

# PHOTOGRAPH

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JUNE, 1976

# AMERICA CELEBRATES THE BEACH BOYS

The Most Influential Band The U.S. Has Ever Produced

By KEN BARNES  
PRM Staff Writer

The Beach Boys have come of age. 1976 is their 15th anniversary, and they and their fans are celebrating it with a six-month tour, criss-crossing the nation playing to sold-out crowds in 50-90,000 capacity stadium sites. Their first new studio album in over three years, "15 Big Ones," will be out in July, and from all indications (including an advance audition-see inside story), it will be a colossal hit. With "15 Big Ones" and its first single hit "Rock And Roll Music," the Beach Boys are serving notice that they're ready to have fun again, in



the studio as well as on stage, and the whole country will be ready and willing to follow their lead. The summer days (and summer nights) of 1976 will be filled with Beach Boys action, in concert,

on record, in magazines, on TV and on the radio. By the end of this Bicen-

ennial (and 15th anniversary) year, the Beach Boys should find themselves, once again, the reigning American band. It's their year for Number One.

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## New Beatles LP For States

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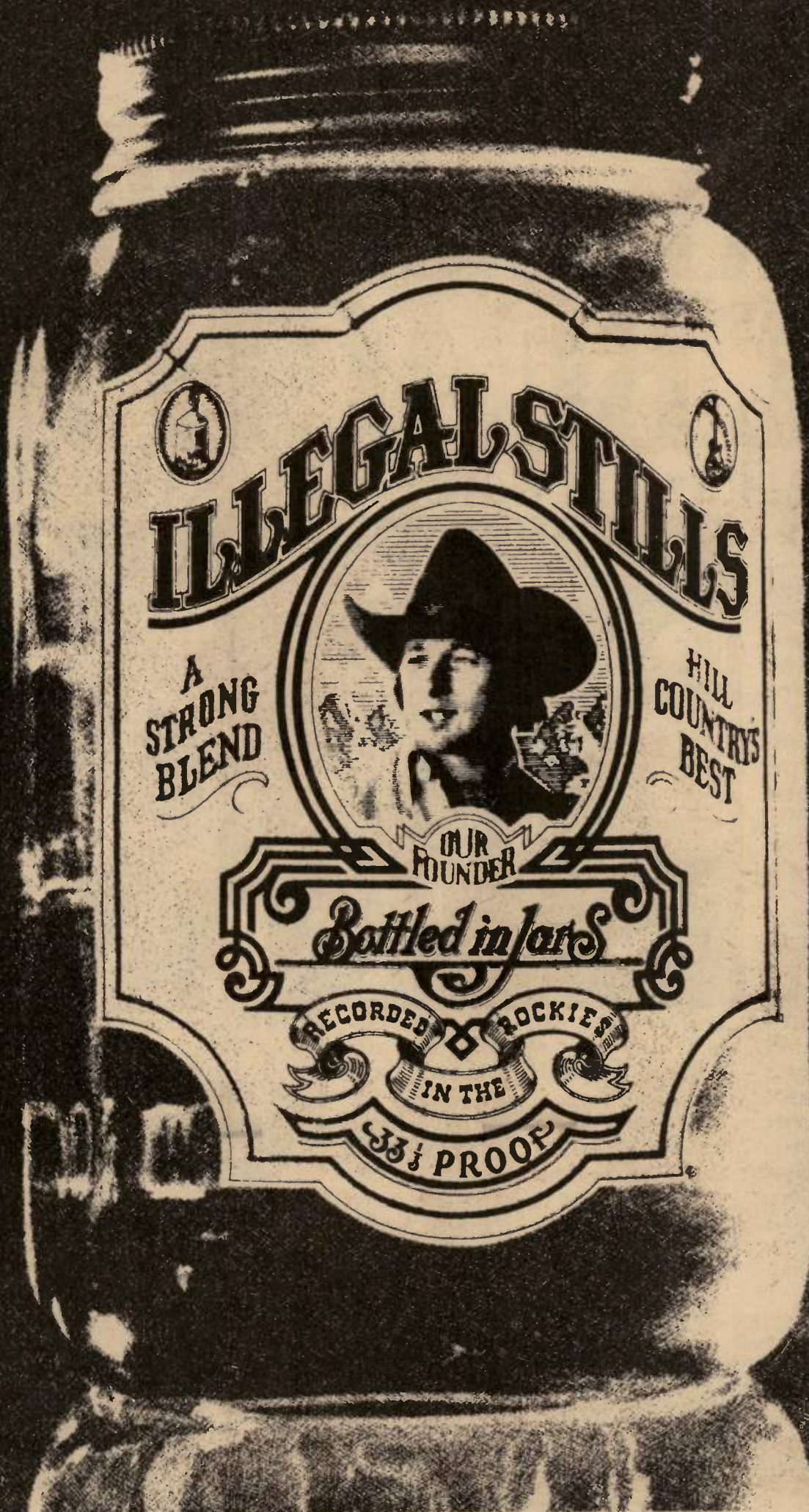


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# GOOD STUFF.

STEPHEN STILLS' LATEST. ON COLUMBIA RECORDS AND TAPES.





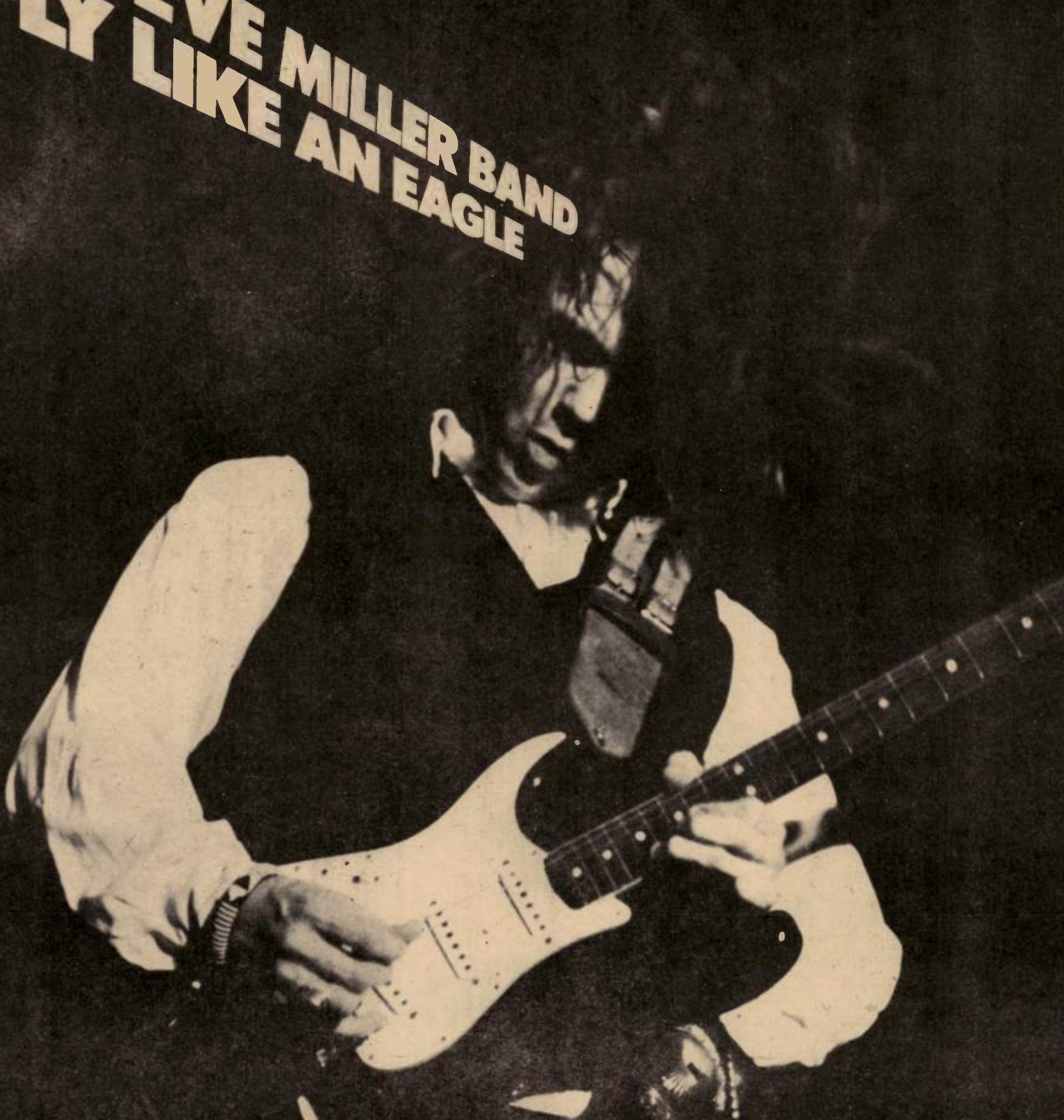
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# PHONOGRAPH

## THE COVER STORY: America Celebrates The Beach Boys

Summer and the Beach Boys ...Add to this the occasion of America's Bicentennial and the stage is set for the most endless of all Beach Boys summers. With the Beach Boys' first album in three years, *15 Big Ones*, the group's most extensive tour ever, a network TV special, and the return of Brian Wilson to the fold, young and not so young Americans will have ample opportunity to pay tribute to several heroes of their pop-cultural history.

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Not since the folk-protest rag of the '60s has there been so much politics in rock: however, the politics are now above-ground and the causes establishment, namely Jerry Brown and Jimmy Carter. The result, a once united counter-culture now divided into opposing Asylum and Capricorn camps. The players in the West vs. South showdown include Jackson Browne, Eagles and Linda Ronstadt (Brown), Allmans, Tuckers and Black Oak Arkansas (Carter), among others.

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After years on the swap-and-switch circuit, Rick Derringer has decided to settle down and become a one band-one woman man. He's formed *Derringer* and hooked on to legendary and luscious songstress Cynthia Weil. With a new album—boasting four Derringer-Weil compositions—and tour forthcoming, Rick has reason to say, "Yes, I'm alive and very well."

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Honed to a lethal nastiness in London pubs Dr. Feelgood is ready for America. Feelgood is: primitive r&b, a fascistic stance, a guitarist who plays two chord progressions, black 'n' white clothes, black 'n' white covers, a mono album....Would you want your sister bringing them home?

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12 Klassik Kuts and  
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FROM THE ALBUMS: everyBODY'S IN SHOW-BIZ • MUSWELL HILLBILLIES • PRESERVATION ACT 1 • PRESERVATION ACT 2 • SCHOOLBOYS IN DISGRACE • SOAP OPERA.

**RCA Records**



## THE SEX PISTOLS 100 Club London, England

By GREG SHAW

London, the trend center of last decade's mod rebellion, has been running a poor second, if not third, this time around. In music and sheer pop energy, New York is far and away the new mecca, with at least half a dozen of the most important acts of the next few years now emerging. Although there are fewer bands, the audience in Paris is the most advanced style-setting group, and may provide a crucial breaking ground for the new wave of 'street' bands that everyone seems to agree are the coming thing.

London's big advantage is a circuit of clubs and pubs where bands can work their way up, plus vastly influential weekly papers like *New Musical Express* that will support the scene. All that's lacking is bands. What few I've followed in recent years have offered nothing vitally new. The best of the new generation, from Dr. Feelgood to the Count Bishops, do little that wasn't done better by opening bands at the Crawdaddy Club 12 years ago.

There are two exceptions, however: Eddie & the Hot Rods, a very punkish hard rock group recently signed by Island, and the Sex Pistols, a new band that is causing

considerable controversy. Early shows featuring girls in leather fetish gear brought them nothing but trouble, so they've dropped that bit. Now it's just them—four guys with hair just this side of skinhead, who hate their audience and just about everything else. They think of themselves as the only true '70s band, and in a way they could be right.

Lead singer Johnny Rotten made headlines when he declared, "I hate hippies...I hate long hair. I hate pub bands. I want to change it so there are more bands like us." Their brand of revolt, though far from spontaneous (most of the heckling in the audience—and there's a lot, some of it quite vicious—seems to come from their supporters) has much in common

with the 1964 Mods, whose home turf of Shepherd's Bush they also share. There's a style and an attitude among them and their small but fanatical group of followers that thrives on the rejection of everything kids of the last eight years have done. And that much, at least, is no pose.

What they represent may be a

(Cont'd. on pg. 21)



Photo by Ray Stevenson

# Southside Johnny: Sparks Fly in Asbury Park

## SOUTHSIDE JOHNNY AND THE ASBURY JUKES The Stone Pony Asbury Park, New Jersey

By ANASTASIA PANTSIOS

The Bruce Springsteen concert consciousness in Asbury Park, New Jersey was overwhelming. As we perused post-cards at Fay's Gift Shop in the arcade at the end of the boardwalk, the proprietress informed us that this is where Springsteen bought the post-card featured on the *Greetings From Asbury Park* cover. She offers to sell three kinds of Springsteen T-shirts in addition to duplicates of the card.

At the Stone Pony, an unimposing dance bar standing on the corner of 2nd and Ocean opposite the boardwalk, Springsteen T-shirts and gossip abound. The featured act tonight, on the eve of Memorial Day, is Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes, the club's regulars on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Sundays.

This isn't an ordinary Sunday night. For one thing, Memorial Day is Asbury Park's equivalent of New Year's Eve, and the area's entire youth population congregates here. Also tonight the Juke's first set is being broadcast to radio stations in Long Island, Boston, Utica,

Rochester, Buffalo, Philadelphia, Cleveland and Asbury Park. It's a promotion tie-in with the eminent release of the Southside Johnny and Jukes album, *I Don't Want To Go Home*. Members of the press, brought in by Columbia Records, mingle with locals from such surrounding towns as Neptune, Rumson or from farther away, Newark and Union. All seemed eager to talk about Springsteen, to mention that he often shows up here to jam with the Jukes.

In such a setting, and given that the guitarist from Springsteen's E Street Band, Miami Steve Van Zandt, is an ex-Juke and the Jukes' producer, it would be impossible to completely disregard Southside Johnny's Springsteen connections.

The friendship and common backgrounds can't be denied. Nor can the basic underlying spirit, a grittier, ritzier spirit than that which pervades '70s white music.

Southside Johnny and the Jukes don't do any original material, though their repertoire boasts a pair of Springsteen oldies that he never recorded and several tunes by Miami Steve. Technically they are a bar band in the old "everyone drink, dance and sweat" tradition, the kind of bar band that the early Stones must have been.

The band's material is largely

blues and r&b. A song as recent and commercial as the Supremes' "Come See About Me" is an exception. The band itself is a dance driving unit with a full complement of four horn players, fronted by Southside Johnny and Lyon on vocals and harp.

The band exudes a raw emotionalism missing from most white r&b revival bands. They project more complexity and frenzy than the arid, remote Dr. Feelgood or the contrived, cutsey Duke & The Drivers. Unlike those, this band is into music completely, into image-making not at all.

The first set was the one broadcast, and it was predictably composed almost entirely of material from the album. Opening with a Miami Steve composition, "This Time It's For Real," the Jukes touched all the album's bases. They brought up New Orleans blues singer Lee Dorsey (of "Working In A Coal Mine" fame), and Ronnie Spector to guest on the songs on which they participated on the album. Various members of the E Street Band—Max Weinberg, Roy Bittan, Clarence Clemmons, Miami Steve—sat in on a number or two.

And of course the climax—much rumor and no doubt inevitable—was the appearance on stage of Bruce Springsteen. He accom-

panied Johnny on the vocals of the last tune of the set, the Sam Cooke chestnut, "Having A Party." For the big city press and the Jersey college kids alike, nothing could top that.

Two more sets followed the broadcast set. The Jukes performed blues classics of Junior Wells, Little Walter and Clarence Carter. The most interesting was the second set in which Dorsey and Miss Spector did several of their own greatest hits; Dorsey joined the band for "Ya Ya" and "Working In A Coal Mine," and Ronnie Spector, using two male back-up vocalists instead of the Ronettes, performed "Walking In The Rain" and "Baby I Love You." Fans of the classic Phil Spector records would have heard none of the lush sound-surround, but rather a blues-inflected band production by the no-nonsense Jukes.

Southside Johnny and the Jukes don't have the vision, expressed through original songs, that would allow them to compete in the Springsteen stardom sweepstakes. But in the same way J. Geils injected life into rock by looking back to blues roots, so Johnny and his Jukes could be a reminder to rock listeners that r&b has a validity and vitality that black music in its disco-ized form has forgotten.



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Produced by Rob Fraboni

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# VICIOUS DIRT, RUMORS and SCANDALS from



Yay Yay boys and girls, greetings from Your Prince in Hollywood. Everything *is* happening.

Three Princes meet: Steven Ford, son of our humble President, was my guest for an evening with his fave rave, Peter Frampton. With a secret service caravan showing the way—my, my, I *am* precious—we arrived at the Anaheim Convention Center where I escorted Steven backstage to an anxiously awaiting Peter and wife, Penny. It was in the stars: Peter and Penny were born scant hours apart and this was their birthday. (Sorry boys and girls but I cannot tell you what year.) "This is the greatest present we've ever gotten," said the impressed and very boyish Peter. *Your Prince* was impressed by the incredible number of very blonde and very teen-age girls in the audience.

Steven has asked me to set him

up with Linda Ronstadt. Hmmm, seems right, Steven the cowboy gets Linda the cow...Sigh, it's hard being the Prince of the Teen-age and the Ambassador of Hollywood at the same time.

Speaking of international hot poop: Kiss was denied entry into Germany because of their S.S. insignia-lookalike logo. The Nazis are obviously trying to protect those hot *frauleins* from the real thing....Suzi Quatro's latest single "Tear Me Apart" (Suzi *should* know) is tearing up Japan and Europe (importers get-on-it).

*Fashion bulletin:* Suzi has flushed her trend-setting chopped-dyke haircut cuz of imitators—looks like Runaway Joan Jett is the new Suzi....Bowie and Iggy were last seen standing in front of the Kremlin, where, my Moscow correspondent tells me, they were holding the sign "Siberia Or Bust."

I hear that reptiles thrive in cold weather....

Speaking of cold, the house detective of the Riot House Hotel closed down an innocent (very) Ted Nugent party in progress—shades of Sparks. I hereby bestow the Wrath Of Rodney upon the wretched beastie. I will have party! On our way to the next affair, Ted, me, and our prime teen-age, Rainbow Vicki and Rainbow Mandy heard "Good Vibrations" over the car radio. Ted said, "Wow man, I've never heard that extra tambourine before." Your Prince kindly informed all that it was Todd.

*Guess Who's Coming To Dinner* or *UFO* lands in Encino: You should've seen the faces of my ladyfriend's parents when, who should knock upon their Valley door but your Prince and the boys from UFO. Ha ha. Their daughter should be so privileged—UFO is currently the hottest item on the groupie circuit, the blue plate special for Rainbow and Starwood waitresses alike. (Dust off the peter-meter, girls.)

MRR (*More Roller Rap*): The Rollers were *besieged* by, yes, *little* girls at an autograph signing party in a Hollywood record store. Shades of '65! Most of the *little* ones were under 16, and some were all of 10 and 11. (Needless to say, Your Prince was in best form; fresh from the shower, cleaners, and, yes, armed with lollipops.) Everyone's favorite was new Roller Ian Mitchell, who is, dear mother, only 16. Even the security guards were child molesters.

