. Don't be deceived.

Robert Wyatt's vocals are the primary Anglophonic element. The former drummer/vocalist for Soft Machine (now paralyzed from the waist down) has released his own hypnotically pathological LPs on Virgin, but *The Hapless Child* has his first serious uptempo vocals in years. He sings like someone awakened out of a peculiarly gruesome nightmare by a gunshot at 4:00 A.M. When Wyatt takes on a line like "At twilight, however, no message had come from the asylum," you have to listen in horrified fascination.

Also in the Euro camp is Terje Rypdal, a rock-turned-jazz guitarist with a burgeoning career on ECM. Like Wyatt, Rypdal on his own albums opts for atmosphere instead of acrobatics, the sky instead of skywriting. Pink Floyd-ish drones have become a large part of his repertoire; it was inevitable that he would eventually work with Floyd's Nick Mason.

And what better project than *The Hapless Child*? Mantler's compositions leave plenty of room for Floydian slips, since he frequently uses large static harmonic zones. Rypdal's guitar fills span the transitions with his usual broad gestures.

But there's a genuinely aberrant twist to Mantler's compositions on *The Hapless Child*. The whole damn album is arranged upside down! Most of the stable elements are grouped on *top* of the tunes, hardly standard practice. Although Wyatt's singsong vocals (in simple verse forms) and Carla Bley's string-synthesizer chords define motionless harmonies, it's impossible to concentrate on them because rhythm madness lies below.

That's where the Americans are. Swallow and DeJohnette (along with Rypdal) take full advantage of the freedom Mantler allows them. Rebounding off the words and each other, they keep up a level of agitation unknown in strictly-arranged Brit-rock (including even Bruford/Collins' double-drum Genesis). Swallow chooses bass parts that are deliberately skewed octaves away from any simple alternates. He leaps when he could walk.

DeJohnette is still more cunning. His drumming splutters all the unexpected accents, snubbing anything approaching steady beat-keeping. (Bley's keyboards do that, in a way—she sets up riffing cross-currents to imply the beat.) Every so often, a snippet of percussion reminds you that DeJohnette listens carefully to the Gorey lyrics, matching their genteel violence with his own.

With this classy a rhythm
continued on next page

PURE JAMAICAN.



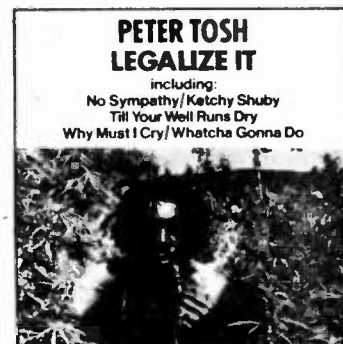
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WNEW-FM

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section, four of *Child's* six songs ("The Sinking Spell," "The Insect God," "The Doubtful Guest," "The Object Lesson") exhibit the kind of relentless drive that Mahavishnu used to generate in odd time signatures, coupled here with an awareness of dramatic suggestions in the lyrics. "The Remembered Visit" and "The Hapless Child" are stately, foreboding crescendos that rely on DeJohnette's coloristic percussives (congas, tympani, cymbals) to enhance their story lines. All in all, there probably won't be a better setting of Gorey's perverse prattle, in this century at least. (If your record store doesn't stock Watt, you can write to New Music Distribution Service, 6 West 95th St., New York, N.Y. 10025.)

ARISTA/FREEDOM SERIES Various Artists *Arista/Freedom*

By COLMAN ANDREWS

Arista deserves great credit for their dedication to the release and rerelease of good, not-necessarily-commercial jazz, both old and new. Not only is the music they present mostly good stuff, but they have been reasonably scrupulous in presenting it accurately and honestly. It's something of a surprise and something of a mystery, then, to come upon the newest Arista jazz release, in the Freedom series.

There are five albums involved, one of which is a two-record set. One of the LPs was released in Europe on Alan Bates' Freedom label a short time ago. Since the release of this material in the U.S. is part of the whole Arista jazz idea in the first place, it doesn't seem necessary to mention the European release on the back of the album. But three of the other LPs, and approximately one-half of the two-record set, have also appeared before—yet nowhere on the albums is there a caveat to the potential buyer to the effect that "This album has been previously released"—the sort of thing that appears these days on rereleases by even the sloppiest record companies.

True, one album, by John Payne, does have notes in which original release credit is given to Payne's own Boston-based Bromfield label, and, true, Stanley Crouch's customarily lucid and customarily myopic liner notes for the two-record set (by Dave Burrell) do indicate that some of the music thereon has appeared on record before...But why isn't there a credit line on the latter album reading "Originally released in 1969 on the Douglas label", or whatever? And why isn't the Esoteric Circle LP identified as a 1971 Flying Dutchman release? Or the Oliver Lake as a 1971 vintage product from Lake's own St. Louis-based Universal Justice label? This disregard for disco-

graphical detail is not like Arista at all. Presumably it was an oversight, which will be corrected in the future.

In any case, the music is—as is usual with Arista—worth having available.

NTU: Point from which Creation Begins by Oliver Lake (Arista/Freedom 1024) is a fine example of regional political jazz, from a period at which the jazz of black self-expression had not yet become too electronic or too sophisticated. Lake is a fiery, urgent reedman, best known outside St. Louis for his work with Anthony Braxton. Other possibly familiar names on this LP are trumpeter Joseph Bowie (brother of trumpeter Lester Bowie, of Art Ensemble of Chicago fame), pianist John Hicks, and drummer Charles Bobo Shaw.

Bedtime Stories by the John Payne Band (Arista/Freedom 1025) is regional music of another kind—white, urbane, and heavy with transliterated rock ideas. Payne, a reedman with extensive rock and blues experience (from Van Morrison and Bonnie Raitt to Johnny Shines) is a strong, confident technician, and his quartet is taut and crisp, but this is something of a "so what?" album, not particularly innovative or inspired.

Montreux One by Archie Shepp (Arista/Freedom 1027) is the real prize of this release. Shepp is simply one of the four or five finest saxophonists of our time. With equal energy, he refuses to be

disrespectful of tradition or to be restricted by tradition's laws. He has a huge tone, warm and burred; he sounds like Ben Webster's wise-ass kid. Recorded at the 1975 Montreux (Switzerland) Jazz Festival, this album presents Shepp in a context that is not particularly angry or militant but which makes absolutely no concession to the beliefs he has expressed more strongly in other ways. His associates here are all longtime friends—Charles Majid Greenlee on trombone, Dave Burrell on piano, Cameron Brown on bass, and Beaver Harris on drums. The tunes include one original each by the three front-line players, and an astonishingly sensitive version of Billy Strayhorn's classic "Lush Life".

George Russell Presents Jan Garbarek with Terje Rypdal/Esoteric Circle (Arista/Freedom 1031)—to give it its full name—was an important work of the European electric avant-garde when it appeared because it was, for all practical purposes, the introductory vehicle for four Norwegian jazz musicians who have each gone on to make substantial contributions to the music today. I'm not a Garbarek fan, though he shows a bit more tentative warmth here than he usually does on his later recordings; but Rypdal is fine—busy, excited, a good judge of dynamics. Bassist Arild Anderson and drummer Jon Christensen provide appropriate support.



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