AFTER A FASHION: STEPPING WAY OUT WITH JOE JACKSON

RECORD

PAGE 16

JULY 1984
VOL.3 NO.9
$1.50
U.K.80p.

GO-GO'S
READY FOR SOME ACTION

MARVIN GAYE
AN ARTIST'S LEGACY

DAVID GILMOUR
SOLO JITTERS

0 34141 07
1-0236

Newport

Alive with pleasure!

After all,
if smoking isn't a pleasure,
why bother?

Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.

Kings: 17 mg. "tar", 1.1 mg. nicotine; 100's: 20 mg. "tar", 1.4 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette, FTC Report March 1984.

HOT STUFF!

We're talking hot, with some searing new licks from primo guitarist, **Pat Travers** and his awesome new album, "Hot Shot." Produced by Barry Mraz and Pat Travers.

The Dice roll us a winner with rock 'n' roll the way it should be, pure rockin' energy on their new album, produced by Chris Kimsey.

And some hotter stuff than ever comes with hard-rocking ***Heavy Pettin'*** and their debut lp, "Lettin' Loose," produced by Queen's Brian May and Mack.

mercury

Polydor

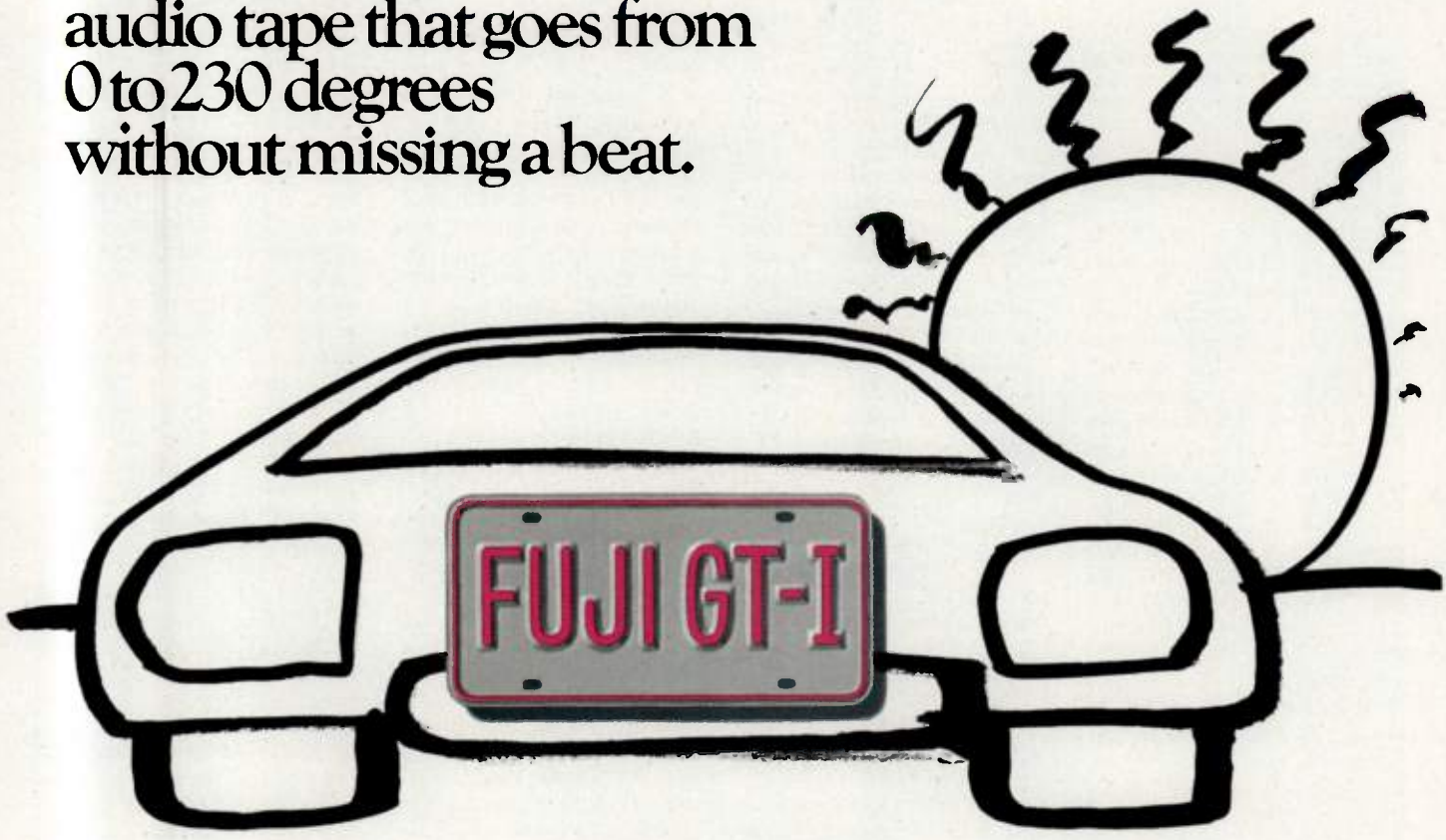
Manufactured and Marketed by
PolyGram Records

RECORD

JULY 1984 VOL. 3 NO. 9

Cover photo by Frank Schramm
Top inset photo by Barry Schultz/Retna

Announcing audio tape that goes from 0 to 230 degrees without missing a beat.



Fuji GT-I audio tape is specifically engineered to handle the hazards of the road.

We built the GT-I to survive the icy depths of winter and the searing heat of summer. In fact, the GT-I can even withstand the harsh environmental extremes of your dashboard. We designed the GT-I with a shock absorber to maintain good vibrations on the toughest roads. And because you demand peak performance, we made sure the GT-I delivers the highest fidelity, even under your car's less than ideal accoustical conditions.

So take the Fuji GT-I for a spin. And see how much smoother the road can be when you drive with a tape that's built to give you more treble and less trouble.

FUJI.

Nobody gives you better performance.

LETTERS

AT THE POLLS

IN REFERENCE TO THE Biggest Flops category of your 1983 Critics Poll (March RECORD), please tell me how a record that has sold over two million pieces in less than six months could be considered a flop? I'm speaking of course of Linda Ronstadt's *What's New* LP.

MONA MOORE
Elektra/Asylum Records
New York, NY

I AM OUTRAGED AND numb after finding Steve Wozniak designated Chump of the Year. The US Festivals were without a doubt the most majestic, professional productions I have ever experienced. It makes me heartsick to read such trashy commentary as appeared in the Critics Poll.

TINA RILE
San Diego, CA

CONGRATULATIONS ON the 1983 Critics Poll. I have been a big fan of U2 from the very first time I heard "Out of Control" in 1981. I'm glad they got so many number one rankings, because that's where they belong.

PETE FRITSCH
Villa Park, IL

THE CRITICS POLL HAS three major flaws. (1) The absence from the Top Albums list of Carlos Santana's *Havana Moon*. This is Santana's autobiography and his tribute to the people that shaped his music and made him a pioneer of Latin-Jazz-Rock fusion. Maybe you think his roots and influences aren't of sufficient depth and are inconsequential to the history of rock. I don't. (2) *Synchronicity* overrated? You must be putting me on! This LP has a straightforward, inspirational message and a unique sound that's captured the imaginations of millions of rock fans. Only U2's *War* can top it. (3) Although *Trans* is not Neil Young's best work, it hardly deserves your designation as Flop of the Year. *Trans* was an experiment with synthesizers and it worked just fine. I prefer music that attempts to be progressive to the insipid and redundant sounds of groups like Duran Duran and Asia. As for *Everybody's Rockin'*, a catalogue of song styles that shaped rock 'n' roll, I can only praise someone who puts so much feeling and emotion in his work. In short, RECORD critics are guilty of shortsighted and mischievous thinking.

PEDRO FUNG
Woodland, CA

FREE DAVID LEE

IT WASN'T EASY FOR ME to put aside all my reservations about David Lee Roth. I'm not dazzled by the lion's mane of hair, or the thrusting pelvis, either. I'm still sufficiently Anglomaniacal to reserve those feelings solely for Sting. But Deborah Frost's literate, witty interview ("Rock 'n' Roll as a Contact Sport," April RECORD) merely validated the Van Halen argument: David Lee Roth is not just an asshole, he's a funny asshole (a talent in itself) and he knows it. It doesn't matter if he is genuine or simply satiric: enthusiasm like his is all too rare in these musically-staid times. Let's hear it for the Dave Show. I think he's on to something.

ELIZABETH HANSON
New York City

DAVID LEE ROTH'S DENigration of John Lennon's return to the music scene after being away for five years was appropriate. In spite of being defended by various rock critics, both Lennon and Paul McCartney were sucked into the false world of marital bliss; since settling down (in both cases with women of miniscule talents), their music lost the creativity and edge it once had. I'm not a fan of heavy metal music, but I'd like to thank RECORD for its upfront coverage in the April issue. There's something special about David Lee Roth.

GARY KIMBER
Downsview, Ontario, Canada

EVERY TIME I THINK I've had all I can take of David Lee Roth, he comes out with some line like "I don't get all the women I want, I get all the women that want me" and renews my interest. There's a discerning person under that muscle and blonde mane. He's not a person I'd invite to my folks' house for dinner, but I definitely love to read about him.

A. L. JUAREZ
Las Cruces, NM

I SUPPOSE DAVID LEE Roth is entitled to his opinion but Linda McCartney is not a witch and Yoko Ono was the best thing that could have happened to John Lennon. I am sick and tired of people putting these women down. Maybe some day David will realize that name-calling is juvenile. I hope he finds someone as loving as Linda and as intelligent as Yoko, because only someone like that will be able to put up with him.

ALLYSON SHELLY
Fullerton, CA

C'MON RECORD! DAVID Lee Roth!? I dumped *Rolling Stone* to read about this nonmusician? Let's face it—a lot of people hate this band because of David Lee Roth. He should take lessons in songwriting, English and respect for others if he's going to speak for the rest of the band. If Eddie and the boys didn't pick him for their front man, he would still be shovelling shit in a stable. And I also don't hear of anyone asking him to sing on their albums!

BILL MYERS
Springfield, MA

BRAVO DEBORAH FROST! Having spent the past six years absorbing every word I could about David Lee Roth, her interview came as a welcome relief. Most of the men who've written about him ask questions about Eddie Van Halen's guitars, Alex's drums, Michael's bass, Valerie Bertinelli, paternity insurance, etc. No offense, that's all great the first few times around, but some of us need Dave in the flesh from time to time. Thank you for another bit of insight into one of God's better creations.

ANGIE TAMBURINO
Miami, FLA

RECORD

MANAGING EDITOR
David McGee

ASSOCIATE EDITORS
Mark Mehler,
David Gans *(West Coast)*

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Wayne King

ART DIRECTOR
Esther Draznin

PICTURE EDITOR
Helene Podziba

DESIGN ASSISTANT
Paula Kelly

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Vince Aletti, Craig Anderton, J.D. Considine, Anthony DeCurtis, Dan Forte, Deborah Frost, Jonathan Gross, Alan Hecht *(video)*, Christopher Hill, John Hutchinson, Doc Pomus, Martin Porter *(audio/electronics)*, Derk Richardson

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER
Henry Marks

NATIONAL SALES MANAGER
Nan Louise Elmore

ADVERTISING
Jeffrey Babcock, Alan Stiles, Patti Fiore *(Classifieds)*
Karen M. Johnston *(Ad Coordinator)*
Penney Bigel *(Sales Asst.)*

ADVERTISING PRODUCTION
Calvin Generette, Debra Wilson *(Asst.)*

VICE PRESIDENT
Marty Ostrow

MARKETING SERVICES
Paul Black *(Mgr.)*, Nancy Haft *(Asst.)*

CIRCULATION DIRECTOR
John Skipper

SINGLE COPY DIRECTOR
John Lowe

SUBSCRIPTIONS DIRECTOR
Kim Shorb

CIRCULATION MANAGERS
Bob Bruno, Bill Coad, Tom Costello, Solomon N'jie, Nicky Roe, Ira Tattleman

MANAGER OF RETAIL SALES
James Jacobs

MANUFACTURING & DISTRIBUTION
Dan Sullivan *(Director)*
Kenneth P. Baierlein *(Editorial Systems Mgr.)*
Lisa Leavitt, Michael Roseman

RECORD is a special interest publication of Straight Arrow Publishers, Inc.:
Chairman: Jann S. Wenner
Sr. Vice President: Kent Brownridge

Main Office:
745 Fifth Avenue,
New York, NY 10151 (212) PL8-3800
Advertising Department (212) 350-1298

Branch:
2029 Century Park East, Suite 3740
Los Angeles, CA 90067 (213) 553-2289

RECORD is published monthly at the subscription price of $12.00 for one year by Straight Arrow Publishers, Inc., 745 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY, 10151. Microform editions of RECORD are available through UMI, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106, (800) 521-0600, and through Bell & Howell, Old Mansfield Road, Wooster, OH 44691, (800) 321-9881. Second-class postage paid at New York, NY, and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to RECORD, P.O. Box 2985, Boulder, CO 80322. This edition published May 25 for newsstand sales from June 19 through July 23.

MILLER HIGH LIFE® PRESENTS

TOP 100 ALBUMS

1 SOUNDTRACK "Footloose" Columbia
2 1984 Van Halen Warner Bros
3 THRILLER Michael Jackson Epic
4 SPORTS Huey Lewis & The News Chrysalis
5 HEARTBEAT CITY The Cars Elektra
6 COLOUR BY NUMBERS Culture Club Epic
7 LEARNING TO CRAWL The Pretenders Sire
8 CAN'T SLOW DOWN Lionel Richie Motown
9 INTO THE GAP Thompson Twins Arista
10 TOUCH Eurythmics RCA
11 LOVE AT FIRST STING The Scorpions Mercury
12 AN INNOCENT MAN Billy Joel Columbia
13 SHE'S SO UNUSUAL Cyndi Lauper Portrait/CBS
14 SOUNDTRACK "Against All Odds" Atlantic
15 TALK SHOW The Go-Go's IRS
16 UH-HUH John Cougar Mellencamp Riva
17 AMMONIA AVENUE The Alan Parsons Project Arista
18 BODY & SOUL Joe Jackson A&M
19 WEIRD AL IN 3D Weird Al Yankovich Epic
20 90125 Yes Atco
21 ELIMINATOR ZZ Top Warner Bros
22 SYNCHRONICITY The Police A&M
23 THE FLAT EARTH Thomas Dolby Capitol
24 GENESIS Genesis Atlantic
25 SOUNDTRACK "Hard to Hold" RCA
26 THE WORKS Queen Capitol
27 SEVEN AND THE RAGGED TIGER Duran Duran Capitol
28 MISTER HEARTBREAK Laurie Anderson Warner Bros
29 ROCK 'N' SOUL PT. 1 Hall & Oates RCA
30 LOVE LIFE Berlin Geffen
31 LABOUR OF LOVE UB40 Virgin A&M
32 FUTURE SHOCK Herbie Hancock Columbia
33 SHOUT AT THE DEVIL Motley Crue Elektra
34 SOUNDTRACK "The Big Chill" Motown
35 RHYME & REASON Missing Persons Capitol
36 BUSY BODY Luther Vandross Epic
37 REBEL YELL Billy Idol Chrysalis
38 THREE OF A PERFECT PAIR King Crimson Warner Bros
39 LIVE Styx A&M
40 ABOUT FACE David Gilmour Columbia
41 SHE'S STRANGE Cameo PolyGram
42 99 LUFTBALLONS Nena Epic
43 WHAT'S NEW Linda Ronstadt Asylum
44 BREAK OUT Pointer Sisters RCA
45 DECLARATION The Alarm IRS
46 THROUGH THE FIRE Hagar Schon Aaronson Shrieve Geffen Warner Bros
47 NO PARKING ON THE DANCE FLOOR Midnight Star Elektra
48 MY EVER CHANGING MOODS Style Council Geffen Warner Bros
49 SOUNDTRACK Flashdance Casablanca
50 DEFENDERS OF THE FAITH Judas Priest Columbia

51 STAY WITH ME TONIGHT Jeffrey Osborne A&M
52 STREET TALK Steve Perry Columbia
53 WINDOWS AND WALLS Dan Fogelberg Full Moon Epic
54 SOMEBODY'S WATCHING ME Rockwell Motown
55 CHRISTINE McVIE Christine McVie Warner Bros
56 TOUR DE FORCE 38 Special A&M
57 DON'T LOOK ANY FURTHER Dennis Edwards Motown
58 MIDNIGHT MADNESS Night Ranger MCA
59 BON JOVI Bon Jovi PolyGram
60 JUNGLE Dwight Twilley EMI
61 UNDER A BLOOD RED SKY U2 Island
62 DANGEROUS Bar-Kays PolyGram
63 IN THE HEART Kool & the Gang PolyGram
64 MILK AND HONEY John Lennon and Yoko Ono Polydor
65 THE POET II Bobby Womack Beverly Glen
66 YOU BROKE MY HEART IN 17 PLACES Tracy Ullman MCA
67 WISHFUL THINKING Earl Klugh Capitol
68 OFF THE WALL Michael Jackson Epic
69 HUMAN'S LIB Howard Jones Elektra
70 DEFINITELY THE SMITHS The Smiths Sire Warner Bros
71 FERVER Jason and the Scorchers EMI
72 RICOCHET DAYS Modern English Warner Bros
73 SPARKLE IN THE RAIN Simple Minds Virgin A&M
74 MADONNA Madonna Sire Warner Bros
75 POINTS ON THE CURVE Wang Chung Warner Bros
76 SELF CONTROL Laura Branigan Atlantic
77 MADNESS Madness Geffen
78 ROLL ON Alabama RCA
79 IT'S YOUR NIGHT James Ingram Warner Bros
80 PIPES OF PEACE Paul McCartney Columbia
81 KISSING TO BE CLEVER Culture Club Epic
82 IN THE HEAT OF THE NIGHT Jeff Lorber Arista
83 SWEET DREAMS ARE MADE OF THIS Eurythmics RCA
84 CARGO Men At Work Columbia
85 ALIVE, SHE CRIED The Doors Elektra
86 RANT 'N' RAVE WITH THE STRAY CATS The Stray Cats EMI
87 LAWYERS IN LOVE Jackson Browne Elektra
88 DURAN DURAN Duran Duran Capitol
89 LITTLE ROBBERS The Motels Capitol
90 STATE OF CONFUSION The Kinks Arista
91 FLICK OF THE SWITCH AC/DC Atlantic
92 1999 Prince Warner Bros
93 JARREAU Al Jarreau Warner Bros
94 LISTEN A Flock of Seagulls Jive Arista
95 THE REAL MACAW Graham Parker Arista
96 MIKE'S MURDER Joe Jackson A&M
97 PRINCIPLE OF MOMENTS Robert Plant Atlantic
98 WHITE FEATHERS Kajagoogoo EMI
99 BUSINESS AS USUAL Men At Work Columbia
100 NEW GOLD DREAMS Simple Minds A&M

THIS IS THE CITY...

Tony Carey chronicles America's underside

ATLANTA—"Man, *look* at her," brays Tony Carey, gesturing toward cat-dancer Sandy Stewart cavorting in her "Saddest Victory" video on his motel TV. "Gawd, I'd marry her mouth."

Apart from Stewart's luscious lips, what undoubtedly brings videos to Carey's mind is the impact his own highly dramatic video has had on the sales of his "A Fine, Fine Day" single. Even the cover art for the single, as well as for his hard-hitting *Some Tough City* LP, consists of video-culled stills.

With *Some Tough City*'s "monologues of urban decay," Carey—a veteran of Richie Blackmore's Rainbow and ongoing partner in Planet P—has hammered a stake in the mythic American landscape previously explored by Bruce Springsteen, Bob Seger and John Cougar. What inspired the California-born multi-instrumentalist, who has lived in West Germany since 1978, to chronicle his homeland's underside in such searing tracks as "A Lonely Life," "Tinseltown" and the album's title cut?

"I spent two months in Los Angeles while I was writing," Carey states unhesitantly, "and, next to ancient Rome, you won't find any place that's more urbanly decayed than L.A. The expatriate writer's syndrome is the farther away you go, the closer you can see what you left behind. As far as Los Angeles goes, a blind man with his head cut off could see that that place is a disaster area.

"I get a little bit more political on the new Planet P album, which will be out in August," Carey reports. "It's my deep-seated, six-year reaction to Western Europe and the end of the world."

—Anthony DeCurtis

PHOTO: JANETTE BECKMAN

Carey: Reacting to the end of the world

PHOTO: JILL FURMANOVSKY

Stewart: 'The songs keep coming out of me'

BREAKING AWAY

Stevie Nicks' co-writer steps out

NEW YORK—"I had it stashed away," Sandy Stewart says, recalling how Dallas studio owner Gordon Perry took her first synthesizer song, "The Last American," to Stevie Nicks. At the time it was only an instrumental track, because Stewart, then cutting demos, was waiting for lyrics to fall from the sky. Perry thought Nicks a better bet. "The next thing I know," Stewart recalls, "I'm on the phone and Gordon's saying, 'You can't have it back. They want to use it on Stevie's next album.' "

The Stewart/Nicks mail order collaboration was retitled "If Anyone Falls." Stewart co-wrote three more songs with Nicks, sang and played keyboards on *The Wild Heart*, appeared with Nicks at the Peace Sunday concert in Los Angeles, signed with Modern Records, then returned to Dallas to finish her own *Cat Dancer* LP, a tight, synth-based pop-rock outing. She credits the album's sharp focus to producer Beau Hill and guitarist David Monday, her co-conspirator when both were in a band called the Sirens that plied the Texas/Louisiana club circuit. There the classically-trained Stewart "had to get up and sing 'Ooh, Baby, Baby' and didn't know what to do with my hands. All my experience is in front of an audience that's like, Southern rock. *You're* trying to play, *they're* yelling 'Lynyrd Skynyrd!' "

As for musical inspirations, Stewart says Todd Rundgren is "someone I've always touched on. Our styles are similar. I write songs, and play them heart and soul on the piano." But lately she's found herself wondering "what it would sound like if you had the guitar strength of AC/DC meeting a Genesis style. I think about these things, but the songs keep coming out of me. The other problem is that when some of *Cat Dancer* was written, I played the songs on keyboards, then wrote the words later. I can't sing 'em and play 'em at the same time." She grins. "But I'm learning. On some of my songs, it's like rubbing your stomach and patting your head."

—Dan Hedges

RUE BRITTANIA?

Not the Neats—no way

ATLANTA—Unlike most of America's other jangling guitar bands, the Neats don't look like bastard sons of British royalty. Based in Boston, the cradle of American independence, these four working class rockers see our nation's war for musical freedom as far from over.

"If it sounds like we're not all for English bands, that's 'cause it's true," emphasizes drummer Terry Hanley, in case I'd missed the point of the Neats' non-stop vilification of the mother country. "It's their attitude that we're mad about. Everything they're doing they copped from here, and they just won't *admit* it."

Composed of equal parts drone, rhythmic drive, and lyrical smarts, the LP *Neats* and the EP *The Monkey's Head in the Corner of the Room* (Ace of Hearts Records, P.O. Box 579, Kenmore Station, Boston, MA 02215) have earned this quartet an underground reputation that continually threatens to propel them onto the big time national scene.

States Hanley: "We're not sending tapes out to every major label in America, but we have some labels who are talking to us . . . and we're talking to them." Adds guitarist Phil Caruso: "We've been doing a lot of touring the past two years and trying to build an audience on that basis. You play a place once, and the next time you come back the crowd is a lot bigger." "We've got a manager, a road manager, and a lawyer at this point," concludes singer-guitarist Eric Martin, in comparing the Neats' current state with the way things were when they started out in late 1979, "but we're just trying to do *our* job right now."

—Anthony DeCurtis

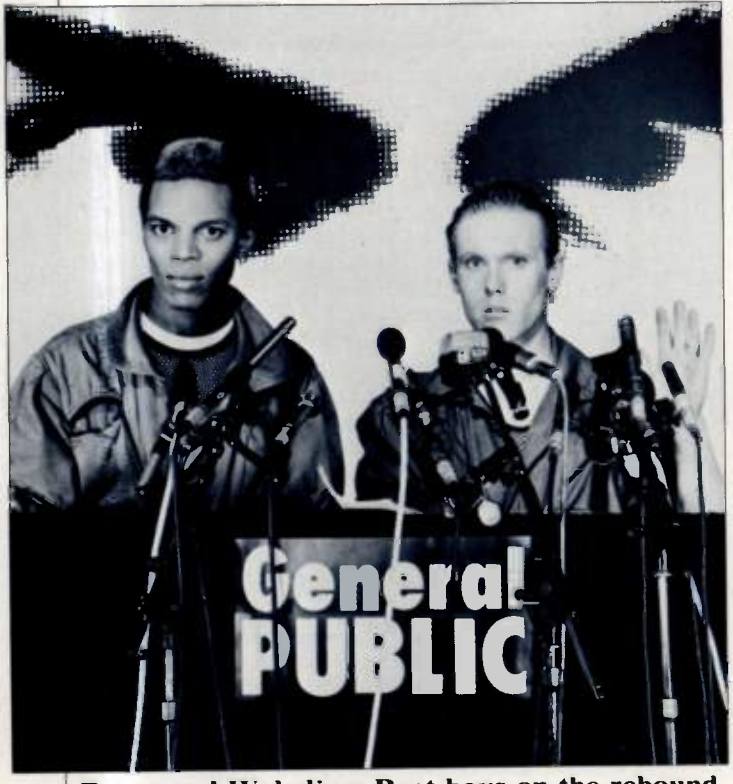
The Neats: Brit-baiters sound off

PHOTO: ELIZABETH B. McCULLOUGH

A BETTER BEAT

General Public has the look of a winner

LONDON—"We could have made another LP and sold a million copies instead of 500,000 just by doing the same old thing. But that's not the reason I picked up a guitar." So does Dave Wakeling, ex-English Beat frontman, explain the surprise disbanding of that group last summer just as it appeared to be on the brink of a major breakthrough in the U.S. and a renaissance in their native U.K.



Roger and Wakeling: Beat boys on the rebound

After the announcement to the rest of the band, Wakeling and Ranking Roger, the Beat's lead singer, retired to a Welsh rehearsal studio, inviting along Mick Jones, who had just been fired from the Clash. Together they wrote new material, auditioned musicians and commiserated with each other over the recent turn of events in their lives. The name General Public came from a sign Wakeling saw on a door at the House of Commons, "No admittance to the general public," a sentiment he felt described the policy of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and also spoofed the *1984*-mania sweeping Great Britain.

The musicians Wakeling and Roger recruited—Stoker, Ricky Billingham and Horace Panter (Mick Jones remains as a guest star)—provided the pair with an enthusiasm they felt had been missing from the Beat for a long time. "They want to prove themselves to us," Wakeling enthuses, "and that stimulates us."

General Public's eponymous debut single and LP (on I.R.S.) prove that the Beat's political toughness has not been compromised, but Wakeling hopes the band will be more contemporary and occasionally lyrical. Says he with a smile: "General Public will be the band the Beat was going to become in our fantasies."

—Debbie Geller

GRASS ROOTS APPEAL

The White Animals know who their friends are

White Animals: More than bopping archivists

ATLANTA—Crammed onto a matchbox stage of Hedgen's, an authentically dingy rock 'n' roll haven, the White Animals power into an eccentric, menacing cover of Nancy Sinatra's "These Boots Are Made For Walking." Young and hot, these Nashville cats are a five-man jukebox, delivering surefire hits heavy on '60s AM pop. "We're a beat group," declares hyperactive singer-guitarist Kevin Gray. "Not nostalgia, but a dance band for kids."

Offering a 10-minute dub-propulsed version of Van Morrison's garage-standard "Gloria," a flawless teen valentine ("This Girl of Mine") by bassist Steve Boyd, and six original raveups, the White Animals reveal themselves as more than bopping archivists on their latest LP, *Ecstasy* (Dread Beat Records, P.O. Box 121356, Nashville, TN 37212). With its production suggesting an approachable, low-budget *Sandinista!*, the album is a quirky jungle of percussion surprises, naive energy and artfully refashioned standard hooks. The material? Imagine a frolicsome face-off between the Monkees and Bob Marley.

Fresh-faced but assertive, the band boasts an engaging, snub-nosed appeal that caught on equally at two recent gigs—as Nashville opening spot for the Kinks, and star attraction at an eighth grade prom. Says Gray: "We loved doing both. The Kinks are idols, but the kids were great. And by now there's a bunch of younger Nashville bands doing our songs." While their recent MTV exposure (by way of their "Don't Care" video) has raised the group's profile, and a projected attack on New York has lifted hopes, the White Animals insist they'll strive to preserve grass-roots credibility. "We opened for Duran Duran," guitarist Rich Parks says, "and even we didn't get to meet them. We don't want *that.*" Kevin Gray interrupts and says, smiling, "Our only plans are to keep this circus on the road."

—Paul Evans

READY TO IGNITE

Oh OK gears up for the summer

ATLANTA—When the Athens combo Oh OK first unveiled their quirky child-rock to the world in the summer of 1981, singer Linda Hopper had no idea how radical their ultra-spare bass/drums/voice lineup would seem to audiences. But perhaps she thought everyone's tastes were as eclectic as hers. "God, heavy metal!" she exclaims, when asked about musical loves. "The first album I ever owned was by Uriah Heep! But soul music is the heartbeat of all music, I think."

PHOTO: LAURA LEVINE

Stipe, Hopper: Threatening spontaneous combustion

Taking their name from the letter equivalents of the last four digits of Hopper's phone number, Oh OK followed the basic developmental path for Athens bands of their time: forming a band, learning to play, doing a gig in three weeks, opening for friends in New York in two months, making a record.

Their new EP, *Furthermore What* (DB Recs, 432 Moreland Avenue NE, Atlanta, GA 30307), adds ringing guitar to the group's lilting musical textures, with Drive-In studio producer Mitch Easter keeping the sound bright and poppy. "Mitch was real open to whatever we wanted," Hopper declares with characteristic ebullience. "He'd use his 'girl compressor' and his 'boy compressor' for the voices—he'd say, 'I've got you on high girl compressor!'"

Drummer David McNair and founding members Hopper and bassist Linda Stipe (sister to R.E.M.'s Michael) hope to recruit former Let's Active sidegirl Lynn Blakey as guitarist for their extensive summer tour. "We're like spontaneous combustion," Stipe says, describing the band, which does display impressive vigor live. "You leave some gasoline-soaked rags in the closet and one hot summer day they just ignite."

—Anthony DeCurtis

DECADES OF HITS

One every 10 years, as per God's plan

NEW YORK—It appears that when God passed out hit records, he played a perverse joke on Manfred Mann (née Manfred Lubowitz). You can have your share of hits, He said, but only one per decade.

So here it is 1984, and Manfred Mann has his 1980s hit, "Runner," from his *Somewhere In Africa* LP. See you in '94, Manfred.

"I hope not," retorts the grizzled veteran of three decades of rock wars. "My intention this time (Divine Providence notwithstanding) is to finally break the U.S. market. I know I've never achieved that. I'm getting tired of one-shots."

Mann, who had his first hit with the Ellie Greenwich-Jeff Barry song "Do Wah Diddy Diddy" in 1964 and followed it up with a cover of Bruce Springsteen's "Blinded By The Light" 12 years later (that single hit Number One), says, rather than going out on the road with his current band, he plans to go right back in the recording studio and strike while the iron is hot.