New faces, fresh meat: John Dean, of Watergate fame, and his wife Maureen rapped with me and my ladyfriends Leah and Pleasant at the "Welcome Artie Party" (New Prez of UA), about what's happening on the Sunset Strip

these days. Maureen has *great* in-crowd potential. Other in-crowd membership contenders include Barbra Streisand, who was with husband/hairdresser Jon Peters, paraded thru The Roxy. Barbra had come for the L.A. Jets, co-stars of her forthcoming flick, the redone "A Star Is Born." Whoever that lead singer in the Jets is, I *want her*; Rodney *must* have her...She carries on for days and looks even more teen-age than Suzi. Sigh. Ho-hum, there were the regulars and would be regulars: Led Zeppelin for headliners Dr. Feel-good, Thin Lizzy and Maria Schneider for both, Ron and Russ Mael and Bob Marley (the very sight of whose dread-locks made Jon Peters clutch his wallet; early exit).

Down Memory Lane and Sunset Blvd.: Henry "The Fonz" Winkler recalled the old days when he *hung* out with Sable and Coral at my old English Disco. It's getting so hard to stay 17 with everybody talking about my "old" English Disco. But young meat like that of the Runaways makes it much easier. I mean, last weekend they opened for Quicksilver at the Boarding House in Berkeley and had the hippies dancing in the aisles. The hippies freaked. Upon being complimented by Quicksilver, the girls raised their teenage noses, sneered "...and *who* are you guys?" *The Runaways show no respect* (but lotsa skin, so it's OK).

Regardless of the lawsuit hanging over my head—thanks to last month's column—the Prince Of Hollywood will always deliver the sleaze, the cheese, the heat and the meat that makes this Hollywood and not Jackson, Mississippi. (And, yes, dear Elliot, there *are* things to do after 2 A.M. in Hollywood—some of them even involve others.)



Photo by Brad Elterman



Rodney On The Run (Clockwise): Corrupting the Bay City Rollers—*C'mon little girl, it's only a lollipop*...Pretty Boys All In A Row—Steven Ford, Peter Frampton and Rodney—*OK girls, take your pick*...Eating with UFO—Rodney, Starwood GM Eddie Choran, Pete Way, Phil Mogg, Danny Paronell and GM II, Ray Stayer—*You know what they say about guys with big thumbs*....





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## Now you can see what Ian Hunter sees.

Since his days with Mott the Hoople, Ian has developed a vision of his own possibilities in music. His new album, "All American Alien Boy," invites you to share his vision. It's a risk other musicians rarely take, because Ian Hunter is also showing you part of himself.

**Ian Hunter: "All American Alien Boy." On Columbia Records and Tapes.**



Produced and Arranged by Ian Hunter

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America Wants  
More of Them

# Beatles Records

America Gets More of Them  
Beatles  
Records

By Michael  
Barackman

The revived interest in the Beatles that has reached epidemic proportions in Great Britain—23 group singles in the Top 100—is spreading rapidly throughout the United States. Increased rumblings about a Beatles reunion, pure knowledge of the British singles surge, along with, somewhat ironically, Paul McCartney's Wings tour, have brought the group itself back into national prominence.

Capitol Records, the Beatles' former label and distributor and their now-defunct Apple label, hope to add to the momentum by releasing "Rock 'n' Roll Music," a double LP package of Beatles rock numbers. Capitol will accompany its release with a million-dollar promotional campaign designed to "recreate" 1964-65 Beatlemania. Already issued as a single is the album's most pop-oriented number, "Got To Get You Into My Life," and plans are being solidified for re-release of an entire set of Beatles singles, individually and in package form, by mid-July.

Con't on next page..





**ZZ TOP'S**

**WORLD WIDE TEXAS TOUR**

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# Beatles LP

(cont'd. from pg. 12)

Already issued as a single is the album's most pop-oriented number, "Got To Get You Into My Life," and plans are being solidified for the re-release of an entire set of Beatles singles, individually and in package form, by mid-July.

The Beatles re-emergence isn't really all that surprising. Popular music has for some time been plagued by both the lack of striking inventiveness and visible leadership, and the record-buying public is seeking a cure. Rupert Perry, A&R vice president at Capitol, helped coordinate the *Rock 'n' Roll Music* project with Capitol's parent label, EMI, and gave the most cogent explanation for the resurgence.

"For the last couple of years, people have been predicting that some sort of musical trend might come bursting through, and it just hasn't happened," he observed. "When there's nothing new, people tend to look backward and remember good things in the past."

Unlike last year's two Beatles Anthology LP's, *Rock 'n' Roll Music* has a specific concept, much like *Endless Summer*, Capitol's Beach Boys repackage. The album contains 28 songs; all blistering, kick-ass tunes. The included material spans most of the Beatles' recording career, ranging from 63's "Twist And Shout," to 70's "Get Back." The tracks are, however, primarily early, R&B-dominated songs, including several that the band didn't write, i.e., "Long Tall Sally," "Roll Over Beethoven," and "Money." Many obscure selections are included: "Hey Bulldog" from *Yellow Submarine* and "Match Box" and "Slow Down" from *Something New*. "I'm Down" makes its first appearance on a U.S. album, and numerous cuts previously unavailable in LP form in Great Britain are also included. The Beatles' rocker at heart, John Lennon, sings lead on the majority of tracks.

"When you look back at the Beatles albums, there are numerous concepts to go with," Perry said. "But this idea seemed especially valid, because, after all, when they came into being in '62-63, it was as a rock 'n' roll band."

To assure *Rock 'n' Roll Music*'s success, and to create a renewed stir in the group and individual members' 40-album catalog, Capitol will conduct the most elaborate and expensive promotional campaign in its history. Loosely budgeted at close to one million dollars (and rising), the campaign includes massive in-store displays (for which 110 miles of clothesline was bought), newspaper and radio advertising, and most importantly, national TV



spots. Two 30 and 60 second spots created by pop cinematist Chuck Braverman will be shown in the country's 73 largest markets during prime time and all fringe periods. 74.6% of all households will be reached repeatedly, with special emphasis on the 18-34 year old sectors.

"What this is more than anything is a campaign designed to accommodate the tremendous demand for the Beatles right now," explained Bruce Garfield, Director of Publicity at Capitol. "It's an uptempo thing. It's not like we're trying to hype something out there—this isn't like Kiss. We're not putting out a schlock package just to get the last sales out of it."

With all the hoopla about the Beatles, it's easy to forget that the group broke up six years ago, and are still dead serious about individual endeavors. The current attention to their solo careers also has its drawbacks. Paul McCartney, in particular, has previously expressed some annoyance that his single "Silly Love Songs" is having to compete with old Beatles numbers.

As for *Rock 'n' Roll Music* itself, a spokesperson at George Harrison's label, Dark Horse, reported that Harrison was "indifferent" about the album. "There's no way any of that old stuff that Capitol could release even compares to what George is doing now," she asserted.

Hmmm. Bruce Grakal, attorney for Ringo Starr, said that former group members were more than just "indifferent." "None of the four objects to their material as the Beatles being put out but the issue is the way this thing was handled," he said. "This whole project has been given to them in completed form, which is not the way you deal with artists of that stature."

Speaking solely for Ringo, Grakal listed specific objections. "We don't like the existing album cover, we would have liked different tracks, and also, evidently some re-mixing was done. Some of the stuff was put out in the previous repackage. Ringo feels the public is entitled to a whole new package. Frankly, we're upset about it."

Five selections are from previous Beatles repackages and despite the special trim, foil, and translucent ink, the cover illustration—a pair of thumbs holding up an old Beatles' picture—looks amateurish.

Rupert Perry denied that any original mixes were changed, explaining that George Martin, the group's former producer, was enlisted to do the mastering for the project. "Anyone who's ever tried to get the four together in one room at the same time knows just how difficult it is," Perry said. "Obviously, the best you can do is keep them informed...This is probably the most valuable catalog in the world, and you can be sure that Capitol and EMI aren't about to prostitute that catalog."

With the enormous focus now on the band, pressures for them to regroup, at least for a reunion concert and/or album, are peaking. That prospect, however, remains minute. McCartney is intent on further establishing Wings as a unit, Starr is set to record his first LP for Atlantic Records with Arif Mardin producing, and Harrison is in England recording his own "old-fashioned rock 'n' roll" album. Lennon is not affiliated with any label at the present time. As for Bill Sargent, the boisterous promoter who offered the Beatles \$50 million for a reunion concert, he has closed down his Century City office and, according to his publicist, "disappeared."

Still, all group members have reserved the right to perform together, and for whatever label they want. It wouldn't necessarily be Capitol, but that company would surely benefit from such an occurrence. Some fingers there remain crossed.

"Certain individuals here have high hopes," a Capitol executive said. "But who wouldn't hope for a reunion. Certainly it would be the most monumental thing that's ever happened in the entertainment industry. After all, where would this whole business be without the Beatles?"



# Ride To The Top!

## New Riders

A new label, a new album



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MCA-2196



MCA RECORDS



# Too Old For Rock and Roll, But Not Too Old to Vote: Rock & Roll Diplomacy--Brown vs Carter

By MITCH COHEN

"I told my congressman and he said, quote: 'I'd like to help you, son, but you're too young to vote.'" -Eddie Cochran, 1958

"I'd like to see the candidate who'd get me to work for him."

-Patti Smith, 1976

In the middle of *Laverne and Shirley* on May 17, ABC said the race in Maryland was "too close to call," but by 10:00 it was clear that Governor Brown had scored a victory in his first Presidential primary contest, setting back Jimmy Carter. Whatever you think of Brown, that's good news, because it keeps very much alive the most fascinating showdown of the year for those looking for cultural-political connections. The Jerry and Jimmy traveling salvation show, which next pitches its tent in California, is showing us just how factionalized the rock scene has become, how far the industry and its consumers have come in participating in the electoral process, and how media oriented campaigns are fueled by music. Who'd have expected that the race for the Democratic Presidential nomination would turn into a battle of the bands?

Back in '72, allegiances were simpler: any musician with a minimal claim to being left of Walter Brennan was either behind McGovern or uninvolved. Now there are at least two candidates who have made a conspicuous attempt to line up rockers. And their public pronouncements are meant to be read as bonds with the young voter. Jimmy Carter, quoted in *Rolling Stone*: "The other source of my understanding about what's right and wrong in this society is from a friend of mine, a poet named Bob Dylan." Jerry Brown to *Playboy*: "Bob Dylan is a person with power...I remember going to Greenwich Village to hear Dylan before anyone knew him." Now, we can do worse than elect a president to whom Dylan is an inspirational figure, but the people who have officially lined up with the born-again Christian and the Zen Jesuit aren't quite in his category.

The way the line has been drawn is almost too pat, geographically, esthetically, philosophically. If Carter is Hal Philip Walker in *Nashville*, then Brown is Bill McKay in *The Candidate*. One is backed by Capricorn recording artists, the other by acts on



Photo by Tom Hill



For the benefit of Mr. Right: (Above) Jerry Brown, Linda Ronstadt and the Eagles rock-steady for Benefit of Brown in Landover, Maryland (Left) Jimmy Carter and two Marshall Tuckers pose backstage.



Asylum. The Allmans vs. The Eagles. The New South against the New Old West. So we have Phil Walden of Capricorn soliciting \$1000 donations for Carter and the two top American groups (The Eagles and Chicago) filling stadia for Brown. Carter addresses a convention of music industry people and recites "Eleanor Rigby," Brown sings "Let It Shine" with Linda Ronstadt and Jackson Browne at a benefit in Maryland. The Charlie Daniels Band and The Outlaws play for the Carter campaign in Atlanta while, in an irony Robert Altman would appreciate, Keith Carradine and Ronee Blakely do their bit for Brown. Right across the board, the down-home hippie redneck boogie and the socially conscious, peaceful easy feeling have been notched in the expected columns. No candidate, as yet, is courting The Tubes or Patti Smith.

The Georgia-California showdown also shows a consistency in the motives for endorsement. A spokesman for Capricorn stated that, in spite of the support by the label chief, it's up to the individual artists to decide whether to back Carter. Still, when you notice that nearly the entire roster, including the Marshall Tucker Band, Grinderswitch, Hydra and Dobie Gray, has participated in one way or another in Carter fund-raising, it's not difficult to suspect some corporate coercion (interestingly, both Capricorn and Asylum are part of the WEA complex).

Walden first met Carter when the then-Governor visited a re-

cording session for Dickie Betts' *Highway Call* LP, and met with Carter on other occasions such as the day Dylan was invited to the mansion. When Carter told Walden about his decision to run for the Presidency, the Capricorn executive promised his support, based on "friendship and admiration of what he accomplished during his term in office." Walden refutes the claim that the "label" is backing Carter, citing Capricorn acts that have withheld endorsement, and artists from other labels that have joined the campaign. To date, Walden's concerts have added in excess of \$200,000 to Carter's campaign chest, and by the end of June, with matching funds, the total should increase by \$400,000.

According to Walden, he is most impressed by Carter's "executive management ability and lack of commitment to old-time political machinery." The other gentlemen from the label also noted that there was no specific issue that led the bands to support Carter, but that once they'd met him, they responded to his "sincerity and honesty" and his "overall philosophy about government and people."

The three acts who drew 19,000 people to the Capital Center in Maryland and raised \$100,000 for Jerry Brown were won over less, it appears, by a love for Brown than by his stands on a few concrete topics. The Eagles, Linda Ronstadt and Jackson Browne have what is called by Asylum a "rigorous benefit schedule" for causes rang-

Indian movement to the United Farm Workers, and their rallying around Brown is a direct outgrowth of their responsiveness to social issues. They first became involved with Brown, said the Asylum spokesman, when the artists and the gubernatorial candidate were both involved with Caesar Chavez and the U.F.W. There is more of a sense in their support of Brown of what they see as moral imperatives, and that has already led to a small conflict between the musicians, who wholeheartedly are in favor of Proposition 13 on nuclear safeguards, and the candidate, who has yet to take a stand on it. Somehow one can't imagine Gregg Allman differing with Carter on the fine points of the Hawkins-Humphrey Bill.

A combination of factors had led to the increased activity of rock artists and other music figures in the political process. Certainly enfranchising 18-21 year olds was a move that necessitated reaching younger voters, but equally important is the fact that rockers are getting older and richer, and people with money like to be in tight with people in power. The growth of the recording industry is also a key consideration: politicians can't afford to ignore a business that generates almost two billion dollars per annum. In addition, the new campaign financing law which forbids contributions over a certain amount and requires identification for all donations of more than ten dollars has, as noted in such

(Cont'd. on pg. 18)



# The Intensest Rush Of All.



Frank Marino, Jim Ayoub and Paul Harwood are a razor sharp pyramid of the most amazing guitar playing, serpentine bass lines and a ruthlessly relentless beat. Their new album, "Mahogany Rush IV," is the one in your record store bristling with electricity.

**"Mahogany Rush IV."** The new album that transcends metal. On Columbia Records and Tapes.

#### **Mahogany Rush Itinerary.**

May 19

Von Braun Auditorium, Huntsville, Ala. (with Aerosmith)

May 20

Municipal Auditorium, Mobile, Ala. (with Aerosmith)

May 21-22

Electric Ballroom, Atlanta, Ga. (with Stu Daye)

May 23

Municipal Auditorium, Birmingham, Ala. (with Aerosmith)

May 26

Auditorium Theatre, St. Louis, Mo. (with Stu Daye)

May 28

Mt. Prospect, Illinois

May 29

Columbus, Ohio

June 6

Oakland Coliseum



# Dr. Feelgood: Frighteningly Authentic Punk Posture

By RON ROSS

They're easy-goin' guys, but they always gotta have their way: when they tell you it ain't right you know you got to agree.

Just as Bowie was coming out for a fascist renaissance in England, a kick-ass brown shirt elite blew in from off a jetty on Canvey Island, Essex. Honed to a lethal nastiness in London dance bars, Dr. Feelgood have connected with some of the largest, loyalest and most excitable concert crowds east of Kiss. Now they've just finished playing every kind of gig they could get in America, from Winterland with Bad Company in San Francisco to the Bottom Line with the Ramones in New York. The stages are getting bigger for the Feelgoods, but Wilko Johnson, spit-fire power chunk guitarist, remembers:

"When we were kids there were these certain pubs, where you had to talk and act and dress just right. 'An if you weren't very big, you just had to convince everybody that you were insane. That you were the kind of bloke who was liable to do anything."

If you were at a party and some guy with jet black hair, white satin pants and a harlequin silk top waltzed in on white Capezios, you might look twice and wonder if he was in a band. But if a guy in a black sharkskin suit with brown mousy bangs and cheeks you could crack walnuts on pulled out a gun, you'd want to see what he'd do next, right that moment. Funny, the kind of guys that can hold your attention.

That's the secret of Feelgood live. Looks that could clear a Memphis juke joint fused with the musical muscle to back them up. Feelgood recall a time when all live bands sounded good, especially when everybody'd had a couple of drinks, but Dr. Feelgood operate on an audience like a dentist work-



Dr. Feelgood (L-R): Wilko Johnson, Big Figure, Lee Brilleaux, John Sparks

ing on a bruise with a drill. Feelgood's as old as "Oh Carol" and as now as blue balls. They've got more to do with the Detroit Wheels than Ace, and I suspect even more to do with Led Zeppelin than the bluesmasters they've dug up yet again so unblushingly. Checking up on my Baby?! Fact is when I heard it live I almost forgot I'd ever heard it at all. Girl trouble's always in and when did you ever give some fast one half as hard a time as Wilko gives that black cat Telecaster when he's on. The kids who know always smile real proud when they tell you, shouting over the blast, "he doesn't even use picks." Then they stare back agog, and in those fans' faces you can see the same pain the same kids felt when they first watched Alice love it to death. The ritual's been localised, down into the tips of Johnson's flying fingers and Lee Brilleaux' husky cough into his harp. His harp?!

The '70s are all so improbable anyway. If Neil Sedaka, why not Route 66. Dr. Feelgood is frighteningly authentic at a punk posture more contemporary to the Quarrymen than the Beatles. And the kids who've never heard one of Lon-

don's seventy-five John Mayall anthologies eat it up. Now of course all Dr. Feelgood need is a hit record. Their first and best, *Down By the Jetty* on UA U.K., isn't out here, and their second, *Malpractice*, Columbia's smartest master purchase in an eon, is Out Now. It's the first thing they've ever done in stereo. What's their next move? Call Dowd, call Ezrin, call Douglas, call Szymczyk!

Sod it. Nothing like that will do. "It's hard for me to talk to people about rock 'n' roll without sounding reactionary," Wilko concedes. Black 'n' white clothes, black 'n' white covers, mono debuts. As the boys have put it so well, they "don't like to worry and they ain't got time." They like to get it right the first time. The kind of recording which was once good because it was cheap, is now conceptual. I say this only by way of pointing up that Feelgood are somewhat more than a blues band.

Attitude and angst, more than any other elements in Feelgood's almost cliched formula, separate them from their pub-rock colleagues and earlier English bloozers. What the Stones, Pretty Things, Johnny Kidd, and other

prototypical '60s bands borrowed from r & b was their confrontation karma, more than a 12 bar format or slide guitar. As a result, Feelgood's dynaflo originals like "Another Man" and "Back In The Night" resemble "Last Time" or "Have You Seen Your Mother?" far more in their 100 proof iron fist impact than they do Ace's lagery "How Long?"

Since the '60s, rock 'n' roll has always thrived on the frustration which alcoholic middle-aged black musicians and restless teens alike have in common. But even if the emotions that Feelgood provide such an easy access to are "primitive," their sound and style are as sophisticated an expression of basic r & b as Britain has ever produced. There's nothing about this music that requires 16 tracks to get it across. What's important is the performance, the creation of an immediate, unpredictable tension which is mono-lithic by design.

The blues remain the sturdiest metaphor for madness in pop music, and Dr. Feelgood have mastered the idiom like they were weaned on sour mash. After only a year of national exposure at home, Lee Brilleaux and Wilko Johnson are already established as one of the great frontman/guitarist duos in rock. Feelgood's recent tour was Britain's second largest grossing for '76, right behind the Who. All the band needs now is their own "Satisfaction," a signature single that will confront AM radio with its energy deficiencies as violently as Feelgood demands attention from its audiences. I can't wait for their first big hit to come on the jukebox just as two guys start to knock over drinks over some chick who's already left with a third guy. Like David Johansen once said, "Real fans hear everything in mono. Stereo is an invention of the critics." Thank Dr. Feelgood for reinventing rock 'n' roll.

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publications as *New York*, made new fund-raising methods necessary. The benefit concert is an opportunity for music people to make large amounts of cash available in 20,000 chunks at \$9.50 a ticket, solving all legal and record-keeping problems. This is not to say that Linda Ronstadt, or Phil Walden, is not totally convinced that the chosen candidate would make a top-notch Chief Executive, but that there's more to the rock star's endorsement than good will.

So the political-rock association rolls on along with the campaigning, and along with phrases like "Spaceship Earth," "planetary realism," "new generation of leadership" and "a government as filled with love as are the American

Dick Dale goes trippin' with Jerry:  
OK, get out of the water and vote!



people," we'll hear more Dixie jams, Caribou cowboys and L.A. crooners. When this sees print, Chicago will have headlined a Brown Bash in Anaheim, and the Carter Southern-rock revue will have finalized plans for concerts in California (Elvin Bishop may do one in San Francisco), Atlanta and New York City. And if the trend continues, Udall will look for singers to add to Chevy Chase and Doonesbury's Jimmy Thudpucker (his only declared counter-culture supporters), Ford's kids will continue to greet people like Peter Frampton at the White House, and Ronald Reagan will have to settle for Pat Boone. And to think that poor Eddie Cochran couldn't get a mere congressman to sympathize with his summertime blues. Just born too late.





**RAMONES**  
"Blitzkrieg Bop"  
Sire 725

The Ramones are my favorite group of the moment. Aside from the fact that you have to love anything this moronic, there's something about their songwriting style that grows on you. I have no idea what it's about, nor do they I'm sure, but that's no drawback—by avoiding the dialectics of the MC5 and the menace of Iggy, the Ramones have managed to turn this style of heavy metal into something that might just be commercial. And there's one other good thing: you know there'll never be a disco version.

**STEVE MILLER BAND**  
"Take The Money And Run"  
Capitol P4260

No one could be more surprised than me at how good this record is. I didn't even like "The Joker"; like most of Miller's work, I found it too self-conscious to take seriously. But now, for the first time, he's using his voice and his unquestioned ability to achieve an earthy rock sound, without pre-

tense. A powerful production makes this simply a superlative rock single, and the album contains at least one equally strong follow-up. Good one, Steve.

**PERE UBU**  
"Final Solution"  
Hearthan 102

This is a Cleveland band whose first independent release was mentioned in its proper place in the footnotes of a previous column. With their second record, Pere Ubu has graduated to the front ranks. Imagine if Hawkwind were a 1976 New York garage band with T. Rex influences, given a better song than any local group has yet come up with, and a production that's nothing short of amazing, considering where it came from. And it even comes with a special sleeve including liner notes. This is a tremendous record, far beyond what Television or any group of this type is doing. And it's yours for only \$2 from 2314 Bellfield Ave., Cleveland Hts., Ohio 44106.

**RONNIE & THE DIRT RIDERS**  
"Yellow Van"  
RCA 10651

How refreshing it is to hear kids singing about their cars again. Even if they're not really kids...This is Ron Dante, king of the bubble-gum survivors, in collaboration with Barry Manilow, but with all the beach harmonies and chassis vernacular the credits are academic. It's simple, fun and commercial.

The biggest trend I've discerned of late is the acceptance of English pop in America. The record

industry has almost completely changed its emphasis from concentrating high-budget superstars in monolithic corporate structures, to searching out independent labels and producers geared to providing pop studio records and local productions. If nothing else, the Bay City Rollers have proven the existence of a teen pop market and the validity of the British school of writer/producers, many of whom are now launching their own labels in England, and getting picked up in America.

I'm especially pleased to see Bickerton & Waddington's State label picked up here by MCA. I've followed State since they began with the Rubettes and watched it develop as a premier pop label. Initial releases here are the Rubettes' "Juke Box Jive" (40549), an old English single but still sounding fresh and cheeky, Mac & Katie Kissoon's "The Two of Us" (40550) and two new acts, Casino with "Crazy" (40548), a nicely dramatic song redolent of late Mott the Hoople, and Federation with "Back to Back" (40547), a sizzling disco number in the Shirley & Company bag (I still like English disco, have to admit). Another great sign is the return of Vanda & Young, of Easybeats fame. After 3 or 4 years of producing hits that never got beyond Australia, their stupendous productions (I rank them with Bjorn & Benny among hard pop producers today) are now beginning to appear regularly in England (mostly on UA) and in America, chiefly on Ariola, where the new John Paul Young record, "I Hate the Music" (7624) can be found. I like it better than "Yesterday's Hero", if only because I found Young's version of the latter so inferior to Jeff Young's tremendous cover. But it's a good solid record, and there's more where it came from.

In England, they're talking about John Miles as the greatest thing since David Bowie. He sounds more like Henry Gross to me, and looks more like Heinz, but in any event, "Music" (London 20086) is an okay record, though nothing like "High Fly", and he's gonna have to do better to justify the heavy-handed hype that's being laid on him.

Among the new faces this time, only one impresses me much. "Don't Let Me Be Wrong" by the

Dodgers (Island 058) is an English (Muff Winwood) production, and it sounds like Emmit Rhodes backed by the Raspberries. The song isn't quite distinctive enough to be a hit, I suspect, but as a pop recording, it's impeccable.

For those keeping track, the Warner-Spector label has released 2 more records, "Soul Man" by Calhoun (0407) and "Standing in the Sunshine" by Danny Potter (0408), neither produced by Spector. The latter is a passable pop ditty, but what we really want is the stuff that's coming out on Polydor in England, all those unreleased Ronettes and Darlene Love tracks. C'mon somebody, get with it!

Miscellany: The new Beatles single is "Got to Get You Into My Life"/"Helter Skelter" (Capitol 4274), the first time for either tune on a 45. What I'd like to know is, how can they compile an album of Beatles "rock & roll" songs and include this track, which is anything but? Why not something like "Roll Over Beethoven" which would be the logical equivalent of the Beach Boys' "Surfin' U.S.A."? The new Elliott Murphy single is "Lookin' For a Hero" (RCA 10690), his best since "Last of the Rock Stars". Journey, a group that's never interested me much, has come up with a surprisingly good single in "On A Saturday Nite" (Columbia 3-10324), with a full hard rock sound and a catchy riff, though ultimately the whole thing is too derivative to really matter.

Local talent: In answer to my complaint about not enough Elton John novelties, Jan Walker has recorded "Who Is This Guy Elton?" on his own label (6 Van Ness Rd, Binghamton, NY 13905). Mildly amusing; be sure and ask for the lyric sheet when ordering. San Francisco seems to be undergoing a great upsurge of local activity. The Charlatans, who started it all in '65, have been kept alive by guitarist Mike Wilhelm under the name Loose Gravel, and now they've got a single, with picture cover, on their own (nameless) label. "Frisco Band" has that old sound, psychedelic outlaws with a sense of humor. A really hot guitar crescendo midway thru. Also from Frisco is a band featuring 2 ex-Flamin' Groovies. Hot Knives has a sound reminiscent of the early Airplane, before Grace; "Loving You" is folk rock with the emphasis on folk, female vocals, and a nice production by Cyril Jordan. Really tasty. Both records available for \$2.50 each from Box 7112, Burbank, CA 91510. And while you're at it, send \$2 to El Rancho Records, 1851 Woodland Ave. E. Palo Alto, CA 94303 for a copy of "Village of the Durned" by Cornell Hurd & His Mondo Hot Pants Orch. It's actually a 4-song EP ("Psychotic Love", "Bicentennial Boogie" etc.) with color picture cover. These guys are hippies, but at least they're trying to be humorous.



**BEACH BOYS**  
"Rock and Roll Music"  
Reprise 1354

The first new Beach Boys single in 18 months, an oldie from their new album, and no surprise that

it's shaping up to be an instant hit. This is the classic BB sound, *Summer Days and Summer Nights* style, exuberant as can be, and you've gotta love it.





# The New Derringer: Rick Derringer & Cynthia Weil

By MITCH COHEN

## DERRINGER: ANOTHER PUNK INCORPORATES

If you're a mite skeptical about the validity of Rick Derringer's latest manifestation—and considering his hopscotching background, that's altogether possible—he understands.

"It got to the point to me where that's one of the reasons that made me decide to do this," he says; "this" being an all-new band that bears his last name and will debut on stage and disc this summer. "Like you say, Johnny and Edgar and then Edgar without me and then Edgar with me and then all of a sudden an album called the Edgar Winter Group with Rick Derringer. *Spring Fever* was weird for several different reasons, and *All American Boy* didn't have a tour going out with it. It was never my idea that I wanted to keep changing bands and changing concepts. The McCoys would have stayed together if it could've, Johnny Winter And would've stayed together. From then on there were just those other stories. I just started being confused myself. I mean, to me also, not only to listeners, the whole thing was diffracted and diffused.

"Out of all of it, I figured out the stuff I like. I decided I wanted to sound like this. I like a rock and roll band, I like it to be simple,

mainly I like to respect what I do in person in front of those audiences enough to be able to put it on tape. That's the decision I made. I don't want to play with ten groups, I don't want to produce fourteen albums at once, I don't want to be a session man. I want to have a band that I am a part of, that everybody in the band likes the kind of music it does and respects it enough to go in and record it. This is what I do. I hope that people don't expect too much."

Derringer is a basic, two guitar, bass and drums group consisting of, in addition to its namesake and leader, Vinny Appice, drummer and 18 year old brother of Carmine; Kenny Aaronson, formerly of Dust, Stories and the Leslie West Band, on bass; and guitarist Davey Johnson from a group called Axis in Shreveport, Louisiana. With this new, young and flashy line-up, Derringer finally achieves, in a way he didn't on his two solo albums, a clean break from the Winter Brothers, with whom he's been associated since the dissolution of the McCoys. The Derringer band, on their first album, captures a kind of classicism rare in 1976 by wedding its hard rock tendencies—centering on the dual guitars—with pop song structure. For card-carrying rock amateurs, the best news on *Derringer* is the unveiling

of the songwriting team of Rick Derringer and Cynthia Weil who, as might have been predicted, are responsible for the album's classiest moments.

The collaboration almost occurred at various times over the past few years, but never was finalized until, as Rick recalls, "Eventually I met her in Hollywood and visited her home. We talked about all the millions of songs that I liked that she wrote, and then I played her all the millions of songs she'd never heard that I wrote. It was like an audition, kind of, for both of us. We discussed ideas, but we didn't sit down and start writing. I just said, well, if you'd like to send some things from this meeting that you think I would like to write, that'll be the way we'll work. In general, the majority of the things she sends, you look at them and they just flow. Ten songs go through your mind as you read them the first time. Incredible.

"She can speak with a person and really assimilate not only their ideas but their vernacular. And the words she sends me freak me out every time because they are always, so far, exactly the kind of thoughts I would like to say, and I guess that's the most you can ask for. I hope our working together can grow. She's as young as ever,

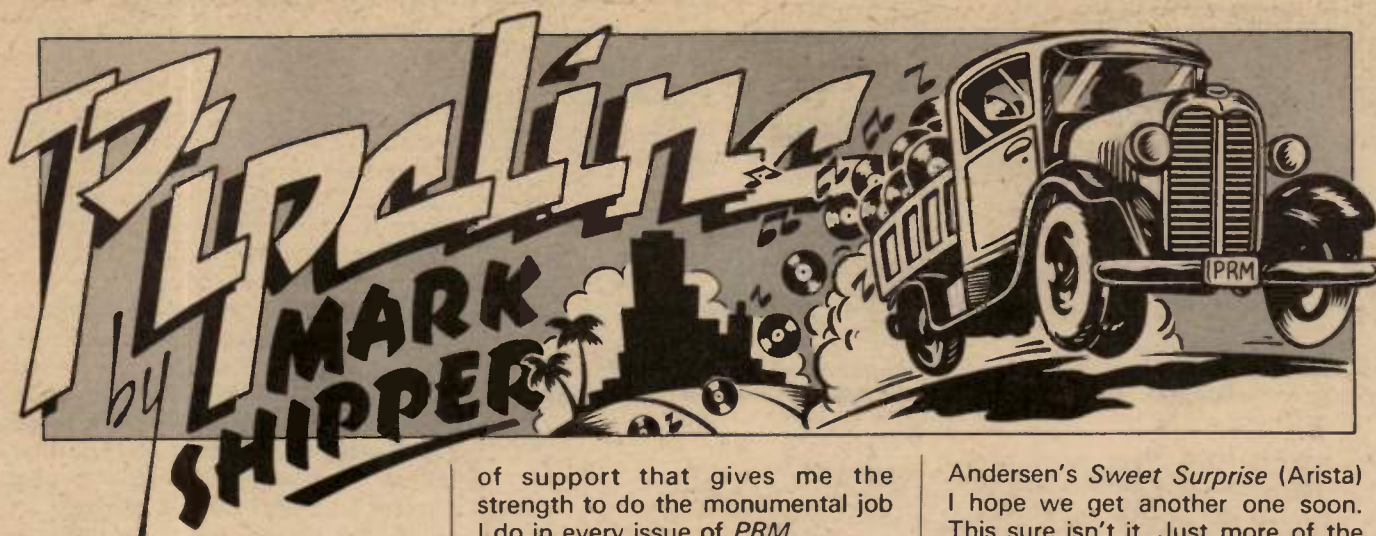
and as current as ever, and she's a great lyricist."

Four of the eight songs on *Derringer* are Weil-Derringer compositions and, as usual, her lyrics are all about varieties of boy-girl relationships, not the usual subject matter for your contemporary power band. The LP is neatly bracketed by W&D songs; the first, "Let Me In," which kicks off the album with those primal "I Can't Explain" chords, is a demand for romantic renewal, while the last, "Goodbye Again," is an admission that they "can't seem to stay apart or stay together." "Comes a Woman" is also about a recurring pattern that finds the singer able to cope with everything but the opposite sex. The song, unfortunately, is marred by a weak performance and concept. The logical choice for the single is "You Can Have Me," the initial musical meeting of Rick and Cynthia, a bright and clever celebration of unqualified, uncomplicated accessibility. Of the remaining four tracks, only "Beyond the Universe" emphasizes technique over structure, and that's an obvious showpiece for on-stage virtuosity, "Sailor" (by Johnson), "Envy" and "Loosen Up Your Grip" are all competently rendered genre pieces.

The base of the band's live act will be drawn from *Derringer*, along with such older numbers as "Rock and Roll Hoochie Koo," "Still Alive and Well," "Teenage Love Affair," "Uncomplicated" and "Hang On Sloop." They take to the road in June, testing their format initially at small clubs and then opening for headliners like Aerosmith in the bigger arenas that Rick much prefers. As he prepared to step out as frontman of a group for the first time in years, he was optimistic, but concerned.

(Cont'd on pg. 21)





With every month that goes by, response to this column is growing at such a rate that, frankly, it scares and astounds me. Just some of the things that have happened in the last month: Two television networks (I can't name them) are bidding for my services to read portions of *Pipeline* on their weekend newscasts...Record company presidents are increasingly holding off on releasing new albums until they've gotten the go ahead from me...I'm now on a first name basis with the Hudson Brothers...The Chantays are recording a single named after this column! The record will be played exclusively on oldies stations. Listen for it. I wrote the lyrics...The list goes on and on, but I won't, except to say thanks to each and every one of you for the wonderful words of support and encouragement you've given me. I couldn't live without letters from readers like Pete Gelb of Oxnard, California, who unashamedly admitted that his one desire in life was to see me drive off a cliff somewhere, because of a few unkind remarks made about his favorite group, America, last month. It's this kind

of support that gives me the strength to do the monumental job I do in every issue of *PRM*.

Well, what's happening this month? Live albums are everywhere in sight. Elton John is the latest to jump on the bandwagon with *Here & There* (MCA). Recorded two years ago, this'll make a great Christmas present if 1974 ever comes around again. Jethro Tull's latest, *Too Old To Rock & Roll, Too Young To Die* (Chrysalis) wins the 1976 *Pipeline* "Truth In Packaging" Award. (The 1975 award went to Jerry Garcia for his "Old And In The Way" set).

**A PENETRATING INSIGHT:** If I can get serious for a moment...It doesn't happen often, but every once in a while an album is released by a relatively unsung artist that captures the feeling of an entire generation of young people. It's the kind of album that is not afraid to take risks, is not bound to current musical fads, and isn't so eclectic that it becomes uncommercial. An album that reveals the *inside* of an artist, with both simple beauty and an amazing sort of sophistication. It's been a couple of years since we've had an album like this, and I can only say that after hearing Eric

Andersen's *Sweet Surprise* (Arista) I hope we get another one soon. This sure isn't it. Just more of the very familiar singer-songwriter stuff....

Camel's albums sell like crazy in the Mojave Desert, but the group wants to expand their following. Their latest, the spacey *Moonmadness* (Janus) is an ambitious effort that never gets off the launching pad. We've always liked Peter Bardens (since his days with Them) but it must be said that *Moonmadness* is nothing more than another space shot in anybody's record cabinet....

**HELP WANTED:** The *New Riders* (MCA) are in desperate need of New Writers. Any group that has to resort to using overdone songs by Otis Redding and Chuck Berry to fill up its albums should certainly entertain the possibility that newer material might expand their following...All the evidence points to the fact that Donovan has been smoking banana peels again. He's dedicated his latest, *Slow Down World* (Epic) to "The Queen Of Venus." Far out, huh? In order to get into the album properly, I smoked a couple of bananas myself and became violently ill almost immediately. Fortunately, the condition lifted at

exactly the same time as the needle on my record player did. Somebody should send an epistle to this dippy and tell him to quit being so trendy (Donovan doing disco?) and start writing more of the great songs that made him such big stuff a few years back...

Capitol Records has come up with the answer for you college-age kids who are nostalgic for your high-school days way back there in the early seventies. It may not be the *Raspberries Best* (Capitol) but there's enough brilliant material here to satisfy anyone with enough taste to appreciate the pinnacle of 70's pop music. Special mention should be made of the elaborate liner notes, which feature the words of many *PRM* writers in their younger, more innocent days. These were Eric Carmen's finest moments, and it only points out the weaknesses in his current work....