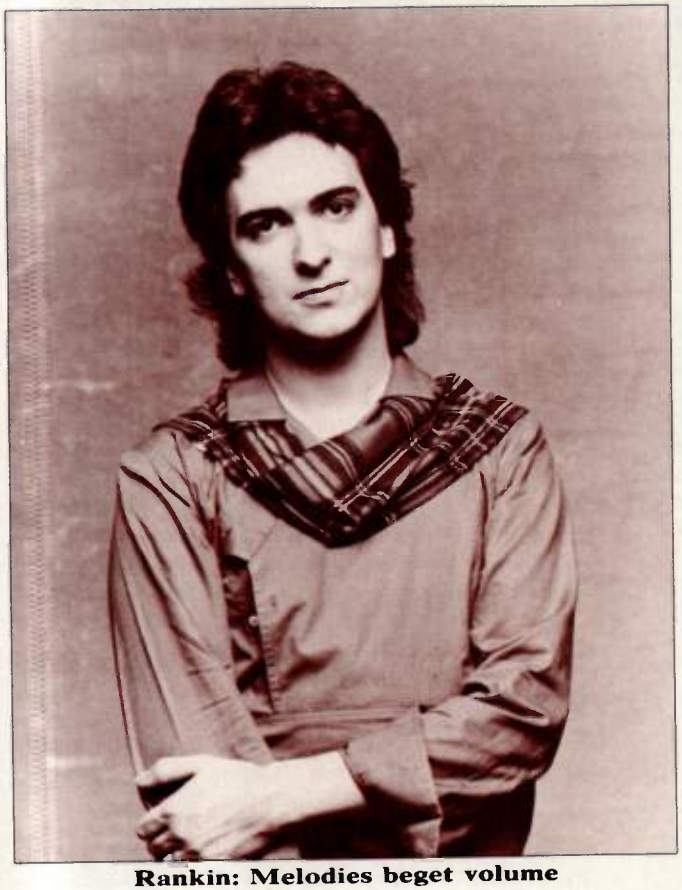
"We're not going to get carried away promoting this album," he explains. "We've got a little impetus now, maybe we can finally follow it up."

His own unusual relationship with The Bitch Goddess has led Mann to investigate the concept of success, from a sort of academic perspective. Given all this thought and study, then, wouldn't you think the Heavens would finally relent and give Manfred Mann a break?

"I think so," says the artist. "Actually, I don't believe God intended this as a joke. If He *really* wanted to be perverse, he would have said no hit at all." —**Mark Mehler**

PHOTO: ADRIAN BOOT/RETNA

Manfred Mann: See you in '94



Rankin: Melodies beget volume

RUNNING WITH IT

Nazareth's Billy Rankin takes the long view

OAKLAND, Ca—Billy Rankin plays guitar with Nazareth, but you can't judge the energetic young Scotsman solely by his work with the Sludge Kings of Glasgow. "When I joined the band four years ago, I didn't like them at all," he notes. "They're not the best band in the world, but they are one of the most honest: they don't try and do anything they don't think they can do well. They're out to have a good time."

After writing a couple of Nazareth's hits, including "Love Leads To Madness," Rankin was offered a shot at a solo album by A&M. The 24-year-old has been playing in rock bands since he was 12—hence the title of his LP, *Growin' Up Too Fast*—and his musical interests reach beyond Nazareth's limited scope. The first single, "Baby Come Back," is pure guitar rock 'n' roll with an up-to-date drum sound, but other tracks keep Rankin's guitar attack ("Always Marshall amps, in great amounts") from making the overall sound too anachronistic. "Think I'm In Love" has a synth-pop flavor, "Where Are You Now" could almost be an Eagles track, and everywhere the searing guitars and flat-out rhythms are tempered with strong melodies and rich vocal arrangements. "As long as you've got melodies you can play as loud as you like," says Rankin pleasantly, adding "Nazareth was never really a heavy metal band. We're more a rock 'n' roll band, because if the song doesn't have a melody it's not worth doing."

Nazareth is a pleasant gig, but *Growin' Up Too Fast* is the first step toward a career of his own, says Rankin. "This is my own thing, and I'm going to run with it. I'm considerably younger than the rest of the guys, so I've got a career to think about." —**David Gans**

PHOTO: HARRISON FUNK, RTNA

ELVIS COSTELLO'S SOLO SET: OVERCOMING THE DISTANCE

While the musical development demonstrated throughout each of Elvis Costello's records is a large part of their appeal, there is a tension inherent in all the discs, a battle being fought between Elvis, singer of songs, and Elvis, bandleader/band member/record producer. And it has become apparent in recent years that, as his primordial rage subsided, his need for the full-tilt back-up the Attractions supply onstage was not only not always necessary, but at times worked against his better judgment. As he worked in subtler colors than the dark hues used in his "guilt and revenge" days, his work often needed less noise on the line for him to communicate properly, so that the distance between him and the world symbolized by the old revenge stance and the infamous Ray Charles statement could be lessened.

It was towards this end, one presumes, that Costello embarked on a month-long American tour by himself in April; if the purpose of his show had anything to do with re-establishing a one-to-one feeling missing from last year's cranked-up *Punch The Clock* tour, then he by and large succeeded at this performance. To some extent, success was guaranteed his every effort, for an adoring audience had turned out (David Lee Roth may have been right when he suggested that all rock critics look like Costello, for they were out in droves this evening). And the very location of the concert—Avery Fisher Hall is normally home to the New York Philharmonic, a clue to the high-toned intentions of this tour—and its one-night-stand quality leads one to believe that Elvis may have wanted a rigged jury. Regardless, he communicated his songs with an artfulness not always given them on recent tours, and showcased some new tunes which will slip easily into his estimable repertoire.

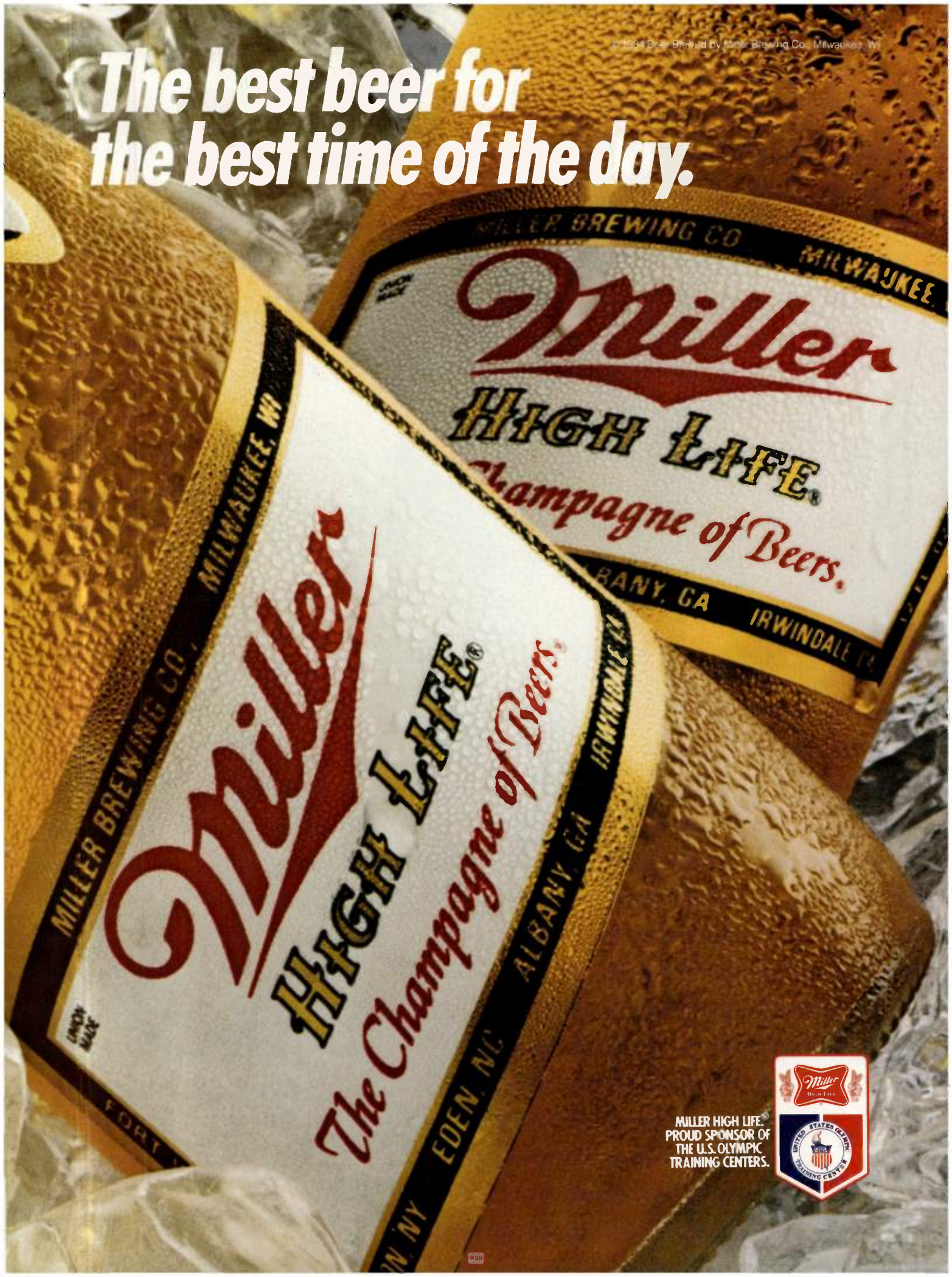
Varying the standard acoustic guitar arrangements by switching to electric guitar, piano or electric piano, Costello always focused the proceedings on the songs. And a pretty smart move it was, because mixing up sixteen of his own greatest compositions with three cover versions established a quality context for the new songs. He chose the best of these, "Peace In Our Time," to complete the third encore, and the show. The imagery, centered on British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's famous last words after failing to appease Hitler at Munich, continues his battle against war begun with the masterful "Shipbuilding." If those songs are any indication, Elvis Costello might just be overcoming the distance which has always haunted his work. And while this solo performance didn't always bridge that distance, it did give ample indication of just how far he's come. **—Wayne King**

DOWN UNDER SHOCK ROCK

If so much of rock is often a formula or a half-baked concoction, as its detractors claim and even its supporters must occasionally admit, where does one find the recipes? Would you believe . . . on the back of the large-size box of Sunmaid Raisins? Using a weaker version of the same marketing stategy that once gave us a playable Dave Clark Five disc on the back of a cereal box, the Sunmaid Raisin Company offers us its "Rock 'N' Roll Raisin Mix"—the precise ingredients of which momentarily escape me—but you can be sure the no-doubt tasty mixture will be served at the next sock hop in my household!

What prompts such half-baked thoughts about rock that *really* cooks was the concert appearance of Australian phenoms Midnight Oil as they hit New York on their maiden American tour. For one could, if neccesity so dictated, come up with a recipe for the startling brand of rock 'n' roll these five Aussie musicians were dishing up. Take one (1) six-foot six lead singer named Peter Garrett, whose spastic stage movements resembled that of a marionette operated by a puppetmaster on acid, and whose shaven head flung enough sweat from his shaven brow to make those assembled wish umbrellas had been passed out at the door (and thus proved that Oil and water don't mix). Add to this two guitarists, Martin Rotsey and Jim Moginie, who stood as matched bookends at each end of the stage, and who both cranked out apocalyptic lines of feedback-soaked guitar when the occasion demanded—and it demanded it incessantly—and throw in a feisty bassist, Peter Gifford. Top it all off with a lunatic drummer, Rob Hirst, whose handling of all the high harmony parts, insistent habit of bouncing drumsticks off his skins and cymbals and into the wings, boyish good nature and general barking at the (Keith) Moon drew as much attention as was humanly possible from Garrett's decidely alien presence.

Simmering under a barrage of blinding white lights which dramatically punctuated each offering from their politically-saturated cookbook (sorry, songbook), the quintet were done in little over an hour. The final result—what, for lack of a better phrase for this delicacy, we'll call Down Under Shock Rock—was truly tasty, and, in fact, left this reviewer hungering for more. For those who missed the band's noteworthy May appearance on *Thicke of the Night* (and who, pray tell, didn't?), check out the USA Network's *Night Flight* show, which has shown an Australian concert clip at least three times already this year. And prepare yourself, because a slice of Midnight Oil is the real thing—they mean it, *man.* **—Wayne King**


The best beer for the best time of the day.
Miller
HIGH LIFE
The Champagne of Beers.
MILLER BREWING CO
MILWAUKEE, WI
ALBANY, GA
IRWINDALE, CA
EDEN, NC
MILLER HIGH LIFE.
PROUD SPONSOR OF
THE U.S. OLYMPIC
TRAINING CENTERS.

Salem Spirit

ON THE BEAT

The Fixx, whose only vinyl release so far this year, "Deeper and Deeper," can be heard over the closing credits of *Streets of Fire*, are currently huddled in the studio with producer Rupert Hine.

SCREENINGS

Marlon Jackson is poised to make a leap into acting once the clamor surrounding the Jacksons' U.S. tour fades. Jackson is said to be considering two projects, one film called *The Cat* (reportedly for Universal) and an as-yet-untitled item that **Richard Pryor** may direct. When asked if he's putting his musical career on hold, Jackson replied, "Film is in my future, but music is in my blood. I cut myself and musical notes jump out"... If you're wondering why **Joe Ely's** video for "What's Shakin' Tonight" conveys a distinct sense of *deja vu*, it could be because horror film producer Roger Corman and friends have been there first. The set used by Ely for the video, which looks as if the room is collapsing in freeze-frame, was built for Corman's film *The Ghoulies*... **Bill Bruford** (whose work with Yes, Genesis, U.K., and King Crimson has placed him at the forefront of British drumming) has a new video cassette out called *Bruford and the Beat*. Said to be "a study in percussion," it features guest appearances by **Robert Fripp**, the rest of Crimson, and Steve Howe. For details, write Axis Video Inc., PO Box 21322, Baltimore, Maryland 21208... A recent market survey has found that since MTV took to the air, 62% of the music channel's viewers have become "more excited" about music... **John Paul Jones**, former Led Zeppelin bassist/keyboardist, has been asked to compose the score for the upcoming film *Scream for Help*. Lyrics for the project will come courtesy of his 15-year-old daughter Lucinda... For many years now, Montreux, Switzerland has been the home of a prestigious annual jazz festival that draws top drawer performers from all over the globe. This past May, the resort town on Lake Geneva was the setting for the First Annual Rock & Pop Festival—which, like its jazz counterpart, attracted a wide range of well-known performers during its three day run. This month, Showtime has plans to air some of the highlights of the event in a ninety-minute special produced by a rather interesting ensemble of rock and video specialists (including the people behind the BBC's longest-running music television program, *Top of the Pops*). At press time, artists scheduled to perform include **Duran Duran**, the **Pretenders, Adam Ant, Roger Daltrey, Bonnie Tyler, Madness, Spandau Ballet, Nina Hagen, Cliff Richard,** and **Tracey Ullman.** The hostess for the event? The singularly unusual **Cyndi Lauper.** Showtime will screen the program several times, so check local listings for air dates... For those keeping track, **Prince** has completed his first entry into the world of the silver screen. Titled **Purple Rain,** the feature-length film—said to be at least partially autobiographical (and tuneful to boot)—

Songwriters galore have been lining up outside the door of Maison Rouge, the British recording studio where the Everly Brothers have been working on their new album with producer Dave Edmunds. Among those indicating an interest in contributing tunes to the project: Bob Dylan, Paul McCartney, Paul Simon, Barry Gibb, Neil Diamond, Marshall Crenshaw, Elton John, T-Bone Burnette, and the Fabulous Thunderbirds...

should be premiering at shopping mall triplexes across the land in late August/early September... There is, however, more to life than music. During a recent survey of 1,229 record buyers in five major cities by the Street Pulse Group, the general TV viewing habits of the MTV generation were probed. Broken down into two groups—those favoring AOR (Album-Oriented Rock) and CHR (Contemporary Hit Radio, *i.e.* Top Forty)—both rated *Hill Street Blues* and *M.A.S.H.* as their fave raves, with *Dynasty*, The *A-Team* and *60 Minutes* showing up strongly. *Late Night with David Letterman*, however, only came in eighth in the AOR group's top ten, and didn't turn up at all in the CHR list. ■

BOOKS

Fifteen years after playing 'In the Midnight Hour' twice in one night during their first 'unofficial' gig, England's **Yes** are enjoying a rebirth with the multi-platinum success of *90125*. Their history is chronicled in *Yes: The Authorised Biography*, the first (and so far only) book devoted to the band. For details, write Sollancz Services Ltd., Order Dept. 14 Eldon Way, Little Hampton, West Sussex, England BN17 7EH. ■

THE VINYL WORD

At work on their newest effort, south of the Mason-Dixon line: **Let's Active**... **Stan Ridgeway,** who once upon a time served as Wall of Voodoo's cornerstone, has been slaving over a hot mixing board on his forthcoming solo project. Along for the ride is the Police's **Stewart Copeland,** who enlisted Ridgeway's talents a year or two ago while putting together the score for Francis Coppola's *Rumblefish*. ■

TRANSITIONS

Ed Parker, longtime personal bodyguard to **Elvis Presley,** is now providing the same protection to British rocker **Billy Idol.** Idol's publicist says that Parker (who runs a chain of karate schools) has been hired to keep the girls at bay, but—as Billy discovered during a scuffle with a disgruntled customer in a New York restaurant last year—sometimes a few extra pounds of muscle can come in handy. In the continuing story of Michigan's upwardly mobile **Ted Nugent,** the Wildman of Rock and Roll (a.k.a. the Motor City Madman and Prince of Volume) appears as though he may be broadening the parameters of his social sphere—at least in the True Romance stakes. When he played a sell-out stand in L.A. not long ago, backstage visitors (including envoys from **Def Leppard** and **Quiet Riot** were treated to the sight of Nugent squiring a vaguely familiar female as his date for the evening. The lady in question? *That's Incredible's* Cathy Lee Crosby, who's obviously expanding her parameters these days as well. What it all may mean, however, is anybody's guess. After the gig, the couple roared away into the Californian night, leaving all questions unanswered... Frontier Booking International, which handles the **Police, Joan Jett,** the **Go Go's,** (as well as numerous fledgling bands the world has yet to hear of) has been continuing its expansion tactics. Its new film, theater, and television division is now representing the Lind Agency, equally famous in the fashion modeling biz for their roster of children of the stars and for their forays into the stables and staffs of several of New York's most established agencies. As a result, Police drummer Stewart Copeland's brother, Ian (FBI's president), has begun juggling tiny sandwiches and pressing the flesh on behalf of models like Ingrid Bergman's daughter Isabella Rosselini, Eartha Kitt's daughter Kitt McDonald, Suzy Parker's daughter Georgia De La Salle, and Chris Barker, son of Lex (of *Tarzan* fame). As yet, there's no word as to how Sting is going to fit into all of this. Stay tuned. ■

Among the West Coast rock luminaries who turned up backstage during Duran Duran's two nights at the Oakland Coliseum: Grace Slick and 13-year-old daughter China (who, it's reported, "hyperventilated like crazy" after scoring a kiss from Simon LeBon). Grace, throughout, looked bemused.

JODY DENBERG

WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND

Rank and File's 'new country' has a new look

Mention country music to Rank and File bassist Tony Kinman and you get an immediate reaction. To wit: "We spent almost all of last year and the good year before that going around talking about country music. It's not something I'm interested in doing anymore. Country music exists and if people want to listen to it they will. They don't need to pick up a magazine and read me or Chip saying how great it is."

PHOTO ANN SUMMA

Rank and File:
An earnest fusion of disparate sensibilities

Chip is Tony's younger brother and the guitarist for Rank and File. He too is vocal about this country music issue, but more succinct: "We're not trying to push country music's limits," he says forcefully. "We're just doing what we want to do."

Rank and File's debut LP, *Sundown*, presented the world with a hard-edged brand of country-rock, enabling the band to transcend their influences and become a reference point in the "new country" genre. From the outset, Rank and File have discarded any archivist notions in order to fashion their own approach to country and rock; now, with the fleshed out instrumentation on their new LP, *Long Gone Dead*, Chip and Tony, the band's songwriting duo, hope the discussion surrounding their roots will be refocused on the band's new directions.

The Kinmans, former members of a politically-oriented California punk band called the Dils, are the sole original remaining members of Rank and File, a group they formed with rhythm guitarist Alejandro Escovedo, who had played with San Francisco's Nuns. The three re-located in Austin in 1980 and hooked up with drummer Slim Evans, gigging for both the rednecks at honky-tonks and the spiked-haired faithful at new wave clubs.

Escovedo departed in late '83 to form the more rock-oriented True Believers along with his brother Javier, late of San Francisco's Zeros. Evans, claiming that he also "grew apart from the band and lost interest," split following the group's October trek across Great Britain in support of Elvis Costello.

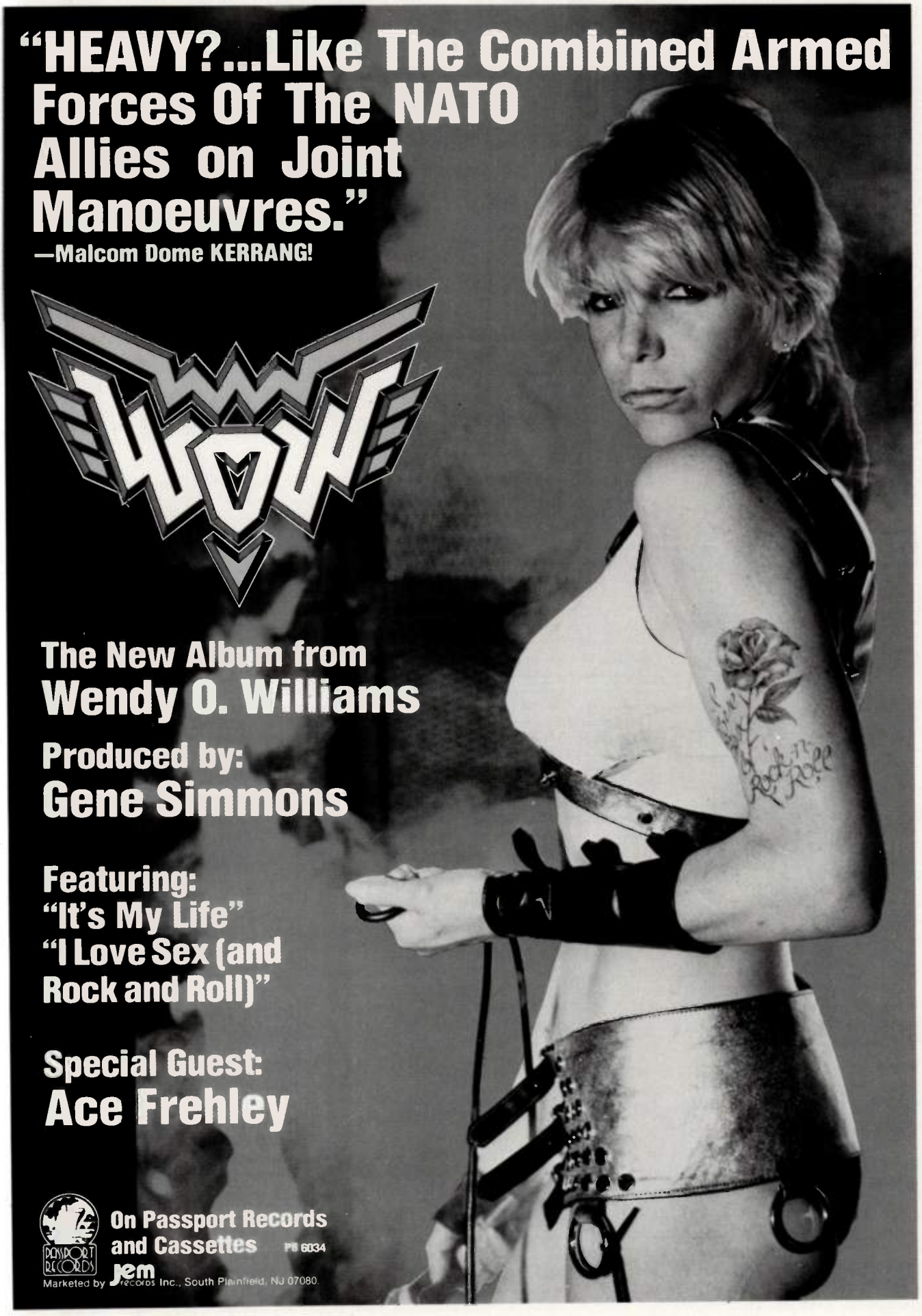
Undaunted, the Kinmans headed to Hollywood for their scheduled recording sessions with producer Jeff Eyrich (the Plimsouls, T-Bone Burnett). With Stan Lynch of Tom Petty's Heartbreakers assuming the drumming chores and Pete Grant plucked from a Glendale country bar to handle steel guitar, autoharp and banjo, *Long Gone Dead* departs from the direct guitars/bass/drum attack of *Sundown* but retains the socio-political awareness of their first album.

"I think we got a lot more energetic sound this time," Chip asserts. "There's a lot of different feels on this record." Eyrich views the album as a "maturing process" for Rank and File, explaining, "They've expanded their musical scope; they've included a lot more of their country influences, and they've expanded further on their rock 'n' roll roots."

"Sound of the Rain" and "Tell Her I Love Her," two tracks from the Kinmans' incarnation as Dils, support the brothers' claim that their move to "new country" was a "natural evolution": both are hook-filled pop songs featuring Chip's twangy tenor and Tony's deep, haunting baritone in a harmonious blend that recalls the shimmer of the Everly Brothers. What this mix does, oddly enough, is point up the similarities between country and punk: both champion honesty and simplicity in their compositions, with songs often built around three chords, and both musics generate an uncommon bond between performer and audience.

Whether Rank and File's earnest fusion of seemingly disparate sensibilities will find favor with the masses is another question entirely. FM radio currently excludes country-oriented music from its playlists, just as it barred black music from rock 'n' rollers' ears before Michael Jackson and Prince budged the doors open. And "new" American music is not being accepted on the airwaves as readily as the current wave of English pop. The Kinmans, though aren't losing any sleep over the "homegrown" airplay issue.

"I think too many of the so-called American bands whine too much when they complain about people like Boy George and Duran Duran on the radio," Tony states. "One song does not necessarily exclude another. Getting on the radio is not a huge concern to me . . . and if these bands that are complaining now are willing to just bide their time, then to quote Waylon Jennings, 'What goes around comes around.' " ○


"HEAVY?...Like The Combined Armed Forces Of The NATO Allies on Joint Manoeuvres."
—Malcom Dome KERRANG!
WOW
The New Album from
Wendy O. Williams
Produced by:
Gene Simmons
Featuring:
"It's My Life"
"I Love Sex (and Rock and Roll)"
Special Guest:
Ace Frehley
On Passport Records and Cassettes PB 6034
PASSPORT RECORDS
Marketed by jem Records Inc., South Plainfield, NJ 07080.

JOE Jackson

No Room For Rock

ON A FRIDAY EVENING IN AN UNDISTINGUISHED BAR IN MANHATTAN'S EAST Village, a drunk slides off his stool and onto the floor, where he curls up in the dust. Without uttering a word to each other or anyone else, some fellow drinkers pick him up, brush him off and balance him once again on his precarious perch.

Though this scene has been played out only a few feet in front of Joe Jackson, it seems to make no impact at all on him, so absorbed is he in his cogitations on the current state of music. The bulging, fish-like eyes maintain their glazed, preoccupied state, and the ideas tumble forth, some clear-headed and well-considered, others merely audacious. If the artist has any doubts about the propriety of his thoughts, though, he quickly counters with a fiery, occasionally tunnel-visioned obsessiveness about his profession.

Born and raised in England, now a frequent resident of New York, Joe Jackson is a pure musician, driven by a slow-burning passion and colossal artistic ambition. On his latest album, *Body and Soul*, he continues exploring different song forms, as he has done throughout most of his career. It's a long way from "Is She Really Going Out With Him," the hit single from his first album and a song that marked him as one of the British new wave's most inspired artists. But there are no rock guitars on *Body and Soul*, nor were there any on his 1983 LP, *Night and Day*. As this interview indicates, Jackson is gradually distancing himself from rock music, disillusioned by the genre's descent into what Wynton Marsalis has called "enforced trends and bad taste." What follows is a representative sample of Jackson's opinions on both of these topics, as well as some insight into his aims on *Body and Soul*.

By Chris Salewicz

You've done one of rock's more evocative videos in "Breaking Us In Two." In general what are your feelings regarding the use of video in rock?

I think that to place too great a faith in the power of videos is a very negative thing. It has a very negative effect on the careers of the musicians doing them. I've seen so many people on MTV who I might have thought were okay until I saw their videos. So often, as far as I'm concerned, it's completely destroyed any credibility they might have had. I think people are too desperate for success and are being pressured into doing videos. People who are visual, like Michael Jackson, should do them, but very few musicians are good actors. I also think it's unfair to new groups, because colossal amounts of money are wasted trying to make new, still developing artists look great on videos. And, on the whole, most videos are pretty much an insult to people's intelligence. What I feel is happening is that rock 'n' roll is degenerating into a big circus, and videos and MTV are very much part of that. People who are seriously interested in making music as an end in itself are going to have to forge a different path. I wish there were a lot more people around who truly cared about music, and wouldn't let themselves be used as puppets for people to make lots of money.

You were on the road 11 months in support of *Night and Day*. Why did you decide to stay out so long?

Because I felt it was the best record I'd done, I thought we should play everywhere and give it as big a push as possible. Also, when we made the album I wasn't convinced it was going to be a hit. I listened to the radio and didn't hear anything else like it—there were no guitars on it, and it wasn't exactly rock 'n' roll. It didn't fit in with anything that was really happening. So it was by no means a foregone conclusion that it would be successful.

Like *Night and Day*, *Body and Soul* speaks of the city in which it was made—New York City, in this case. In many ways it strikes me as the archetypal record that an English musician, fleeing British negativ-

PHOTO GUIDO HARARI/LGI

Wild Turkey Hill.
The legend began 150 years ago.

For signed Ken Davies lithograph, 18" x 19", of Wild Turkey painting, send $10 payable to: "ANCO," Box 929-R, NYC 10268

There's been a distillery on Wild Turkey Hill for almost 150 years. Sometimes the air stands motionless in the valley, where the gentle-running waters of the Kentucky River flow. But on top of the hill, constant breezes cool our Wild Turkey whiskey naturally as it ages in the barrel. Wild Turkey Hill is a place like no other. And it helps us make a Wild Turkey whiskey like no other.

WILD TURKEY®/101 PROOF/8 YEARS OLD

AUSTIN NICHOLS DISTILLING CO., LAWRENCEBURG, KENTUCKY © 1984

ity, would make when stimulated by New York's resolute optimism. Still, it's not all sweetness and light, is it?

No, there's some very sad stuff on it. There's a fair amount of bitterness and tragedy and cynicism as well. Doing an album of ten positive songs doesn't sound very stimulating to me. Within the songs there's a psychological and emotional progression, from questioning and doubt and cynicism to hope and finally to a positive outlook. In pretty vague terms the album is a kind of a spiritual journey.

So the songs have definite aims. "The Verdict," I understand, was inspired by the movie of the same name. How does that fit into the spiritual journey?