**LETTERS, LETTERS, LETTERS:** *Pipeline's* mailbox is jammed again this month. A small sampling: Mike Hoffman of Pittsburgh demands that I apologize to Yes for saying a couple of critical things about them last issue. OK, Mike, but not until they apologize for *Tales From Topographic Oceans*...William Barry of Chicago asks: "Do you know how I can obtain a copy of the lyrics to 'Rocket Man' by Elton John?" Sure, Bill. Just find someone who has them and make a xerox...**PERSONAL TO EDDIE OF DETROIT:** The police confiscated your last package. Please send another as soon as possible...*Pipeline* wants to hear from you. Send your comments, opinions exotic lingerie, etc. to me c/o Pipeline/Phonograph Record Magazine 6922 Hollywood Blvd., Suite 316, Hollywood, CA 90028. See you next month.

#### Derringer & Weil (Cont'd from pg. 20)

"We're a rock and roll band. We're Derringer. It's a new band. They're gonna say, 'What is it? Is it Edgar, is it Johnny, is it this, is it that?' I hope we've defined a picture of what we are clear enough by this album so they'll know. We have to show people what this is. That is, if anything, the problem right now, with Johnny, Edgar, me. I'm trying to solve that problem somehow. If there's ever gonna be an identity for me established, it can only happen this way.

"I read just a few weeks ago some article where Jimmy Page says, and it was even excerpted in black letters at the top, something about, 'Yes, it's always been my feeling that the British rock bands have had a much stronger conviction about the personality of rock. It's never happened with American bands.' Well, I don't believe that that should be. I don't want to be an English rock band—

I'm patriotic, especially in the Bicentennial year—I want to be an American band but in the same tradition as the Stones, The Who, Led Zeppelin, the ones that last and have personality. We want to be liked, we want to do good, we want to stay together. All this stuff I've said with every band I've been in and it hasn't worked yet."

#### Sex Pistols (Cont'd from pg. 6)

typically Shepherd's Bush aggro-backlash that's sociologically unique in 1976. Musically, however, they have a lot of obvious parallels. They remind me very much of Television, when Richard Hell was with them and they still did "Psychotic Reaction." Rotten has Tom Verlaine's charismatic intensity, though without the avant-garde pretensions that put me off in so much of the New York scene. Their sound is a straight blast of tortured punk rock. They are tighter and more dynamic than any New York band I've seen since the Dolls, and their original songs (with titles like

"Pretty Vacant", "Only Seventeen", "Submission", and "No Feelings") are potentially strong. Like TV, they do a few carefully selected oldies—"Watcha Gonna Do About It" and "Substitute" suit them so well they might have written them. They also do a fine version of the Stooges' classic "No Fun". There's a lot of Iggy in Johnny Rotten, as he taunts the audience into a violent mood that seems to come more naturally to the English working class. The night I saw them the violence was relatively contained, but in previous appearances chairs have been known to fly across the room, knocking over amplifiers and inciting brawls. Which the Sex Pistols would prefer to an encore, anytime.

The established press has not accepted the Sex Pistols with open arms. *Melody Maker* said, "Their dreadfully inept attempts to zero in on the kind of viciously blank intensity previously epitomized by the Stooges was rather endearing...the guitarist, another surrogate punk, played with a deter-

mined disregard for taste and intelligence." Presumably the writer considers Iggy the epitome of taste and intelligence. At any rate, they've scared off just about everybody outside their small circle of fellow aggroids, and a few of the more dauntless critics, who see them as the vanguard of what some have called the European Punk Revival.

I found quite a bit to recommend guitarist Steve Jones besides his lack of taste and intelligence. He struck me as what the young Pete Townshend might've become if he'd joined the Velvet Underground instead of the Detours. He plays no solos, relying on rapid chording, spurts of feedback, and a fevered assault on his instrument.

Whether the market for stupidity, ineptitude and stylized neopunk extends beyond the cult level is currently being tested by the likes of Patti Smith, the Ramones and others. If it does, Iggy will yet make the cover of *PRM*, and the Sex Pistols will be so popular they'll hate themselves.





# Blind Date

with  
FLO & EDDIE

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

I should have known better. I merely *happened* to mention that I'd heard Flo & Eddie were working on a new album, and before I knew it I was backed up in a corner being subjected to a *tirade*. "You mean our brand new, wonderful new album which contains very little of the pop satire everyone thinks we do but a lot of that wonderful music we knew we had in us all the time? *Moving Targets*, on Columbia Records and tapes?"

Uh, yeah, I guess that's the one, all right. "You're going to freak when you hear it—or not! And once again we give everyone the right to review it in PRM. No artists took us up on it with *Illegal, Immoral And Fattening* (their previous LP, now officially a cult item) and we know why—it's not good to say cruel things about your contemporaries. But this time we really expect them to come through. Remember, that's *Moving Targets*, on Colum—"

--bia Records & tapes. I know. Moving right along...and not a moment too soon...we began the Blind Date proper.

## Excerpts from SWEET SURPRISE—Eric Andersen (Arista)

Let's start out gently. It's very early in the morning, folks—you don't realize Ken showed up at our pad at 6 this morning, to avoid the crowds. This is the best time—virgin ears. I haven't heard a lot of game shows on TV, nothing's polluted my auditory senses, no soap operas. A gentle folkie. Steel guitar. Acoustics. Tommy Bolin. Eric Andersen! Hey, we got one! I've always been a fan of Eric Andersen. Buck teeth. That's what happens when you look like that and grow up. Tim Schmit and Tom Scott are on it—the Happiness Twins. *Tin Can Alley* was a wonderful album—his stab at pop of the time (1967). Very *Highway 61*. A little too mellow for me. I'd give him a break. It's just too early for Eric Andersen. Four in the morning would be better. He's appealing only to timber wolves on that cover. He's got a great voice and writes very pretty songs, but he's just so affected by silly things like the outdoors. You've gotta draw the line somewhere. I hate the mountains, I hate the timber wolves, (sing) "I hate the prairies, I hate the ocean, white with foam..."

## Excerpts from Rumpelstiltskin's Revenge—Shawn Phillips (A&M)

One of the earliest Flo & Eddie's favorites? Al Kooper! Loudon! Shawn Phillips! We got another one! Shawn's great. What's this one called? *Rumpelstiltskin's Resolve*? Oh no! As long as his hair keeps growing...We're really pulling for Shawn now. Seven albums into it—*Seven*? Ten? More like 28! I must have missed a couple. Shawn appeals to a very broad audience. Broads. He's capturing the Donovan audience. He is not; even Donovan isn't. *Option To Option*, he should call this album. "Shawn Phillips...I don't know, you want to pick him up again, Jerry?" "Well, is his hair long?" "Yeah, and we don't have Claudine any more." "And Paul Williams is short..." "OK, he's taller than Paul and prettier than Claudine. Sign him!" Shawn's starting to look like Rick Wakeman. *Everyone* is. Rick Wakeman's starting to look like Michael Murphey, who's starting to look like Gregg Allman!...



## Excerpts from DADDY'S GIRL—Charlie & the Pep Boys (A&M)

All right! Rolling Stones, right? Aerosmith. Produced by Nils Lofgren? Name of a famous tire seller? B.F. Goodrich. Goodyear. Firestone. Mark C. Bloome. Bloomin' Shames. Winston. Double-Ply Music Company. Delta. B.F. Sloan. Pep Boys? What? Oh, they're so cute. Definitely after the Starwood crowd. They sound terrible. That's about the worst-sounding record I've ever heard. Nils! Where'd you record this? Bias Recording Studio, Falls Church, VA. I don't think anyone's beating a path to their door. I have the idea that guys like Ken and all the real radical pursuers of pop music will love this album (PRM: True...) It's not recorded like a 70's album, and it certainly won't sell. It'll be a cult item. Occult item. It's not the

## future of rock & roll. *Moving Targets*—

## Excerpts from Warren Zevon (Asylum)

Well-known figure around town? Kim Fowley. The Runaways. Totie Fields. Known to us personally? Gary Rowles. Dobie Gray. Mentor Williams. Tom Jans. Good guess, Dobie Gray. Dobie, your hit is waiting for you—"Mohammad's Radio." We change the title for sure. He used to play keyboards for Phil Everly? Wait a minute! I know who used to play keyboards for Phil Everly. Lyme! Warren Zevon! Allright! Needless to say, we discovered Warren Zevon by putting "Like The Seasons" on the back of "Happy Together," making him everything he is today—and cutting "Outside Chance." Jackson Browne can tell you he discovered Warren Zevon, but you ask Warren who cut his songs first. I could tell you things about the Raspberry Dancing. Warren, we like it. Remember when we took acid and stood outside the Pioneer Chicken take-out for six hours? At least he's finally away from Bones. Carl Wilson sings and arranges this one? This could be a breakthrough for Asylum, a voice that doesn't sound like Jackson. That didn't get bitten by a tarantula, that doesn't sleep in the desert. This is no "Heroes And Villains." Sounds an awful lot like Dan Fogelberg combined with Jackson Browne. Why does everyone on this label sound like that?

## Excerpts from RAMSHACKLED—Alan White (Atlantic)

A custom label design? Then we know it's one of the guys in Yes. It is one of the guys in Yes? Make sure you print that we know it before you played it, just from the custom label. Who's left in Yes who hasn't released a solo album? The roadie! The piano player? The drummer's solo album? Alan White. (looks at label) My God! It's the most expensive package I've ever seen! All Yes's artwork surpasses Yes's records. I don't know why a drummer gets it in his head to do this. I wouldn't buy it. Well, what *would* you buy?

## Excerpts from THE RAMONES (Sire)

My favorite album of the month! That's the way a guitar should sound. Whoo! Freddy Cannon! Where are they from? Cleveland?

Florida? Not from New York? I know who this is. Real club-rock, like the Dolls. A cult item. Everyone goes out and sees them, like they do with the Runaways. The Ramones. Boy are they ever New York. There's something artificial about this. I can't believe they're all brothers. They're not! They'd be a hot item if Rodney's was still open. I don't want to like them but there's something about them that I know is not bad. They're trying too hard. They're concealing their intelligence very well. "Let's erase the other eight verses and use that one over and over. No—wrong color leather! I have a rip here so you can't have one there but you can have a rip down there." It's the Seeds, what can I say? Everything sounds like "Let's write a song about drugs" "OK, how about glue?" "Let's write a song about the faggots down on 53rd and 3rd, hey!" It's four guys who found two chords they could play. They weren't the right two chords.



## Excerpts from Cardiff Rose—Roger McGuinn (Columbia)

Roger! I love it! Mick Ronson, right. Why is he *singing* like that? (holds nose). Joni Mitchell song? Next cut. I like Ronson—he's got a good knowledge of guitar. I think it sounds good. I think this last couple of albums got out of control. Kristofferson put his name on "Rock & Roll Time." Unusual. The Byrd who fell from grace with the sea. I like this album.

## Excerpts from LOVE ME BY NAME—Lesley Gore (A&M)

Real old Flo & Eddie fave? Lesley Gore. Whoa! I hope these people realize how *up* we are on the new sounds. She has no skin! This looks not unlike the *Diamond Dogs* cover. Did Guy do it? There's cute love letters from "Q" to "Munch" and one from "Munch" to "Q". I think it's a lot better than the mediocrity of the MOR direction she was headed in. She might have been Jaye P. Morgan last year. This is better than Bette Midler, I'll tell you that. She's making \$200,000 a week in Vegas and Lesley Gore is trying to get started. I can't wait to see her again and call her "Munch." I haven't seen her for 16 years but that doesn't matter. What's that record you're not gonna play? Tower of Power! Let me review it without hearing it. It eats! What unmitigated gall—live! That's *Moving Targets*, folks, on .....(tape cuts off).



# WINGS AT THE SPEED OF SOUND



Paul McCartney  
Linda McCartney  
Denny Laine  
Jimmy McCulloch  
Joe English

ON CAPITOL RECORDS AND TAPES



SUMMER  
MEANS FUN



WDR



# THE BEACH BOYS

## AND ★ THAT ★ CALIFORNIA ★ SOUND

PHONOGRAPH



The fourth annual  
BRIAN WILSON & THE BEACH BOYS ISSUE  
May, 1973, August, 1974, July, 1975 June, 1976



It's no less true in 1976 than in 1966. Ten years later the Beach Boys are still singing about the California good life. The minute you hear those harmonies brimming over with energy and enthusiasm (whether they're singing "Surfin'", "Good Vibrations" or their new hit "Rock & Roll Music"), everything clicks—sun and sand, cars and guitars. You're California dreaming and you wish you were there. There's no way to count the number of kids over the years who've deserted their old stomping-grounds to check out what the Beach Boys were singing about.

But it's not just California. As time goes by (and especially lately, with their globe-spanning tours), The Beach Boys have come to mean

◆◆◆◆  
ERIC CARMEN:

"They are certainly the most important and influential band America has ever produced. Melodically brilliant songwriting, complex arrangements and complete control of the recording studio combine to make the music interesting, inspiring, and yet always accessible. Their vocal harmonies are unsurpassed....I think Brian was a french horn, Carl was a flute, Al Jardine a trumpet, Dennis a trombone, and Mike Love a baritone-sax before their present incarnation as The Beach Boys."

◆◆◆◆  
DEAN TORRENCE:

"Life without *Surfin'* USA would be like sex without girls!"

◆◆◆◆  
"I'll say good-bye to my old hang-outs,  
I want to see what The Beach Boys sing about".

—Lou Christie  
from "Hollywood's My Stop", 1966

more. In their songs and stance, they represent what's great about America, on every level from summer fun-in-the-sun, to deeper themes like freedom and mobility, everything that's made America (for most of us, anyway) the greatest youthful culture ever; Teenage Heaven on earth. And if the foregoing sounds excessively mawkish, I can assure you that hearing the Beach Boys sing provokes a profounder patriotic thrill than the national anthem, "America the Beautiful," and Kate Smith put together. For their generation (the kids of the sixties and the seventies), The Beach Boys are America.

—Ken Barnes  
June, 1976





# AMERICA CELEBRATES THE BEACH BOYS

## "This is Gonna be the Most Outrageous Summer Story of All" --Mike Love

By KEN BARNES

He's not joshing, either. The Beach Boys are revving up for their biggest multi-media assault ever. And one of the media to be assaulted this time will be records — *15 Big Ones*, the first new Beach Boys studio album since January 1973 and *Holland*, is completed and scheduled for early July release. An LP preview, their new single "Rock & Roll Music," the Chuck Berry/Beatles classic, is just out and already looks like a certified smash.

Added to their music of the day, the Beach Boys are planning their most extensive, most spectacular tour yet, one that should leave no stadium or major city unplayed.

They're set for their first network TV special, a nationally syndicated 15th Anniversary radio documentary that should blanket the country, plus projected cover stories in major news magazines (*Time* and *Newsweek* level), books, you name it. 15 years after their South Bay debut, the Beach Boys are preparing to make the biggest splash of their career.

The tour begins in July and lasts, off and on, till the end of the year. "The July 4th weekend...will probably be the biggest...ever in the group's history of touring," Mike Love told KMET/L.A. listeners during a stage-setting tribute. "The 1st and 2nd we'll be

in Oakland at the stadium there. Down here we'll be at Anaheim Stadium on the 3rd." Appearing with them will be Poco and America, both of whom just might come to regret the day they ever got on the same stage with the Beach Boys. "Then we just got an offer to go to Philadelphia to play a 90,000-seat stadium on July 4."

That last Bicentennially-apropos Philly date is confirmed, and should warm the hearts of the Beach Boys, who at one time wanted to be named the official Bicentennial band (feeling, rightly, that no one else represented American values quite so well). The first leg of the tour continues

till September 19, touching bases at most of the country's available stadium venues, and it's estimated the group will play before 1.2 million people during those 2½ months. They'll pick up again in the fall, until about 80 dates have been played in all, culminating in a New Year's Eve 1976-77 show which will mark their 15th performing anniversary.

The Beach Boys will be performing on a special set, which according to a spokesman is "a mock-up of a boat, with palm trees and twinkling lights to get the effect of water rippling along the sides. It's so complex we're taking two crews, one to set it up and







one to take it down." Z.Z. Top's live mountain lions and cacti notwithstanding, the tour of the summer will be the Beach Boys, hands down.

As if that weren't enough to keep them in the public eye, the group will have their first TV special broadcast on August 5 via NBC. Shooting starts June 15 on location in Southern California, and nobody's really sure how it's going to come out, but the Beach Boys have scored a definite coup by landing Lorne Michaels to produce it. Michaels is the producer of NBC's *Saturday Night*, easily the funniest, most innovative, and best youth-oriented program in recent TV history, and he and the group have been given a free hand by the network and sponsor for this special. *Saturday Night's* Chevy Chase is a probable guest star, but it won't be a conventional variety show by any means. "We'll be trying a new form of TV," a spokesman says, although considerable live footage from their Anaheim and Oakland shows is likely to be spotlighted.

The Beach Boys will also be featured on an NBC News special on Transcendental Meditation early this summer. Brian Wilson, Mike Love, and Al Jardine were filmed meditating in the studio, and Love a TM instructor, will be shown teaching a class. TM's comeback since its 1967 Maharishi/Beatles heyday has been almost as spectacular as the Beach Boys', and it is still a big part of the group's program, especially for Love. A track called "TM Song" is the B-side of "Rock & Roll Music."

Everything is tying together very neatly this summer. The Beach Boys of course have enjoyed a remarkable resurgence dating from *Surf's Up* in 1971, for the most part owing to their tours. The live shows, gradually incorporating more and more of their early hits, reacquainted forgetful fans with the pure joy of the group's sun and surf stance—if anybody's learned how to utilize solar power effectively, it's the Beach Boys. And, through a process which no one quite understands, they managed to touch an entire new, vast generation with their music.

Capitol Records, their former label, punched it all into high gear with two astonishingly successful album compilations of Beach Boys classics, *Endless Summer* and *Spirit Of America*; and their present label, Warner/Reprise, chipped in with several repackages of their own.

All the while the Beach Boys dithered about as far as cutting a new album, preferring the safe, predictable acclaim that came from touring, and experiencing strained relations with their label and management. Anticipation grew higher for some new product from the Beach Boys, but this summer it's finally here, in the form of *15 Big Ones*.

The album title and art concept are, fittingly, the creation of Dean Torrence, the blonder half of #1 surf contenders Jan & Dean, and a longtime friend of the Beach Boys (he sung lead on "Barbara Ann" and may well sing with them again at some future point). When asked to explain the title's significance (if any), Dean claimed "it's a nice-looking number. So I made it the title and they recorded 15 songs to fit." Actually, it was almost that haphazard. Dean, who runs the successful Kitty Hawk graphics firm, wanted to tie the album package in to the 15th Anniversary theme, but *Anniversary* and *Happy Birthday* failed to knock him out for the title. While roughing out a tentative design to show the group, Dean pencilled in *15 Big Ones*, and the Beach Boys loved it.

It's a neat title, all right, the *15 Big Ones* referring alternatively to the 15 years of Beach Boys history, the 15 tracks on the album, and conveying a casually antique flavor (reminiscent of album titles like *The Standells Sing The Hot Ones*, or *The Four Seasons "Big Girls Don't Cry" and 12 Others*). It's just right for this particular album, composed of eight oldies (popularized by other artists) and seven original tracks.