I thought *The Verdict* was a great movie because there were so many layers of meaning in it. It was a very spiritual thing, about a guy trying to save his soul. I believe that sometimes you have to follow your heart without compromising for other people or taking the easy way out. That's what the song is about: about being afraid to take that step, about being human. It's not heroic at all. No matter how right or noble you feel about having taken a particular course, you still have moments of insecurity when you think, "God, did I do the right thing?" Certainly *I've* taken the wrong course at times, both in my work and in my personal life. So there's always going to be that question: What's the verdict?

Or "Where's the beef?"

You can take it on any level you want, from a day-to-day level to a much deeper spiritual or religious degree. A lot of ideas and feelings went into that song, a lot more than are usually put into a pop song. I just want people to appreciate it on whatever level they can.

You close out side one with "Go For It," a song that speaks to the heroic potential of mere mortals—including those hampered by physical disabilities, such as Ray Charles, who's mentioned by name—rather than Superman-like characters.

Ray Charles, who went blind at an early age yet still did things like drive cars, became a superstar. He's much more of a hero than the kind of supposed heroic figures who really are just oversized cartoons. I also mention Babe Ruth in the song simply because he always looked so unlikely. He never looked like a hero: he was fat, and he hit a lot of home runs. You don't have to do a lot of running if the ball goes sailing out of the stadium. I think all he was into was eating hot dogs and drinking beer. So you can still be a hero even if you're fat or skinny or have big ears.

Do you have any heroes?

Beethoven. He's always been my greatest hero. At school, when all the other kids were into Cream, I was completely into Beethoven. In fact, I kind of got into rock music *after* that. Now, though, I'm coming back to Beethoven. To be quite honest, I've got quite sick of everything *except* classical music recently. If I go out to see some music, I tend to just go and see the New York Philharmonic—I've come back to that. I'm sick of popular music—it's quite horrible at the moment. But I got tired of seeing jazz as well, because there's a lot that doesn't seem right with what's happening with it now.

PHOTO: GEOFF BUTLER/LGI

'Sometimes you have to follow your heart without compromising for other people'

Your first albums were produced by David Kershenbaum, but on both *Night and Day* and *Body and Soul* the two of your are credited as co-producers. How has that relationship evolved? What is Kershenbaum's role now, and what is yours?

David has a strong technical background and a really detailed ear for pure sound: he can listen to a mix that sounds perfect to me and make it better every time. But a lot of producers these days are obliged to be arrangers. Most musicians can't even read music—they just know a few chords, go into the studio and bash away until something emerges. The producer is then given the job of making some kind of order out of

PHOTO: ADRIAN BOOT/RETNA

'Rock 'n' roll is degenerating into a big circus, and videos and MTV are very much a part of that'

this chaos. But I believe a lot of that order should be imposed by the musicians, and that before you go into the studio you should know what everyone is going to be playing. So that's what I do. But I take it a step further, to a point where I know what I want it to sound like. I know, for example, what kind of echo I want to hear on the voice; I know what kind of balance things should be in, and so on.

Do the other musicians have much input?

Now and again. But I *have* to remain in control of it. In fact, I find it very strange that a lot of people think that is unusual. "God, what a dictator he is—he doesn't let his band rock out." But that's not the idea of this band at all—it's a band I hand-picked to play my music.

Side two of *Body and Soul* begins with the song "Loisaida," the Spanish term for Lower East Side, the area you live in in New York City and one with a large Puerto Rican community. The exposure to that culture affected your music long before this record, though.

If your ears are open to music and you spend any amount of time in New York City you *have* to notice the Latin thing. Simply beause it is so strong and really happening. It amazes me that people living here will just get wrapped up in their own little scene and not be aware at all of how much is going on. I always get the impression that if I suggest people check out some salsa, they'll reply, "But Puerto Ricans listen to that, so *we* wouldn't like it. Besides, it's Spanish." That's the only barrier as far as I can see, but it's not as big a barrier as it seems. People just aren't open enough. I don't understand why people listen to only one kind of music. It doesn't make sense to me: it's like wearing the same clothes or eating the same food every day.

Certainly the music that is most alive and crucial in New York is salsa, as well as black music, of course: the funk and rap thing is far more exciting than anything rock bands are doing. The truly original music in the United States, the stuff that's mattered, has always been black music.

Do you find anything interesting about rock 'n' roll at the moment?

It's thrashing around in its death throes. It's degenerated into something very commercial and very shallow. It amazes me that people are still kidding themselves that they're being "rebellious" and "anti-Establishment," when rock 'n' roll culture is dead as a dodo. The whole concept of it is very self-deluding. In fact, the whole idea of youth culture is sort of silly, because if culture is any good it must be for everyone. It's only in the United States and Western Europe that these artificial boundaries have been set up—before the 1950s, the word "teenager" wasn't even invented.

Do you have any faith in popular music's power to affect changes in people or in society at large?

I learned a really good lesson from my third album, *Beat Crazy*. And that is, you can't change anything with music, even though you think you can. That was a real angry album. I looked around me and saw so much that was getting me down that I just poured it all out. It didn't do any good, of course. It didn't change *anything*.

But isn't the ripple effect of popular music—the sudden awareness that you are not alone in thoughts expressed in a song—far more subtle and pervasive than in any other art form? Isn't your power to influence and suggest certain attitudes a responsibility you should respect?

Yes, but what's the point in doing it anyway? You see, I'm coming to believe more and more in art for art's sake, even though I feel there's a prevailing tendency for people to regard that as total self-indulgence. But there's nothing wrong with being dedicated to music, and wanting to make great music, and putting your best efforts into that. It doesn't have to say something meaningful for right now. It doesn't even have to have lyrics. I suppose I think more and more in terms of pure music for its own sake. That's what I'm good at, so that's what I should be doing.

But I don't think that means I'm turning my back on the world and retreating into an ivory tower. In fact, I take more notice of what's going on now than at the time I did *Beat Crazy*. I'm more politically and socially aware than I was then, yet I feel it's worthwhile just to make music.

You don't believe artists should reflect the moods and feelings of their time?

Of course I do. I've just come to feel more and more that the true artist is dedicated to his art, and just gets on with it and as a matter of course intuitively reflects what's going on without sitting down and saying, "Okay, I'm now going to write some lyrics about Ronald Reagan." You have to have your priorities right. You have to be dedicated to being contemporary first. Those people who jump on bandwagons are generally not heard of after a while. It's great art that survives. And the fact that I'm writing in 1984 means it's going to come out being contemporary. Something that's forced can never be great art. ○

STEVE FUTTERMAN

HUNGRY FOR POSSIBILITIES

Jamaaladeen Tacuma moves bass playing into the future

In his innovative work with Ornette Coleman and on a host of solo projects and group settings he participates in, Jamaaladeen Tacuma has developed an instrumental conception for the bass that could well be the sound of the future, if today's musicians are brave enough to confront it. "I'm always trying to move the instrument further," Tacuma insists. "I'm always hungry for what all the possibilities are. All instruments are the same; you get off one you find the same problems on the other. You're always thinking about extending its limits."

Talk is cheap, of course, but Tacuma is one of those rare artists who backs up every claim he makes. *Show Stopper*, Tacuma's acclaimed Gramavision solo debut, finds the bassist conversant with musics ranging from classical to ethnic and every popular form in between.

The key to his ear-grabbing approach on the bass is the way Tacuma couples lightning fast technique to a soulful, blues-inflected feel. Born Rudy McDaniel in Philadelphia, the 26-year-old Tacuma, originally a singer, was influenced by local acts like Brenda and the Tabulations and the Five Stairsteps as well as the more famous Motown acts passing through on tours. But his attention soon shifted to the men who played the instruments behind the vocalists, particularly to the heart beat of the band, the bassist. During his final year in junior high school, Tacuma began formal music lessons and acquired his first bass guitar. Although session masters such as James Jamerson and Ronnie Baker had considerable impact on the aspiring bass man, Tacuma's inquisitiveness extended well beyond his own instrument: "Instrumentalists like John McLaughlin on guitar, John Coltrane on sax, and Hamza el Din on oud were just as important as any bassists," he notes. "I was listening to everything from Stockhausen to Mandrill."

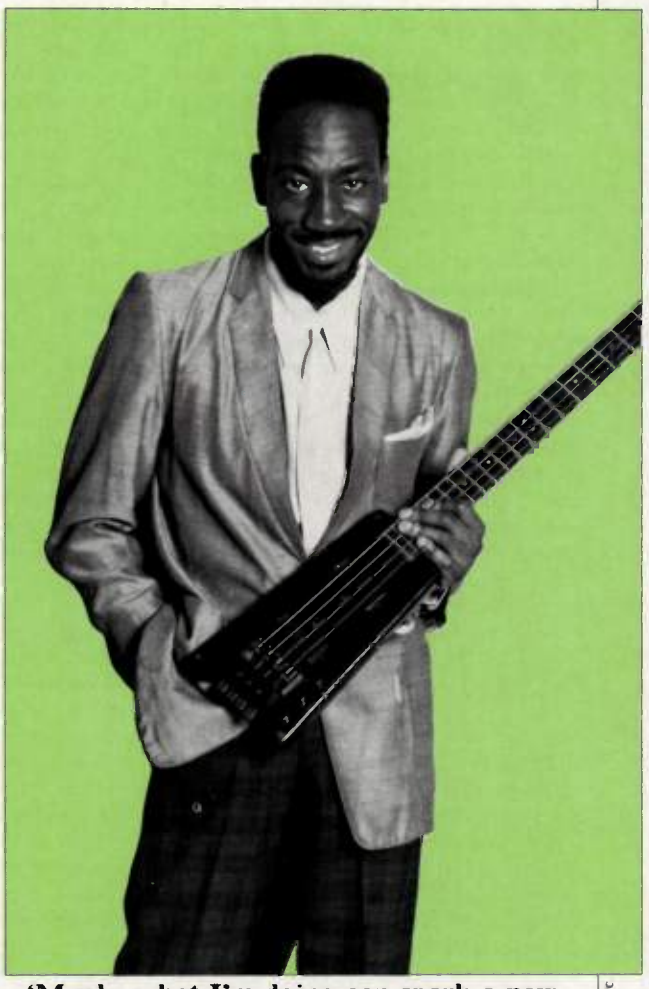
Passing up college, Tacuma went straight to work for jazz organist Charles Earland. A year later he returned to Philly and hooked up with singer Edwin Birdsong. At this unsure juncture of his career Tacuma was introduced to Ornette Coleman, arguably the most important figure in jazz in the last two decades. It was a pivotal moment for the young musician.

"When I met Ornette it just took off," Tacuma recalls. "He gave me some very important advice: 'You never have to worry about doing anything commercial, because there aren't that many people doing what you do anyway. Just keep on doing what *you* want to do; never limit yourself to one particular style.' "

Tacuma's initial groundbreaking work with Coleman's Prime Time band can be heard on *Dancing In Your Head*, a 1977 Antilles release. On "Theme From A Symphony," a side-long extravaganza, Tacuma's lines fly in, out and around Coleman's sax, blurring all notions of support and soloing, rhythm and melody. His accomplishment was not in establishing what a bass *could* do—Stanley Clarke and Jaco Pastorious had already broken those barriers—but stating everything a bass *should* do.

The bassist who seemed to pop out of nowhere became a musicians' favorite and soon found himself in demand for a variety of sessions. In addition to his work with Prime Time and Jamaal, Tacuma also has "dance" band called Cosmetic that is about to record with Kraftwerk producer Francois Kevorkian. More experimental leanings are covered by his occasional work with the punk/funk jazz noise group The Golden Paliminos and a duet situation with drummer Cornell Rochester, Double Exchange. Recent session work includes Nona Hendryx's successful single, "Keep It Coming," producer Kip Hanrahan's musical adaptations of writer Ishmael Reed's works and Tacuma's own discovery, singer Mark Oliver, whose debut he is producing. Work has also been completed on *Show Stopper*'s followup featuring a track with Bill Bruford on drums, David Murray on sax and Vernon Reid on guitar.

As adaptable as Tacuma is for others, it's on his own work that his genius for unpredictable playing comes across. Coleman's harmolodic method is the core of Tacuma's approach. According to the bassist, in this system composition refers to melody, "and that melody contains the rhythm, the harmony, the sound and the time. If the melody contains ten notes and the musician wants to pick out three and phrase them in a very rhythmic way and move them in any particular fashion that he wants, that's fine. The harmony, rhythm and melody move in the same direction simultaneously, you just make your choice."



'Maybe what I'm doing can spark a new energy in someone who can take it further'

PHOTO: GRAMAVISION INC

Despite the work that Tacuma and the handful of Coleman influenced disciples (James Blood Ulmer, Ronald Shannon Jackson) have brought to popular music, one wonders how far-reaching the effects of the harmolodic system can be. Tacuma's forecast is as positive as the energy guiding his musical destiny. "Any good musician who thinks about it for two minutes can do it," he claims. "'I'm taking it as far as I can, but we all have limitations as beings. Maybe what I'm doing can spark a certain new energy in someone who can take it further. I know for a fact that in a certain amount of time there's going to be some guys who'll play some music that will be so incredible, so much more so than what I'm trying to do, that it will be amazing—and I want to be around to hear it." ○

JOHN HUTCHINSON

YOU MEAN FLOYD THE BARBER?

David Gilmour, without those other guys

On March 31 David Gilmour gave a solo concert in Dublin, Ireland, the first of a planned three-month tour encompassing Europe and America. The evening before, the Pink Floyd guitarist had appeared on *The Tube*, a trendy British TV rock show, playing two numbers from his new solo album *About Face*. He looked tense and nervous, and was clearly out of place among a generation of pop fans with whom he has next to nothing in common; when Duran Duran followed his performance, the program reverted to a more natural flow. This, however, was but one of several pre-concert omens, including little publicity for the show, problems with the support act and considerable tension among Gilmour's associates.

As it turned out, the gods were with him. The house was full and Gilmour played a set that included about a dozen songs from his two solo albums, plus a set-closing, rapturously received version of "Comfortably Numb," his contribution to Pink Floyd's *The Wall*. There were no flying pigs, downed aircraft or laser beams to be found, and Gilmour appeared subdued and hesistant, content to let his band develop momentum and provide the standard gig banter. There were hints of grandeur, though: on the instrumental "Let's Get Metaphysical," on "Murder" (a song about John Lennon's killing) and on "Comfortably Numb" the artist rose above the constraints of legend to play and sing with sweet assurance.

The following afternoon, Gilmour sits in his hotel room, listening to a tape of the concert. His hair is conventionally short these days, and he's less stocky than his publicity photographs suggest. There is a restrained air about him, entirely appropriate for a man who keeps most of his feelings to himself. He doesn't joke around much, and his red shoes, worn with the leather jacket he sports on *About Face*, an open shirt and jeans, seem more of a gesture to rock 'n' roll flamboyance than a natural expression of exuberance.

Gilmour last appeared in concert in June of 1981, when Pink Floyd played *The Wall* for the filming of the movie. How did it feel to be back? "It's actually more nerve-wracking playing to an audience that size than to a much larger one," he answers. "I'm not used to it now, and I'm not very practiced at it. I just don't know what I should do, how far I should go, and I can only learn by doing more gigs. Last night I felt I should have spoken to the audience more. There's an openness you've got to establish with the audience through eye contact and your general demeanor. I can certainly get a lot better at it."

And he'll have plenty of opportunity to improve what with a long tour ahead of him. But he professes to love performing, even though doing it solo demands that certain economies of scale be acknowledged as they never were on the Floyd's sojourns. "I'd like to find myself in the situation where my name, on its own, carries the weight necessary for me to tour in a more civilized way. But I have to earn that now, because my reputation doesn't do that for me. The fact is that our individual names mean virtually nothing in terms of the great record and ticket-buying public.

Gilmour: Rising above the constraints of legend

PHOTO: LAURA LEVINE

"But what else am I going to do? I like writing music, I like making records, and I like getting up on stage to perform. I can't rely on the guys in Pink Floyd to do all that with me whenever I feel like it, and you can't just go out in a half-assed way to try and make the situation possible."

Indeed, with both Gilmour and Roger Waters having cut solo albums, Pink Floyd's future seems uncertain. The signs of decay have been evident for some time: the doom-laden *Final Cut* was, for all intents and purposes, a Roger Waters solo outing, with two other Floyd members sitting in as sessionmen. In any case, the album's very title hinted at its position in the Floyd canon. But Gilmour won't commit himself on the band's status. "The question is open. We might do something together again; I've no idea. But my own album and tour are the entire focus of what I'm doing musically at present."

Nonetheless, Gilmour doesn't hesitate to proffer an opinion about *The Final Cut*, in his words "a one-off album and not like anything that's happened before in our long and checkered history. It didn't happen at all in the way I wanted, and I had constant arguments with Roger over how I thought it should be made and the things we had to do in order to make a good album. Roger disagreed vehemently and it came to the point where I could no longer effectively contribute to the production. My own opinion is that it would have been a much better record if we had managed to collaborate on it more. There are some

good ideas on it—three good songs, in fact—but I feel the rest is rather cheap filler of the kind we hadn't put on a Pink Floyd record in years. But obviously I'm prejudiced because of the disagreements and difficulty I had in making it: it reached the point during the recording of the album that I just had to say 'If you need a guitar player, give me a call and I'll come and do it.'"

Gilmour promptly began working on *About Face*, wanting no more than to make "as good an album as I possibly could." Not that *About Face* has no meat on the bone. "Murder," for example, concerns Gilmour's feelings in the wake of John Lennon's murder. "I never met the guy," he says of the slain Beatle. "The song developed out of my feelings of fear and frustration. What actually made it happen was that those feelings lasted so long. It still puts me in a rage sometimes."

There's also two anti-nuke songs on *About Face*—"Cruise" and "Out of the Blue"—although Gilmour isn't four-square in the anti-nuke camp. "I can't feel it in me to commit myself to nuclear disarmament," he says quietly. "But there are specific aspects of the campaign I'd agree with. One is not having cruise missiles in our country, and particularly not having them near where I live! But it would be immoral to expect America to retain nuclear weapons in order to protect us when we don't keep them to protect ourselves. It's a very difficult question."

And how did Pete Townshend come to collaborate on "All Lovers Are Deranged" and "On The Air"? Gilmour says he had rejected "about three different sets of lyrics for the two tracks, so eventually I asked Peter if he would do some. It had nothing to do with the Who or his fame; it's just that I like the things he stands for. I didn't work with him on them—I sent him finished backing tracks and he sent them back with a lyric sheet and some rough vocals dubbed on. I didn't want to restrict him."

Gilmour admits to being apprehensive over the critical and public response to his album, primarily because he's making such a heavy commitment to his solo career at the moment—to the point where he says it has temporary priority over even his own family commitments (he's married, with three children ages two, four and seven). *About Face* closes with a song titled "Near the End," interpreted by some as being about the gradual dissolution of Pink Floyd. In it Gilmour sings of "Thinking that we're getting older and wiser/When we're just getting old/When you see what's been achieved/Is there a feeling that you've been deceived?" But every ending suggests a beginning, even if, as in this case, it's a tentative one. Told he looked sad and withdrawn onstage, Gilmour bursts into laughter. "I was just nervous," he explains after calming down, "but perhaps I've been around Roger Waters too long. It could be contagious!" ○

PHOTO FRANK SCHRAMM MAKE-UP PRU WALTERS HAIR LESLIE LOPEZ

A WAY TO GO-GO

INTO THE BREACH (AND ONCOMING TRAFFIC) WITH FIVE LIVE ONES

BY ANTHONY DECURTIS

OBLIVIOUS TO THE JAM OF RUSH hour drivers, Go-Go Kathy Valentine eases her black Le Baron convertible out of the parking lot and snail-crawls down Los Angeles' Melrose Avenue. Our somnambulent pace is matched in weirdness only by the disturbing fact that, for reasons as yet unclear, the door on the driver's side is wide open.

Suddenly a voice much less soothing than that of *2001*'s Hal the Computer intones from the dashboard: "A door is ajar." "I dunno, looks like a *door* to me," the spike-haired bassist chortles gleefully as she slams the door, presses pedal to metal and propels us to further adventures.

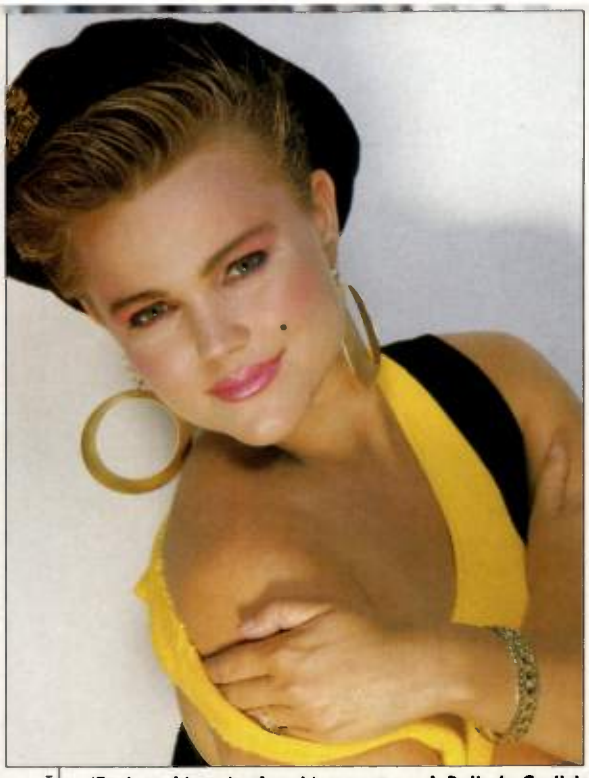
Which aren't long in coming. Later that evening the 25-year-old Valentine swings onto a narrow, two-way side street while fishing for something in her bag. From the opposite direction a car approaches, its headlights assuming a look of terrified pleading as we gun directly toward them. Valentine's black-booted foot is on the accelerator, her eyes are probing the contents of the bag to the right of her seat, and it's clearly time to cast journalistic distance to the wind.

"Kathy, WATCH it! Look out! Look out!" I yell. Valentine looks up, swerves abruptly to the right, and calmly cruises past her (no doubt) intensely relieved fellow motorist, who's stopped dead in the opposite lane. Casting a mischievous and unashamed glance in my direction, Valentine quips matter-of-factly: "What a way to Go-Go, eh?"

WHO WOULDN'T WANT TO GO like a Go-Go these days? *Talk Show*, the band's third album, has not only restored their chart credibility after 1982's disappointing *Vacation*, but its rhythmic muscle and percussive kick have established the quintet as a rock 'n' roll battery to be reckoned with. This shift in sound and image suits Kathy fine.

"One realization that made me start thinking about our image," Valentine reflects, reassuringly immobile in a restaurant booth and quaffing margaritas, "is that I'd meet someone in another band at a party and we'd have a conversation, and the person would end up the night saying, 'It was really a pleasure to meet you. I never thought I would like anybody in the Go-Go's.' That happened a few times and I started thinking, wow, what do our peers think of us and why do they think of me in this way?"

A tad naive, *ne c'est pas*? Strange though it may seem, there's something about appearing on album and magazine covers in towels, tutus and cotton underwear that makes people tend not to take you seriously, you know? But what really troubled the Go-Go's is that their "silly, airhead, dizzy



'Projects,' 'product' and 'percentages': Belinda Carlisle (left) and Jane Wiedlin keep tabs on the Go-Go's' bottom line

PHOTOS FRANK SCHRAMM

broad" image, in drummer Gina Schock's words, totally overwhelmed their achievements, which by any standard have been remarkable.

To start with, the band's 1981 double-platinum debut album, *Beauty and the Beat*, is a pop-craft masterwork. Produced by Richard Gottehrer, the record pumped out hooks with assembly-line regularity and generated two smash singles in "Our Lips Are Sealed" and "We Got The Beat." The album topped the charts, but more important, from the standpoint of history, it was the first album by an all-female rock band ever to penetrate the Top 100, let alone go to Number One. As Charlotte Caffey says, with a broad, completely filling-free smile, "That's a fact. It will always be a fact."

While the premature rush-job follow-up, *Vacation*, was neither as artistically accomplished nor as commercially successful, it did sell 800,000 copies (and it will almost certainly be certified platinum this year in the wake of *Talk Show*'s triumph—it was in the Top 20 as of this writing—and the band's summer tour) and produced a Top 10 hit in its title track.

But when the obviously inferior *Vacation* stalled the Go-Go's' seemingly unstoppable momentum, the band's critics unleashed their assault: the first LP was just a fluke; the girls really couldn't play; they'd run dry as songwriters; they weren't serious about the band; they couldn't stand the pressure.

Thus began the strange sequence of events that nearly unraveled the world's most successful all-girl band, though it took some time for the importance of what was happening to slam home. "There were two sides of it," Valentine reasons. "The album wasn't doing as well as *Beauty and the Beat*, but *we* were doing better—we were on our first major tour, playing huge arenas, and finally experiencing the fruits of the success we had earned before. We were starting to see money for the first time—a year goes by before you see any. So it didn't seem that bad."

When the exhausted band returned to Los Angeles in November of '82, they devised a highly rational plan for the new year: relax and write for a couple of months, rehearse in March, record a third album in June, release it in the fall. But finally the Go-Go's had to confront some serious issues that they'd been able to avoid during the daily blitz of more than a year of non-stop touring and recording.

In addition to the letdown of *Vacation* and an increasingly incongruous sun-funteen image, the band's business arrangements, having grown extraordinarily complex in the rise from the L.A. punk club circuit to double platinum, needed restructuring. "Our manager, Ginger Canzoneri, was basically a friend of ours who had never managed anybody before," states guitarist Jane Wiedlin. "She was as green as we were at being in a band. She hadn't made big-figure deals and she hadn't pushed record companies around. She hadn't done any of the things that become necessary when a band gets huge. It got harder and harder on her, because if something went wrong, we'd scream at her. She was under a lot of pressure from us and from the record company, who, I think, felt they could push her around because she was inexperienced. We wanted someone who would yell and scream, if necessary, and get things done for us." The Go-Go's are now with Front Line Management, which also handles Dan Fogelberg, Stevie Nicks and others. Canzoneri (who was unavailable for comment) is out of the picture at present, although Carlisle says "Ginger may be involved with us in a creative way in the future."

Then a series of personal difficulties began to exact a toll, the thorniest and most mysterious of which was guitarist Charlotte Caffey's hand injury. "My hand—the doctor said two weeks, and then it turned into four months and a total nightmare," Caffey recalls, without specifying exactly what the problem was. "It was an incredible amount of strain on the girls. I couldn't play, I couldn't do anything. It was physical, it wasn't psychological—I don't believe it was. I saw four physical therapists, three doctors. They gave me cortisone shots; they were going to operate.

"It was such a guilt thing on me. I felt, 'I'm ruining it.' At the same time I was going through a time where I wasn't writing very much. I don't know what triggered what, or what came first—if having my hand not working made me not be able to write or vice versa. And after two months of me not being able to play, the girls tried to *insist* upon me playing. It was a very, very difficult time for us, and we did come very close to breaking up."

While Caffey's enigmatic arm ailment turned the Go-Go's' future into a big question mark, her writing block dropped a weighty creative burden on her four colleagues. The most musically sophisticated member of the band and the most prolific composer, Caffey had either written or co-written 15 of the 22 original tracks on the first two albums. Her being essentially out of commission tightened the pressure on the rest of the group, who were already reeling from the image and man-

agement problems plaguing them. It was not blue skies overhead.

"I was scared we were going to break up," Valentine confesses. "Belinda was having personal problems with her boyfriend at the time and, to me, she didn't seem interested in the band. She had done that movie (*Swing Shift*) and I was scared she would want to go on and be in movies. Charlotte had her arm problem and was totally freaked out about that. We were meeting with every manager in the whole city, and in New York too. They were all saying, 'This is what we can do for you,' and we were falling apart at the seams.

"On top of that we were going to rehearsal every day and it was, like, '*Ohhhhh*, let's try to work this song out again,' and 'When are we gonna make the record, when are we gonna make the record?' For over a year we didn't generate any income at all and I was starting to worry about money. Everyone seemed to scatter. It got to be almost a laughing matter. You'd walk into rehearsal and think, 'Who is it gonna be this time?' and inevitably somebody would walk in and just burst into tears and say, It's useless, it's hopeless."

As these difficulties mounted, it became evident that *Talk Show* would have a great deal to accomplish. New songwriting powers would have to emerge in the band. If the record was going to appear before late 1984, someone would have to compensate musically for Caffey's extended period away from her guitar. The sound and songs would have to be tough enough to shatter the public's frilly perception of the band and to convey all the group had endured in the past year.

The numerous problems *Talk Show* had to resolve instigated yet another round of indecision, decision and revision, this time hinging on one major question: Who would produce? The Go-Go's were pleased with PopMeister Richard Gottehrer's work on the first two albums, but believed their new tunes demanded fresh ears. A stream of producers, including Quincy Jones and Chris Thomas, were contacted and consulted, and the same issues arose again and again. How did they view the band? Were they knowledgeable about the band's work? Would they respect the band's suggestions or try to bully them?

"We had lost a lot of confidence," Valentine admits. "I had anyway. I wasn't sure whether our songs were good. We hadn't been playing them live, we hadn't been trying them out on the audience, so to speak. We had been out of the public eye for so long. You don't see your name anywhere, you don't hear your stuff on the radio, you don't read interviews that you've done. I started having an identity crisis. Are we still a viable band, or are we one of those whatever-happened-to bands?"

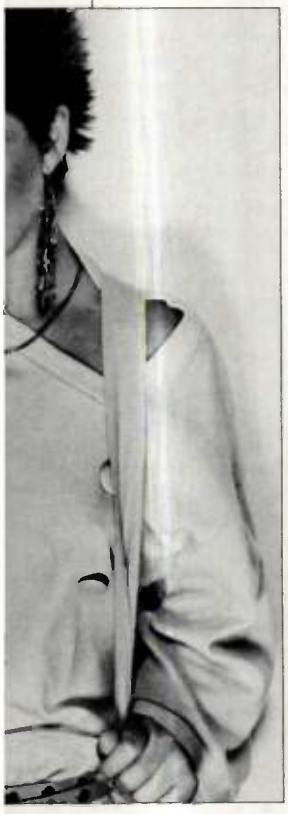
At the recommendation of I.R.S. Records' founder Miles Copeland, the Go-Go's met with and eventually selected English producer Martin Rushent (see related story, page 28). Rushent, best known for his work with the Human League, impressed the band with his openness, intelligence and interest, vanquishing their doubts about his synthesizer fetish and publicly stated conviction that guitars were likely to become obsolete.

Whatever their eventual fate, guitars were absolutely going to play a central role on *Talk Show*, says Valentine, who cowrote five of the album's 10 tunes and rocked out half the guitar solos on the record (a return to those days in the Textones when she handled the guitar exclusively), while Caffey handled keyboards and attempted to resharpen her ax chops once her hand recovered. "I definitely didn't want us to come crawling back," Valentine insists. "I wanted this record to be rock 'n' roll sounding. I wanted guitar solos that sounded like solos. With the saturation of synthesizer music that was going on, I didn't want to go in that direction at all. I don't like that stuff a whole lot, and I didn't want it to look like we were jumping on the next gravy train. I wanted it to be rough and raw. Music like Culture Club and the bands from England is nice and pleasant, but to me it's not rock 'n' roll."

THE GO-GO'S LEFT L.A. FOR RUSH-ent's studio, Genetic Sound, in Reading, England, with the hope that the forced companionship, the remote locale, the lack of distractions, and the heady rush of finally recording their new album would rev up their collective enthusiasm. Their first rehearsal with Rushent on November 1 of last year marked the major turning point in their effort to smash the obstacles that had impeded their progress for over a year.

"There was still a lot of tension and weirdness in the band," Caffey recalls. "Martin saw the problems the band was going through." "We felt like we were banging our heads against the wall," Gina Schock relates. "We didn't know whether our arrangements were right; we'd go over things a million times, and we had no one to tell us, we didn't know who to *ask*, even. We didn't know who to turn to. Then finally when we got over to England and we

(from left) Kathy Valentine, Charlotte Caffey and Gina Schock: Individual dramas and post-*Vacation* blahs



'I DIDN'T WANT TO MAKE A WIMPY ALBUM'

BECAUSE ALL FIVE GO-GO'S' MENTIONED THE BAND'S TRIP TO England to begin working with producer Martin Rushent on Talk Show *as the turning point of their post-*Vacation *blahs, it seemed only natural to get Rushent's take on manning the board for the girls. Rushent spoke by phone from Genetic Sound, his home/studio in Reading, England and the site of the* Talk Show *sessions.* —**Anthony DeCurtis**

How did you initially become involved in producing *Talk Show*?

Miles Copeland was the catalyst. He approached me about a year ago and said, "I really think you should do the Go-Go's."

Did the idea of working with the Go-Go's appeal to you?

Initially, no, because I'm a bit of a synthesist myself, and they're a guitar rock 'n' roll band, basically. But I was in Los Angeles and Miles arranged for me to meet them last summer. We got along really well—I just liked them as people, really—and I decided to give it a go. The girls were wary, a bit nervous about working with a guy who was heavily into synthesizers.

What seemed to be on the Go-Go's' minds when they first talked to you?

They felt they'd written a collection of songs that had a lot more depth than their previous work. They thought they'd written fairly heavy rock numbers and they wanted them done like that. And when I heard the material for the first time I thought they were right. There were half a dozen cuts that should be approached seriously. They wanted to do more solo work than before, and to have a lot more attention paid to the detail of the record than had been paid in the past. Both I and they were concerned that they should sound a little tougher. To my ears, they sounded a little bit poppy and flouncy before. I didn't want to make a wimpy record. I understood that certain songs needed a lighter treatment than others, but there were some songs they wanted to sound hard, and I think we were successful at that.

How would you describe the sessions?

They took about ten weeks, including the mixing: nine weeks in the studio and one week of rehearsals. They were very well rehearsed when they arrived, apart from a couple of songs that had been written shortly before the album started. They were incredibly hard-working, probably one of the hardest working bands I've ever had. Nothing was too much trouble. They were all much better musicians than I had been led to believe. I tried to have no preconceptions about them before they got here, but a lot of people—well, not a lot of people, but several people—have said, "Oh, I hear they don't play too good," and blah, blah, blah. But, actually, they turned out to be very skillful. I mean, they're a damn sight better than a lot of bands I've recorded in the past, you know?

Gina mentioned that at first you had wanted to use synthesized drums. How did that get resolved?

I don't think anyone was being dogmatic. We really wanted to try to get the best of both worlds. We wanted some of the precision and power you can achieve with machine drums coupled with the liveliness of real drums. We eventually worked out a system where Gina could track onto the drums and we could add certain effects from the machines, and it really worked out very well. There were never any arguments or fights about it.

The technique that we applied to the songs was essentially the same all around. Gina would do her drums first on her own, working with the guide drum track, and we'd gradually add each individual on to get exactly the right sound for the song. We spent a lot of time discussing each song, how we wanted it to sound, what the instrumentation would be, and a long time perfecting each individual's performance.

Can you define what you try to do as a producer in general and relate that to your work with the Go-Go's?

A producer's role is to help people get what they want. Sometimes they don't know how to deal with all this massive technology, a 48-track console, computers and God knows what else. So you steer them through that jungle of technology, and try and educate them as to how all this machinery can be used to their advantage. As long as the band has an element of trust in your ability to do the right thing for them, they'll follow you. Once that's happening, you've got yourself a real project.

And that's what's happened with the Go-Go's. They initially said, "Look, this is what we want to achieve. Can we do it?" My answer was, "Yes, this is how it's going to happen, this is how it can be done," and it went from there.

Were you ever tempted to use more synthesizers on the record?

I was quite content. I was recording the Go-Go's. For me to succumb to any temptation to smother their songs with synthesizers would have been silly. I'll save that for my own album.

Were you pleased with how the album came out?

Yes, I was. It's the first American band I've produced, in fact, and I was a little bit wary about working with Americans. Not because of any dislike for Americans at all. Quite the contrary. But, you know, you are different. You have different terminologies for certain things; and your own outlook on life, and perhaps your outlook on creativity, isn't similar to ours. One of the things I discovered, I suppose, was that there's probably many more similarities between Britons and Americans than there are differences, culturally. I'm looking forward to working with more American bands, now that I've broken the ice. ○

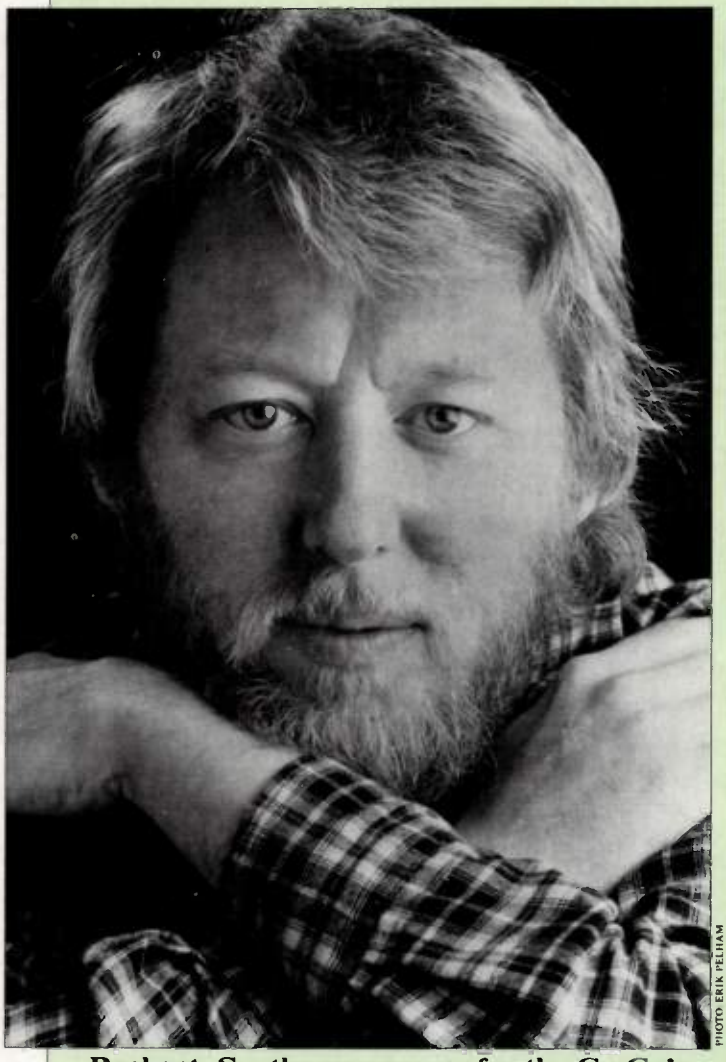


PHOTO ERIK PELHAM

Rushent: Synths were no-go for the Go-Go's

had a rehearsal with Martin, he said, 'Well, there's not much I can do with these arrangements. They're all great.' We were like, 'Jesus Christ, what a relief!'"

So our five Cinderellas spent 10 weeks with the Prince Charming producer, made a record that kicked ass and bulleted up the charts, progressed toward defining an adult image and never suffered again, right?

Right, except for the last part. After returning to L.A. to prepare for an international tour to begin in April, the 26-year-old Schock—historically perceived as the band's hypochondriac—decided to check in with the doctor for a check-up. "Just more silliness," thought her rhythm section compatriot, Valentine.

"We were at rehearsal when the doctor called," Schock remembers. "He said, 'I want you to come down so I can speak with you about the results of your test.' I said, 'Can't you tell me over the phone?' He said, 'I'd rather speak to you in person.' Well, I started crying right there."

On March 19 Schock underwent elective open-heart surgery ("They sawed my chest open," she dead-pans) at Cedar Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles to repair an atrial septal defect, a hole in the heart between the two collecting chambers. The operation lasted approximately three hours, with an additional hour for plastic surgery, and was judged completely successful.

The condition had existed since birth. "I'm thankful that it was found out now," says Schock. "The doctor told me that by the time I was 40 I would have been a complete invalid, or I would have died of a massive heart attack. He said I could have waited until after the tour to do this. I chose to do it now, because I couldn't stand the thought of it."

The most heartening sign of the Go-Go's' new-found maturity is the degree to which Gina's sickness has pulled them together. The whole band accompanied her to the doctor when she got the news, spent the rest of the day with her, and two of the girls stayed at her home that night. Just before she entered the hospital, the band rented a couple of cars and took her to a southern California spa for relaxation, fun and moral support. Now they're awaiting her recovery before starting rehearsals for their summer tour, scheduled to kick off in Detroit on June 21. "I don't think there are many bands who love each other as much as we do," says Kathy Valentine disarmingly, and who could disagree?

So after nearly splintering over a bum arm, an album that merely went gold, inexperienced management, and boy problems, the Go-Go's can now face major surgery and the postponement of an international tour with striking equanimity. Not that everything's perfect in Go-Go land.

The band's current high-fashion clothes horse image, while a cut more realistic than the previous persona of bouncy teen queens, still exists at a measurable distance from flesh-and-blood humanity. On the honesty front, Jane Wiedlin and lead singer Belinda Carlisle seem content to dismiss the difficulties of the past two years with p.r. truisms like, "Everyone has problems." They've settled into being professional Go-Go's, prating about "careers," "projects," "product" and "percentages" between only half-spontaneous collapses into Val-Girl giggles. During a joint interview they shot dagger-glances across the table at the mention of Charlotte's frustration about being pushed to play when she felt her arm wasn't ready. "It was a learning experience," Belinda icily explained.

As for the others, Charlotte—the band's true beauty and the most emotionally vulnerable Go-Go—is struggling to overcome her songwriting block. Enormously engaging and outspoken, Kathy is the group's rock 'n' roll heart—moving, dressing and, God knows, driving with a swagger that charmingly recalls her male idols.

And feisty Gina awaits health, the road and respect: "I certainly appreciate life in general a lot more. I can't wait to get back to drumming. This album will make it so that, instead of most of our musicians friends saying, 'My kid would love to meet you,' they're gonna say, 'You did a great job.' And it will make other musicians admit, 'Yeah, they are pretty good.'"

So let it be said: on *Talk Show* the Go-Go's do a great job. And journalists, like musicians, will have to own up: Yeah, this is a band, and a pretty good one at that. Way to go-go. ○

PHOTO: ANASTASIA PANTSIOS/KALEYEDISCOPE

'Yeah, they are pretty good':
Will the Go-Go's' peers and critics own up after hearing *Talk Show*?

MARK MEHLER

ALL COME TO LOOK FOR AMERICA

Ruben Blades in the land of the free, the home of the brave

Columbus Avenue is a street running through what is commonly referred to as Manhattan's "burgeoning" upper west side. It is "burgeoning" because swanky, high-tech clothing stores and restaurants are moving in, driving rents skyward and driving out long-established neighborhood shop owners who quietly provided vital services for the area until they could no longer compete for space with hipper-than-thou emporiums selling only *atmosphere*, not good food or clothing that might have some value beyond, say, next week.

One of the anachronisms on the Avenue is the Tap-A-Keg bar, a decidedly low-tech establishment (its sign proclaims it "A Hell of a Joint") with Latin music on the jukebox and no quiche on the menu. In a delicious irony, the Tap-A-Keg turns out to be the favorite watering hole of a 35-year-old man who may one day be the president of Panama but is right now a preeminent Latin singer-songwriter who's attempting to bring his socially-conscious music to an American audience. Suffice it to say that Ruben Blades' view of the world's precarious state is as concerned as Columbus Avenue's is frivolous.

But then, most of the carpetbagging shopkeepers here wouldn't know what it's like to scrounge on the street for bedding.

You might say the adult education of Ruben Blades began when he went to the mattress. Almost a decade ago Blades was a newly-arrived Panamanian immigrant, a 26-year-old attorney who had given up his legal practice and come to New York to play salsa music for the masses.

What he found was subsistence employment in the mailroom of Fania Records and a "horrible" little flat on the upper west side, where every night he slept on a cold wood floor and battled a crushing loneliness the likes of which he never imagined when he left his homeland.

Salvation came in the form of a weathered old mattress, discarded and left on the street for the next morning's round of garbage collection.

"What I really needed most at that time was a bed," Blades recalls. "I looked down from my second floor window and couldn't believe what I was thinking of doing. In Panama, there's *no way* I'm going to go down there and have my neighbors see me carry off something that somebody else *threw out*. You don't do that. But this city was teaching me a new reality. It was telling me to cut out the bullshit I brought over here and go down to that street and *survive*. I was deeply humbled, but I was also growing up."

'You tell it like it is, you make trouble'

With the new bed commenced phase two of the professional and spiritual odyssey of Ruben Blades, who proceeded to leap from the Fania mail room job to a spot in esteemed Latin band leader Ray Barretto's group. In 1977, after two years with Barretto, Blades joined Willie Colon and the Fania All-Stars—the top Latin band, bar none—as a co-leader, and racked up four gold albums and a Grammy nomination before going solo in 1983.

But success didn't dull Blades' fear for the fate of his troubled homeland, a great deal of which is recounted on his stunning new album, *Buscando America* (*Searching for America)*. Released by Elektra, the LP might well become the first hard-core salsa record to find a sizeable U.S. audience, if the label can master the intricacies of Latin crossover. At least Blades has delivered on his end: *Buscando America* spans the spectrum of the Latin experience in the New World through a mix of charged Dylanesque politipop, barrio soul and soaring poetry. Should this experiment succeed, the implications for pop music are enormous.

"Latin Americans have to have a form of communication that talks about being Latin-American and not American Latin; that doesn't view ultimate success in Las Vegas terms; that addresses the rage and hopes of a people completely deprived of a voice in the media," says Blades. "What is there now? 'Owner of a Lonely Heart' is a Latin riff, Latin Hustle, establishment bullshit. You know why I put a doo-wop intro on 'Decisiones' (the first track on *Buscando*)? It reminds me of what happened to us as a people. In Panama we looked to the U.S. as the sun that would lead us away from darkness. We thought America was the father, but it was really Hollywood, nothing. All that time, we never really looked at ourselves, and we stayed undeveloped and without respect, while we got ripped off. Once and for all, let's give Latins a chance to think about who they are."

Such talk is heretical in the present climate of Latin music, so it comes as no surprise that Blades is widely regarded in business circles as a troublemaker. He's presently bogged down in a quagmire of federal lawsuits relating to his previous nine-year association with Fania Records. "You tell it like it is, you make trouble," Blades says forcefully, his voice rising. "I

PHOTO JONATHAN LEVINE

have years of legal training, so am I going to be a dumb shit? In Spain the writer's association tells me I've sold 268,000 records, and the record company says I sold none and they overpaid me thousands of dollars in royalties. What is going on?"

With *Buscando* Blades violates yet another cardinal rule of the Latin scene by getting political. His songs deal with death squads, state-supported terrorism and bankrupt foreign policies, as conveyed in a series of wrenching personal vignettes, such as the story of a mother's search for her family (in "Desapariciones," or "Disappearances"), all of whom have vanished without a trace, leaving her to ask, "Where do people who disappear go to?"; the horrific recollection of the cold-blooded shooting of a priest and an altar boy ("El Padre Antonio y el monaguillo Andres," or "Father Antonio and the Altar Boy, Andres"); and most moving of all, the title song, a cry for the United States to live up to the vision of its founding fathers, even though "Those afraid of truth have made her disappear."

Blades' concern for social justice was cultivated by his paternal grandmother, who raised him while the parents worked to support a large family. "My grandmother was the most exceptional woman I've ever known. One of the first women to graduate high school in Panama; a free spirit, a yogi, a vegetarian, a spiritualist. Whatever I am or will be is due to her."

His eyes opened, Blades began questioning instead of accepting. Riots in 1964 left a couple of dozen Panamanians dead, and Blades found himself believing that "the same army that licked the Nazis was kicking our ass." He followed the civil rights movement here and wondered "whether the United States was like we saw it in Technicolor." As a form of protest, he stopped singing in English.

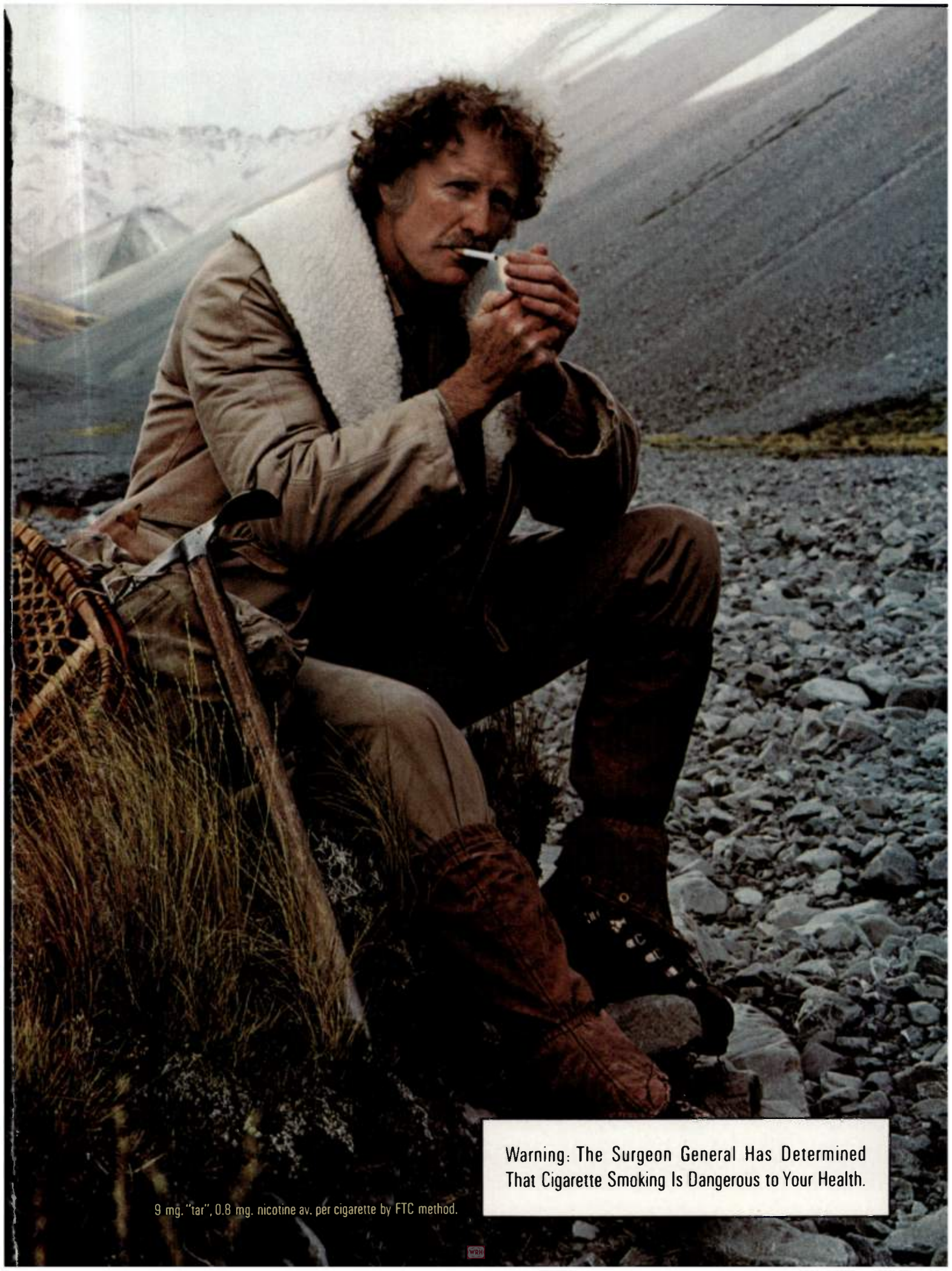
Prodding from his grandmother coupled to his own growing awareness of a world without order prompted Blades to enter law school; upon graduation he went into private practice. Two years later he decided "pop music is where I'm needed. In Panama I was just another lawyer."

Eventually Blades will return to Panama to reclaim his birthright in long lost love. Current Panamanian public opinion polls place him third in personal popularity among his countrymen, behind the late President Omar Torrijos and boxer Roberto Duran. But there is work to do in preparation for the trip home. This fall Blades will enter Harvard to study for a Master's degree in international law. "I need to re-establish my credentials as a professional before I go back," he explains. "Right now Panama is going through an election with no strong leadership. 50 percent of the people are 21 or younger. I want to be part of the political process someday. Because I have this education, I don't think I'll be denied a place in government if I can earn it." ○

CAMEL LIGHTS

It's a whole new world.

Today's
Camel Lights,
unexpectedly mild.


Warning: The Surgeon General Has Determined
That Cigarette Smoking Is Dangerous to Your Health.
9 mg. "tar", 0.8 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method.

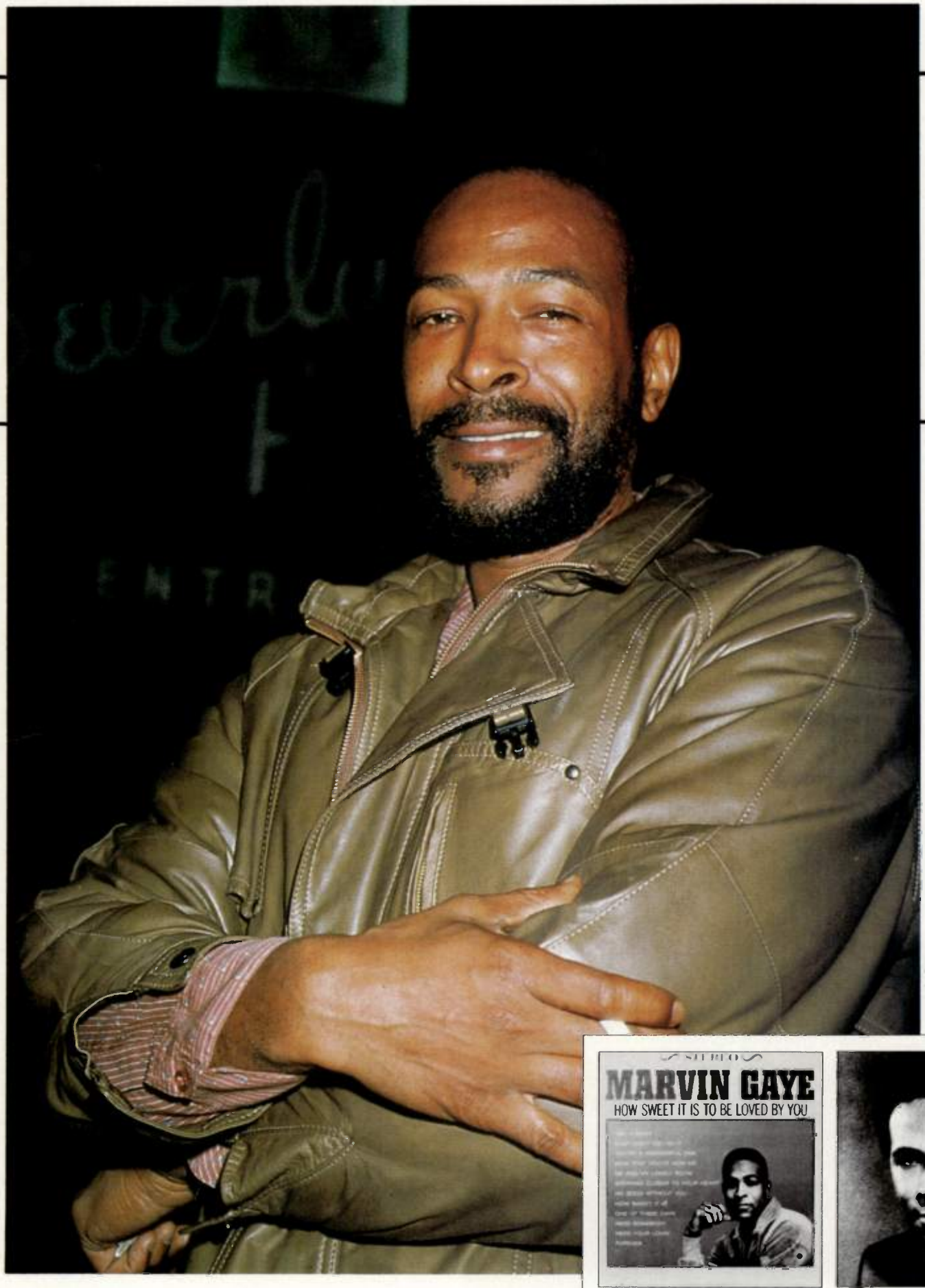
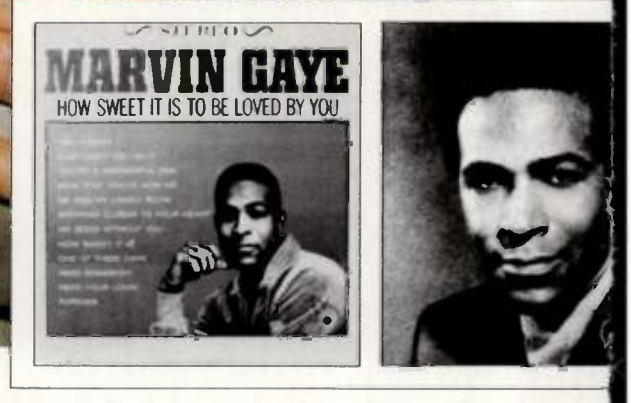


PHOTO EA RETNA



THE ART AND ARTISTRY OF MARVIN GAYE

No One Quite Like Him

BY DAVE MARSH

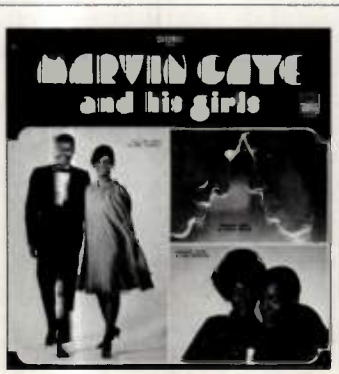
I used to think Marvin Gaye was the most underrated soul singer of the '60s. Now I'd expand that judgment, not only because of his ugly, tragic death but because the music Gaye made in the last decade of his life warrants it Gaye was the most underrated singer of the past *two* decades—and since "Sexual Healing" has been overwhelmed in public memory by *Thriller*, perhaps he would have suffered the same fate in a third.

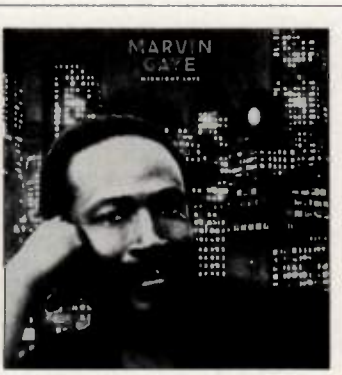
Yet Marvin Gaye was a great singer, a great entertainer and, for my money, as great an artist as popular music has produced. My office is littered now with 20 albums, spanning his career from the first Tamla hit, "Stubborn Kind of Fellow" (1962), through *Midnight Love*, the 1982 album that contained "Sexual Healing." These albums are Gaye's legacy. They include every style of music from the bluesiest singles ever created at Motown to Nat King Cole tributes, from doo-wop emulations to the slinky sexual syncopations of *Let's Get It On*, from duet triumphs with Tammi Terrell to the inconsolably solitary creations of the early '80s. Some of these songs are inalterably basic examples of the gospel-blues bedrock in which Gaye and producers Holland-Dozier-Holland specialized on his early hits. Others are among the most sophisticated pop music ever crafted, incorporating production electronics, post-psychedelic conceptualizing and Caribbean rhythms without ever making a gauche or foolish move.

For all its disparate elements, Gaye's music is held together from beginning to end by a sense of cool so complete that it's majestic, an awesome unflappability that is his trademark. Gaye's cool wasn't a matter of emotional distance or reserve (except when it needed to be). It was a matter of *control*. Even when he cuts loose, as in "Can I Get A Witness" and "Wonderful One," you can hear him building up to the peak, measuring the moment, modulating it, reining it in again. Other performers—even ones as great as Solomon Burke and Wilson Pickett—zeroed in on a target and demolished it. Gaye was more subtle: first he would survey every inch of the ground his trajectory covered, *then* home in and, with considerable aplomb, pulverize his prey.

Gaye's talent couldn't be denied. It began with a three-octave tenor voice, and included a full range of effects from breathy falsetto to gravelly basso, an amazing ability to find a pocket in the beat and cruise in it, a sharp sense of how to get the most from his collaborators. But what's most striking about his work is that it's always intelligent, forever conscious of itself. Gaye was always probing, restlessly tinkering with shades of meaning even—or especially—during his best performances. What he did with "The Star Spangled Banner," when he sang the anthem to open the 1983 NBA All-Star Game, transforming the unwieldy words and old-fashioned melody into something contemporary that became a statement about the sentiment at the core of the song, about his own relationship to it, about the piece as a *work of art*, he did continuously and less obtrusively in his own albums and shows.

Even performers as great as Smokey Robinson and Stevie Wonder sometimes like to ride on instinct. Gaye never acquired that habit, so even when he was bored and annoyed—as he was through most of his last two Tamla albums—he couldn't fall back on craft and let himself glide. Instead, Gaye fashioned those albums, *Here My Dear* and *In Our Lifetime*, as comments on his situation: the injustice of alimony in the first case, the tribulations of making music to finish off a contract in the second. He did this even though—or





PHOTOS: MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES, EBET ROBERTS

Blessed with a cool born of control rather than emotional distance or reserve, Marvin Gaye was the artist who best expressed Motown's mix of disparate musical styles

again, because—that meant that those albums were often tedious and irritating.

As a result of those traits, of the concreteness of his concepts, of the sweep of his ambition and the totality of his command, Marvin Gaye's approach has more in common with the smartest, most inspired white rock stars—Lennon, Townshend, Lou Reed, Brian Wilson—than it does with such black performers as Wonder, George Clinton or even Sly Stone. Gaye shared with such white rockers the inclination to shape each album around an explicitly stated theme—and indeed, the inclination to mold his music in album-length rather than hit single formats in the first place. This cost him in the late '70s when white-oriented FM radio banished black musicians from its precincts, while black-oriented radio refused to relinquish its emphasis on hits.

Motown was set apart from the rest of black music, given its greater access to the pop mainstream, largely because of what it wasn't. Motown records were aware of blues and gospel, used them as tangible reference points, but first and foremost, Motown singers sang pop. Thus the label's appropriate patron saint was Jackie Wilson, with his big band arrangements and Al Jolson tributes. But after his experience as a Wilson songwriter, Berry Gordy perfected a more balanced blend. If any one performer could be said to best express the artistry of that mix, it was probably Marvin Gaye.