At first it might seem strange that the Beach Boys would cut a half-oldies album for their crucial studio comeback. But the more you think about it, the more logical it becomes. Originally, it seemed

(Cont'd. on Pg 31)

## GETTING YOURSELF DOWN IS TOO MUCH OF A LOAD. GETTING YOURSELF UP IS JUST RIGHT.

When you were learning to roll, just any album was O.K.

But now that you're not a beginner, why roll with an album that doesn't really rock?

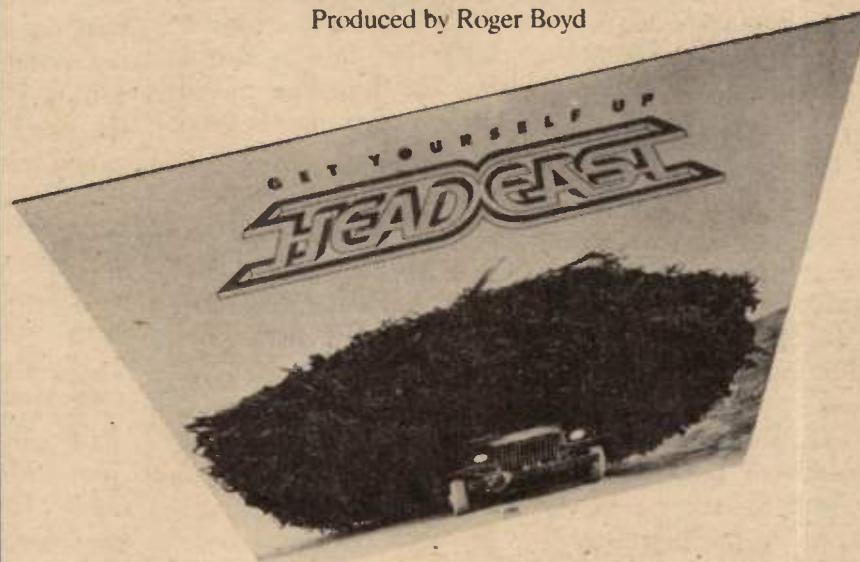
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### "GET YOURSELF UP"

The new album from  
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Produced by Roger Boyd



**BURNIN'**  
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**A&M RECORDS & TAPES.**







**15 BIG ONES**  
The Beach Boys  
Brother/Reprise

By KEN BARNES

Last minute track-by-track first impressions of 15 BIG ONES: Rock And Roll Music [POPULARIZED BY CHUCK BERRY, THE BEATLES]: This one's familiar as a single already, but it makes a great leadoff track, too. Clever idea to cut it—renewing the Beach Boys' old Chuck Berry ties ["Surfin' USA" and half their early guitar intros] linking with the Beatles' inspired 1965 version. A timeless song anyway, unbeatable in 1957, 1965 or 1976. Full harmonies, Brian noticeably present and wailing, and Mike Love singing in his most Californian-nasal style, just like the old days. The natural sequel to "Surfin' USA" 13 years on, contemporized by drinking "beer from a wooden cup" instead of Berry's "home brew." Smash.

It's OK [WILSON-LOVE]: Amazing. Haven't heard the Beach Boys sound this summery since "Do It Again" in 1968. Short [2:18], lively, full production, it literally vaults out of the speakers. Definitely a premeditated [no TM puns intended] attempt to do it again [again], but it works better than I would have believed possible. New mature note of pessimism: "IT'S OK TO GO OUT AND HAVE SOME FUN.../IT'S OK, LET'S PLAY AND ENJOY IT WHILE IT LASTS..."

Had To Phone Ya [WILSON-LOVE]: Originally cut in 1973, but never released, by American Spring [Brian's wife Marilyn and her sister Diane]. An ethereal SUNFLOWER feel on a basically slight-but-pleasant song. Takes a few strange changes of direction, and ends with a Dennis Wilson vocal cameo.

Chapel Of Love [DIXIE CUPS, RONETTES]: This was always one of my least favorite Spector [and Greenwich-Barry] songs, but the Beach Boys translate it into a new dimension via a majestic all-stops-out production. About this point, most doubts about the course the Beach Boys' oldies bent would chart are disappearing. I'm still not sold on their CHOICE of material, but the execution seems impeccable.

Everyone's In Love With You [MIKE LOVE]: Mike's first solo composition [words & music] is a revelation. Swirling instrumental textures [Charles Lloyd on flute?] decorate an utterly irresistible melody. The Beach Boys haven't sounded this pretty since "Till I Die" [on SURF'S UP], but this is not a fearful, brooding mood piece but a lighthearted love ballad. Probably will emerge as my favorite track.

Talk To Me Talk To Me [LITTLE WILLIE JOHN SUNNY & THE SUNLINERS]: Sounds as good as could be expected, taking into account my lifelong personal aversion to the song. The PET SOUNDS-style bells and horn textures do wonders for the tune, but it still seems like a flatulent song warring with a delicate arrangement. A jarring interpolation of "Tallahassie Lassie" provides welcome, though fleeting, relief.

That Same Song [WILSON-LOVE]: A bouncy little trip through musical history, very simple in conception but hard to resist. Brian's singing MUCH lower now; could hardly recognize him.

TM Song [BRIAN WILSON]: Starts boldly with a strident mock-argument recalling those "Cassius Love Vs. Sonny Wilson" studio goofs the Beach Boys used to mess around with to fill out their 1964 albums. Then a quiet voice announces "It's time for me to meditate," and we begin. Essentially a cosmic giggle, short [1:34], lightweight, and not overbearing in its spiritual advocacy. It wouldn't have sounded out of place on SMILEY SMILE but that was far from the best Beach Boys album.

Palisades Park [FREDDY CANNON]: Brian's reportedly been kicking this one around in his head for years, but it kicks off Side Two in fine fashion. A showpiece rearrangement turns frantic Freddy's roller coaster ride into a rhythmic rocker, with tasteful synthesizer fills and the patented full-to-bursting harmonies. For the second time on this album ["Chapel" was the first], they've transmuted teenage trivia into a majestic monument—and without smothering the original impulse of fun. Shades of "Amusement Park USA."

Susie Cincinnati [AL JARDINE]: This was the B-side of both "Add Some Music To Your Day" [1970] and the too-late-for-Christmas 1974 single "Child Of Winter," and although it's never been on an album, it's hard to understand what it's doing here six years after its first appearance. Maybe they wanted to give Al his big chance. It sounds fine, in any case, a

sprightly story of a Cincinnati groupie ["city's #1 sinner"] on wheels.

A Casual Look [THE SIX TEENS FEATURING TRUDY WILIAMS]: A hoary [1956] L.A. girl-group oldie, perhaps a little overnasalized in the lead vocals and played a bit too obviously for laughs, but once again it sounds great. The Beach Boys have a natural affinity for this sort of 50's doo-wop, as evidenced by the sharp a capella intro.

Blueberry Hill [FATS DOMINO]: As trite an oldie as you could dig up, it starts with an extended sax run and goes into a sparse string-bass-backed vocal. At this point it's the prime candidate for turkey of the set, but then it explodes into gear with that ever-electrifying neo-Spectorian Brian Wilson production in full riot. Just gets better and better, as they pull off another upset victory.

Back Home [BRIAN WILSON]: The only new original on Side Two spotlights Brian's new low voice again in a bucolic ditty about going back to the farm which doesn't particularly ring true. Pretty slight stuff, although the chorus picks up the momentum.

In The Still Of The Night [FIVE SATINS]: If there were ever a stale oldie you never wanted the Beach Boys to tackle, this was probably the one. But once again the production and background vocals are enough to rejuvenate the most jaded—another doo wop triumph. The lead singer [probably Brian] sounds extremely hoarse and uncharacteristically deep-voiced. A surprise stunner, here.

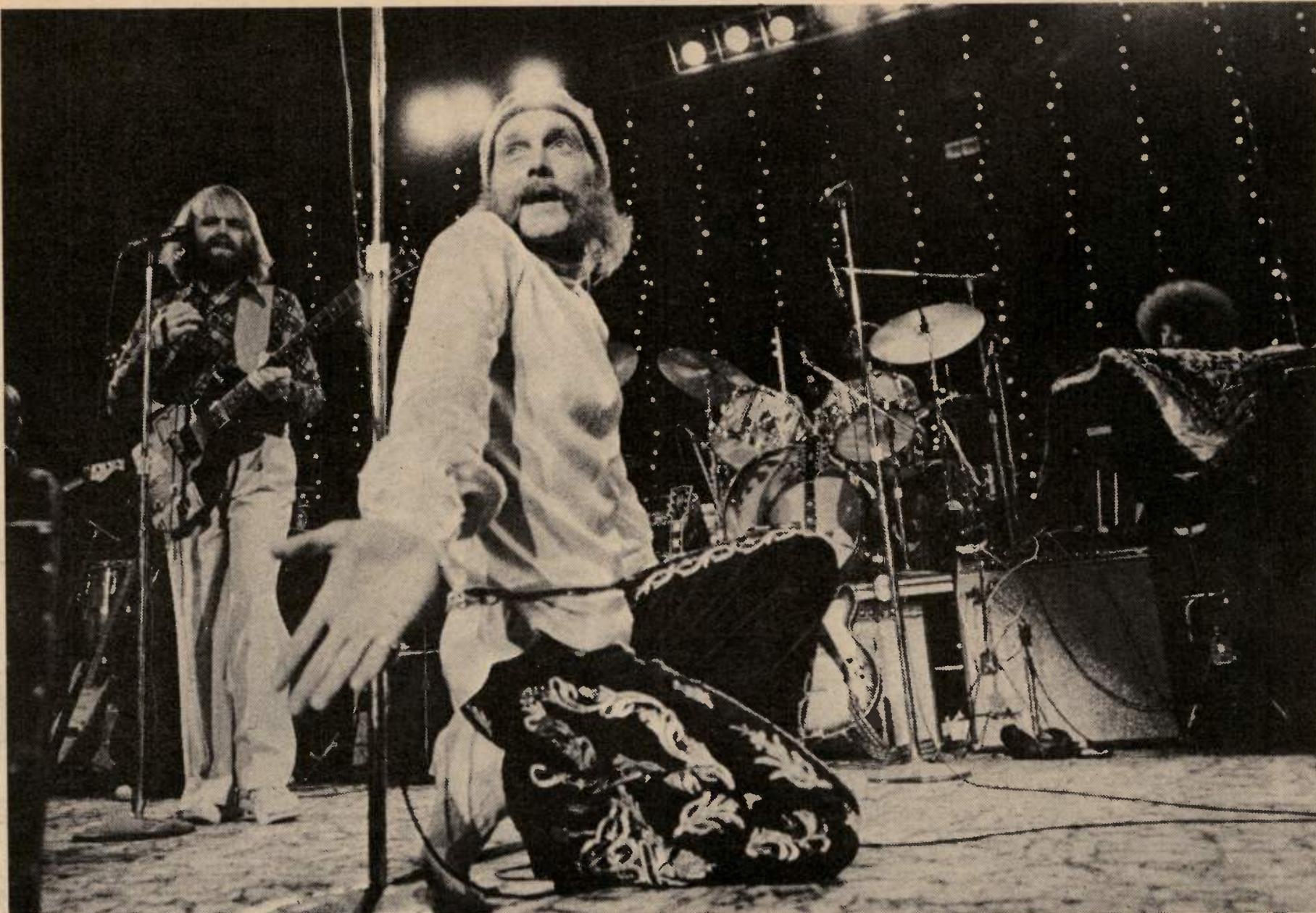
Just Once In My Life [RIGHTEOUS BROS.]: An unusual choice [surprising they didn't pick

"You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin'," in keeping with the more obvious choices on the LP], and one I was looking forward to. Strangely, it's the only oldie here which doesn't quite come off, doubtless because the Phil Spector original was produced so brilliantly, and because no solo-singing Beach Boy can match Bill Medley on this one. There are moments of greatness, and the spectacular production pays homage to Spector while displaying subtle differences, but it ends up a valiant second best. The off-key singing [in spots] is disconcerting.

The vocals, in fact, are the one slight problem on 15 BIG ONES. The instrumental textures are appropriate, rich, and sumptuous, and the vocal harmonies are naturally unbeatable. But the lead vocals often sound excessively casual, as if the Beach Boys were trying too hard to prove they were having a good time in the studio.

That minor point aside, the album radiates an irresistible summer-shine kind of feeling, while at the same time displaying all the stunning production values Brian Wilson and the group are famous for. It's both awesome and relaxed, striking an inspired [and commercial] balance between the exuberance of their old records and the formalism of their recent efforts. It's got everything it needs, they're artists, and they do look back, but not in a spirit of blind fidelity to the original versions. Instead they turn the old songs into BEACH BOYS numbers, giving the album a unity rare in oldies-showcase projects. 15 BIG ONES is the album you've been hoping the Beach Boys would make for years now. It's a triumph.





## Beach Boys Influence: Not Just a Sound but a Lifestyle

By MARK SHIPPER

With a new album, a summer tour, and the return of a more-active Brian Wilson, it seems safe to say that the Beach Boys are definitely back. But it's also safe to say that they've never really been gone. In one form or another, the sound that Brian Wilson & Co. created fifteen years ago has seldom been off the charts. When the Eagles take off with their customary soaring harmonies, or Henry Gross sends chills up your spine with a song like "Shannon," you immediately realize that these records could not have existed had there been no Beach Boys.

Almost every major group has, at one time or another, paid tribute to the Beach Boys. The Who were one of the earliest to display overt Beach Boys' influence in songs like "Barbara Ann," and "Bucket T." Pete Townsend and Keith Moon particularly have never been reluctant to credit Brian Wilson for much of the Who's sound. (Moon, in fact, had a solo version of "Don't Worry Baby" out as a single last year). The opening track on the Beatles' *White Album*, "Back In The USSR," raised a few

eyebrows back in 1969 when first released. The song was loaded with obvious Beach Boys falsetto and 1969 (two years into "hip consciousness" and the denial of everything that came before it) was no time to dredge up the visions of hedonism that Beach Boys music always conveys. The Beatles, of course, were far removed from any kind of street sensitivity (thankfully) that would have prevented this song. Interestingly enough, "Back In The USSR" stands up, seven years later, better than anything else on that particular album.

There's something, some factor, in Beach Boys music that refuses to allow it to become dated. The most apparent evidence is the pair of Capitol re-issue albums that each went platinum last year. Capitol originally intended "Endless Summer" for the oldies market, aimed their TV advertising at it, and sat back in amazement at the phenomenal sales response from teenagers far too young to remember this music in its original release.

What is it about the Beach Boys that keeps their music contemporary when most other music from the mid-60's sounds every bit

of the ten years-old that it is? There's lots to be said for the abundance of social factors (girls, cars, and the beach are all still very much in vogue) but from a purely aural standpoint, a lot of credit has to go to Brian Wilson's production abilities. The sound achieved on pre-*Pet Sounds* albums like *Summer Days & Summer Nights* and *All Summer Long* is simply miles above anything else from the period, production-wise. And, an earlier record, "Don't Worry Baby," is so clean and contemporary that it seems more modern than the trio of re-makes (by Keith Moon, California Music, and Keller & Webb) that have appeared thus far in the seventies. Brian Wilson's mastery of the recording studio was every bit as complete as one of his idols, Phil Spector.

As for the social factors, the ideal life as expressed by Brian Wilson ten years ago (an endless summer of sunshine, cars, and girls) is still pretty much the idea for any kid with a chance at it today. When Eric Carmen delivered his most obvious Beach Boys tribute in "Drivin' Around," (from *Fresh*, the Raspberries second album) he covered it all: "Long hot

days/We'll be catchin' the rays/My tape deck is blatin'/My car's fast/I'm drivin' around..." Carmen delved further on the final Raspberries album in "Cruisin' Music" and on his first solo LP with "Sunrise." More than any other contemporary artist, Carmen has used Brian Wilson as a source that can be returned to again and again.

Todd Rundgren is another artist who owns up to his Beach Boys debt. His carbon-copy "Good Vibrations" is on its way to being one of the few direct Beach Boys cover hits ever. Last summer's "Help Me Rhonda" by Johnny Rivers is another, but you have to go back over ten years for a third, "Little Honda" by the Hondells. While some may see this relative lack of cover-version success as an indication of something lacking in the material (there've been more than a dozen successful Beatle covers, for example) it's more likely due to the difficulty of out-doing (or even reaching) the original. It requires an artist with the pop skills of a Rundgren or Rivers to even approach it.

Rather than the almost-hopeless task of covering the Beach Boys, most seventies acts have chosen

(Cont'd. on Pg. 31)



# Here comes the perfect set!



## Golden Summer

### Side 1

Surfin' **Beach Boys**  
Surfer Stomp **Marketts**  
Hawaii 50 **Ventures**  
Summer Means Fun **Fantastic Baggys**  
Surf City **Jan & Dean**

### Side 2

Wipe Out **Surfaris**  
Honolulu Lulu **Jan & Dean**  
Balboa Blue **Marketts**  
Underwater **Frogmen**  
Muscle Beach Party **Frankie Avalon**  
Surfin' Safari **Beach Boys**

### Side 3

Sidewalk Surfin' **Jan & Dean**  
Surfer Joe **Surfaris**  
Let's Go Trippin' **Dick Dale & the Del-Tones**  
Surfin' Bird **Trashmen**  
Pipeline **Ventures**

### Side 4

Ride The Wild Surf **Jan & Dean**  
Surfer Girl **Beach Boys**  
New York Is A Lonely Town **Tradewinds**  
Lonely Surfer **Jack Nitschze**  
Beach Party **Annette**  
Let's Go **Routers**

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No Beach Boys edition of Phonograph Record would be complete without Bruce Johnston [front, center]. Bruce has never forgotten how to have a good time—a firm believer in the future of fun.

In the end, it's been this "friendship," more than anything else, that's keeping old fans loyal and new ones coming. Pop Stars (which the Beach Boys have never appeared to be) go out of style. Friends don't. The Beach Boys won't.

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#### KEN BARNES

(Cont'd. from pg. 27)

like a good, relaxed way to reinvolve Brian Wilson in the group's recorded affairs—his participation in the last three albums had been on the minimal side. The selected oldies apparently just popped out of Brian's head spontaneously; "That's what Brian was most comfortable doing," according to Dean. It was a good way for the entire group to test the waters again; they could just "get in and do it and have a good time. It's better than worrying about what they were going to do" (Dean

again). And, including the oldies is probably the best way to indicate to the public that the Beach Boys have recaptured the fun-first-and-foremost attitude that characterized their earlier material but was often absent on latter-day albums. *15 Big Ones* is a direct link to the Beach Boys' past, and as such it should have the broadest potential appeal to both old and new fans.