Gaye had a background in doo-wop, R&B and gospel. When he needed to reflect it, he could summon it up as effectively, as authentically as the great Atlantic and Stax singers: "Can I Get A Witness" is cut from the same cloth as the hits of Solomon Burke and records like "I'll Be Doggone" and "Baby Don't You Do It" echo Otis Redding and Wilson Pickett, without the former's rusticity or the latter's implied threat. Yet it's hard to imagine any other Motown star pulling off music so bluesy, so deeply rooted in gospel, as the Holland-Dozier-Holland hits of Marvin Gaye. The marvelous, gospel-like simplicity of "You're A Wonderful One," "How Sweet It Is (To Be Loved By You)," "Your Unchanging Love" and other Gaye/H-D-H collaborations continually promise fullblown outbursts in the Stax-Volt style, but they're kept perpetually in check. The resulting tension, and the fact that it's never fully released, is uniquely Motown's. But it's hard to imagine a singer more clearly suited to the style than the diffident and debonair Marvin Gaye.

However unhappy and recalcitrant he may have been with the production process, Gaye had hits with every significant writer, performer and arranger in the Gordy group and he fitted perfectly with four different duet partners (Tammi Terrell, Kim Weston, Diana Ross and Mary Wells). Unlike Stevie Wonder, Gaye's career didn't develop neatly, so one can't talk about periods in his music. He worked off and on with Holland-Dozier-Holland from 1963 ("Witness") through 1967 ("Your Unchanging Love"), after which H-D-H split the label. But he also worked with his one-time mentor, Harvey Fuqua, and Johnny Bristol on those shattering duet records, including "It Takes Two," "Ain't Nothing Like the Real Thing," "If I Could Build My Whole World Around You" and the inimitable (ask Diana Ross) "Ain't No Mountain High Enough." And during 1965 and 1966, he made three singles with Smokey Robinson that are so sassy, sophisticated, smooth and danceable that they seem like the truest progenitors of his '70s style: "I'll Be Doggone," "Take This Heart of Mine" and "One More Heartache," confessions more complete than any Smokey ever allowed himself, coupled with snaky, sensuous rhythms not months but years ahead of their time. This music all but demands the extension it received in *What's Going On* and *Let's Get It On*. But for the time, Marvin was still chained to the Motown machine.

It was with the machine—indeed, with Norman Whitfield, probably the most mechanistic producer Motown ever saw—that he made his masterpiece, the single most enduring track he recorded: "I Heard It Through The Grapevine," a composite of 400 years of paranoia and talking drum gossip distilled into 3:15 of anguished soul searching. "Grapevine" is a great song, but Gaye's version is by far the greatest anyone has ever done, because his fretful, self-absorbed vocal so completely complements Whitfield's ominous arrangement. Bearing down on every word, making each syllable count, Gaye explored "Grapevine" as if the song were a lost continent of music and emotion, as if the plotters in the song were his true and personal demons, had in fact scorched his identity all but out of existence as the music suggests. In those three and a quarter minutes, Marvin Gaye earned his independence from the Motown mill, in part by so perfectly summarizing all of its splendors and delights. And as his final Whitfield collaborations, "That's The Way Love Is" and "The End of the Road" indicate, Marvin Gaye was going in his own direction anyhow. The suggestion of '70s funk in those two numbers is at least as much Whitfield as Gaye, but the intimacy, the degree to which they become dialogues between Marvin and the band (especially the bass), the suppleness with which the voice commands, is far removed from what happened in more typical Whitfield hits of the period—compare them to the Temptations' "I Can't Get Next To You" or "Psychedelic Shack" sometime.

What's Going On was a landmark in four areas. It opened black record production to the advances in technique made by white rock groups such as the Beatles. It expanded the music rhythmically, by stretching the meter further than even Sly Stone had dared to do, and it upended the R&B song form, which had persisted basically unchanged through the soul years, by unravelling it, allowing performers to explore nooks, crannies and nuances inaccessible within the more strictly blues-derived format. Finally, songs such as "What's Going on," "Inner City Blues," "What's

Happening Brother" and "Save The Children" exploded the range of topics available to black songwriters, previously limited to (at most) making general salutes to brotherhood and expresssions of anguish over discrimination. Gaye not only detailed the specifics of oppression, he also made strong statements about returning Vietnam veterans and against nuclear warfare, at a time when such subjects were risky even for acid-rockers.

What's Going On and its successor, the less political, more sensual *Let's Get It On* (which nevertheless served the admirable function of moving black pop thematically past mere flirtation and teasing, into the sweaty, complicated passions of adult lovemaking), stand as the two most elegant, exciting and seamless records Marvin Gaye ever made.

Yet after making them, Gaye was embittered. He felt slighted when less groundbreaking music got the reviews and awards: In 1971, the year of *What's Going On*, Grammys went to Carole King, Isaac Hayes, Paul McCartney, Lou Rawls, James Taylor and Bill Withers. Marvin Gaye garnered nary a nomination.

His fragile ego never recovered from that snub, which colored the rest of his days as surely as the collapse of Tammi Terrell into his arms just before her death from a brain hemorrhage. Gaye would never again make innocent music after Terrell's death; he would never make music so ambitious, lean and intensely performed after the Grammys ignored him. It wasn't until "Sexual Healing" that he had another big hit. His last decade was repeatedly marred by tragedy, disruption, disintegration: the failure of his marriage to Anna Gordy (supposedly portrayed *a clef* in Elaine Jesmer's 1974 novel, *Number One With A Bullet*), stage fright that all but immobilized him, a drug habit (he's said to have once injected himself with an ounce of pure cocaine in a suicide attempt), back tax bills, expatriation in England and Belgium, bankruptcy. The records become stark, perverse and infrequent, though his shows (when he could do them) remained straightforwardly sexual enterprises.

Now Gaye is in danger of being swallowed up—for the time being—by the manner of his death. Filicide is rare thing; the headlines are unavoidable. But that's not the substance of Marvin Gaye's life and career. The real story is the beauty and power of his recordings. When I hear "Pride and Joy" or "Distant Lover," "Hitch Hike" or "Got To Give It Up," when he and Tammi swing into the agonies and ecstasies of "Ain't Nothing Like The Real Thing" or "Ain't No Mountain High Enough," the truth becomes clear. There was no one quite like Marvin Gaye in the history of popular music and while that means that he can never, ever be replaced, it also means that those of us who loved him and what he did will never, ever let the world forget him.

notes

3-D rock 'n' roll

It figures. In the toy store, right there on the shelf next to Big Bird, Snow White and, most appropriately, Peter Pan, sits Michael Jackson. Not the real Michael Jackson, mind you, but rather, Michael Jackson *in 3-D*. Hey, now you're talking, boss. Right again: this Michael Jackson talks—sings even!

PHOTO: PAULA KELLY, DAVID McGLYNN

Talking View-Master's 3-D Thriller: *Our most begloved singer now sits on the shelf next to Peter Pan*

What it is is the latest entry in the selling of our most begloved singer and yet another example of music video's impact on the marketplace. Spurred by one of its executives' enthusiasm for contemporary music, the View-Master Corporation has added a new wrinkle to its recently-introduced Talking View-Master line by releasing a 3-D version of Michael Jackson's *Thriller* video. Next up is Menudo, and the company is currently negotiating with Adam Ant, Van Halen and Culture Club in hopes of bringing them into the fold.

The Talking View-Master employs a cartridge incorporating both a standard seven-scene 3-D Viewmaster reel and a tiny flexi-disc (*Thriller* is a three-cartridge set). Inside the unit is a constant speed motor, linear tracking tone arm and a self-cleaning sapphire needle. The sound, though inferior to that of a record, tape or Beta Hi-Fi video, is surprisingly clean and crisp. There's also a volume control on the side of the unit, and a mini-headphone jack. Suggested retail price on the Talking View-Master plus three cartridges is $29.95; cartridges can be purchased separately for approximately five dollars.

The View-Master Corporation's decision to enter the rock field came in early '83 at the urging of Gary Evans, V-M assistant vice president and creative director. Talking View-Master was scheduled to be on the market later that year with its standard children's titles, but the 43-year-old Evans had discerned what he considered "a new relationship between kids and rock music," international in scope and broad-based in appeal. In particular he saw his own children (he has three: daughters 14- and six-years-old, and a son 11-years-old) and their friends developing "pen pal" relationships as more and more foreign bands broke in this country. "My oldest daughter exchanges tapes with fans overseas," Evans observes, "and that level of communication is a big advance over what it was when I was that age. More than anything, View-Master's interest in rock is the result of this acceptance of rock by youth of all countries."

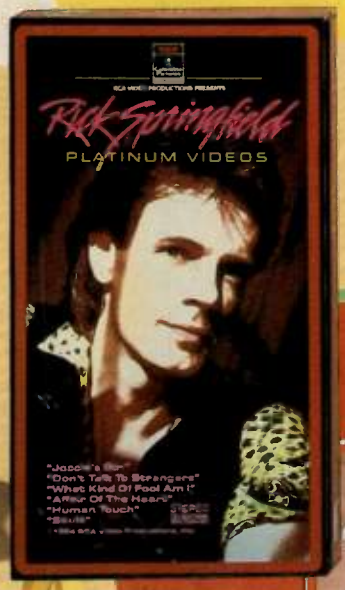
Neither Evans nor company president Arnold Thaler knew at the time that Jackson, long enamored of the View-Master he had owned as a child, would have his business associates propose the company release *Thriller* as a View-Master reel; conversely, neither Jackson nor his business associates knew at the time that View-Master had developed the technology to incorporate sound into their system. View-Master sent its senior photographer, Hank Gaylord, and free-lancer Gene Stein to the *Thriller* set in East Los Angeles ("Meeting Michael Jackson was great," says Gaylord. "The first thing he said to me after we were introduced was 'This was my idea.'"). From their 400 photos came 21 Jackson-approved shots, including several scenes not used in the final version of the video.

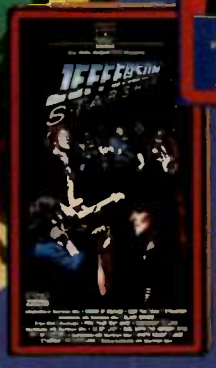
According to Evans, the View-Master demographic runs broadly from four- to 13-year-olds, although the Talking View-Master is expected to skew heavily to the eight- to 13-year-old group. Evans himself tested the product on a group

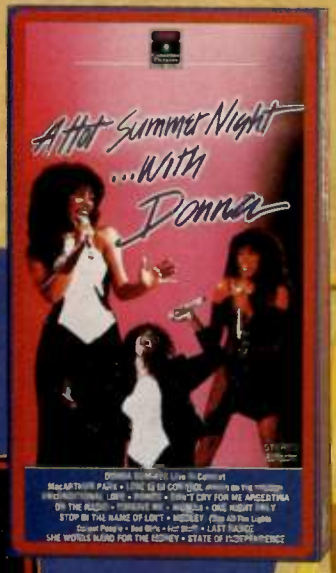
More ▷

PHOTO: LISA LEAVITT

Spring and Summer just got hotter.







NOW AVAILABLE ON VIDEOCASSETTE. PRICED FROM $19.95 TO $29.95.*

*Suggested Retail Price.

VHS STEREO MONO COMPATIBLE

Beta hi-fi STEREO MONO COMPATIBLE

RCA/COLUMBIA PICTURES HOME VIDEO, 2901 WEST ALAMEDA AVENUE, BURBANK, CALIFORNIA 91505, (818) 954-4950

RCA Columbia Pictures HOME VIDEO

notes

MUSIC VIDEO

PHOTO: LISA LEAVITT

Wait a minute, you say. You're watching Def Leppard's "Bringing on the Heartache," and you know you've seen it before. Well, you have. The first version of "Bringing on the Heartache," shot in 1981, was a live performance by the band. Why did they remake it when the original was already in heavy rotation on MTV? Band manager Cliff Bernstein says the first version "was made before we had the budget to do anything big, and before the general level of videos was sophisticated. And also, the song was never a hit single, so we're re-releasing it and adding it to High and Dry *(the album that preceded* Pyromania*). David Mallet made the video; he also did 'Photograph' and 'Foolin' ' and we like his stuff. Okay, so we didn't do 18 different versions of the same song—are we trying to rewrite history?" You be the judge.*

of students at his daughter's junior high school in Hillsborough, Oregon, and says the response was overwhelming. "I brought the Talking View-Master with me and they said they liked it, they wanted to take it home—and these are 13-year-olds! That convinced us there's a market for this."

At the time of this interview View-Master hoped to have at least two more rock titles available this summer. Evans points out, though, that negotiations are "sensitive" because of the number of concerns that must be addressed—not only the mastering rights with the record company, but mechanical and synchronization rights from writers, artist royalties and numerous miscellaneous expenses. "What we need from the record industry is recognition that this is a toy," Evans declares. "This isn't something you make a million dollars off of—it's for kids. Record companies don't understand the toy business.

And where will View-Master draw the line as to the proper fare for its young audience? Is Boy George more or less acceptable than, say, any of the clowns from Motley Crue? Evans admits the question is fraught with complications because "how do you find someone in rock who hasn't done something that's unsuitable to a company with a Disney-type image?" But Evans is going to have to find an answer to his own question, since he's primarily responsible for selecting the artists for View-Master. "The things we put on have to be above moral reproach. We won't show people undressing or doing anything questionable. Disney used to run character studies on actors before hiring them. The music and pictures we present must meet certain moral standards."

So where does that leave a guy who can't resist that fabulous new line of makeup, or a gal who wants nothing more than to be king of her castle?

"There's going to be no off-color stuff. As far as transvestism, we're not going to capitalize on that part of rock 'n' roll. We want to portray the good fun that rock 'n' roll is. It's entertaining, it's a great spectacle and it gives you a good feeling when you listen to it. At it's best that's what rock 'n' roll is—good fun. And that's what we want to get to." **—David McGee**

who's driving

You might think the seemingly sophisticated effects, great sense of humor and deep, surreal colors make the **Cars'** "You Might Think" one of the best music videos ever—and you might be right. But who directed it? The credits read: "Directed by **Charlex** and **Jeff Stein.**" Charlex is the special effects house in New York that made those great National Enquirer ads (where bodies slip off heads), HBO graphics and so forth. Jeff Stein is a music video director (Billy Idol's "Rebel Yell" clip is among his credits, besides compiling the Who's **The Kids Are Alright** rockumentary). Elektra Records (the Cars' label) says it hired Stein to direct "You Might Think," and he commissioned Charlex to work on the clip—and that Stein personally worked with **Ric Ocasek** and Elektra Records on the video. Stein comments: "There's no controversy about this clip. I'm the director of the video. Those in the know, know. Anyone claiming otherwise needs publicity more than I do."

Charlex part owner Charlie Levi, meanwhile, has this to say about it: "Jeff Stein got the Cars video because he used our graphics reel to show the Cars and Elektra. Ocasek agreed to use Stein because he liked our Enquirer ads. As far as I'm concerned, it's not a controversy. It's very clear that video couldn't have been made without Charlex. Elektra offered Charlex full billing, but we agreed to share it with Stein." Levi explained that Charlex put a lot of money into "You Might Think," shooting for seven days (it usually takes two days of shooting to make a music video promo), and editing for 300 hours.

Well, exactly how did they turn Ocasek into a mosquito, and get him to step inside a photograph, and get the Cars on a bar of soap in a bathtub?

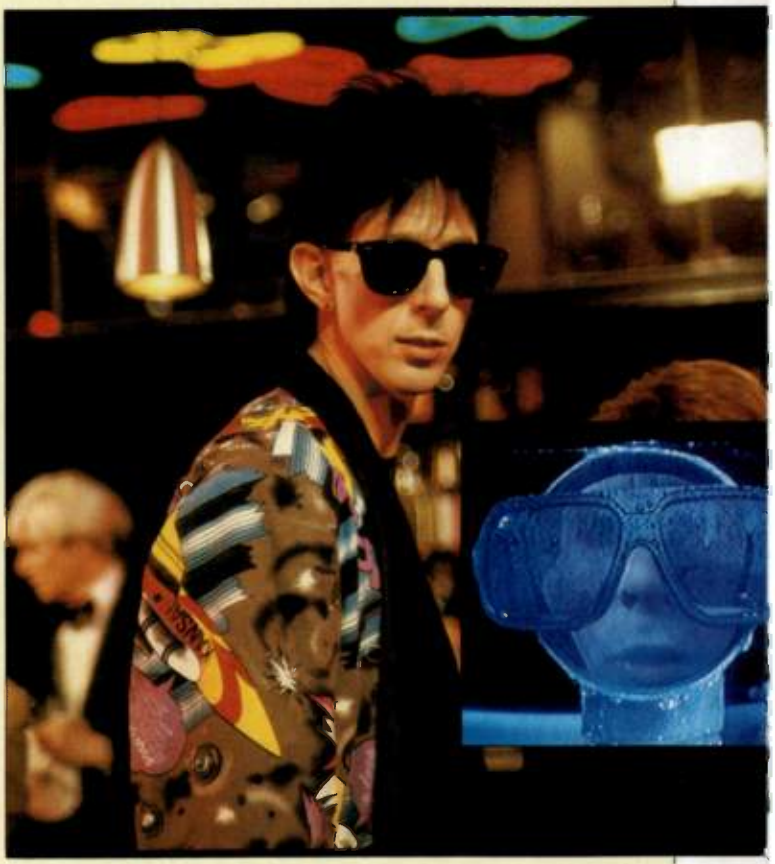
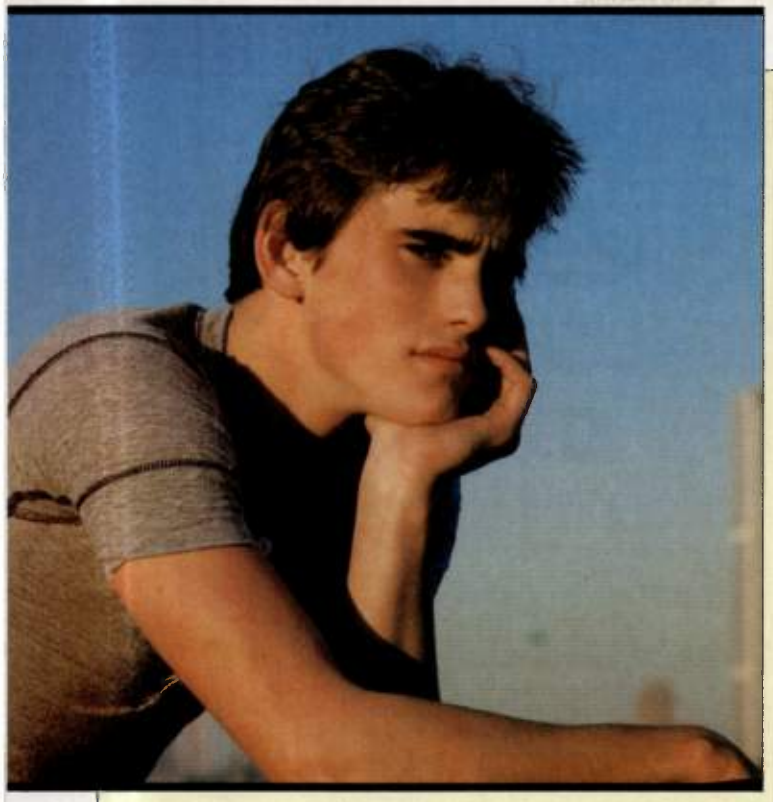


PHOTO: LYNN GOLDSMITH

Ric Ocasek with Andy Warhol (backround) on the set of "Hello Again"

(inset) A scene from the Cars' "You Might Think" video: Where's the credit?



Can actors be directors? We know they try—now they're making movies and music videos. First Timothy Hutton directed the Cars, now Matt Dillon's done the same for newcomer Gale Boggs, who's on video singing "Lollipop" but isn't (as of this writing anyway) on a label. And how did she hook up with Dillon? What do you think? They're just good friends (actually, Boggs is dating a friend of the actor's). Dillon had no comment on his first music video venture, but the clip's producer, Bob Lampel, says Dillon is "quite serious about this—it's not a joke or a lark."

Levi says that from a technical standpoint "this video could have been made three years ago. Sure, we used an A.D.O. (a new special effects machine), a paint box (a new system for painting graphics onto video) and a quantel machine (a special effects machine that moves video images around), but anybody can use those things and not have made this video. Charlex has a certain brand of wacky humor, and we spare no expense on a project—there weren't any technical breakthroughs on this clip. We just worked very hard on it, paid great attention to detail—it's all in the production value. We shot it all here; designed all the sets, too. Jeff Stein wasn't even here for the whole project—we asked him to leave in the middle, because he was holding up work. The Cars were great, though."

Has this experience soured Charlex on doing any more music videos? "It depends," says Levi. "We don't solicit work—we're very busy. However, if the right band or person came along—like David Byrne or David Bowie—we'd think about it."

And speaking of the Cars, they've decided to use a different director for each of the six clips planned for *Heartbeat City*. One of those directors is **Andy Warhol,** who gets the credit on "Hello Again," and word is that **Timothy Hutton** will direct the band's next clip. Warhol, who used some of his favorite underground New York types in "Hello Again" (including fashion designer **Diane Brill** and a person named **Ming Vauze,** who Warhol described as "my bodyguard during the day and a drag queen at night"), says he "loved" working with the Cars, and adds: "I wish I was a Car. Then I could be in show business."

Reminded that he is, in a way, in show business, Warhol says, "Well, yes, but we want to make more music videos. That's what we're going to do now. But I guess everyone wants to make them. I love MTV! I run it all the time as background."

PHOTO: LISA LEAVITT

vid bits

MGMM, the acronym for the company founded by **David Mallet, Brian Grant, Russell Mulcahy** and **Scott Millaney,** has opened a New York office with the intention of getting into "more commercial work" . . . the Doors are working on a full-length video cassette for the home market. The Cars will put their six new clips together for release as a video album, and that **Rolling Stones** compilation video mentioned in the last issue will probably coincide with the release of the band's forthcoming greatest hits album (covering tracks from '71 to the present) and contain some vintage '60s videos as well . . . **DEVO**'s videos are the subject of a Ph. D. thesis by Harvard graduate student Christine Bottinger. She compares the group's music and videos to the European Dada movement. A DEVO spokesman commented: "We're glad Harvard is DEVO."—**Merle Ginsberg**

PHOTO: HERBERT SCHULZ

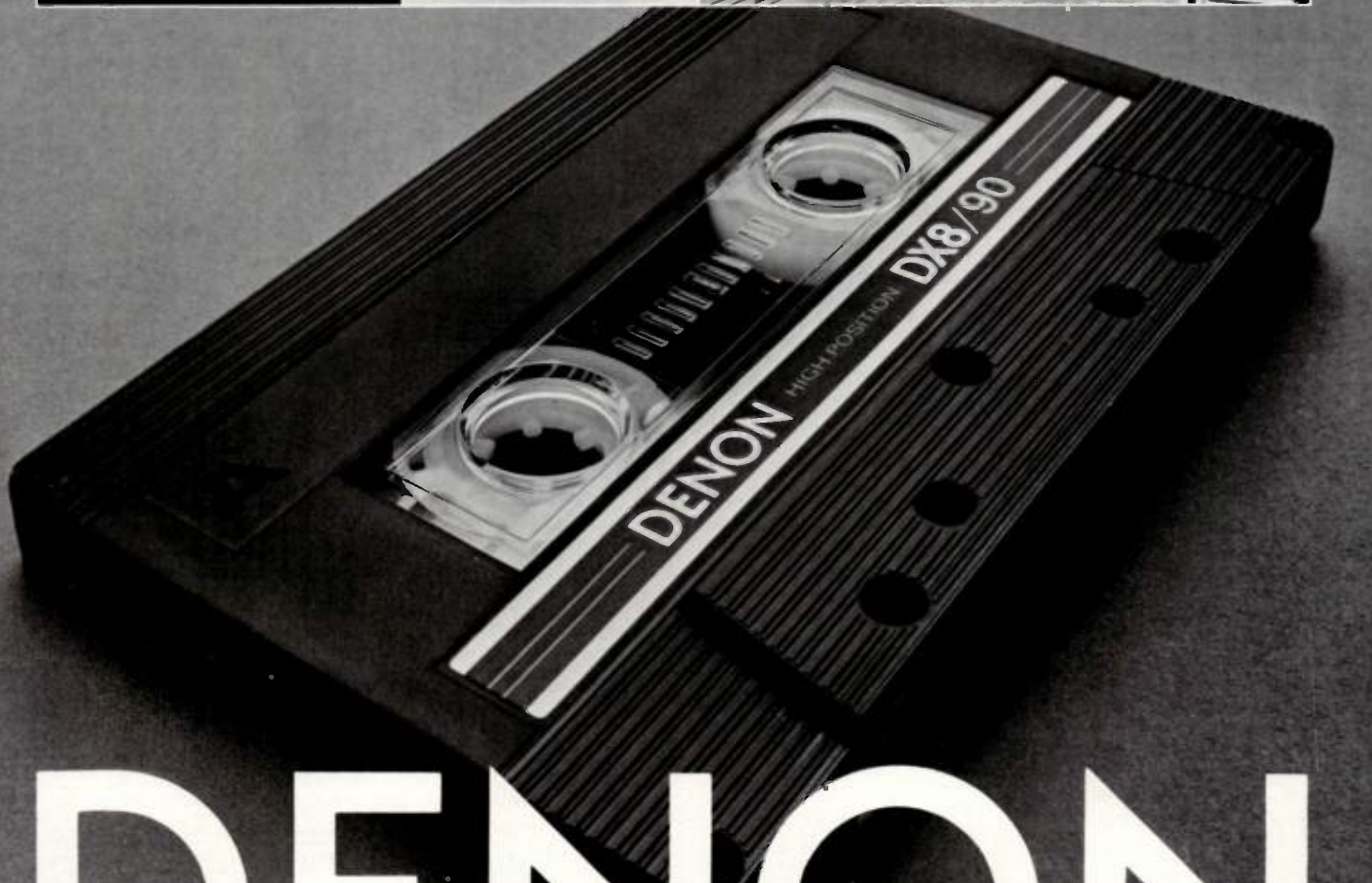
"Oh, hell!" Perry Lister exclaims in the midst of an interview about her career as a music video choreographer. "David's just called—and I missed him!" David is video director David Mallet, who was no doubt seeking Lister's services for his next music video—he's already used her in Billy Idol's "White Wedding" and "Eyes Without A Face," Def Leppard's "Photograph" and Jethro Tull's video album, Slipstream. *Lister (who is Idol's current love interest) belonged to one of the first rock dance groups in England, Hot Gossip, a mainstay of* The Kenny Everett Video Show *during the late '70s. She's also been a member of Kid Creole's Coconuts, a singing and dancing member of Steve Strange's group, Visage, and she danced in one of the all-time bad movies,* Can't Stop The Music *(Lister calls it "the dog of the century"). Now Lister (shown here in her dancing duds) has brought her video dances to the Cat Club, a Manhattan night spot on 13th Street, where she and her troupe perform dances to music currently heard and seen on video clips. "Not everyone has MTV," Lister points out, "and people want to see that sort of dancing done live. It's to the present what ballet was in its heyday." Baryshnikov wept.*

TO MAKE A CASSETTE TAPE SOUND LIKE MUSIC, YOU'VE GOT TO KNOW WHAT MUSIC SOUNDS LIKE.

Think about it. What other tape manufacturer also builds professional recording equipment including 24-track and digital studio tape recorders? What other tape manufacturer has 72 years of experience as a major record company? Other tape manufacturers may talk about "digital ready," but do you know Denon *developed* the digital recording process in 1972?

It is this unique combination of technical and musical expertise that led Denon to use Dynamic Distortion Testing to optimize DX cassette tape performance in the presence of real musical signals, not mere laboratory test tones. The result is the most *musical* of all cassette tape.

Denon DX-Cassette tape. When we claim it's better, we say it with music.



DENON

DESIGN INTEGRITY

Nippon Columbia Co., Ltd., No. 14-14, 4-Chome, Akasaka, Minato-Ku, Tokyo 107, Japan

Denon America, Inc.; 27 Law Drive, Fairfield, N.J. 07006 201-575-7810
Queon Imports, 3950 Griffith St., Montreal, Quebec H4T 1A7, Canada. 514-735-4338

Everly Brothers

REUNION CONCERT Rick Gardner/
MGM-UA Home Video/60 min./$59.95
ROCK 'N' ROLL ODYSSEY Richard DeLigter/
MGM-UA Home Video/73 min./$59.95

Now that the second generation of rock stars—Jagger, Richards, Townshend, Davies, McCartney, Dylan—are reaching their forties at varying levels of parody or tragedy, it again becomes important to follow up the stories of the founding fathers of rock, to see how they dealt with the onset of middle age and with the problems of being nudged from the spotlight by a younger generation of stars. The scorecard, of course, reads none too good: Elvis, R.I.P.; Jerry Lee, physically drained but still blithely contemptuous of social and moral standards, even to the point of allegations that would allow him to keep his nickname "Killer" for good; Chuck Berry, in and out of jail again and still squeezing those dollars while singing the same old song; Little Richard, jumping back and forth from heaven's gate to hell's temptation.

Add to this list, but with a drastically different footnote, the names of the Everly Brothers, Phil and Don. On a September evening in London last year, the Everlys went a long way towards restoring their tangled past decade with the lustre of their sweet harmonies. Ten years after Phil Everly walked off a stage, vowing never to return to the sibling act which had sustained both brothers since childhood, the duo got together at the Royal Albert Hall and resumed their lives—not just professional, as in the case of other 1983 reunions, but their personal ones as well, because the 1973 split was more tragic as a family drama than as a musical one.

The Everly Brothers' Rock 'N' Roll Odyssey is the story of not just a recordng act, but of a family, and the depth of feeling that created rock and continues to sustain it. The documentary traces the Brothers' long road back to their Dad, Ike Everly, and the Iowa radio show they all played on. From there, we get a capsule summary of their career after the big move to Nashville—their crucial relationship with Chet Atkins, their hook-up with Felice and Boudleaux Bryant, the husband-wife songwriting team who penned most of their hits, the glory days of 1957 to 1962, and then the days of decline. From this point, the video attempts an understandable if erroneous bit of revisionism. It is implied that the British Invasion killed off the duo (even if the Beatles cheerfully acknowledged the debt their music owed to Don and Phil's harmonies) when actually the hits had stopped coming long before that. By the time of the split in '73, all attempts to keep them off the oldies circuit—most notably a summertime stint taking over Johnny Cash's TV show time slot, and half-hearted attempts at fitting in with the country-rock movement their music had helped create—failed, and with divorces and drugs in the picture, the personal bond was severed as well. When the documentary allows the Brothers to gloss over this split, it does them as well as us a disservice.

But it could be that any real probing would have hampered their comeback attempt. The delicacy of the Everlys' art so obviously depended on harmony not just at the microphone, but also as flesh and blood. It is here that the story turns for the better, for we see a family reunion down in Kentucky, even go to Ike Everly's grave, and a sense of coming home, of having come full circle is felt. The comeback can easily be attributed to greed and ego, but it could not have worked so well if the personal reconciliation had not taken place before the musical one. One is left with a sense that not all rock 'n' roll stories need end up be tragic, as *New Musical Express* writer Charles Shaar Murray opined after Lennon's death, but can actually have as deeply felt and upbeat an ending as most of the songs that Don and Phil Everly sing.

(Consumer note: When music videos like *Making Michael Jackson's Thriller* are going for as low as thirty bucks, it is unconscionable to have to pay *four* times that amount to own these tapes, especially when the original plans called for the retrospective and comeback show to be on one videocassette. Since *Odyssey* closes with footage leading up to the comeback show, you'll want to see both (especially since they roll the documentary's credits over the one number they do show from the Royal Albert show, the gorgeous "Let It Be Me"). If you've got some money to burn, spend it on *Rock 'N' Roll Odyssey*, then rent *Reunion Concert*, or wait for it to show up on HBO again.) —Wayne King

Paul Simon

THE PAUL SIMON SPECIAL Director: Dave Wilson
Pacific Arts Video/50 minutes/$39.95

This 1977 television special is the epitome of the "sensitive artist among the savage hacks" genre, in which Simon spares himself the torture of "doing" a special by making a show *about* making a show. By portraying all his behind-the-scenes tribulations, Simon escapes having to actually face the cameras as himself.

"Low-key" best describes this program. There are no sudden movements in *The Paul Simon Special*, no raucous laughter, no loud music—not even any loud talking. It's so sedentary it's maddening.

Charles Grodin plays his usual unctuous character in the role of the producer, embodying all the shallowness and bad taste guys like Simon expect from television types. Chevy Chase and Lily Tomlin make brief appearances that add virtually nothing to the proceedings except (in Tomlin's case) to give Grodin's character another opportunity to be obnoxious.

On the plus side, the "show about a show" format allows Simon to present his music in informal settings. The Jessy Dixon Singers are shown "rehearsing" "Loves Me Like A Rock" with Simon, and harmonic master Toots Thielemans just drifts over and joins in. In this number Simon looks like he's actually enjoying himself for a few moments.

Art Garfunkel appears in a dressing room rehearsal of "Old Friends"; Simon performs "Something So Right," "I Do It For Your Love," "Still Crazy After All These Years" and "The Boxer" with his band and/or a string section. The music is excellent; the "comedy" is relentlessly placid. But then Paul Simon has always

The Everly Brothers, Phil and Don, yesterday and today: Sweet harmonies, bitter decline, compelling comeback

PHOTOS: LISA LEAVITT

been one of the great laugh riots of our time. *The Paul Simon Special* is too old, too self-consciousness, too *serious* for its own good, and ours. **—David Gans**

Grace Jones

A ONE-MAN SHOW (D: Jean-Paul Goude

Island Pictures/Vestron Video/44 minutes/$29.95

Grace Jones may not be much of a singer, but she's no dummy either. She knows to work with the right people: musicians like Sly and Robbie and the other Compass Point All-Stars, who surround her tone-deaf raps with supple, state-of-the-art funk-reggae; and fashion photographer turned video *auteur* Jean-Paul Goude, who pretty much made savage Grace's image as the embodiment of disco-era androgyny and who directed this concert-with-studio-inserts video. Like Grace herself, *A One-Man Show* is a stunning, eye-catching statement of pure visual style: from Grace's show-opening (and show-stopping) *homage* to Marlene Dietreich's famed *Blue Angel* gorilla-suit scene; through the dramatic high-contrast lighting of the starkly geometric stage sets, and the outrageous giant-psychedelic-mushroom duds for the "Living My Life" set piece; to the pointy masks and hats in the closing Manhattan rooftop-cabaret number. Sure, there are a couple of dead spots, such as when the Compass Pointers drop out for Jones's excruciating accordion-accompanied version of "La Vie En Rose"; and even Goude himself seems to admit that "Private Life"—with extreme close-ups of Grace's visage intercut with shots of her getting frantic in a claustrophobic white room—tires in record time, as he cuts to the next tune after only a minute or so.

But all in all, *A One-Man Show* is a very slick, very sleek and very pleasingly provocative example of musical-visual synergy. Released back in 1982, it remains one of the most delectable videocassette-sized slices of eye-and-ear candy on the market. Hell, Goude (now working with Cristina) might even be able to make the dreaded Stevie Nicks palatable. But then, why reach for the moon when we've already got a star like Grace? **—Michael Shore**

Sheena Easton

(D: Steve Barron, David G. Hillier)

Picture Music Intl./14:49/$16.95—Sony Video 45

Nice try, small cigar. Ultimately it's difficult to disguise style as substance, and Sheena Easton has much more of the former than the latter. Someone—Barron? Easton?—has placed her in a lively context in "Telefone" and "Machinery," though, and it works. In the black and white "Telefone," Easton is stalked by some of cinema's truly great men—Frankenstein (an award, please, to the Karloff lookalike who's playing this role), Dracula (not even close to Bela) and Quasimodo (come back, Charles Laughton!). It's all played for laughs, seems to have nothing at all to do with the song, but it works. "Telefone" has an unbeatable hook, and Easton's performance is right on the mark. The *coup de grace* is the entrance of the unseen King Kong's giant, hairy hand rescuing our heroine at the moment the villains are closing in on her. "Machinery" again casts Easton in the *femme fatale* role, this time in a factory where she's harassed by a cruel female shop steward, who's later seen partying with her boss, popping the bubbly and throwing paper money around as if it were in endless supply. In the boss's office, three samples of the factory's products—tiny life-like figurines of policemen—suddenly come to life and arrest the revelers. Next thing we see is Easton's superiors turned into figurines themselves and Easton occupying the boss's office. So the oppressed become the oppressors and sooner or later everyone gets put on the shelf. Oh, it's a jungle out there.

"Ice Out In The Rain" and "Morning Train" are real snoozers. The former is all poses and no emotion; a cross between a Calvin Klein jeans ad and those inscrutable "share the fantasy" Chanel ads. The icelady cometh. As for the concert version of Easton's first hit, "Morning Train," suffice it to say the artist has very little going for her as a performer. Sinatra can walk back and forth across a stage, microphone in hand, and rivet your attention. But of course, he's Sinatra. Sheena Easton? Next case, please.

—David McGee

Joy Division
New Order
A Factory Video

Joy Division: (D: Shamberg/Rebo)

Factory Video/60 minutes

New Order: (D: Shamberg/Rebo)

Factory Video/53 minutes

Various Artists: A Factory Video

Factory Video/60 minutes (All Factory Videos $30 each)

Don't bother with the vertical hold. Your tracking device is in operating order. And that's about as bright as it gets. There's no point in adjusting your set. Those murky, fuzzy images on the screen are exactly what's on the tape, supporting my argument that the attraction of most Factory product has been Peter Savilles' sleeve graphics ripped off from Mussolini-era Italian futurists.

Technically, these tapes are of unacceptable quality and should be avoided by anyone but the most forgiving fan of Factory's pale peculiarities. The stage lighting afforded the live Joy Division tapes (shot in the months preceding singer Ian Curtis' suicide in May 1980) is so weak that faces appear as ill-defined globs of pimento cream cheese. The one-camera setup and inexcusable room sound hardly makes for a fond remembrance of a reportedly powerful act. The hard core, however, might contend that the experience of watching this band should be as painful as one imagines it was to actually be a member of it.

But Ian Curtis' death throes are prime time entertainment compared to Division survivors New Order, offered slightly burnt early in their career in 1981 during a concert shot at the Ukranian National Home in New York. This is one boring, pretentious ensemble; better to listen to its records and let the mind's eye conjure up more stimulating vistas.

Low-budget work just can't compete in the home video market, and the cruel evidence is on *A Factory Video*, a compilation of about a dozen depressing tracks apparently shot by first-year film students with shaky tripods. The performances are equally deluxe with self-pitying blighters poised on the edge of desperation, staring

In "Telefone," demure Sheena Easton suddenly bites back at her attackers—among them, Dracula—then is rescued by King Kong

out at the emptiness of their bank accounts.

Most of this material toured clubs and galleries a couple of years ago and at the time had passing historical significance. But offering it to the public as archival reference work is like filing glossies that haven't spent enough time in the fix. They brown quickly. —**Jonathan Gross**

Kajagoogoo

(D: Simon Milne)

Picture Music Intl./11:25/$16.95–Sony Video 45

High-gloss Brit-pop at its most excruciating. Kajagoogoo is a band with no new ideas, no presence, no past and no future (pun intended). A few more like this and I fear the Almighty will simply flush this globe of ours down His cosmic toilet.

—**David McGee**

Allegro Non Troppo

(D: Bruno Bozzetto)

RCA-Columbia Pictures Home Video/80 minutes/$29.95

A music video for all ages and for the ages. Originally a 1978 theatrical release, this Italian *Fantasia* is comprised of six animated music videos plus live action interplay between a pompous conductor, an orchestra full of cackling old ladies and a cartoonist who is set up on the stage to "jam" to the music. Writer/director Bruno Bozzeto's stories use simplicity and familiarity to create impact. In Ravel's "Bolero," the story of evolution begins with a Coke bottle, while in Stravinsky's "Firebird" the snake is the one that eats the apple in the Garden of Eden. The most affecting video is Sibelius' "Valse Triste," depicting the memories of a lonely cat prowling the remains of its post-nuclear home. Though not in the same league as a Disney animated project in terms of technical excellence, *Allegro*'s animation achieves more humor and emotion than the typical Disney project, and its childlike drawings are very much in tune with the doodling graphics seen on MTV.

—**Alan Hecht**

In Allegro Non Troppo a lonely cat prowls the remains of his post-nuclear home

My Breakfast with Blassie

MY BREAKFAST WITH BLASSIE

Rhino Video/60 minutes/$39.98

Rhino Video's first offering is the thinnest of parodies, a one-liner stretched to one hour, based on the form of the film *My Dinner With Andre*. As a concept, it's worth about 15 seconds in a comedy monologue: "Instead of brainy talk in a hoity-toity French restaurant, let's do a movie about a lame comedian and a wrestler having breakfast at Sambo's. We'll call it *My Dinner with Andre the Giant.*"

Andy Kaufman plays the lame comedian to perfection (dare I say it's a role he was born to?). After musing about his *schtick* of wrestling women and telling how he came to meet Freddie Blassie, the former wrestling champ, author of that deathless rock classic "Pencil Neck Geek" (available, not coincidentally, on Rhino Records) and a self-proclaimed "king of men." Kaufman then parks himself in a Los Angeles pancake house, and who should walk in but Freddie Blassie himself, a large, silver-haired gent whose charm vanishes as soon as his voice becomes audible over his Hawaiian shirt. Over the next half hour Kaufman and Blassie are shown, in ruthless video verite, agonizing over their breakfast selections, comparing their neuroses about hygiene, patronizing their waitress and harrassing a table full of young women.

It goes downhill from there, a pointless exchange of witless stories between two repellent little men. While waiting for his dessert Blassie recounts the fruits of his labors in (and, one suspects, out of) the ring, among them fused vertebrae, broken ribs and fingers, "nose broken seven times, cut and stabbed eleven different times . . . had acid poured on me . . . fractured skull, brain concussion twice . . ."

That explains Blassie. For Kaufman, it's simply a sad legacy. —**David Gans**

MUSICVIDEO TOP TEN

1 **MAKING MICHAEL JACKSON'S THRILLER**
MICHAEL JACKSON
Vestron Video

2 **DURAN DURAN**
DURAN DURAN
Thorn-EMI Home Video

3 **BILLY JOEL LIVE ON LONG ISLAND**
BILLY JOEL
CBS/Fox Home Video

4 **PHIL COLLINS***
PHIL COLLINS
Sony Video 45

5 **POLICE AROUND THE WORLD**
POLICE
I.R.S. Video

6 **COOL CATS: 25 YEARS OF ROCK 'N' ROLL STYLE***
MGM/UA Home Video

7 **A HARD DAY'S NIGHT**
THE BEATLES
MPI Video

8 **THE WALL**
PINK FLOYD
MGM/UA Home Video

9 **DAVID BOWIE***
DAVID BOWIE
Sony Video 45

10 **READY STEADY GO***
Thorn-EMI Home Video

*Denotes new entry
The MusicVideo Top Ten indicates the fastest-moving sales and rentals titles in music product as reported by the country's leading video retail outlets.

VIDEO CLIP TOP TEN

1 **I WANT A NEW DRUG**
HUEY LEWIS & THE NEWS
(Chrysalis) D: Devendra Rethod

2 **SOMEBODY'S WATCHING ME**
ROCKWELL
(Motown) D: Francis Delia

3 **HOLD ME NOW**
THOMPSON TWINS
(Arista) D: Robert James

4 **HERE COMES THE RAIN AGAIN**
EURYTHMICS
(RCA) D: Lennox/Stewart

5 **GIRLS JUST WANT TO HAVE FUN**
CYNDI LAUPER
(Portrait) D: Ken Walz

6 **POLITICS OF DANCING**
RE-FLEX
(Capitol) D: Chipper Field & Arnell

7 **JUMP**
VAN HALEN
(Warner Bros.) D: Van Halen

8 **TONIGHT**
KOOL & THE GANG
(De-Lite) D: Martin Kahan

9 **ADULT EDUCATION**
HALL & OATES
(RCA) D: Tim Pope

10 **FOOTLOOSE**
KENNY LOGGINS
(Columbia) D: Herbert Ross

Compiled by RockAmerica (27 E. 21st Street, N.Y., N.Y. 10003), the Video Clip Top Ten indicates the most popular rock video clips being played in over 250 clubs, colleges and record stores. In addition to title, artist and label, each entry contains the name of the clip's director. These charts reflect video play for the month of May.

PERSONAL COMPUTERS BECOME PERSONAL COMPOSERS

Part I: Basics of the Commodore-64

CRAIG ANDERTON

The recent non-fiction bestseller *Soul of a New Machine* (the story of how a company brought out a technologically advanced computer in record time) noted that some of the best programmers at the company had musical backgrounds. This is hardly surprising if you consider that composing music is not unlike writing a computer program: both use a finite amount of raw materials (with music, scales and with programs, computer instructions or commands), and both depend upon the logical development of a theme, with numerous subthemes supporting it. Yet like music, computer programming is also an art—sometimes the knottiest programming problem isn't solved by logical thinking, but instead by a sudden intuitive flash that musicians have traditionally identified as part of the creative process.

In the early days of composing via computer, computers were so rare and expensive that few musicians had the opportunity to explore this new musical frontier. Then in the mid-'70s, the first microcomputers appeared. Shortly thereafter, companies started making musical devices that could be controlled by these microcomputers, along with software programs to link the musical hardware and computer together. Unfortunately, these initial offerings—while inexpensive by previous standards—were still beyond the reach of the average musician.

During the early '80s, the new breed of inexpensive "personal" computers appeared. Many of these included music-generating capabilities, although they were generally limited to buzzy-sounding, one-note-at-a-time melodies. Nonetheless, primitive music composition programs started appearing, and for the first time musicians could get involved with simple computer-aided composition for well under $200.

Then Commodore shook up the market by introducing the **Commodore-64** (C-64 for short), which took the bold step of including a complex music synthesizer IC in the computer itself. In retrospect, this would appear to have been somewhat of a gamble; custom ICs are not cheap to develop or manufacture, and catering to this as-yet-undefined market no doubt increased the C-64's price in a very price-sensitive field. Commodore's strategy has been rewarded, however. Several quality music composition programs now exist for the Commodore that turn it into a virtual "music processor," in the same way that other software can turn a computer into a word processor. And because so many musicians have purchased the C-64 for its musical capabilities, musical instrument manufacturers (such as Sequential Circuits) are designing products intended to run on the C-64. Naturally, the C-64 is not the only game in town; many companies have excellent programs designed for the Apple II or IBM PC. But the C-64 is certainly the least expensive option, and offers surprising capabilities for the price.

The Commodore-64: Personal computer and 'music processor'

Does this mean that computers have now become musical instruments? Well, not really. One problem is the lack of a suitable "interface" between musician and machine: it's not easy to play music on the typewriter-style keyboard found on low-cost computers, and also, in many cases you do not play notes directly but instead type in numbers, which in turn represent notes. Better programs make the interface between machine and human as painless as possible, but comput-

ers still have a long way to go before they are as convenient in live performance as even the most limited keyboard synthesizer.

But there's more to music than real-time performance, and for the present, personal computers seem very comfortable in their role as personal composing machines. As such, they serve as a kind of hybrid between a musical instrument and multi-track recorder. Consider the C-64 as a musical instrument: it has three independent oscillators (tone generators), each with four possible timbres. Each oscillator can also have its own amplitude envelope, which varies the dynamics of a note. (For example, you could select the quick decay associated with a percussive instrument, a sustaining tone like an organ, the slow-attack sound of a flute or bowed instrument, and so on.) The C-64 also includes a filter to let you shape a sound's harmonic content for a brighter or more muted timbre, as well as several interesting special effects. Unfortunately, the C-64's sound quality is somewhat noisy and "dirty" compared to a conventional music synthesizer, but is nonetheless of sufficient quality to be musically useful.

Remember too that the C-64 has more to it than a built-in synthesizer IC, such as 54K of memory and built-in BASIC language. These two features are the key to multi-tracking effects; you can use BASIC commands to string notes together, store these sequences of notes in memory, and then play back your composition. Since there are three independent sound sources, you can program three-part harmonies (one part at a time) as well as single-note lines. In fact, by choosing suitable sounds, you can even create percussive effects to accompany a melody line.

Programming in BASIC, however, can be a rather tedious process—so tedious, in fact, that it's hard to feel tremendously inspired when you're entering lines and lines (and lines) of numbers to play something as simple as "Mary Had A Little Lamb." That's why several software companies have now developed high-level "language" for the C-64 which are easier to use, more appropriate, and infinitely more "musical" than BASIC. Instead of having to enter numbers, you can enter notes directly; some programs even let you play on the C-64 keyboard and immediately record what you play into memory.

All the elements now exist to make low-cost computers musically useful: special-purpose music hardware, computer control with lots of memory, and high-level languages that make the computer easy (well, at least easier) to play. For the price of a computer, disk drive, video monitor or TV, and software, it is now possible to assemble a low-cost, remarkably sophisticated composing machine. Next issue, this column will cover some of the software programs available for the C-64. ○

MARTIN PORTER

RACK 'N' ROLL

Much to the credit of those who decipher what the public really wants from its audio equipment, playing habits have become almost as important a consideration as sound. Certainly top quality audio remains a high priority, but how somebody listens to an LP, selects a radio station or makes a tape recording are crucial matters. And with a slew of new microprocessor-based features much of the pain and bother involved in operating a multi-faceted stereo system can now be easily soothed.

Case in point: **Aiwa's V-700** system ($850), one of several new "midi" sized systems that encase feature-full components in a compact rack. A surprisingly sufficient stereo—composed of linear tracking, programmable turntable, 30 watts per channel amplifier, 12 (six AM, six FM) station pre-set quartz synthesized tuner, and computer-controlled cassette recorder—is stacked only 15 inches high and sits on a table 13 inches square. Its downsized proportions are deceptive, because there's actually a lot of umph and pizzazz here. However, discriminating listeners might fare better by pairing it with speakers other than Aiwa's own two-way **SX-7Y** models ($145/pair).

The system claims to do away with the complicated wiring and cables that make four-component systems such a pain to assemble. This is just short of the absolute truth. There are several cables built into the rack to hook the cassette and tuner to the amplifier, leaving you only to attach an antenna, phono plugs and speakers.

The rack does more than simply take the agony out of system construction—it puts the audio essentials in an easy-to-access order and all in one place. Besides, there's more to the system than mere wiring convenience. The designers were somehow able to pack every imaginable feature (other than remote control and cassette auto-reverse) into these tiny components. The controls, as a result, are miniature and more suited to thin fingers than stubby ones; they're numerous too, totalling 65 buttons, sliders and dials. My man, that is a lot of real estate to maneuver around.

A

One of the system's many drawing cards is its linear tracking turntable. Bored or dissatisfied with the sequencing of that new album? Program the front panel controls and a music sensor on the tonearm will follow the instructions, playing tracks in the order desired or simply previewing the first 12 seconds of any cut. When tested recently the tonearm proved 90 percent reliable with a variety of programming. Unfortunately, the tonearm also carries its own stylus, which won't accept any of the better brand cartridge/stylus configurations. The turntable's biggest plus is that it's tied to the V-700's "synchro" system that links platter-play to the cassette machine. To record an LP, just poke the red synchro recording button on the cassette machine and the tape will roll and set the turntable in motion at the same time.

B

The cassette machine pulls off similar feats for recording from the tuner or some auxiliary component (i.e., a Compact Disc player). It automatically registers your tape type (including metal and chrome), carries Dolby B and C, and features its own music sensor that not only creates measurable pauses between music cuts when recording but will search from cut to cut on the cassette as well.

And how does it sound? The specs read commendably high and in a recent workout there were no significant audible complaints. A mix-and-match system, and maybe add an incidental feature or two, may afford better sound, but the price, size and convenience of this stereo system stack make it a winner.

TAPE TECH

Capitol Records recently sent out a new batch of prerecorded cassettes all emblazoned with popular noise reduction buzz words—"High Quality," "Expanded Dynamic Range," "XDR." Everything, in fact, but "Super Duper" and "Outta Sight." Only one declaration was familiar: "Dolby," followed by the a new twist, "HX Pro."

If you've listened to tape of late you're already familar with Dolby Noise Reduction, the process that takes the flat-tire hiss out of tape. You also know that you must tape with Dolby (either B or C) and play it back with a proper decoder (usually built into the tape recorder) to accomplish the necessary effect. This works with any tape type from the low-cost ferric oxide to the high-end metal or chrome.

Noise reduction was one step in an evolving effort to upgrade music on tape. A second step has since been taken by record labels seeking to improve the quality control of their tape duplication process, as well as giving their premium acts a premium tape for prerecorded cassettes. BASF made a big splash when *Synchronicity* was released on chrome, and there is talk that the entire A&M cassette line will soon turn chrome. Atlantic, meanwhile, has gotten behind Agfa Gevaert's Magnetite 12, an improved ferric formula, for Yes's *90125*.

So what's with Capitol cassettes such as Thomas Dolby's (no relation to noise reduction pioneer Ray) *The Flat Earth*, April Wine's *Animal Grace*, and Queen's *The Works*? Voluminous cover notes indicate that these are hot-sounding tapes and, in fact, they are better than most. The Dolby (as in Thomas) cassette in particular performed well without noise reduction on the aforementioned Aiwa V-700.

The secret ingredient isn't the tape, since they all come loaded with standard ferric brand. And some synthesizer bleeps at the beginning and end of the cassette are there simply to give an added impression of improved quality control. A lot of the liner notes too are hype—all but Dolby HX Pro.

Although HX Pro is available in high-end cassette decks, it is also capable of being applied to taped material during the duplication process. And price-conscious record labels have found that HX Pro can do its trick on inexpensive ferric oxide tapes, and comes close (but no cigar) to chrome quality. Most important, since HX Pro improves the way a tape is recorded, it can be played back on any cassette deck with fine results without a decoder or noise reduction unit.

HX Pro was originally devised by Bang and Olufsen of Denmark and only licensed to Dolby. It works by constantly monitoring the bias of programmed material (a high frequency signal, or "bias," is always recorded on a tape along with the music). This inaudible tone allows for low noise and less distortion. With HX Pro, if the noise reduction circuitry senses a bias increase (the result of a musical stretch heavy on highs), it instantly lowers the bias to keep things consistent. This reduces tape saturation and the subsequent loss of high frequencies that would result in an overall dulling of the sound.

HX Pro does the trick. During a recent subjective listening test, the high frequencies in particular were notably good.

In short, the Pro line is worth looking out for—that is, if you can find it buried beneath the meaningless cassette cover hype.

CATCHING SOME Zs

Sansui's newest Z series of stereo receivers offer consumers a variety of interesting component alternatives within the same brand family. The **Z-3000X** (approx. $400), **Z-5000X** (approx. $500), **Z-7000X** (approx. $800), **Z-9000X** (approx. $960) share several characteristics that show how the mildest refinement in the Sansui line, plus a bit more power and an additional feature or two, can up the price tag significantly.

Common to each is the "simul-switching" feature that automatically selects the program source and simultaneously turns the unit on. They all feature the company's "feedforward" integrated line, which fights off distortion, the enemy of clarity, in all of its various manifestations. Finally, each carries 16 preset stations, quartz synthesized tuning, and a digital clock with a three-memory 24-hour timer.

From there the products differ. The 9000X is the heavyweight, boasting a seven-band graphic equalizer for tone controls, built-in reverb with adjustable decay and 130 watts of juice per channel. The 7000X carries 100 watts, can drive two pairs of speakers (the 9000X can handle three pair) and features a four-band tone control (not quite an equalizer). The 5000X and 3000X, meanwhile, are missing the enhanced tone sliders but do carry sufficient power, with the former driving 70 watts per channel and the 3000X offering 55 watts per channel.

And how about the specs? Interestingly, in the vital categories, the top two models run head-to-head with the same dead-head evident among the two less expensive receivers. In terms of the numbers alone, the 3000X and 5000X fare impressively well. So if you're shopping for Sansui—and only by numbers—then you'd best study those digits that apply to how much power you require, how much tone flexibility you desire and, ultimately, how much money you will want to spend (it don't rhyme but it's true). ○

A Aiwa's V-700 system ($850): Feature-full components in a compact rack; **B** Capitol's HX Pro cassettes: Low noise is a constant; **C** Sansui's Z series: Attractive component alternatives in the same brand family. The Z-7000X compu-receiver (not shown; approx. $800), carries 100 watts, can drive two pair of speakers and features a four-band tone control. The Z-9000X compu-receiver (approx. $960), shown here, carries 130 watts per channel, has 16 preset stations and can drive three pair of speakers.

DAVID GANS

RHYTHMIC SELF-DETERMINATION

Better songwriting through drum machines

When I was a kid first falling in love with rock 'n' roll, I came early to the conclusion that I was going to have to become a drummer because I'd never be able to learn all those guitar chords. Now I'm a competent guitarist with an identifiable style and a penchant for electronic effects tastefully applied—and despite repeated stabs at it over the years I still can't get a kick drum and hi-hat pattern going, let alone hit a tom-tom in time.

There are, of course, *drummers* to do these things. But they're a breed apart, as any guitarist will readily proclaim without being asked. Drummers always have ideas of their own, frequently involving more sound than the songwriter has in mind. Nothing ever comes out quite the way the author first hears it in his head because of that pesky problem of *other people*.

In the mid-'70s we began to see "rhythm boxes," slightly hipper versions of the metronome with a few very simple patterns, which kept time reasonably well but didn't sound much like drums. By the start of the '80s, digital sampling techniques and cheap, powerful microcomputers made it possible to store the sounds of real drums in memory chips and play them back in user-programmed patterns of any length and complexity. They can even be played in real time by tapping the various front-panel buttons.

At last my clumsiness on the trap set will no longer relegate me to the class of rhythm morons! And no longer is the songwriter hamstrung by human drummers' inability to read minds, or limited to the narrow rhythmic repertoire of battery-operated boxes whose tastes lean toward grooves designated "Rock #2" and "Beguine," whatever the hell that is. At last, rhythmic self-determination!

Matthew Wilder knows about this stuff. He began his career with a steel-string acoustic, busking in New York's Greenwich Village neighborhood. He's felt that sinking sensation of trying to *explain* the feel of a song to other musicians, and that's one of the reasons why he moved to the piano and then to synthesizers. "The piano is more of an orchestration instrument than the guitar," he explains. "And with a synthesizer, you're dealing with colors that have yet to even be heard by the human ear. You can press a button and get flutes and cellos, which you cannot do with an acoustic instrument." And now, thanks to digital drum machines, Wilder can present his songs to musicians and record company executives in almost complete form.

Oberheim's DMX is the complete rhythm section on Matthew Wilder's hit single, 'Break My Stride'

"I wrote my first album with an Oberheim DMX drum machine," says Wilder. "In fact, on the album version of 'Break My Stride,' the DMX *is* the rhythm section, with the exception of some live percussion." The success of *I Don't Speak The Language*, Wilder's debut album, is owed in part to the artist's ability to use the new technology to develop his ideas. "Music in general has a lot more rhythmic crunch to it these days. Any writer who's striving to keep his finger on the pulse of what's contemporary is wise to use all the tools available. The rhythm machine in conjunction with the synthesizer helps build the record into the song from its inception."

Wilder notes that the drum computer isn't always the starting place for his songs, although he has built some tracks up from basic rhythms developed on the DMX. "It's like having your own little rhythm section at home: 'Play this and let me jam over it.' Before you know it, you're on to something." On other songs, he adds, "the synthesizer sound was dictating its own groove and I had to go look for it on the drum machine."

"The drum machine will never make me a drummer," Wilder concedes, "but it has made my sense of time impeccable. I can go into the studio now and not have to worry about keeping meter." And there's plenty of room for the flesh-and-blood drummer to improve on what Wilder built at home on his computer: "I don't get into elaborate programming of fills, because I figure the drummer has much better insight. When he starts elaborating on what I have, it's more exciting because he brings in that live thing: the *drummer element*."

Keyboardist Mitchell Froom has been involved in an automatic music system for recording and live performances with guitarist Ronnie Montrose, using a Roland Microcomposer, digital drum and bass computers, mixers and synchronization devices. It's an ambitious and expensive proposition: Froom likens it to a "walking NAMM show" and it took over a year to assemble. The first time they played a gig with it, Froom recalls, "a series of about three human errors resulted in the drums being two full measures ahead of the bass in 'Town Without Pity.' All the drum fills were in the middle of the phrase instead of at the end. I just looked at Ronnie and said, 'We're sunk!'" And somewhere some drummer must have smirked just a little.

"I heard the tape later, and the only thing that was really bad about it was the way we were playing," Froom notes. "We were so freaked out that we started making all sorts of mistakes. Most of the people didn't know the difference." His delvings into electronic drums and computerized music have given Froom a new appreciation for good drumming. "There are certain things you can't even hope to capture with electronic drums. The decision *not* to play a drum fill is often more powerful

than the decision to play one, and you can feel that attitude. When a drum machine plays straight through, it's static: There's no mind behind it."

But finding a drummer who knows when not to play isn't always easy. "That's why I originally got into the Linn and all that stuff: to have control over the sound and dynamics. It's a real thrill and feeling of power to be in control of all that stuff," Froom admits, "but for most of the stuff I do on my own I prefer real drums."

The System's David Frank, who plays everything but guitar on the duo's records (his partner, Mic Murphy, handles that task), uses drum machines exclusively. "It was a result of getting a drum machine and a sequencer and realizing that I could sit there and make the whole song," he says. "Our sound was established on *You're In My System* as using drum machines, and we've worked from the all-electronic concept. It wasn't anything against drummers; I played with drummers until about a week before I got the drum machine, and I will continue to play with them in the future."

Frank uses an Oberheim DMX, a set of Simmons drum modules triggered by an Oberheim DSX sequencer, and a PPG Wave 2.2 computer with drums and percussion instruments in its floppy-disc library of digitally sampled sounds. He's also been using the new Yamaha DX7 digital synthesizer, as well as a DX1, a larger version available only in Japan. "I love sampled drum sounds, but you can do fantastic things with FM synthesis such as bending toms up instead of down, and you can get all sorts of incredible timbale sounds. It gives you a completely different palette to work with."

A lifelong keyboard player who studied at the Berklee College of Music, Frank is one of those rare musicians who's hardly even tried to bash at a drum kit. "I was never that interested," he shrugs. "But I enjoy programming drums. It's just part of being an arranger."