*15 Big Ones* is sure to be a smash hit, calibrated as it is with the opening of the group's tour. The TV, radio and magazine coverage will bolster the cause, and Warners is planning an all-out advertising/promotional blitz (as well they should), with TV spots galore. It's time to get ready. In 1961 the Beach Boys were "Surfin'." By 1963 they were "Surfin' USA." In 1976 they'll be celebrating Beach Boys USA, and it should be the biggest Beach Boys bash ever.

to adapt their material to the sound. Henry Gross' "Shannon" is a prime example, and there have been scores of others, mostly less successful, chart-wise. Flash Cadillac's *Sons Of The Beaches* album from last year (on Private Stock) was thematically based on Beach Boys music, and one track, "Time Will Tell" perhaps comes the closest of anything recorded in the seventies to authentic Beach Boys standards. (Not close enough, unfortunately, to keep it from flopping dismally as a single last summer). For Beach Boys fans, though, this is required listening. Same goes for the Beverly Hills Blues Band, former Dino, Desi, & Billy stalwarts who've been fraternal with the Beach Boys ever since the demise of their original group. An album is coming this summer from Warner Brothers and expectations are high. Even more promising is Papa Do Ron Ron, a Southern California group under the wing of Dean Torrence. Their version of "Be True To Your School" (RCA) was a brilliant updating of the perennial classic. With an album in the works, a summer-full of gigs ahead, and the guidance of an acknowledged heavyweight in the field (Torrence), Papa Do Ron Ron, more than anyone else at this point, hold the promise of carrying the Beach Boys' torch into the future.

As for the present, there's never been more Beach Boys consciousness at any time in their career. It's gone beyond records into TV themes and even commercials (a sure signal of anything's contemporary appeal). The "Theme From Laverne & Shirley" by Cindi Greco is an unlikely marriage of girl group rock and vintage Beach Boys. Commercials like the current "Pepsi Generation" spot are full of solid Wilson references, and some even go further. Pay attention to

the backing track on this summer's Bonnie Bell suntan lotion commercial, and you'll hear a familiar tune that finally registers as "The Warmth Of The Sun" after a couple of listenings.

Clearly, after fifteen years, Beach Boys music is literally everywhere. When attempting to understand why, it's useful to consider this: there's something special and unique about music that is this *celebratory*. Far from the frustrated, misunderstood character that has dominated center-stage in rock & roll almost since the beginning, the Beach Boys (in their music) are having a great time and are thoroughly delighted to be right where they are. There'll always be a market for this sentiment. ("Suburban Soul Music," a friend calls it and that's about as apt a definition as you're likely to find). For every Bruce Springsteen hiding on the backstreets of Asbury Park, there are ten suburban kids hanging out at the new shopping center on a Saturday afternoon. Beach Boys music has always belonged to them. For another group to claim this audience, they'd not only have to be as talented as the Beach Boys, but they'd have to be as human and vulnerable, as well. Greil Marcus said it best in his excellent book, *Mystery Train* (E.P. Dutton, New York). "Unlike so many Hollywood groups that come from somewhere else," he writes, "the Beach Boys have never been fakes. They celebrated the freedom of California hedonism, looked for its limits, owned up to its failures, but never lost the ability to delight in the sun and to share that delight with others. Their pleasures, as opposed to those claimed by such seventies inheritors as the Eagles and America, have always radiated affection because those pleasures are rooted in friendship..."

## The Beach Boys



BRIAN WILSON  
DENNIS WILSON AL JARDINE CARL WILSON  
MIKE LOVE

This is the fourth annual Brian Wilson & The Beach Boys edition of Phonograph Record Magazine. We began devoting an issue each year to Brian and California Music back in March, 1973. Each subsequent year reveals even more cause to celebrate the Wilson Brothers, Mike Love, Al Jardine, Bruce Johnston, Terry Melcher and Dean Torrence.

Special thanks to Ken Barnes, Mark Shipper, Warren Duffy, Jim Evans and especially Dean Torrence & Kittyhawk Graphics for their help and contribution this year.

—Martin Cerf

Kittyhawk





**WARREN ZEVON**  
Warren Zevon  
*Asylum 7E-1060*

By **BUD SCOPPA**

They're all here—various Eagles, an Everly Brother, Buckingham/Nicks, Bonnie Raitt, Carl Wilson, David Lindley, J.D. Souther, and Jackson Browne himself, acting as producer—in what at first glance seems to be a supersession of high-level L.A.-rock masters. But these famous personages have willingly lowered their own high-profile styles in the service of a little-known but intriguing musical contemporary. Like the narrator of "Carmelita," one of the album's most disturbing two-pronged songs, Zevon has been down and out "on the outskirts of town" for years, eyes wide open and pen in hand.

Browne's commercial success has afforded his old friend Zevon a

## Warren Zevon: Seedy Side of LA Today

chance to join the prominent Asylum family of artists, several of whom are stylistic next of kin. But instead of merely adding his voice and sensibility to the chorus of country-rockers and despairing romantics, Zevon has chosen to make an album that functions as a commentary on the L.A. school of reflective rock. On the opening track, "Frank and Jesse James," he explores the same terrain the Eagles covered in *Desperado*, but instead of identifying metaphorically with the outlaw archetype, as the Eagles did, he concocts a narrative as ambiguous as Dylan's "Hurricane" and "Joey," causing us to wonder whether he's singing about Old-West justice or New-West narcissism.

As the album progresses, the ironies at the heart of Zevon's songs become progressively more overt, until, by its end, the characters are contemporary "Desperados Under the Eaves," trapped in cheap L.A. motel rooms "listening to the air conditioner hum," finding solace neither in their dreams nor in the view from their windows. The only reasonable response to this desperate turn of events would seem to be to crack a grim joke...

*And if California slides into the ocean  
Like the mystics and statisticians say it will  
I predict this motel will be standing  
Until I pay my bill\**

-from  
"Desperados Under the Eaves"

...and then make a few phone calls in order to pick up a mood-elevator on credit.

This harrowing depiction of emptiness under the palms is accompanied by a lovely melody and a grand-scale choral arrangement (by Carl Wilson) in direct contrast to the lyric. This mock-romanticizing of inertia and banality runs through the album like a recurring theme, fusing the picaresque absurdity and the aching despair that characterize Zevon's world.

With Zevon, we get not just the lyin' eyes but also the unsettling details behind them: the specific bars, motels, and fast-food joints; the favored diversions and perversions; the preferred poisons and the going price for meat on the platformed hoof. If this bleak and lurid landscape produces deep sorrow in Jackson Browne and

moralistic fury in Neil Young, it twists Zevon's mild features into a tense, wild-eyed grin:

*Well, I met a girl in West Hollywood  
I ain't naming names  
She really worked me over good  
She was just like Jesse James  
She really worked me over good  
She was a credit to her gender  
She put me through some changes, Lord  
Sort of like a Waring blender\**

-from "Poor Poor Pitiful Me"

Zevon feels neither above the sordidness, like Young, nor detached from it, like Browne; he's a troubled but fully engaged participant, trading rounds "...With these phonies in this Hollywood bar/With these friends of mine in this Hollywood bar...." he may feel strung-out, impotent, and kind of queasy, but he's in the place he calls home surrounded by his friends, and he doesn't mind filling the rest of us in on the parts his friends left out.

\* © 1976 Darkroom Music, BMI



## STEVE MILLER

### Fly Like An Eagle



**FLY LIKE AN EAGLE**  
Steve Miller Band  
Capitol ST 11497

By BUD SCOPPA

Steve Miller is a bright guy and a fine musician, who can rock with the best of them. But from the very beginning of his recording career he's exhibited a deep-seated goofiness; it works for him when it's controlled (as on his early albums, bolstered by the presence of Boz Scaggs and producer Glyn Johns) but it also creates the gimmickry and self-indulgence that have marred the basic classiness of Miller's music in recent years. What's most annoying about *Fly Like an Eagle*, (Miller's first album since his pop breakthrough, *The Joker*, more than two years ago), is that it's fundamentally the strongest record he's made in years, but Stevie Guitar has perversely hidden its strengths beneath a tacky veneer made up of both ersatz-mysticism and callow cutesiness.

The album acts as a document of Miller's confusion: does he want to be seen as the pop-star he might have become if he'd followed up *The Joker* more conscientiously, or does he want to update the psychedelic-guru persona of his first album, *Children of the Future*? The latter stance, manifested by the bleeping synthesizers that begin and end the

album and by the constant musical and lyrical references to his early work, comes off as strained and downright silly, while the former tends to result in contrivance and cliché. Neither his burbling guitar nor his carefully overdubbed harmonies can save "Dance Dance Dance," a stock country-rocker that even Loggins & Messina might object to, or "Serenade," in which a compelling guitar riff gets "lost in space" as soon as Steve presents the mock-metaphysical lyric.

This kind of silliness dominates the album's first side right up to the last track, "Mercury Blues," the relaxed simplicity of which makes the music preceding it seem all the more banal. This easy-going blues, with its rolling riff and honest lead/harmony singing, produces a revelation: Steve Miller is still capable of letting his hair down, loosening up his collar, and rocking with the ebullient drive that made his early records so special. As he gradually turns the astrological reference of the title into a hot-rod daydream, he seems to have that realization himself.

Happily, Miller and his band members—bassman Lonnie Turner and drummer Gary Mallaber—maintain the casual assertiveness of "Mercury Blues" well into side two. "Take the Money and Run" and "Rock'n Me" have all the ingredients of the classic Miller Band style: nasty repeating guitar riffs overlaid with luminous harmonies, revealing once again his love for both bright pop à la Beatles/Beach Boys and for the crude energy of electric blues and Chuck Berry. Sam Cooke's "You Send Me" is sung with an easy grace informed by both wit and sentimentality, "Sweet Maree" smolders with understated urgency and the closer, "The Window," generates a credible solemnity until it becomes mired in gratuitous special effects as it exits.

When he's bad he's practically infuriating, but when he's good—as he is on half of *Fly Like an Eagle*—Steve Miller still goes to overdrive. Don't force it, Stevie Guitar—you still got it.



**I DON'T WANT TO GO HOME**  
Southside Johnny and The Asbury Jukes  
Epic PE 34180

By SAM SUTHERLAND

The ripple of pre-release hoopla surrounding the recording debut of Southside Johnny has emanated as much from this young white blues stylist's theater of operations—the same Jersey shore wasteland mythologized by peer and mentor Bruce Springsteen—as it has from Southside's music. The connection is partially reinforced by the similarities between the two singers' styles, but I suspect the line may prove more damaging than helpful.

In terms of these performances, Southside Johnny emerges as more of a musical brother to Peter Wolf and Paul Butterfield than to Springsteen. *I Don't Want To Go Home* is clearly a tribute to the seminal rhythm & blues styles that are the models for these updates, and in those terms it's hard to quarrel with the Asbury Jukes' devotion to their roots. Even on their own turf, though, the finished work is a faulted one, weakened by Miami Steve Van Zandt's often unconvincing production touches.

The Jukes may well be an exciting live band, as their early fans have suggested, but I can't really tell: No single player really stands out here, nor does the band impress as an ensemble unit, and Zandt's grafting of some rather average horn charts onto that framework does little to compensate for this anonymity.

Were Southside Johnny a truly authentic singer, these weaknesses might be offset, at least partially. But too many of his performances rely on sweat and volume, instead of heart and finesse; more serious is the uneven range of songs, which give him little to work with. Van Zandt has written three of the songs here, and they strike me as the least successful: the title song is intended as a neo-Drifters ballad, complete with keening string lines and syncopated rhythm, but the melody and lyrics fail to achieve the urgency of their prototypes. "How Come You Treat Me So Bad" starts off promisingly, laying the ground-work for a New Orleans treatise on tough women, but once guest legend Lee Dorsey completes his opening rap, moving on to the song itself, the whole exercise falls apart.

Covers of songs by Ray Charles, Steve Cropper and Solomon Burke fare slightly better, but it's Bruce Springsteen himself who provides the best song, "The Fever," already familiar to live audiences. That's an unfortunate victory, for this lone Springsteen styling can only frustrate those listeners hoping for another Asbury Park street poet. Southside Johnny simply isn't one, but he hasn't fully refined his true role of blues aficionado either. Until he can find stronger songs and a more incisive studio collaborator, Southside Johnny seems trapped between a still-evolving musical style and a misleading personal involvement with Springsteen's mythic pop presence.

## BLUE OYSTER CULT

### AGENTS OF FORTUNE

Including:  
This Ain't The Summer Of Love  
(Don't Fear) The Reaper  
E.T.I. (Extra Terrestrial Intelligence)  
Sinful Love/Debbie Denise



**AGENTS OF FORTUNE**  
Blue Oyster Cult  
Columbia

By KEN BARNES

No matter how predictable rock seems to become, it can still surprise you, and I've got to admit

to being surprised as hell by the Blue Oyster Cult. Of all the groups most likely to come up with a contemporary classic, they were pretty low on my list. They'd made one energetic but unexceptional live album and three studio LP's which sounded tortuous and cumbersome to me, as if they had a hundred riffs in their heads and felt compelled to use twelve of them in each song. Figuring in the endless posturing of their live sets and the reams of pompous inanity generated by their journalistic supporters, the total score for me was on the negative side.

But the Cult really came through with a classic on *Agents Of Fortune*, and I can't hear enough of it. It's called "Don't Fear The Reaper," it was written by guitarist Donald Roeser, and it's impossibly good. It's built around a simple, insistent guitar riff guaranteed to mesmerize all but the dullard of

dullards, with a captivating minor-chord melody plus haunting harmonies and vocal interplay the likes of which BOC have never before approached. Great drumming, lyrical lead guitar, and neat philosophical lyrics that don't get in the way but are there if you want them. The only flaw is a disconcerting, slightly atonal segment midway through which should be edited out when Columbia issues the track as a single (as I'm assured they will). It will either be a huge hit or a treasured collector's item and Cult favorite in ten years' time, but right now it's up there with the very best American rock of the 70's, records like "I Wanna Be With You" by the Raspberries, "Search & Destroy" by the Stooges, Big Star's "September Gurls," Grin's "Moontears," and both Dwight Twilley Band singles.

"Don't Fear The Reaper" is so good that the rest of the album

necessarily pales, which is as it should be, since half of it is the same old lumbering riff-rock and deserves to be forgotten. But the Cult are using vocal harmonies more, and it helps on cuts like "E.T.I." Both of Patti Smith's collaborations with drummer Albert Bouchard are intriguing, especially the uncharacteristic (for BOC) teenage lament "Debbie Denise," and there's a snappy pessimistic rocker called "This Ain't The Summer Of Love" (great title), co-written by *Back Door Man* staffer Doc Savage.

Overall *Agents Of Fortune* sounds like one of the better Blue Oyster Cult albums. But the LP (or alternatively, the forthcoming single) is a must purchase for "Don't Fear The Reaper," which even if it is (as I suspect) a once-in-a-career happenstance has won me over to the BOC cause. It's simply the best single track I've heard all year.





**SINCERELY**  
The Dwight Twilley Band  
Shelter/ABC SRL 52001

By MARTIN CERF

Certainly Eric Carmen, Steely Dan, The Beach Boys and Todd Rundgren, among others, have contributed to the emancipation of the pop LP, aesthetically and commercially. Success in one area need not preclude the other anymore. When Dennis Elsas of WNEW-FM/New York freely admits to Raspberries fandom (he even contributed liners to the current *Best Of The Raspberries* LP), we can safely conclude prejudice against pop is a thing of the past, or, if not, soon will be.

This fact will prove most significant for The Dwight Twilley Band, whose only previous success was a spectacular debut single last summer. You'll recall, of course, those unmercifully repetitious, searing hooks and inspired lyrics: "You ain't, you ain't, you ain't got no love-a." It was a conspicuous

start for an act that literally walked off a Tulsa, Oklahoma street into one of Leon Russell's several recording studios, with demo tape in one hand, guitar in the other.

The Dwight Twilleys unprecedented rise from obscurity was matched only by the act's (apparent) instant return to from whence they came.

We didn't hear much after that first hit, except for an even more astounding 45 follow-up, "You Were So Warm." It wasn't a follow-up or sequel in the true sense,

because the passionate, throaty ballad, replete with Spectator-sound-surround and tambourine-a-la-Bono was the farthest thing from the rough and raucous "I'm On Fire." That's when it initially became clear to me: The Dwight Twilley Band would be favorites for a long time to come.

The Twilleys' post-'Fire' career has not been without its share of technical difficulties. If a bomb

follow-up was not cause enough for concern, the subsequent announcement that Leon Russell wanted out as both co-owner and principle artist asset of Shelter Records, was. After a year of transition, the new Shelter Records is about to make itself known, with the long-awaited, often recorded



first Dwight Twilley Band LP christening the new Shelter/ABC line. (ABC is the fourth distributor/manufacturer for Shelter. In order, it's been Blue Thumb, Capitol, and most recently, MCA.)

"Sincerely," the title track (originally the flip of "You Were So Warm"), like much of the album's material, combines *Revolver*-period Beatles production technique (reverse tape, etc.), with pre-flower-power punk protest lyric (e.g. Davies' "I'm Not Like Everybody Else," the Standells' "Try It," the Stones' "Play With Fire"). If there is such a thing these days as "punk music" (Ramones?), it will

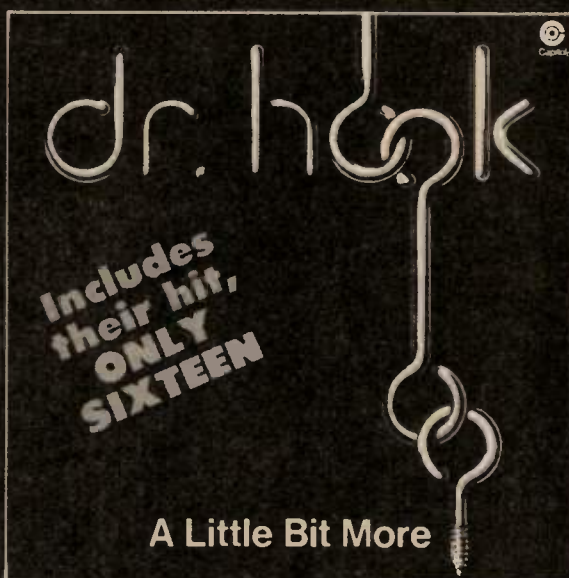
be the Twilleys (perhaps with Nils Lofgren) who eventually define the style for the masses, with tracks such as the title cut, "Just Like The Sun" (latter day Del Shannon) and, especially, "Could Be Love" (my current favorite from the set).

The LP tracks incredibly well, no filler, and even their dedication to the tube, "TV," which is served up in Gene Vincent/Elvis posture, manages to avoid "Uncle Tom Oldie" status.

*Sincerely*, and I don't mean this lightly, is fresh and honestly exciting, and, most importantly, *listenable*. Unlike the Iggy's and MC5's of the past or today's Runaways or Ramones, it isn't necessary to "imagine" or "visualize" what the Twilleys are doing musically. It's not merely implied. In the studio, Dwight and partner Phil Seymour are in their natural element, the result of which is always classy, yet fun—and no one need apologize or interpret this band's greatness. They have the technical smarts of Rundgren and something more, unusual to great ideas. If you've ever wondered just how diverse—compositionally and musically—a four-piece pop unit can be (in case you're too young or have forgotten the early-middle period Beatles), you must make it your business to get this record real soon. The imagery is incredible. There are ballads, rockers, rhythm, melody and vocal brilliance for days, and more quality action lyric than even Screen Gems would know what to do with.

# DR. HOOK

asks, how long does it take to get from the  
"JUNGLE TO THE ZOO"?



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Ron Haffkine

A Little Bit More



They answer that and  
**A LITTLE BIT MORE**

in their new album on  
Capitol Records and Tapes.



# SOUL & JAZZ



**Isley's Second Generation**

**RECORD** **MAGAZINE** **3**  
June '76 / Vol. 3



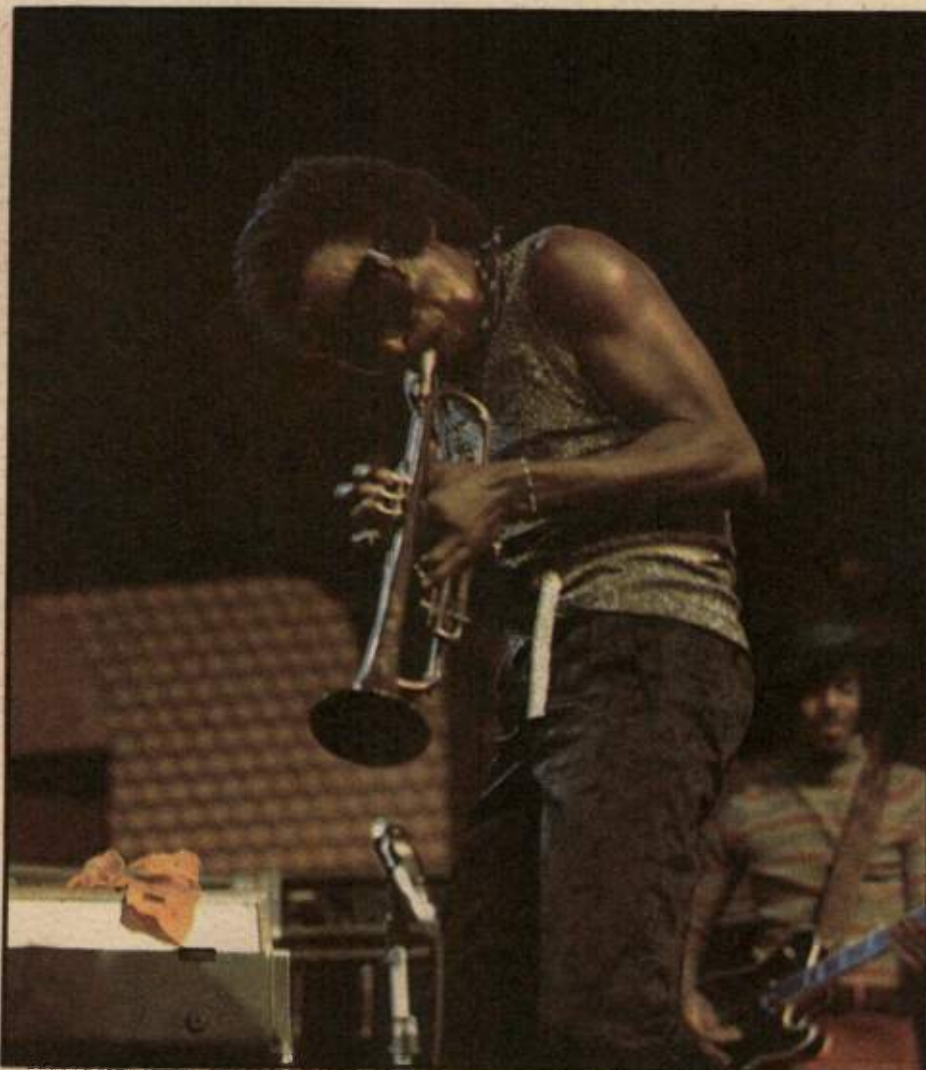
# Miles Davis: Depression As An Art Form

## Vinyl Therapy by Lester Bangs

I have been wrestling with this Miles Davis thing for what has amounted to years now, and even though I still haven't gotten it figured out, perhaps an expository dissection of my confusion can be instructive to you, if *you* care. Certainly Miles has been leading quite a few of us along by the nose, tying our tympanics and our standards up in knots (especially reviewers) as we try to figure out whether the relative no-impact of all this crap boils down to us or him. Here, then, is the problem, with a roster of alternative solutions (take your pick, if you pick):

Ever since *Jack Johnson*, which came out in 1971 and was his last incontrovertibly masterful album, Miles has become something whose antithesis he had been for the previous 20-odd years of his career: erratic. Critics particularly had trouble deciding whether albums like *Miles Davis in Concert* were difficult, dense masterworks or plain old dogshit: it wasn't even as simple as a figure traditionally deemed above criticism, but rather that nobody wants to be caught sitting on yesterday's curb whacking to old blowing-sessions when Miles is sculpting new thruways and monorails. Briefly, he laid on us such bones of great contention (although not very many people wanted to say so in public) as *Miles at Fillmore*, *On the Corner*, *Big Fun* and *Get Up With It*.

Now. For anybody who has been following Miles' career farther back than *Bitches Brew* there were at least parts of each of these that were a bit difficult to swallow. At least if your listener's integrity extended to yourself (screw the public; anybody that buys Stanley Clarke albums deserves whatever they get). *Miles at Fillmore*, way back in '70-'71, was the first one I remember being a bit thrown by: it was simply obvious that he was extending the *In a Silent Way/Bitches Brew* approach (which Joe Zawinul has never gotten nearly enough credit for, and may have been almost wholesale ripped-off when you get right down to it, if not for the fact that he has been plowing his own avant-MOR row of pap with Weather Report), no, rather he was *reiterating* the leaps of those albums in a way that not only added nothing, but was literally not up to Miles' traditionally Mandarin-impeccable standards. I wrote it off as an off note unaccountably put on record, but then he followed the brilliance of *Jack Johnson* and the relative comeback of *Live-Evil* with *On the Corner*, which still reigns supreme



as the absolute worst album this man ever put out. An experiment in percussion and electronics, what little actual trumpet you could pluck out of the buzz-wizz and chockablocka was so distorted as to be almost beyond recognition. And this from the man who made a good deal of his rep on the devastating, transcendent depths of pure human emotion he could find in his soul and axe.

It seemed almost to amount to a form of suicide, or at least an artistically perverse act of the highest order. There were, of course, the Faithful who declared four-square like Jann Wenner of John & Yoko's *Wedding Album* that Miles Knows What He's Doing Even If I Don't—Ralph J. Gleason, a man whose penchant for glib preachments and namedropping could be eternally excused by his boundless passion for musical art, devoted a lead tandem review in *Rolling Stone* to *On the Corner* and the then-current Santana album. They were, he said, a new genre of "street music" with heavy Third World (or at least American Ethno-Cultural Minority Group) ramification, directed to audience of same, with the review's obvious though unstated implication being that if we the (presumably) white

jass-buffs couldn't get with it, maybe it was only meant for the bros.

I have in my time heard similar claims made, in more stridently specific terms, for mediocre-to-ghastly albums by people like Archie Shepp, Joseph Jarman & the Art Ensemble of Chicago, and Sun Ra, and they were every bit as much a platter of horseshit in those instances as with Miles. Gleason once told me that Shepp was working in an area where it was very difficult indeed to tell "good" playing from "bad," and that therefore *Three For a Quarter*, *One For a Dime* was one of those then-proliferating albums which were simply immune to critical arbitration. I mean, if "free" playings tenets *are* adhered to to the letter, then we really have no business telling Archie Shepp, for instance, that he has been exploiting the ethnocentricity and oppression-bred anger of his own people for about half a decade now, do we? Who are we, a bunch of white boys who have never felt Mr. Charlie's boot, to say that *Three For a Quarter* is nothing more nor less than a crappy album of jackoff squacksquawk tenor blowing slung out by an artist who doesn't seem to have very much respect for his

audience?

No, we must admit that we, or our forefathers, or *somebody*, stands guilty of *four hundred years* of YOU KNOW WHAT. But I will also go on record as saying that I have been listening to all kinds of jazz, including "free" rambles than most sane people (I used to listen to *Ascension* and Albert Ayler's *Spiritual Unity* while eating breakfast), and even though I don't know the first thing about the technical aspects of music I can tell good jazz, "free" or otherwise, from bad, and Archie Shepp has put out a whole lot of albums that are either gibberish (*Three For a Quarter*) or blaxploitation bullshit (*Attica Blues*). Ask just about any musician and he'll tell you that with certain very minor exceptions, isolated tracks and such, Pharoah Sanders has been totally uninspired and unforgiveably gimmicky since Trane died; and I had the laff riot of seeing Sun Ra live in Berkeley a few years back, the old wack-dome himself along with full troupe of dancers, percussionists etc., two sax players chasing each other thru the audience staging a mock cockfight with their horns SWUWWKASWAANKASQUOON-KRRRRRRONKARRGGGHHHH etc., much to the psychedelic delight naturally of the 99.999% white audience.

The connection between all this and Miles' *oeuvre* is a connection, precisely. Even though he still doesn't move as many units as the prodigal Stanley Clarke or blear-obs McLaughlin, it's safe to assume that in 1976 at least a couple of double-disc meistersplats of murk-mung elektro-Miles are as essential a component of the coke-spoon swinger's pad as the proper brand of aromatic candles. So Miles is not just background music but an essential part of the conspicuous consumption mores of a certain current subculture, and perhaps should not be criticized as music at all, but rather in accordance with their rise or fall on the barometer of college student and pimp-chic Hip. So maybe Tom Wolfe should start reviewing his records instead of me.

On the other hand, Miles has meant a lot to me ever since I first heard *Birth of the Cool* when I was too young to understand it, and while I still think I can tell good Miles from bad (the latter being something never experienced on wax, at least, till this decade), I'm still not ready to write him off as so many others have done whether they pay lip service or not. This in spite of the fact that the one time I

(Con'd on page 40)



## Two Generations Of Innovation

By Joe McEwen

# Isley Brothers

A short hop across the George Washington Bridge, Teaneck, New Jersey is a crowded suburban community, heavily dominated by upwardly mobile black families. In the past

decade, the black population of Teaneck has escalated sharply as blacks, like their white predecessors, have sought to escape the

urban sprawl and tensions of Queens and Manhattan. The city is also home to a number of black entertainers, but by far its most prominent citizens are the Isley Brothers, who honored the town by using its name for their

record company logo.

Ernie Isley lives with his mother in a sleepy ranch house, tucked off a winding Teaneck back road. The white, clapboard structure is also home to brother-in-law Chris Jasper and the youngest Isley, Marvin. The three, none of whom is over 24, make up the





# The Isleys (Cont'd from page 37)

youngest Isley, Marvin. The three, none of whom is over 24, make up the younger half of the Isley group. The trio joined their celebrated older brothers, Ronald, Rudolph and Kelly in 1969 and it's not a coincidence that the transfusion of fresh, young talent paralleled the emergence of the Isley Brothers as a vital force in black music.

In the back of their house, only a few feet away from their expansive swimming pool, Ernie, Chris and Marvin sit around a table, fiddling with some phones they've been hooking up on the patio. A question about "Shout," the Isley's first hit in 1958 and a record that heralded the coming of harsh, gospel-inflected soul music, brings a smirk from Chris and smiles from Marvin and Ernie.

"Our music is about so much more now," Ernie offers, "We've got a lot more to say musically and lyrically. I-IV-V chord changes and three guys jumping up and down, screaming and shouting "wooo" just isn't where we're at." "That's right," Chris solemnly intones, "We want our music to expand people's consciousness and take them onto a different musical plane." While songs like "Live It Up" and "That Lady" may not be the sober, consciousness raising vehicles Chris Jasper asserts, clearly the Isley Brothers are saying something that hits home with their audience. With the sales of their last three albums totaling almost seven million, the Isley Brothers rival Earth, Wind and Fire as black music's most commercially successful self-contained unit.

In contrast to the inability of rock 'n' rollers to age gracefully, longevity has always been a characteristic of popular black music. A look at the soul charts at any given time indicates the continuing commercial health of Esther Phillips, Bobby Bland, the Dells, Four Tops and others who have been successfully recording for 15 years or more. Among these venerable artists are the Isley Brothers, who have been a unit for almost 20 years, since their first doowop recording in 1957. But while those who maintain a continuing audience usually do so without altering their approach, the Isley Brothers have been engaged in a process of continual evolution, involving themselves in most of the major stylistic changes in popular black music. In the '70s, they have been at its forefront.

Despite their doo-wop dablings, the Isley Brothers came of age with the gospel frenzy of "Shout" and "Twist and Shout." The Brothers established a reputation as one of the wildest stage acts on the soul circuit, climaxing frenetic shows by crawling on the floor, climbing on pianos, disrobing and anything else to which the spirit of "Shout" moved them. It was also during this period that the Isley

## The early days: Ronald, Rudolph and Kelly Isley paying the doo-wop dues



Brothers picked up a young guitar player from Seattle named Jimi Hendrix, who only added to the group's unrestrained live and studio presence. Hendrix left in 1965 and the Isleys, after a period of commercial slack, capped their excessive energy and signed with Berry Gordy's Motown label.

Motown was at its assembly line peak when the trio joined, but despite the regimentation, their enthusiasm and unfettered vocals gave them a raunchy fervor that stood out from the rest of Gordy's stable. Though the group experienced success with "This Old Heart of Mine" and "I Guess I'll Always Love You," the Brothers never really fit into the scheme of things. Stifled by Detroit formula, the Isley Brothers left Motown in 1968.

Previously, the group had experimented unsuccessfully with its own label and attempts at self-production. When they left Motown, the Isleys reformed T-Neck Records and signed a distribution deal with Buddah; with their initial release, "It's Your Thing," the Isleys had their first gold record. Unfortunately the stabbing, late '60s funk bass line of that hit straight-jacketed the group's music for almost two years as the group churned out endless sound alikes, including "I Know Who You've

Been Socking It To" and "Black Berries."

The release of *Givin' It Back* in 1971 was a radical departure from the funk of the previous years. As Marvin explains, "Everyone was looking for something new and wondering where it was going to come from. But nobody ever thought the Isley Brothers would be the ones to pull it off." The title referred to the contents; pop/rock covers (i.e. "Ohio" and "Love The One You're With"). The group and its band, which now included Chris, Marvin and Ernie, were presented as a self-contained unit. Though the album wasn't a total artistic success, it was an ambitious move and one that planted the seeds for the group's current sound.

The follow-up, *Brother, Brother, Brother* (and subsequently, a widely ignored live album), put more emphasis on establishing an identifiable repertoire of mostly original material. A reworking of the jagged "It's Your Thing" bass figure, the addition of conga percussion, Ernie's 12 string acoustic and stronger harmonies, created an attractive and accessible sound highlighted by "Work To Do" and "Pop That Thing." The live album, and a version of "Machine Gun/Ohio," also showcased the Hendrix-influenced guitar of Ernie,

who has become a prominent figure in the Isley Brothers sound of the '70s. The constant comparison to Hendrix amuses him. "Everybody always mentions how much I try to sound like Hendrix or how I was influenced by him. But really I picked up the guitar for one reason, to play Jose Feliciano's 'Light My Fire.' In fact for a long time, that's all I could play."

In 1973, the Isleys transferred T-Neck's distribution rights to Columbia, which has led to a marked increase in their record sales as well as to a continuing refinement of the "Work To Do" style and several tentative moves into new musical arenas. The 45 release of "That Lady" in '73 proved to be the ultimate distillation of the *Brother, Brother, Brother* sound. Smartly uptempo, with a bouncy bass line, Ernie's sinewy guitar soloing and an irresistible melody, the song was an adaption of their own, early '60s, rhumba-flavored original. On the *3 Plus 3* album, the song is extended to six minutes, most of them a vehicle for Ernie's guitar pyrotechnics, displayed over an attractive, chopping rhythm track.

While the rest of *3 Plus 3* turned out to be a somewhat disappointing adjunct to the delicious "That Lady," *Live It Up* was one of 1974's most stimulating releases. An expanded lyric conception, wrapped in engaging melodies, set the disc off from its predecessors and the album remains a successful hybridization of the group's earlier styles and neo-Stevie Wonder black music.

Since *Live It Up*, the Isley Brothers have released two albums, last year's *The Heat Is On* (their first Number One LP) and the current *Harvest For The World*. While neither has expanded on the promise of *Live It Up*, both albums are satisfying, if predictable, reworkings of their already well-defined sound. The question is where do they go from here.

Marvin, whose baby features and bulky frame most nearly resembles that of his older brother Kelly, attempts to answer. "A lot of artists are in the business to get out. But we're about music, that's what's important to us. We're building a studio near Westchester in New York and in two years or so we hope to begin working with other artists." Ernie interjects, "Every album is different for us and we approach each without a thought to what we've done before. If, for example, we decided to use horns again, they wouldn't be used in the way they were on, say, "It's Your Thing." He continues, "Just because we have a platinum album, that's no reason to retire or become satisfied. Obviously money isn't a motivating factor. We're artists and we use music to express ourselves. With all of us putting in our two cents, whatever we do will be creative. The Isley Brothers will never stand still."





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Photo by Allan Tannenbaum



Miles:

(Cont'd. from pg. 36)

finally got a chance to see him live, in 1973, he was such an asshole that his cooking (and, of course, unidentified) backup band put him to shame, while the Titan himself settled for stalking sullenly around the stage, pausing his pre-mature curmudgeon's sulk every few minutes to lift his horn and blow three to six random careless and totally irrelevant notes, or find himself wandering behind an electric organ on which he randomly essayed two-finger off-notes more suitable to in-store demonstration than what was going on around him. The highlight of the concert was when some smart-aleck in the audience threw a frisbee, it hit him in his black badass dog-mean S&M choker, which fell off. His entire performance, from music to personal bearing, was a giant screw-you to everybody present (including his fellow musicians?) and I hated his guts. If you wanted to rationalize this excess academically you could see it as the logical extension of his legendary proclivity for turning his back on his audiences, except that when he *used* to do that he was playing music that could snap your soul in two at the same time, besides which it's a matter of simple convenience (after all, why should we extend *him* any courtesy?) to reject all such notions which can only encourage more infantilism, and merely write the guy off as an asshole. And quite probably a burnt-out one at that.

But here I sit, three years later, and this man and his music refuse to ease their stranglehold on my tastes, more, my emotions. I am *obsessed* with Miles Davis; I am

obsessed with him because he once released *Sketches of Spain*, which contains an *adagio* passage in Rodrigo's "Concierto de Aranjuez" which may hold more distilled sorrow than any other single solo by anyone I have ever heard; I am obsessed with him because *Kind of Blue* like *Birth of the Cool* a decade previous defined an era and produced some of the most beautiful, spacious, expansively inspired music it was to know; I'm obsessed because *In a Silent Way* came close to changing my life, reinstalling a respect for the truly spiritual aspects of music when I was otherwise intent on wallowing in grits and metal; I'm obsessed, simply, because he is Miles, one of the greatest musicians who ever lived, and when a giant gets cancer of the soul you have to weep or at least ask for a medical inquiry.

Which is why I have been studying Miles' work, from all eras, for the past year or so, trying to figure out where (if?) he went wrong. Think about the fact that this guy has been making "jazz" records *since the late forties*, and that many of them, way more than any single musician's share, have become (to borrow the title of one) milestones. The man has defined at least three eras in American music—can Dylan say the same? Never mind that when *In a Silent Way* came out it had the same effect as Charlie Parker's naissance and influence on his followers—i.e., ruined a whole generation of musicians who were so swept by its brilliant departure that they could nought but slavishly imitate so every goddam album you heard dribbled the same watered-down-kitsch-copy of Miles' electric cathedral—it remains that now, seven

years later, *In a Silent Way* not only has not dated but stands with *Sketches of Spain* and a few other Miles albums as one of the sonic-monuments of our time. And that's neither hype nor hyperbole.