Like Wilder, Frank has no hard and fast rules for composing. "Sometimes it's just chords on a synthesizer and then a groove," he says. "Sometimes I set up a basic two-and-four on a snare, write a song on that, and then arrange the drums around the music. Sometimes Mic has an idea for a melody and I work up from there. It works all different ways."

The System rarely works extensively with multitrack tape outside the studio—and even when recording they need relatively few overdubs—because computers have made it possible to interconnect and synchronize virtually every sound source—except, of course, Murphy's guitar and voice. "The DMX plays the drums and controls the DSX with its clock," Frank explains. "The DSX is in turn controlling the synthesizers (an OB-Xa, a Minimoog, the DX1, the DX7, and the Wave—the last with a Garfield Mini Doc in front of it to convert the DMX's 96 pulses per quarter note to the Wave's internal rate of 64 pulses). When we play live, I'm usually playing two keyboards; then I have three or four running off sequencers."

The System's David Frank: Working with a completely new palette in quest of musical notes and sounds

PHOTO ELENA SEIBERT

Appearances suggest that all this technology is hard to manage and that people like David Frank must have studied electrical engineering along with music theory. But that isn't the case: "I do it by sound," says Frank. "I don't have an in-depth insight into these things; I work by manipulating them on the outside and taking for granted that they're going to do what they're supposed to do. I'm not an engineer, and I don't want to be. I'm not particularly in quest of technical knowledge—I'm in quest of musical notes and sounds." ○

MIKE SHEA

GET RHYTHM

The Boss DR-110 Rhythm Machine

Hear an enticing beat and try to resist playing air drums. Most rock fans can't, nor can they play real drums. But if you can lay down perfect drum fills on a table top or slap your knees in time to the rhythm, you may well be capable of becoming a good drummer. Unfortunately, buying a drum kit is both an expensive proposition and, if you live in an apartment building (especially one with thin walls), a move guaranteed to lose friends and influence people negatively. Once behind the kit, you might also learn how difficult it is to hold a tempo through an entire song.

PHOTO: PAULA KELLY/DAVID McGLYNN

Dr. Rhythm: It's got a good beat and you can dance to it.

Still, for those determined to indulge, there is a low-cost alternative in the form of the **Boss DR-110 Dr. Rhythm** machine from Roland, priced at $240. This fully programmable, battery- or AC-operated, compact (7 1/2" wide x 4 5/16" deep x 1 3/16" high) unit's synthesized drum sounds and processing capabilities can in no way compare with $1000-plus digital drum machines boasting digital recordings of real drums; but then, I've seen professional recording artists have to hire drummers to program their digital drum machines. Not so with anyone who becomes proficient with the DR-110, which will also improve the user's ability to keep time and enable him or her to understand and read professional drum charts.

Start by studying the front panel controls and indicators. Drum sounds are programmed to play in rhythm patterns, and four sets of patterns are controlled by a single "bank" selector button. Next to this is a row of eight buttons used in selecting particular patterns in each bank, giving the DR-110 a total of 32 programs. Of these 16 are factory-set and 16 are user programmable. A "shift" key, when held down, allows the aforementioned nine buttons and others to assume additional programming functions. Below these are six instrument trigger buttons (bass drum, snare, open hi-hat, closed hi-hat, handclaps) plus an accent button, which, when used in conjunction with an instrument, accentuates or increases the volume of a beat.

A subjective professional recording studio judgment of these sounds turns out mostly favorable: bass drum is good; snare is fair-to-middling; hi-hat (open or closed) is poor, though the hi-hat open *then* closed results in a natural-sounding cut off; the cymbal is a joke. However, the handclap function, incorporating reverbation, is exceptional—in fact, one recording engineer swore to me that the DR-110 is his artificial handclap of choice. The DR-110 has an overall volume knob, a control over the amount of level increase caused by the accent button, a balance knob (to mix levels of the drums and handclaps with the cymbal and hi-hats) and a tempo control.

A liquid crystal (watch-like) display (LCD) is the most important feature in terms of programming ease and the unit's capacity for teaching rhythmic notation and structure. The LCD is divided into four sections, the largest being a grid display with a separate line for each instrument (except accent, cymbal and handclaps, which all share the bottom line). A black dot on the upper left hand corner of the grid blinks on and off in showing the correct tempo. This dot can be moved around the grid in two ways during programming: pressing any instrument button moves it to that instrument's grid line; pressing the "stop" causes it to move horizontally across the grid's 16 beat positions. The grid can also be shortened to 12 beats per measure. Pressing the "start" button causes a dot to remain and therefore be programmed to play at any point on the grid. When a pattern is completed, switch to play mode, press start and the instruments will sound on every dot programmed as the unit runs through that measure. This is called step programming.

Mistakes are easily corrected by adding or subtracting any dot on the grid. Since these dots correspond to the timing value of a rhythm chart, if you replace them with notes and the spaces between them with rests you will actually be scoring a professional rhythm chart. Both the programming and this association to rhythm charts are aided by 20 sample rhythms shown in the owner's manual in dot display format for programming with an equivalent rhythm chart below them. The manual also gives the rhythm charts for factory pre-set patterns.

All programmed data is retained on power off, but the memory is not transferable to tape or other machines. However, blank grids and rhythm charts are provided in the back of the owner's manual for copying and filling in preferred patterns to be reprogrammed at a later date. See, the DR-110 isn't a machine designed to be tossed out in a few months when the next big technological wonder comes along; it's built to last. In addition to a mini-headphone jack, this unit comes with Roland's "P-Buss" 1/4-inch phone jack; not only can it be plugged into a stereo or instrument amplifier, but also to any other instrument and have that instrument and the DR-110 comes through the headphones.

The Boss DR-110 is an exceptional product, but judge for yourself: before laying out any bucks, play around with it for a few minutes. Try programming some of the sample rhythms in the back of the manual and make the kind of changes you'd like to hear. You'll be surprised at what you're able to do in only a short time. ○

Mike Shea is a graduate instructor at the Institute of Audio Research in New York City. Readers are invited to submit questions concerning audio, video or computers to: Mike Shea/Hands On, RECORD, 745 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10151. Include your phone number if you want a personal reply from the author.

PHOTO: ROBERT MATHEU

JOE ELY'S GRAND NEW WORLD

HI-RES
Joe Ely
South Coast/MCA

By Laura Fissinger

In certain circles these days, they're polishing up the eulogies for "roots music." Loyalists of almost any genre with its traditions in acoustic instruments, from cocktail jazz to barrelhouse blues, are in premature mourning for "real human sound," shortly to be offed by the carnivorous computer and its music-making progeny. The stranglehold is on radio, record companies and television, they say, and therefore on the aesthetic values of John Q. Public. This fatalism implies, of course, that no music is larger than technology, that no piano bar ballad or Brazilian folk song will avoid the well-mannered death of a body-snatched pod person.

Oh, ye of little faith. Texas-born singer-songwriter-hurricane force Joe Ely shreds those sad graveside speeches into so much parade confetti with a magnificent LP called *Hi-Res* (that's computerese for high resolution, which is computerese for an extremely clear picture on your terminal screen). In the three years since his last record, Ely apparently fell in love with computers and their possibilities. Unlike Neil Young on *Trans*, though, Ely doesn't write about technology here, he writes about his three R's—resignation, release and redemption—just like he al-

ways has. The computers and synths and fancy studio footwork are utterly subservient to the best batch of songs he's ever produced.

You almost wonder what happened to Ely these past few years that forced him to write an album so overflowing with archetypal characters and feeling (and it's all Joe this time; songwriting credit is shared on only two tracks, unlike previous efforts dominated by former sidekick Butch Hancock). But any sense of surprise is a slight to the capability he hinted at all along, most audibly in the songs of 1978's near-classic *Honky Tonk Masquerade* or the insolent and visceral energy of 1981's *Live Shots*. Some people credited that capability in large part to Hancock's songwriting gifts; others gave the kudos to Ely's inheritance from other baggy-eyed Texas rascals who picked off everything from accordions to rock guitars in the cause of pushing a Saturday night over a cliff. Ely's hyper-expressive burlap tenor and his sense of risk made him a worthy heir, but an heir all the same. Since *Live Shots*, guitarist Jesse "Jake" Taylor left the band and drummer Robert Marquam died. Reportedly these changes and Ely's overlong cult status forced him into some heavy changes; so he burrowed into a home studio with a synthesizer and computer and hard work.

Obviously he worked damn hard.

Not only is Ely the master of his machines on *Hi-Res*, he's also finally the master of his hallowed heritage. The songs are that good, save two: "Lipstick In The Night" and "Imagine Houston" both try to be general parables as well as detailed story-songs, and fall somewhere in the crack between. The eight other tracks all try the same trick, and succeed. "What's Shakin' Tonight" and "Cool Rockin' Loretta" open the record with sinister Tex-rock on top and a volcano of fear and need underneath. They set the system up for the rest of the show—instead of chilling the burn of the guitars, the keyboard synthesizers provide the cooler, softer counterpoint that the music needs for a complete emotional and aural spectrum. In the lonely compassion of "Madame Wo," the yin is the dark thunder of Steve Meador's syndrums; the yang is the high, sad keyboard legatos. The cascading synthesizer phrases in the incredible "Dream Camera" let the listener see through the thick guitar and vocals to the protagonist's homicidal anguish. "Letter To Laredo" is a fairly stock cowboy-on-death-row number, sounding no less parched and desperate for the record's impeccable production. In the slow singe of "She's Gotta Get The Gettin'," as in most of the other tracks, you can't even tell when the new gadgets are doing the jobs of the old ones.

The Tex-Mex "Dame Tu Mano" ("Give Me Your Hand") and "Locked in a Boxcar With the Queen of Spain" roll the album to an emotionally complicated close. The cowboy ends up riding the boxcar with the queen's crown on his head and, probably, a portable computer getting dusky with his guitar on the car floor—the brave new world and the funky old one take a joy ride together. On *Hi-Res*, old and new are made more by the other, not less. Ely's heritage taught him about swallowing fate in a Coke-and-rum hug and forcing it to dance all night; now he's done the same to the modern music machines.

MIRROR MOVES
The Psychedelic Furs
Columbia

By Anthony DeCurtis

Pastiche isn't the problem, it's the *point* with cool post-modern combos like the Psychedelic Furs. The British art/punk tradition is truly the Furs' only real subject, not merely their creative heritage. The band's music is a dusky netherworld where influence and originality, sound and meaning, shade into each other, stripping those distinctions of significance. All of which means that the Furs are not psychedelic in name alone.

Mirror Moves, the Furs' fourth album, is a formal triumph, and provides the perfect example of a band that has transformed all its limitations into virtues. The constricted range of vocalist Richard Butler's Bowie/Cockney croak has become a minimalist garden of delights, with each shift in inflection or register bearing emotional freight. Lyrics that in the past might have been pushed to unnecessary obscurity, or just dopiness, are restrained enough here to be imaginatively fertile and evocative.

Mirror Moves has the aural and thematic consistency of one long, flowing song, though tasteful contrast establishes the independent life of each cut. Check out, for example, the jazzy, jagged sax solo that builds a hot transition between the melodic yearnings of "Heaven" and the urgent, ominous rush of "Heartbeat."

But what's most encouraging is how Butler has balanced the tense world-weariness of tracks like the stunning "Highwire Days" with an updated Sixties-style concern for emotional connection. With the "Penny Lane" trumpet line and Walrus psychedelia of "Like A Stranger" and the touching "all we really need is love" message of "Here Come Cowboys," the Furs blend the Beatles into their cross-generational musical mix to excellent effect.

Images surrounding love, the heart, and the longings of the soul pulse steadily throughout *Mirror Moves*, infusing the deep internality of this set of songs with a larger purpose. The self-performance implied in this record's title is not a narcissistic end in itself, but the beginning of self-examination and reaching out to others. Amid the tough lushness of "My Time," Butler rasps, "There's a world at the door with a heart on its sleeve." On *Mirror Moves*, the Psychedelic Furs open the door and let that world in.

LOVE LIFE
Berlin
Geffen

RHYME AND REASON
Missing Persons
Capitol

By Nick Burton

Berlin and Missing Persons are two of Los Angeles' hot properties at the moment, and in this Video Age where image is paramount, it's easy to understand why: both bands hawk a chic "new wave" image with a heavy emphasis on sex, and both are fronted by sexy blonde female singers (sex appeal, of course, being extremely subjective these days). But Berlin and Missing Persons aren't just guilty of this kind of cheap exploitation, they are also guilty of terminal trendiness, and as trends have a way of vanishing very quickly in the pop music business, both bands are on the edge of a faddish precipice. For all I know, Berlin's Terri Nunn could be fronting a Christian rock band this time next year, while Missing Persons' Dale Bozzio might go heavy metal. Right now, though, it's all synthesizers and sex, wrapped up in kitschy packages.

Berlin's *Love Life* particulary relies on sex, with songwriter John Crawford's lyrics focusing on the sex-with-guilt angle (demonstrated in the past by overly synthesized gloss like "Sex," and here with torpid dance tunes like "When We Make Love" and "Touch"). Crawford's lyrics supposedly deal honestly with adult sexual relations, and while that may be a fine, civic-minded concept, it just doesn't work.The problem here is that Crawford's stale electronic disco music betrays his Zeitgest aspirations, and Terri Nunn's rather prosaic vocal style fails to convince. I mean, we're not exactly talking Joy Division's "Love Will Tear Us Apart" here.

Still, *Love Life* is an improvement over the band's dreary *Pleasure Victim* debut, and it's easy to be initially engaged by the catchy hook of a tune like "No More Words," one of the two tracks here produced by Giorgio Moroder (Mike Howlett of Flock of Seagulls fame is responsible for

the remainder). But take away the ultra-slick production and what have you got? Not much. The one really solid tune here—the Roxy Music-like samba "For All Tomorrow's Lies"—comes off as a fluke or happy accident when compared to the melodically deficient bulk of the LP. Maybe next year's model of Berlin will be more along the lines of that tune, but somehow I have my doubts.

Missing Persons' sophomore album *Rhyme and Reason* downplays sex a bit, but it's still only a notch or two above the adolescent approach of their initial offering, *Spring Session M.* Dale Bozzio continues to employ her octave-jumping hiccups, and the band still sounds like they want to cut loose, but they never do. *Rhyme and Reason* does boast a couple of likeable cuts—"Give" and "Right Now" are the most tuneful tracks here—but like Berlin, Missing Persons' musical direction is confused. It's part pop, part rock, part funk, part kitchen sink (or is that what Dale Bozzio is wearing this year? My, things get so confusing), but the elements don't gel when combined. What's most bothersome about Missing Persons is their desire to drown themselves in a pretentiously trendy sea of electronics. There are fine musicians here (drummer Terry Bozzio, guitarist Warren Cuccurullo and bassist Patrick O'Hearn are all ex-Zappa sidemen), but their talents are obscured by their own devices.

Yet while Missing Persons may have the edge over Berlin musically, it's still hard to shuck their equally schlocky image, and one figures Dale Bozzio's prominently displayed breasts and Helmut Newton's chic cover photos have more to do with the band's appeal than their music. Ultimately, both groups have more to do with Show Biz than rock and roll. Berlin and Missing Persons may be L.A.'s most fashionable practitioners of state-of-the-art electronic dance muzak, but aren't we all getting weary of that kind of product by now?

YOU BROKE MY HEART IN 17 PLACES
Tracey Ullman
Stiff-MCA

By Craig Zeller

Three smash hits in a row, a best-selling debut LP, a plum role in a popular sitcom, hanging out with Paul "He used to be a Beatle" McCartney—no doubt about it, Tracey Ullman is a very big deal in merrie olde England.

Well, here's hoping she rides just as high Stateside. She's already made a splash over here via her MTV guest-host stint. But her claim to fame deserves to be *You Broke My Heart In 17 Places*, easily the most engaging debut to appear in months. From start to finish it's a gleeful spree in which Ms. Ullman establishes herself as a pure pop enthusiast of the first order (Nick Lowe would've *killed* to produce this record).

Tracey's no songwriter, though, so she went to outside sources for everything here. The choices are sometimes wonderfully obscure, occasionally strange and always interpreted with great warmth and affection. She's got a touch of the chameleon in her; among others, I hear early Debbie Harry, Karen Carpenter and Susan Jacks (who you all remember and cherish from her days in the the Poppy Family).

Unquestionably, a key vocal influence was Lesley Gore, and Tracey's expert utilization of such an emotionally urgent style is a joy to beohld. Side One opens tremendously with the runaway exuberance of "Breakaway"; its charms recall the simple pleasures to be found in Gore's immortal "Sunshine, Lollipops and Rainbows." It's followed by a truly heartrending remake of Kirsty MacColl's "They Don't Know." The fact that this was able to become a hit over our crapola airwaves is genuine cause for applause. But for me, the *coup de grace* is the poignant, camp-free reading given to "Move Over Darling." The way Tracey transforms a piece of Doris Day schlock into seduction nirvana is a minor miracle.

All the aforementioned sureshots occur on Side One but believe me, Side Two's no slouch either. You can discover that for yourself. In the meantime, take it from me: Tracey Ullman is worth turning cartwheels over.

THE POET II
Bobby Womack
Beverly Glen

By J.D. Considine

Nominally a sequel to 1981's *The Poet*, this is less a second helping of that album's personal expressiveness than a second side of Bobby Womack. Granted, "Love Has Finally Come At Last," the exhilarating single that kicks off *The Poet II*, falls easily into the same well-measured view of domestic passion that sparked its predecessor, *The Poet*'s "If You Think You're Lonely Now." But that's only true if you look at the single as a function of its lyrics, and it's anything but that—instead, it's about the musical push/pull that develops between Womack and guest vocalist Patti LaBelle. While the rhythm bed is pure Philly Soul sophistication, Womack and LaBelle offer an exercise in contrasts on the verses: he gruffly rushes his lyrics, periodically punctuating them with soulful shouts, while her lines are drawn out, dragging against the beat as she illuminates each phrase with gutsy vocal leaps. Forget what you've read about the rebirth of the R&B duet—Womack and LaBelle are the most incandescent team since Otis Redding recorded with Carla Thomas. Their vocal chemistry makes "Love Has Finally Come At Last" one of the most emotionally fulfilling songs of the year.

Like the single, the other great moments of this record have more to do with the music than the meaning. On paper, "Through The Eyes of a Child," one of the other two duets with LaBelle, is an upbeat bit of philosophizing on Womack's part, but what lifts it above the level of mere hopeful sentiment are the telling musical details, like the effortless burst of jazz guitar following the chorus line, or the impassioned tenor solo that follows LaBelle's verse. In the long run, it's this musical sureness that allows Womack's trips to the soapbox to end up far more convincing than they might otherwise have. Best of the bunch is the quotation from the Rev. Martin Luther King that opens "American Dream," for here Womack has managed to frame it with a musical setting that doesn't simply trade off of the power of Dr. King's oratory, but actually works in communion with it. Even though the trick is more musical than a matter of words, it's hard to hear that track and not walk away feeling that Womack's self-conferred laureate is entirely deserved.

BANANARAMA
Bananarama
London

By Craig Zeller

Let's have the cold hard facts of the matter right up front where they belong: 1. *Bananarama* is not as consistently enthralling as its predeccesor, *Deep Sea Skiving*; 2. I've still got it bad for Bananarama.

Just a word (or more) about *Deep Sea Skiving*. That scintillating mishmash of UK singles and tacked-on albums tracks was undoubtedly one of the best records of 1983 as well as being one hell of a mood elevator. To this day, it only takes one spin of "Young At Heart" to get me giddy. And who can forget the jubilant "Shy Boy," or the tender mercies of "Wish You Were

Here," or the heartbreaking finality of "Cheers Then," or . . .

Guess I'd better hit my brakes, brother, or I'll end up reviewing the wrong record. At any rate . . . While *Bananarama* is in no way a victim of the sophomore jinx, it does have one drawback: a shortage of material. There's only eight cuts here (actually nine, counting a fade-out fragment called "Link"). Not only that, but nearly half of these get the extended dance break treatment, which means they have extra instrumental time padded into them. I wouldn't object if it was done imaginatively, but like everyone else that tries it, it only sounds like Bananarama is killing time until the next cut. Half these tracks could've easily been trimmed to make room for two more.

That said, there's plenty left to love on this record. "Cruel Summer" would make a perfect release this summer, when everyone could chant its irresistible chorus under the boardwalk during a sweltering July heat wave. "Rough Justice" is like hearing a rejuvenated ABBA swaying to a tropical backbeat. "Hot Line " saunters along most refreshingly and "State I'm In" is the sort of pop jubilance these women excel at.

But as good as the aforementioned gems are, they must all take a backseat to the brilliant "Robert DeNiro's Waiting." This one's got it all—an exhilarating state of mind, an irresistible plight (only the young Vito Corleone can make their hearts go boom, boom, boom), and a chorus that's overflowing with wish fulfillment. Throw in an unforgettable touch—the way they lop off the first syllable of "Italian" at the finale—and you've got future gold. All in all, a worthy-if-flawed successor to a smashing debut. (Personal to Bananarama: If DeNiro can't cut it in the *amore* department, come see about me. I do a pretty mean version of "Volare.")

MY EVER CHANGING MOODS
The Style Council
Geffen

By Wayne King

During Paul Weller's stint with as leader of the Jam, comparisons between his outfit and Pete Townshend's Who abounded. This was especially true in the United States, which never took the trio to heart as did their native England, where Weller was being acclaimed as another Son of God in innumerable *New Musical Express* readers' polls. Ironic, then, if the Style Council is his way of avoiding the predictable response the Jam was receiving up until their demise, because *My Ever Changing Moods* only serves to further the Townshend/Weller analogy.

What Weller has done with the Style Council (consisting of himself, keyboardist Mick Talbot and assorted "honorary councillors") is take the basic premise of Townshend's 1983 collection of twenty years' worth of demos, *Scoop*—a picture of the artist as Grand Eclectic—and make it a career move. In doing so, *My Ever Changing Moods* becomes the nadir of the whole sham British idea of "eclecticism" as captured by that all-encompassing phrase Style. *Moods* is a catalog of cool as defined by a would-be Mod, the most slavishly fashion-conscious and self-obsessed subspecies in rock's history. As the genres parade by—funk, soul, big band jazz, rap, easy listening, folk, plus who knows how many others—we're left with what? Bullshit, my friends. The only connection here is the timeless and empty conceit of fashion, that change is all, change is supreme, change, always change, and never mind if it's for better or worse so long as it comes, and we are different. This concept is the basis for offering three numbers previously released with new arrangements, as if no idea has proper form, but can always be transformed and presented as new. Too bad that such self-deceit prevents us from enjoying the strides Weller has made as a singer. Too bad that such gamesmanship undercuts the pointedly political lyrics of many of the numbers. And that the compassion and love evident in others is eviscerated by the emptiness at the heart of this music.

The back cover quotes from Jean Paul Marat, described as an "18th Century French visionary." Another appropriate description might be murderer, since Marat was perhaps the most bloodthirsty character in the drama of the French Revolution. That Weller makes no distinction between the two extremes of Marat's personality is all too telling. But could we have expected anything else from a man who can't decide which is Western civilization's greater threat, imminent nuclear destruction or the possible return of bell bottom trousers?

24 ORIGINAL CLASSICS
Dion
Arista

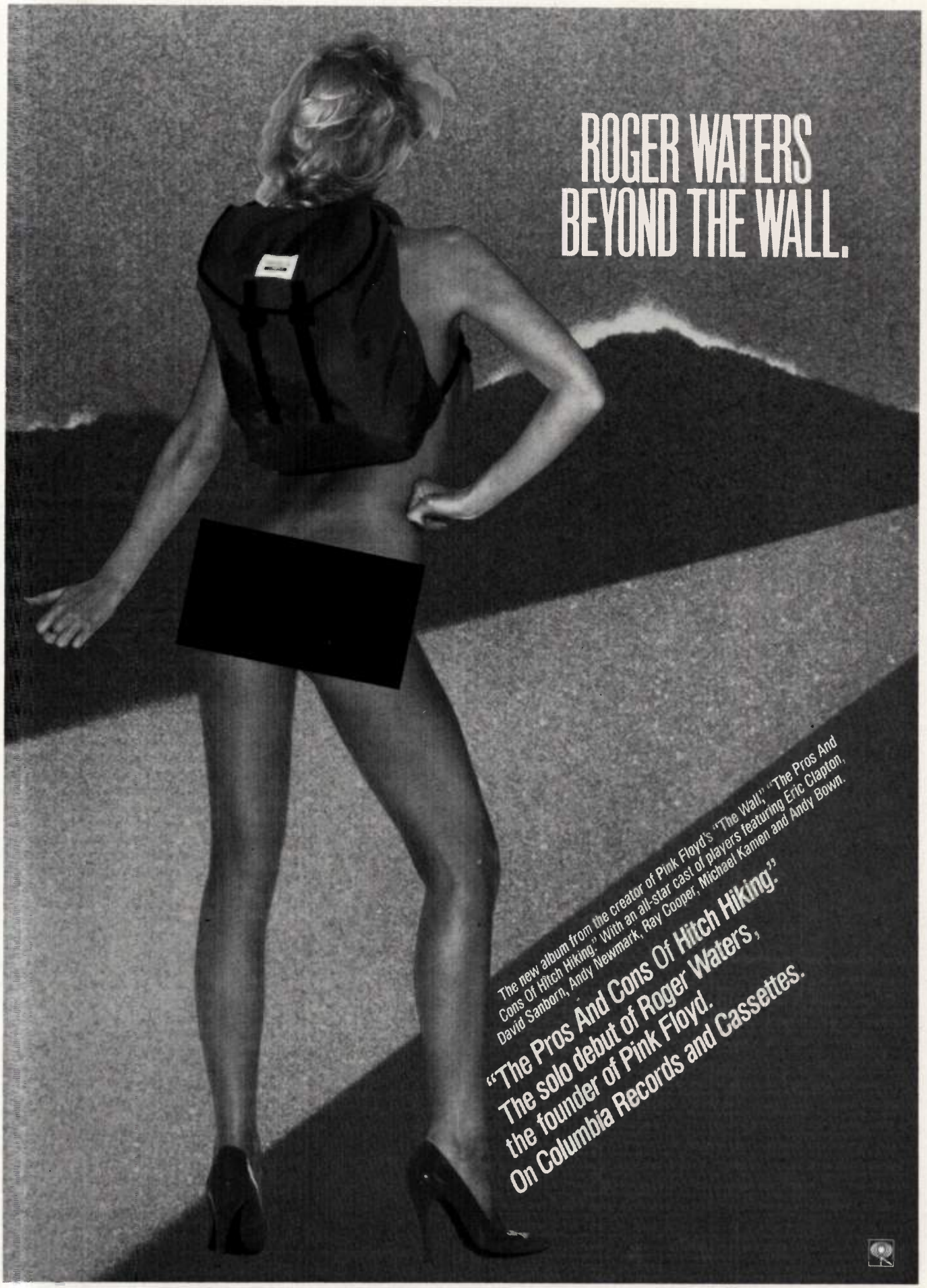
By David McGee

My man Dion. Or should that be Our Man Dion? No, for he is not your man or my man, or even our man. Yea, verily, he is The Man. I know this to be true, for I come from a land far from Dion's native Bronx; far from the concrete and clay of Fordham Road; far from the city in search of a hero. And in this land, known to most as Oklahoma, Dion's cry was heard and it set the people free—well, at least the people in my neighborhood on the north side of Tulsa. It is one thing to be the prince of the city; it is quite another to hold dominion over Indian Territory as well. To anyone who does this I say yea, verily, you are The Man.

As a long-time traveller in spirit with he who shall heretofore be known simply as The Man, I can attest to the worthiness of most of these *24 Original Classics*. "I Wonder Why"? "A Teenager In Love"? "Lonely Teenager"? Podnahs, that Italian tenor ache made more gals swoon than yours truly cares to count—in my time a serenade from The Man guaranteed a little dynamic courtship, you know what I mean? And how about those spit-in-your-eye vocals on "The Wanderer," "Lovers Who Wander," "Runaround Sue" and "Little Diane"? We are talking about a guy who never met a dame who didn't understand a slap in the face or a slug from a .45. We are talking about The Man.

And in case you think The Man was great but not quite On The One, dig the social conscience of "Abraham, Martin and John." It wasn't worth a damn for dynamic courtship, but yo! The Man had spent the best part of a decade doing all the hard work for us! And let us not forget that The Man was a visionary: he clearly foresaw the mean machines of his day shrinking to tin can size and all the action moving into the boudoir. Hence the great wimpout of the '70s, and the decline of America, demonstrated here on side 4 wherein is contained "A, M & J," "Sanctuary," "Your Own Back Yard" (an anti-drug credo) and a washed-out rendition of Tom Waits' "Heart of Saturday Night," itself an elegy to a state of mind The Man made manifest in his work. Be advised that yours truly admires The Man's successful battle against his drug addiction, and endorses any effort to take stock of one's life (as The Man continues to do this day in some of his altogether-wonderful Christian recordings), but takes exception to the way *24 Original Classics* closes not with a bang but with a whimper. Why a live version of "The Wanderer" and why "Heart of Saturday Night," rather than the superlative "I Used to be a Brooklyn Dodger," or "Queen of '59" from his totally boss 1976 LP, *Streetheart*, as grand a comeback album as has ever been made in the history of rock 'n' roll?

But who am I to complain? Three sides full of prime vocalizing, a couple of interesting tracks on the fourth side and a philosophical problem that may be mine alone. As The Man himself would no doubt agree, let he who is without sin cast the first stone. Me, I wanna rock.



Produced by Roger Waters and Michael Kamen. Management: Peter Asher Management, Inc. Eric Clapton and David Sanborn appear courtesy of Warner Bros. Records Inc. "Columbia," are trademarks of CBS Inc. © 1984 CBS Inc.

WHITE MUSIC
GO 2
DRUMS AND WIRES
BLACK SEA
ENGLISH SETTLEMENT
WAXWORKS
XTC

Virgin/Geffen

By Jonathan Gregg

In what may qualify as one of the great humanitarian gestures of modern times, Geffen has acquired the entire XTC catalog for re-release in the U.S. (Geffen released the band's most recent effort, *Mummer*, in January). Thus ends an ill-starred relationship with Epic, whose dog-in-the-manger style of promotion made XTC one of music's best kept secrets, revered by critics, fellow musicians and a handful of devotees, but largely unknown to the American public.

Comparisons between XTC and the Beatles are inevitable, for while they do not collaborate, guitarist Andy Partridge and bassist Colin Moulding lead the band with a similar balance of talent—Partridge the poet lyricist and group visionary, whose angular, slashing rhythm guitar propels the outfit, and Moulding, the more engaging (and commercial) melodist, who serves as the perfect foil to Partridge.

Relatively slow bloomers, XTC did not show their full potential on the first two albums. Released in 1978, both *White Music* and *Go 2* suffer from the influence of the then-prevailing musical climate, i.e., "new wave." The combination of raw production, Barry Andrews' cheesy organ sound and some quirky, half-baked songwriting makes them interesting only to serious aficionados. In many ways this period of XTC's career is better served by the compilation album, *Waxworks*, which includes two of *White Music*'s best cuts, "Statue of Liberty" and "This Is Pop," along with several excellent non-LP titles (notably "Science Friction" and "Are You Receiving Me?"). However, while the record is a judicious enough compilation spanning XTC's career through *English Settlement*, all the LPs after the first two are well worth owning in their entirety.