But since then, the years, private problems, celebrityhood, hipper-than-thou—*something, whatever*, taken its toll. *On the Corner* was garbage. So was, with the possible exception of one bit I have been told about but unable to find in its four unbanded 30-minute sides, *Miles Davis in Concert. Big Fun* and *Get Up With It* were largely leftovers, with expectably erratic results. The former's "Go Ahead John" was a cooker, but too much of the rest was something never previously expected of Miles: simple ideas repeated for whole sides, up to a half hour each, in an electronicized repetitiveness and distortion-for-its-own-sake that may have been intended as hypnotic but ended up merely static. Wallpaper bizarre. What was perhaps even more disturbing was that once you got past the predictability and disappointment and analyzed the actual content of the music, it took Miles past his traditional (and traditionally heart-wrenching) penchant for sustained moods of deep sadness into a new area redolent more of a by turns muzzy and metallic unhappiness. He should have called one of these albums *Kind of Grim*. And mere unhappiness, elaborated at whatever electro-technocratic prolixity, is not nearly the same as anguish. Much of Miles' finest music, from *Blue Moods* to *Porgy & Bess* "Prayer" to *Sketches to My Funny Valentine*, has been about inner pain translated into a deep mourning poetry so intense and distilled

(Cont'd. on pg. 42)

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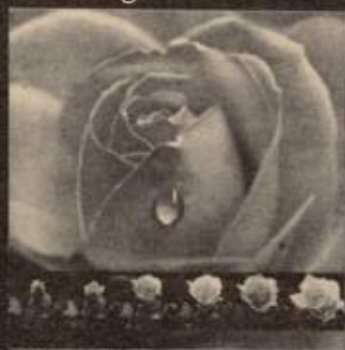
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Miles: (Cont'd. from pg. 40)

that there have been times when I (and others have reported similar reactions) have been almost literally unable to take it. I have always been offended when people will ask you to take off any jazz record because they find it "depressing," but secretly I always knew what they meant. Because there were times when I found Miles' anguish not purgative but depressing, when I had to yank *Jack Johnson* out of the 8-track deck because I could not drive to the laundromat with such a weight in my heart; but I also knew the reason why I (and, if I may be so presumptuous, the nebulous anti-jazz people I just mentioned) was depressed: *because at that moment there was something wrong with me*, of a severity that could reach by degrees from my consciousness to my heart, to my soul; because I was sweeping some deep latent anguish under the emotional carpet, or not confronting myself on some primal level—and *Miles cut through to that level*. His music was that powerful: it exposed me to myself, to my own falsity, to my own cowardice in the face of dread or staved-off pain. Because make no mistake, Miles understands pain—and he will pry it out of your soul's very core when he hits his supreme note and you happen, coincidentally, to be a bit of an open emotional wound at that moment yourself. It is this gift for open-heart surgery that makes him the supreme artist that he is.

So, obviously, I am damned if I am going to shrug him off at this point. I am going to tear these records apart and find out what the source of the cancer running through them is, praying for cure. There are various theories being bantered about the grapevine concerning Miles' present state, many of them having to do with his personal problems (health, interpersonal relationships, etc.), and they are undoubtedly a major contributing factor in his decline, but to write a fade of this magnitude off to gossip fodder would be cheap, and since he hasn't incorporated his personal problems into his hype/legend like certain other artists, they remain nobody else's business. It's too easy to concoct chemical or sexual demonologies. What emerges from *Big Fun* and *Get Up With It* is a sense of depression so deep and unconsolable as to be cold as the floor of a morgue. When you think of the cokespoon set that buys these albums because it's *Miles*, man, because of some stupid image, it's impossible to imagine them actually sitting there and *listening* to the entire half hour of "He Loved Him Madly," *Get Up's* opener and one of the most truly bereaved pieces of music ever put on record. It didn't sound like Duke Ellington, to whom it was ostensibly dedicated, at all; but it sure did sound like death. Like a grief beyond all wails, darkness,

darkness and loneliness that became positively clammy, like a lifetime prison sentence in a diving bell in the blackest depths on the bottom of the ocean. How many people could even *take* music like that, especially at such length?

Of course, the rest of the album was the usual hodge-podge, tossing together unreconstituted dreck, an old out-take with the "superstar" band he led in the early '70s, one fine side-long Spanish tinged slipstream, and one terse, fiendishly humorous exercise juxtaposing standard funky blues harp with some of Miles' most biting trumpet work heard in ages. What it all added up to was a good bit more than the standard eccentric-avantgarde artist schtick ("I'm Miles, I can put out anything.")—clearly, this music was indicating that something was wrong with the progenitor, that he was not indulging himself or tapped out or merely confused. That he was sick of soul.

Which of course, providing you believe it, still doesn't solve the problem: IS THIS GOOD MUSIC OR NOT? And, ARE NOT SOME COURAGEOUS ACTS BETTER LEFT IN PRIVATE?

So, after disposing of the new one, *Agharta*—it's recorded live in Japan, Miles lets his sidemen solo at respectable but probably disproportionate length, and his own outings are what we have come to expect for one brief moment of open-hearted breath-caught-in-the-throat Old Miles in the middle of "Theme From Jack Johnson," which incidentally sounds very little like its namesake if that matters—I am going to further complicate the Miles conundrum by answering all the questions raised above with some more:

1. *Is this music good or bad?*
2. *If it's bad, does Miles know it?*
3. *If it's bad and he knows it, is he*
  - [a] *just telling his audience to get screwed;*
  - [b] *fulfilling contractual obligations;*
  - [c] *groping for something he is at present incapable of fulfilling;*
  - [d] *putting out product because like Dylan, John Lennon etc., he simply has nothing better to do and can't admit he's washed up?*
4. *If this music is good, does that mean that Miles is trying to tell us something we may not want to know of [of latent anguish theory]?*
5. *If this music is good, is it also good for us?*
6. *If it's good and the effect of that goodness is to depress us, should we keep listening?*
7. *If it's bad, are reviews like this not the worst possible*

*medicine for Miles' afflictions? Should we tell him he's jiving himself, and effect a boycott until he relocates himself?*

8. *If it's bad, why am I so much more fascinated with Miles in a state of decay than I was when he was making one fine, solid, mainstream album after another?*

I won't pretend to have the answers to any of those questions, but I will say this: the very fact that they had to be posed makes this music more interesting and provocative than nine-tenths of everything else being released today. For Milesophiles, I'd suggest that you go back to two early albums for the precedents to his current dilemma: to *Miles in the Sky* for a spacious preview of the spaciness (a crucial distinction, sometimes) that made *Bitches Brew* almost too airy and some of its followers almost invisible; and to an album that has been called at various times *Jazz Track*, *Frenzy* and *Elevator to the Scaffold*. That was the soundtrack to a French thriller that Miles laid down with some European nobodies way back in 1958, it was completely different than anything else he was doing at the time, and in its deep-night sense of terminally disconsolate moodiness has remained a classic over the years that prophesied the artist's recent psychic plunge. It was recently reissued on Columbia Special Products.

As for all this new Miles music, I sit here at the end of *Agharta* with a rubbery weight at the bottom of my heart which the former dredged up. I'm no masochist, and nobody could ever call Miles maudlin, but I'm not sorry. I have finally learned to think of Miles' most recent music and what he has done to his art as taking a jewel, a perfectly faceted diamond as big as the earth shining brighter than ten thousand suns, suppose you took that jewel and with implacable, superhuman, malevolent hands *crushed* it in on itself, compressed by a force beyond comprehension until it was half its original size, black all over and a cold and unbreakable lump. I think of that diamond as the emotional capacities of Miles' music, as Miles' heart; my theory re the musical personality of Miles Davis is that he has committed upon himself, his heart, just exactly what was done to that diamond, for reasons having to do with great, perhaps unbearable suffering. In Patti Smith's words, his music now to me is "a branch of cold flame," and I think that, crushed as that heart is, the soul beyond it has not been and cannot ever be destroyed. Like Graham Greene's "burnt out case" (by which I don't mean drugs), perhaps that is all that is left. But in a curious way that almost glows uniquely brighter in its own dark coldness; and that, that which is all that is left, is merely the universe.

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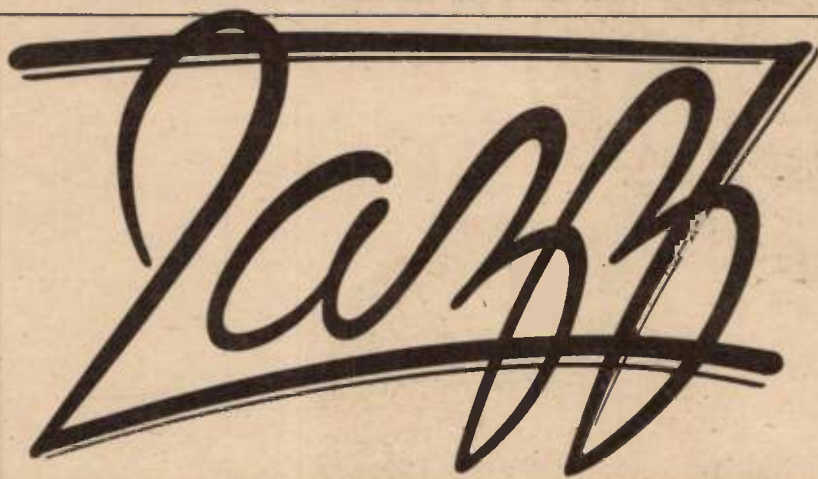


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## IN THE SEVENTIES



By LITA ELISCU

Billie. Lester. Bird. Trane. A deluge of re-issues is raining down and the sounds are pouring out of the speakers now. Sounds which have shaped and are still shaping our lives, both the musical and legend-loving sides. Sounds so pure, so uplifting and also gutter-poor, it is hard to believe a whole nation isn't sitting around and listening, learning.

But we are not, and it is of course our own fault, all of us, and it is partly *our* fault—we who write about jazz, as this music is popularly known. Leafing through books, essays and liner notes, it is like reading an alchemy text designed to exclude the uninitiated. Blah-blah and mumbo-jumbo everywhere, the rumblings of some Egyptian high-priesthood busy telling the people why the religion is so good and yet insisting that comprehension is beyond their ability.

Billie, Lester, Bird and Trane. I was very young when I first heard of them, understood the power of their game. Learned to fit some of the pieces together, Bix Beiderbecke to Fletcher Henderson and Goodman and Mingus and Miles and McLaughlin; but the words written about all of this have never been of much help to me, and I suspect not much help to anyone else either. Here is a Fletcher Henderson re-issue, and as the sides play, years pass, and one can hear the music go through the non-subtle changes brought about by the new musicians now in the band; hear pleasant-enough dance tunes suddenly acquire tone and depth and emotion and *swing* through the force of a Chu Berry sax, a Roy Eldridge trumpet solo. Hear Coleman Hawkins fade out, replaced by this something different, re-invented. And the liner notes...say nothing about this. Not because the writer does not know or care, really. Rather, it is because it is too obvious for him: his attention is turned to the alleged suffering of black musicians forced to borrow whole choruses from white composers writing syrupy (atonic, natch) songs for the

white consumption. Not a bad point, but robbed of half its value because given so little foundation.

And reading the books which make erudite study of the beats used and from whence they cometh, and the exact moment African rhythms were supplanted by white intellect—as though that ever happened! As though there was a matter of intellect, white or black, to be considered! As I'm somewhat of a chicken, there are no specific references being given here, but none of this is made up.

Neither is this story. One night, I was walking the dog along Third Avenue, passing shops and cafes and apartment houses. It was cold out, not especially nice. In front of me, a couple swung out of a building. They were not attractive, as such things go. He spoke in a nasal, ugly accent, they both had pimples, were kind of greasy-faced and stringy-haired and heavy. They looked at each other, giggling, holding hands, and suddenly the girl broke into song, a clear alto, phrasing and scatting, and the boy answered back, and there it was: Ray Charles and Betty Carter right in front of me! Billie and Lester! They went on their way, singing to and for each other, holding hands, smiling and pleased. I stood there, blinking. It really isn't any more difficult to understand music than just that: as people singing for and to each other, even if it is a man on a horn and whomever he is singing to seem to be invisible. It could be you. There really is not much more to it, except that sometimes, a lot of people sing at the same time.

None of the above means I'm going to recognize the next Real Thing, necessarily, when I hear him or her or it. Just as bad, there's no secret plan intended, some outline for understanding jazz. It is not a matter of pure emotion, intellect or pure anything else; like any human endeavor, the music is a mixture and we each must find our way through it. The usual advice (well, it *must* be the usual) still holds: listen to the best. Keep in mind that the people are telling stories the best way they know how, even the only way. Before there was rock and roll chic, there was this.

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(Dedicated to Max Gordon)



HORIZON SERIES  
Various Artists  
A&M/Horizon

By COLMAN ANDREWS

Jazz used to come in "records". Now, like the rest of popular music, it comes in "releases"—the new Blue Note release (where is it?), the new CTI release, the first Warners' jazz release in years, etc....And the new, second, Horizon release.

Horizon is A&M's jazz label, and it made a respectable if not exactly

earth-shattering debut about six months ago with LPs by Jim Hall, Dave Liebman, Sonny Fortune, Dave Brubeck and Paul Desmond, and the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis big band. The range of music was broad; the new release, five albums by the Jones/Lewis aggregation, The Revolutionary Ensemble, Ira Sullivan, Dave Leibman with Richard Beirach, and Paul Desmond, spans an even greater breadth of musical styles.

*Ira Sullivan* (Horizon 6, A&M SP-706) is an engaging, eclectic album featuring a highly respected, little-known musician originally from Chicago, who plays both trumpet and reeds with confident proficiency. (This is a near impossibility; Benny Carter is the only other musician I can think of off hand who brings it off.) Sullivan's style is hard to pin down, but his playing always has a fresh, alert quality to it that is most appealing.

*New Life* (Dedicated to Max Gordon) (Horizon 7, A&M SP-707) by the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis band is straightforward, intelligent stuff, but I don't find it particularly stirring. Mel Lewis is one of the best big-band drummers alive, and there are fine solos by Frank Foster, Roland Hanna, Pepper Adams, Jerry Dodgion, and Jones himself—but this is one of those albums where it sounds like all the musicians were playing sitting down.

*The People's Republic* by The Revolutionary Ensemble (Horizon

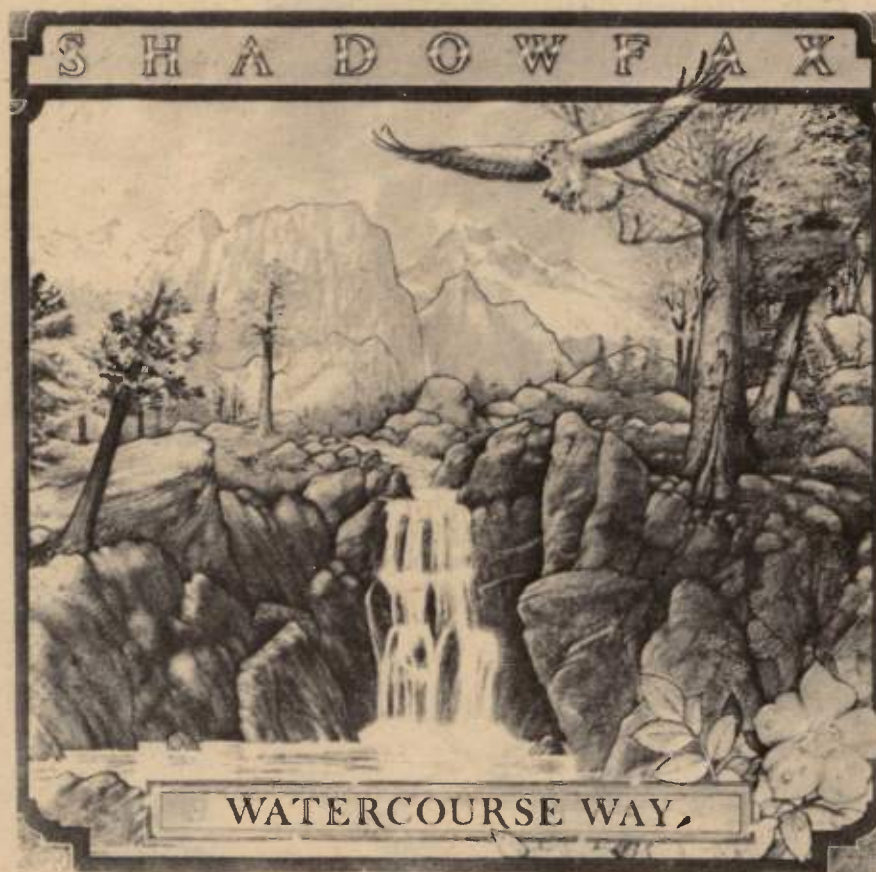
8, A&M SP-708) is structure free improvisation, featuring a topnotch group of players—Leroy Jenkins (who I sometimes think is the only truly "modern" jazz violinist in the world), bassist Sirone, and percussionist Jerome Cooper. It's hardly an easy album to listen to, but there's an edge of urgency to it that is positively riveting, and the jaggedly logical, magnetic solos Jenkins plays on "New York" and "Chinese Rock" are truly exciting. I'm less impressed by the title track, which is largely a series of conflicting vocal parts over a texture of percussive effects; this is the kind of music that has a great deal more validity to those who create it than it can ever have to those who are supposed to listen to it.

*Forgotten Fantasies* by David Liebman and Richard Beirach (Horizon 9, A&M SP-709) is the kind of album you'd expect to find on ECM—acoustic reed and piano duos with all the purity and all the flash of a beige-and-faded-green Oriental nature painting. Both men play well, but I'm afraid I have a hard time telling (or wanting to tell) Liebman apart from a dozen or so other young reedmen with similar musical sensibilities.

*The Paul Desmond Quartet Live* (Horizon 10, A&M SP-850) is a double-record set, and like most double-record sets of jazz or rock music, it would have been much more impressive as a single LP. Recorded live in Toronto, the material is mostly familiar—Brazil-

ian classics "Manha de Carnival" and "Wave", three ballad standards, Ellington's "Things Ain't What They Used To Be", Desmond's own "Take Five", etc.—and, though it's all high quality stuff, four or five tracks ("Things", "Take Five", etc.) would have made a far stronger statement. Desmond sounds wonderful (his inversion of the melody on the second chorus of the Ellington track is almost worth the price of the LP itself), cool and smooth as alabaster. Bassist Don Thompson has a light, whimsical touch (his solo of "Take Five" is particularly nice), and guitarist Ed Bickert is everywhere, doing everything, with superb good taste.

The Horizon LPs, in general, are intelligently planned and neatly executed. I have reservations (noted above) about some of the music presented, but Horizon's sincerity and dedication to good jazz—commercial and otherwise—cannot be faulted. Packaging is admirable, by the way; there's plenty of photographic evidence of the musicians' existence in all cases, intelligent liner notes in most cases, and detailed personnel listings throughout. There are even, in some cases, pages of music reproduced and stereo mix diagrams indicated. Only the discographies are spotty. Desmond's solo LPs on A&M are listed, for example, but no mention is made of the albums he has cut under his own name for Fantasy, RCA, CTI, and Warners.



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