Drums and Wires witnessed the departure of Barry Andrews and the addition of brilliant guitarist Dave Gregory. Along with charter member Terrry Chambers on drums, this is the configuration that would make XTC's most memorable music. Now a polished unit, with a marriage of guitars made in heaven and a young producer named Steve Lillywhite behind the board to get it all down, XTC was finally able to interpret complex, dissonant compositions like Partridge's "When You're With Me I Have Difficulty" with the same aplomb as hard pop gems like "Real By Reel" or Moulding's "Making Plans for Nigel," a major U.K. hit. With this album they permanently shed the image of artsy punks and began to establish a much more concise and provocative balance between classic pop and the avant-garde.

Nowhere is this more evident than on *Black Sea*, their fourth LP. Perhaps goaded by Moulding's hitwriting success, Partridge dominates the album with his most pop-oriented material to date, and never has the inclusion of a lyric sheet been more justified. From the crunching opening chords and cannon-fire drum sound of "Respectable Street," through the ska-rap of "Living Through Another Cuba," to Moulding's two indelible singalongs, "Generals and Majors" and "Love at First Sight," *Black Sea* is probably the most consistently melodic and hard-rocking album XTC has produced, and represents a peak in the state of the four-piece guitar band art. It was, however, a format they were to progressively abandon, starting with the double album *English Settlement* (which was condensed into a single disc upon its 1982 American release).

Replete with traditional musical influences and historical themes, *English Settlement* is a marvelous work of minstrelsy, bridging the gap between period pop and lasting, universal music, and must be considered their finest achievement. The concerns of the lyrics are timeless but close to home ("Runaways," "No Thugs In Our House"), alternately public and private ("Snowman," "Knuckle Down"), and while Moulding's writing takes on new depth with "Ball and Chain" and "English Roundabout," Partridge tops it all with the eminently hummable classic, "Senses Working Overtime." *Mummer* (reviewed in May RECORD), is even more eclectic and removed from the guitar rock aesthetic—a *Sgt. Pepper* to *English Settlement's Revolver.*

All in all, these are some of the most indispensable components to a good record collection. Many thanks to Geffen, and welcome back, lads. That's under "X" in your local record stores, folks.

. . . . . .

SHE'S STRANGE
Cameo

Atlanta Artists/Polygram

By Steve Bloom

Back in the days when there was a record company called Chocolate City, a group named Cameo gave the label instant credibility. Cameo's 1977 debut, *Cardiac Arrest*, introduced a band that was well-schooled in the artistry of funk, from James Brown through Parliament to the rites of disco. Seven years and five gold albums later, Cameo has halved its original eight-man lineup and now records on its own label.

So it almost goes without saying that *She's Strange* is a long way from *Cardiac Arrest*. The title cut topped the black singles chart in April while sounding remarkably like the Manhattan Transfer, while on the following track, "Love You Anyhow," guitarist Charlie Singleton shamelessly mimics George Benson's scat schtick. Then there's an extremely dubious "Tribute to Bob Marley," which, like the lackluster attempts at rock-funk scattered throughout the LP, breaks no new ground.

The album cover features a woman whose face is lined with tribal marking (she's strange, get it?). Of all the different faces Cameo displays on this record, the most desirable is the one with the cool, jazzy look. The breezier numbers, such as "Groove With You," "Heading Downtown," and even "She's Strange," reveal the influence of Benson, Al Jarreau, and any number of jazz vocal groups. More than anything else, it's the harmonies that make these songs memorable. Cameo's next release shouldn't be a jazz album, though; I'd like to see a greatest hits volume instead. For would-be funkateers who have never heard "I Just Want To Be," "Cameosis" or anything from ever-more-alluring *Cardiac Arrest*, it would be an adult education.

. . . . . .

ICICLE WORKS
Icicle Works

Arista

By Crispin Sartwell

If all of the British new wave bands you've heard lately seem to sound alike, this debut album is solid evidence that you're not hallucinating. Icicle Works sound more like everyone else than anyone else—a considerable achievement, but not necessarily an enjoyable one.

This band of befuddled Liverpudlians often sound uncannily like Duran Duran, and singer Ian McNabb's debt to Simon LeBon is all too evident. But to Duran's punchless pop they attempt to append the artistic ambition of the Cure or the The. Unfortunately, they are neither as unpretentious as DD nor as sincerely cerebral as TT. As a result, much of this album edges into the realm of the excruciating.

A typical product of their artistic ambi-

tions is the lyric of "Chop The Tree," which begins: "When in the winter of our discontent/We found a way/To tie a bond between our hearts/In the open field should there we lay." Those words are printed on the sleeve (!), and the listener can be forgiven for not knowing what they mean, since, of course, they mean nothing at all. And they are by no means atypical.

In the interest of fairness, it should be noted that there are two very good songs on this record: "Whisper To A Scream (Birds Fly)" and "Love Is A Wonderful Color," respectively the album's opening and closing tracks. Here there is melody solid and original enough to compensate for the continued lyric incoherence. "Wonderful Color," in particular, features such breathtakingly bright ideas that you can't help but wonder whether this is the same ensemble that's responsible for the rest of the LP. "Whisper To A Scream," though it owes its lyric idea to Elvis Costello and suffers in the comparison, possesses a certain wreckless charm that masks its deficiencies. But two good songs is a single, not an album, and between these two stretches a Sahara of filler. Give this one a miss.

STRAIGHT AHEAD
Amy Grant
Myrrh

By Laura Fissinger

Pop singer Amy Grant had much to recommend her even before the release of the forthright, full-hearted *Straight Ahead*. She recorded five solid-selling LPs before her sixth, *Age To Age*, won both a Grammy and the first gold album ever rewarded to a solo gospel artist. She fills sizable venues in most of the country and receives a raft of great press wherever she goes. Not a bad track record for a secular singer, and a great one for a "contemporary Christian artist." But for a contemporary Christian artist who wants to cross over without compromise, can any track record get non-believers to listen? Can any album?

For those who don't care about the denomination of good singing, Amy Grant will be a cherished discovery. In her lower register there's dusky, sensual immediacy; in the midrange, clarity and extroversion; up top, lyrical, evocative sweetness. Listen to *Straight Ahead*'s title track and try to think of any current mainstream female with such a superbly disciplined and expressive vocal instrument. How many other pop singers retain access to the genre's roots, its heritage of the emotional honesty from folk and gospel musics? Only on the over-produced "Tomorrow" and "Open Arms" does Grant really sound like just another run-of-the-mill balladeer bound for easy listening stations.

The lyrics, however, represent a drastic drop in eloquence. For all the mention of lapses in faith in songs like "Thy Word," "Open Arms" and "Tomorrow," Grant sounds thoroughly saved. The profound power in a Christian artist like T-Bone Burnett comes from his constant falls from grace and eternal need for redemption; his spiritual life appears in both his music and lyrics as an hourly struggle, ballasted by the trust that his God gave him his dark sides for good reasons. Grant has said in interviews that she wants to inspire and give hope. How much more hope would she offer if her humanity sounded like a blessing rather than something to be detested and endured? At times in a song like "Thy Word," she seems to already be waiting at heaven's gate, the formality of admission her only obstacle.

The music and arrangements could provide *Straight Ahead* with the sound of earthly shadows and storms, but they don't. Grant and husband/co-writer/guitarist Gary Chapman create respectable generic West Coast pop-rock, at its most distinctive when the acoustic instruments and madrigal-influenced vocal arrangements are dictating the feel of a given song. Mostly, though, there is no tension, no aural parables of the long journeys towards faith and transformation. If non-believers already have plenty of pleasant pop music, why should they grapple with the strong religion of this album just to hear some more pleasant pop music?

Grant is such a terrific singer, and has such a special persona, it's lousy to think of her shut out of the mainline marketplace. Even lousier to think what might happen should she and Chapman make an album that *does* disclose more of Christianity's pain and struggle. Would people listen even then? Would non-Christians accept Grant's beliefs?

STARE AT THE SUN
The Jon Butcher Axis
Polydor

By Laura Fissinger

No mystery about the Jon Butcher Axis' low profile past their Boston homefront. Supposedly, this current golden era of crossover and crossbreeding has made the phrase "hard to peg" obsolete. Yet both last year's self-titled Axis debut and

CATCHING UP, MOVING ON

LIONHEART
Kate Bush
EMI America

NEVER FOREVER
Kate Bush
EMI America

By Jonathan Gregg

With the release of these two albums, Kate Bush's catalog is finally complete in the U.S. Her second and third LPs, respectively, *Lionheart* and *Never Forever* bridge the gap between 1978's *The Kick Inside*, Bush's precocious debut at age 19, and 1982's breakthrough, *The Dreaming*; it is testament to her vision that neither album sounds dated. Instead, they make a strong case for Kate Bush as *the* major female artist of the '80s, a musician and performer whose intuitive sense of melody and unflagging adventurousness put her on a par with Joni Mitchell in her prime.

This is not some singing puppet whose strings are pulled from a booth by her Svengali producer. Half angel, half dervish, Bush fairly radiates character and motivation, combining classical perfectionism with a child's fearlessness, and her cherubic soprano, so pure and reckless, exudes an intoxicating combination of innocence and sexuality.

Released late in 1978, *Lionheart* made clear that *The Kick Inside* was not the work of a one-shot prodigy. While the two albums' sound is similar, here Bush's vocals are more controlled, the arrangements more spacious and fluid, and the songwriting more consistent, of which "In Search of Peter Pan" is the most spellbinding example. Bush approaches such traditionally abused rock topics as sex and mysticism with a disarming earnestness ("The more I think about sex/The better it gets/Here we have a purpose in life/Good for the circulation"), while "Oh England My Lionheart" glows with the same rare sincerity of an artist who knows and loves what she is writing about.

Whereas *Lionheart* recalls some of *The Kick Inside*, *Never Forever* seems to anticipate *The Dreaming*. As co-producer, Bush was developing her grasp of the mechanical aspects of making records. Songs like "Violin" feature more extreme vocal and instrumental treatments, and topics such as conventional and nuclear warfare ("Army Dreamers," "Breathing") reflect a more mature and worldly introspection. So while it's not as stunning as *Lionheart*, *Never Forever* shows Bush in an important transition between performer and producer.

Now that we have her records, all we need is Kate Bush in person; aside from one appearance on *Saturday Night Live*, Bush has never graced these shores. And that's a shame, because, judging by the videotape of a 1979 show, *Kate Bush Live at Hammersmith Odeon*, she offered visual performance on a high plane years before MTV even existed. But for now, five years later, we have finally caught up with her. Until her next move, that is.

Bush: Exuding an irresistible combination of innocence and sexuality

PHOTO GUIDO HARARI/LGI

Stare At The Sun resurrect it.

If labels are a must, it's fair enough to call Butcher's trio an AOR band. Fans of same will love *Stare At The Sun*'s lead-weight bass and bone-breaking drums. Then again, they'll probably hate the classy, dissonant jazz chordings around which guitarist/writer Butcher centers his style. Jazz fans will hate the bones being crunched. Butcher is black, so some whites won't want his very white music. Some blacks won't want white music from a black man, either. Butcher's singing is rough, emotional, distinctive, but *very* white, and that's another potential problem. And what he sings about? Fans of party-hearty won't like his literacy, and bonafide literates will find the lyrics much too ambitious and much too simple. High-tech guitar effects? They're here too, but not enough to please those who like them and too many to please those who don't. And what's all this atmosphere, and all this oriental-sounding stuff, and just who is playing all those keyboards? What kind of trio is this, anyway?

Butcher brought all these contradictions together in a masterpiece of mood and pacing on side one of the first album, but *Stare At The Sun* is much too timid and anxious to please to hit with the same force. Classic sophomore slump? Maybe. But in four cuts, he pulls it all together. A pair of rockers—"Call To Arms" and "Victims"—use the herculean Axis rhythm section to anchor and amplify the delicate time changes and atmospherics. And on two ballads—"Dreamns Fade Away" and "Walk On The Moon"—the process is reversed: the ethereal and complex qualities let the heavy bottom act as heartbeat, and not as a hammer. On those numbers, *Stare At The Sun* holds a promise for intelligence and artistry that AOR rock could barely hope to accomodate. Here's hoping that Butcher can deliver on the promise later.

EARTH CRISIS
Steel Pulse
Elektra

By Rico Mitchell

With all due respect for UB40's encouraging American breakthrough, Steel Pulse remains England's premier reggae band. Formed in 1975 in Handsworth, Birmingham's black working class district, the band helped solidify Britain's punk-reggae alliance by opening for the Stranglers and Generation X and participating in several Rock Against Racism concerts. In 1979, following the release of their first album, *Handsworth Revolution,* Bob Marley gave them his imprimatur by asking them to join him on a European tour.

Steel Pulse came into its own as an international force on 1982's *True Democracy*, an impressive balance of stern Rasta doctrine and stylish musical innovation. But as fine an achievement as that record was*Crisis* is better. Songwriter David Hinds has inherited Marley's courage and conviction, if not yet all his eloquence, as a spokesman for blacks in Babylon. Drummer Steve Nesbitt and bassist Ronald McQueen recall the Wailers' Barrett brothers in their ability to integrate funk elements into their riddims without compromising the reggae one-drop. Keyboardist Selwyn Brown and percussionist Alphonso Martin back Hinds' plaintive vocalizing with bittersweet harmonies.

The most immediately engaging tune here, "Steppin' Out," is an irrestible invocation to dance to Jah music. "Throne of Gold" is a love song cut from the melodic cloth of Marley's "Waiting In Vain," but with more chivalrous lyrics. Hinds points the finger more directly on "Earth Crisis"—""Super powers have a plan/Undermining Third World man"—and "Wild Goose Chase," which rails indiscriminately against nuclear power, neutron bombs, contraceptives, abortions and test tube babies, and ends with the rhetorical question, "Tell me who shall save de human race?"

Since Bob Marley's death, reggae music has beem without a unifying spiritual center. Popular singers like Dennis Brown and Gregory Isaacs profess allegiance to Rasta, but often seem more preoccupied with the daughters in the front row. And Yellowman, Jamaica's ruling deejay, has more in common with Redd Foxx than with Marcus Garvey. How ironic that it takes a black band from Birmingham, in double exile from Jamaica and Mama Africa, to most conscientiously keep the Trenchtown flame burning.

SCENES IN THE CITY
Branford Marsalis
Columbia

JUMPIN' IN
Dave Holland
ECM

By Steve Futterman

The promising jazz musician becomes a great jazz artist when he finds his own voice, his soul. Chops are only the icing on the cake, the spark that provides the flame.

No matter how technically adept a player is, without the signature sound that sets him apart from all others he remains just another drone. Or as Charlie Parker put it, "You can't join the throng 'til you play your own song." Bassist/bandleader Dave Holland is a member of that elite throng; saxophonist/bandleader Branford Marsalis is on the outside looking in.

Branford Marsalis, like his trumpet-playing brother Wynton, is still searching for a voice. In their pursuit, the Marsalises sort through influences, taking what they can from this hornman or that, looking for clues that will hopefully lead them back to themselves. This is a necessary evolutionary process—no artist ever hits the scene fully formed. But Branford is now at a dangerous stage in this development. Where Wynton continues to hit on every neo-bop trumpeter from Lee Morgan to Miles Davis to show him the light—an inquisitive tic that gives his playing variety and nerve—Branford has already found his model. With *Scenes*, his debut album, he has decided to become Wayne Shorter.

It's all here: the same laconic phrasing on the tenor, that ethereal soprano tone, every note dense but floating—Marsalis has co-opted Shorter's style wholesale. There's no inimitable character to Marsalis' blowing or this horn-plus-rhythm group conception; the predominant sound of *Scenes* is lifted straight from Shorter's pre-Weather Report work with Miles Davis and from Shorter's own Blue Note sessions. The result is a disheartening lack of daring and imagination; just because Shorter has stopped making records like this doesn't mean someone else should be making them for him. Branford Marsalis is obviously a gifted saxophonist who has backed himself into a stylistic dead end. Hero worship is for fans; musicians have to risk falling on their faces in order to reveal themselves.

Dave Holland found his instrumental voice on the bass during his 1970s' work with Miles Davis, Anthony Braxton and Sam Rivers. With *Jumpin' In*, his first record with a working group, Holland has now become a composer and bandleader of distinction. Drawing on innovations of the past two decades, *Jumpin' In* weds free style blowing to Holland's own obsession with unified formal structure. This is music that acknowledges its sources even as they are transformed through a new consciousness. The surging solos speak of Ornette Coleman and beyond, the rich tonal colors suggest Mingus, and Holland's contrapuntal themes even revive visions of old New Orleans.

Yet these are only random associations; Holland—unlike Marsalis—has turned the materials of the past into something bright, unexpected and utterly personal. *Jumpin' In* is one of the most satisfying records of the year and is a must for anyone interested in exploring acoustic jazz, 1980s style. Dave Holland's is a voice that sings.

LUXURY
Method Actors
Press

By Christopher Hill

The Method Actors are a near-perfect example of a sub-legendary band, creators of what critic Robert Christgau once termed "semi-popular music." This status needs official recognition now that the barriers between what was once thought of as the rock 'n' roll underground and large scale acceptance have undergone a massive and maybe enduring reconfiguration. The Actors have a more impressive collection of clippings than the Velvet Underground. They have fans who unself-consciously talk about their "early," "middle" and "late" periods. The British writers, with their reverence for highly significant and nearly unknown figures, cast founder Actor Vic Varney as some sort of seminal figure, along the lines of, say, Robert Johnson or Iggy Pop.

To speak the unvarnished truth, the music of the Method Actors is about as enjoyable as music from a band that has No Commercial Potential written across it in letters a mile high. The elements they've used to concoct their amusing patiche seem clear enough: the Eurobroodings of Bryan Ferry, a dash of Bunnymen psychedelia, a hip nod to technodance rhythm, and an annoying level of screw-the-listener experimentalism.

Still, the Method Actors are enjoyable in fits and starts, thanks to a guiding instinct for energy, rhythm and economy that usually leads them to the most cost-effective use of their spartan elements, and drummer Robert Schmid is the man who mostly keeps them honest. In "You, The International Language," he snaps the song to attention right from the start. With sharp snare punctuation, dramatic rolls and other cannily chosen effects he provides a tense underpinning for Stan Satin's *Slaughter On Tenth Avenue*-styled sax riffing.

But the distillation of the Actors' power is best heard in their cover of the Velvet Underground's "All Tomorrow's Parties." Great ideas here which transforms the Velvets' elegy into a folk-rock charger include a certain melodic twist in the background harmonies that fairly ignites each speedy verse, and some sax playing that I can only describe as sounding like medieval jazz. With evidence of this kind of meat behind all the method and mannerisms, it just might pay to keep an eye on these Actors' future roles. (Press Records, 432 Moreland Avenue, Atlanta, GA 30307.)

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

SHAKTI SHOES & SANDALS THE ORIGINALS! Contoured cork footbed forms to your foot as you walk. Free catalog. (800) 336-3394. Shakti Shoes, 309-AC Spring Street, Herndon, VA 22070.

JIM MORRISON T-SHIRTS. $10. JERSEYS $12. Catalog $1. Quality Promotions, 670 E. Third Ave., #200, San Mateo, CA 94401. (415) 344-1108.

FAN CLUBS

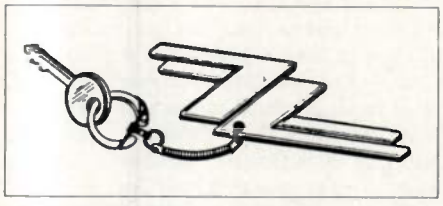
U2 INFORMATION, FOR DETAILS SEND S.A.S.E. to U2 Information, Box 156, Princeton Junction, NJ 08550.

GENESIS INFORMATION, FOR DETAILS SEND S.A.S.E. to Genesis Information, Box 253, Princeton Junction, NJ 08550.

BLACKMORE/RAINBOW FAN CLUB: FOR information send S.A.S.E. to: 2493 Pierce Ave., Niagara Falls, NY 14301.

GIFTS AND MERCHANDISE

ZZ Top Keychain



SEEN ON THE ZZ TOP VIDEOS. SOLID BRASS, chrome-plated. Send $10 (money order) plus $1 shipping and handling to: ZZ Top International Fan Club, Dept. R, Box 19744, Houston, TX 77224.

NO-NUKES. HELP STOP NUCLEAR POWER and Arms—Be active today or radioactive tomorrow!!! Send $4.95 for complete kit to: Future World, Box 476 (B), Stoneham, MA 02180.

MISCELLANY

INVENTIONS, IDEAS, NEW PRODUCTS WANTED! Industry presentation/national exposition. Call free 1-800-528-6050. Arizona, 1-800-352-4058. X831.

US/CAN/EUROPE. SINGLES, ALL AGES, SEEK correspondence/sincere friendships. SASE: SCANNA, Box 4, Pittsford, NY 14534.

MUSICIANS

Musicians, free classified

FREE SPACE IS PROVIDED TO RECORD SUBscribers who are musicians. If you need a gig, or additional band members, send us your ad (25 word maximum). All listings are subject to space availability. If you have something to buy or sell, you pay only $1.00 per word. Send your ad to: RECORD, Musicians' Classified, 745 Fifth Ave., N.Y., NY 10151. Attn: Patti Fiore.

PLAY KEYBOARDS! EASY METHOD GUARANteed instant learning! Free sample: Nicmar-RC-5, Box 17, Port Jervis, NY 12771.

MUSICAL INSTRUCTION

I.C.A. INSTITUTE OF COMMUNICATION ARTS. A one year "Communications Media" program and/or part-time courses available. Audio Engineering, Video Production, Entertainment Business, Synthesizers/Modern Electronic Music, Music Theory, Music Arranging, Communications, Record Production, Sound Reinforcement, Systems and Sound. The full one year program is 26 hours per week over 42 weeks of instruction, with 700 hours of "in-studio." Courses can be taken on a part-time basis to achieve graduation status. Student financing available. Please call or write: I.C.A. Institute of Communication Arts Assoc., 2nd Floor, 1730 Burrard St., Vancouver, BC, Canada V6J 3G7, (604) 734-5474.

MUSICAL EQUIPMENT

PICKGUARD MATERIAL, BINDINGS, AND other hard-to-find guitar making supplies. Send $1 for catalog. Stewart-MacDonald, Box 900R, Athens, OH 45701.

INSTRUCTION

The Music Business Institute

CAREER PROGRAM IN MUSIC: INCLUDES RECording, studio, concert/video production; artist representation/management; retailing/wholesaling; record promotion/marketing; copyright/music-industry law; songwriters/music publishing; & more. Employment assistance. Accredited. Financial aid available. Write for free brochure & career guide. MBI, Dept. RD, 3376 Peachtree Rd, NE, Atlanta, GA 30326. (404) 231-3303.

DEEJAYS, NEWSCASTERS TRAINED. SCHOOL of Broadcast Arts. Home study. Free brochure. Write: SBA, Box 23 A, New York, NY 10019.

BE A RECORDING ENGINEER! NEW CLASSES quarterly. Institute of Audio/Video Engineering. (213) 666-3003/1831 Hyperion, Dept. A., Hollywood, CA 90027.

OCCULT

WITCHCRAFT'S POWER SECRETS! GAVIN & Yvonne Frost, world's foremost Witches, teach you. Details. Box 1502-X, Newbern, NC 28560.

POSTERS & PHOTOS

Celebrity Addresses & Photos

THOUSANDS AVAILABLE. ALL THE "SUPER Stars." Illustrated catalog $1. Celebrity Contact: 12077 Wilshire, #501-1, Los Angeles, CA 90025.

CONCERT PHOTOGRAPHS. V. HALEN '84, Duran, Idol, Asia, Culture C. '84, U2, Ozzy '84, Clash, Cars, H. Oates, Dolby, Go-Go's, Cougar '84. Catalog/sample $2. List favorites/alternates. Pop Shots, Box 1247R, Boston, MA 02117.

MICHAEL JACKSON!! 25 DIFFERENT COLOR photostamps. Send $6 and SASE to: B.A. Klink, Box 1035, Dearborn, MI 48121.

BEATLES' COLOR PHOTOS—SET OF 5 never published candid shots (1965-1969). Great for framing! All 5 for $7.50 + $1 postage. Order now and receive free picture of John. Walter Gerheart, 511 Compton Drive, Colonial Heights, VA 23834.

V'KRIENGKAI PHOTOS & BUTTONS!!! D. Duran, R. Rhoads, B. Idol, C. Club, R. Plant, Fixx, Q. Riot & thousand more!! Catalog $1 (refundable w/purchase). Specify favorites. V'Kriengkai, Box 657-R, Lenox Hill Station, NY, NY 10021.

COLOR CONCERT PHOTOS. HUGE SELECTION, hundreds of performers including rock, country, southern bands. Send $1 for beautiful illustrated catalog. Mention favorite. "Smile", Box 15293-RD, Chesapeake, VA 23320-0293.

ORIGINAL MOVIE POSTERS! FAST SERVICE! Catalog $2.00 (refundable). Movie Poster Gallery, (R), Box 2745, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

RECORDS AND TAPES

Never Before Available!

YOU CAN'T BUY THESE RECORDS! NY DOLLS, Buzzcocks, Television, BadBrains, Johnny Thunders, Dictators, Bush Tetras, Malaria, MC5, Germs, Nico, Fleshtones, 8 Eyed Spy, Suicide, many more! They exist only as authorized album length cassettes—top quality, professional liner notes, bands photos, colorful graphics. Be amazed by our free catalog. Write: Roir Cassettes, 611 Broadway, Suite 214RM, New York, NY 10012.

WHOLESALE: RECORDS, BLANK TAPES, Stereo. Buy direct. Free details. Record Opportunities, Box 245-R, Skykomish, WA 98288.

TODD RUNDGREN'S
COMPUTER GRAPHICS T-SHIRT!

Todd's 8 color computer graphics silkscreened on 100% cotton white muscle or crew T. S/M/L/XL
Send $12 + $3 P&H
(CA Residents add 6½%)
CONCERT CLOTHES
Box 744, Malibu, CA 90265. 100% guaranteed

FREE sample of . . .

GOLDMINE, the world's largest record collector's publication! Thousands of records for sale in each issue from all eras and all music areas. 45's, 78's, LP's and EP's. Rock 'n' Roll, jazz, country & western, rhythm & blues, new wave, folk — you name it **GOLDMINE** covers it! Published every two weeks! Sample free. 13 issues $22.00. **GOLDMINE, Circulation Department AIB, 700 E. State Street, Iola, WI 54990**

New LP's, $2.50 Or Less

ALL TYPES. FREE INFORMATION: BARRY PUBlications, 477 82nd St., Brooklyn, NY 11209.

FREE SA-90 TDK TAPE WITH 138 COMPARTment wall mounted cassette storage rack. Walnut finish, all wood. Send SASE for info. B.C. Woodworking, Box 221E, Medford, WI 54451.

PNEUMUSIKMANIALIVE! HUNDREDS OF Titles. Clash, V. Halen, Bowie, F. Mac, Police, Zeppelin, U2, Pretenders + many more. 40 page catalog $1. **Peppers Tape Factory**, Box 1237R, Canton, OH 44708.

RARE—OBSCURE—CULT COLLECTORS. Get huge 100+page catalog listing all types rock albums (American and Imports) from 60's and 70's. New catalog every two months. Send $2 (credited to first order). Be Bop Records, Box 2610R, Philadelphia, PA 19130. USA (215) 496-0382.

DON'T MISS OUT ON OUR GREAT CATALOGS of imported records, books, magazines, and posters. New release, cutouts and out-of-print also available. Send two 20¢ stamps and list favorite groups. Spin Dizzy, Dept. A, Box 21723, Milwaukee, WI 53221.

POP/COUNTRY. REVISED CATALOG ($1.50). Oldies/Current: 45's & L.P.'s 1040's through 1980's. Tommy Edwards Record Heaven, 4237 Fulton Rd., Cleveland, OH 44144.

SEND FOR FREE CATALOG. 1000'S OF OLDIES, out-of-print LP's, unusual records, now available by mail. Off The Record, Dept. A, 6136 El Cajon Blvd., San Diego, CA 92115.

RECORDS, CASSETTES, OLDIE 45's, IMPORTS, cutouts, picture disks, catalogs $2; Nert, Box 268-R, Lawrence, MA 01842.

RARE/IMPORTED: RECORDS, BOOKS, POSTers. World's largest selection. Gigantic illustrated catalog $1.00. Rockaway, Box 1508-E, Woodbridge, VA 22193.

SONGWRITERS

SONGWRITERS RESOURCES AND SERVICES IS A non-profit organization dedicated to the education and protection of songwriters. For free information, write or call: SRS, 6772 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood, CA 90028. (213) 463-7178.

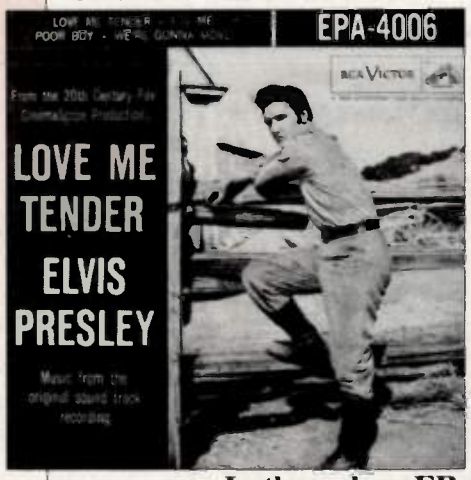
TRAVEL

ESCAPE TO THE ISLANDS. STAY AT MAHO BAY. NY Times says: "An ecological showplace . . . first class. $40 double for tent-styled canvas cottages in US Virgin Islands National Park on St. John." Call now! Toll free 800-392-9004 or in NY 212-472-9454 for brochure, reservations, and special airfares. A beautiful playground for hiking, snorkeling, sailing, and just plain relaxing.

DAVE MARSH

PADDING THE SELL

About 10 years ago, Jon Landau wrote a *Rolling Stone* column entitled "The Filler Memorandum" in which he detailed the various dodges used by rock and pop artists since time immemorial in order to pad their albums into something resembling a decent timespan. Landau's column was funny, but beneath the humor was an edge of significance, for he clearly recognized that by the mid-'70s, what a performer used to fill out his or her albums had become one of the most important criteria of excellence. In general, then as now, rock performers were caught up in the essential contradiction of record marketing: One makes more money and earns more prestige by selling albums, but albums sell (and get paid attention to) largely on the basis of one or two hit tracks. Since most artists aren't capable of making more than one or two hits per session (that is, per year), the dilemma becomes how to fill up all the rest of that vinyl. On his second album, a two-disc affair, Johnny Winter made one of the most creative responses imaginable—he left side four blank—but despite CBS Records' ill-fated fling with the one-sided 45 a year or so ago, the idea never caught on. Perhaps it lacks subtlety—though if so, that's as novel an excuse in the field of filler as in the field of rock.



In those days EPs stood for something . . .

Landau's column should have been the last word on the subject, but in recent years filler has become virtually an art in itself. The record business has responded to the potential of padding with more alacrity, not to say passion, than it has to almost any issue with which it has been confronted in the '80s. And some of the new varieties of filler are absolutely ingenious, as anyone knows who has tried to track down the perfect mix of a dance tune and nearly gone broke in the process.

The clearest instance of creative padding is the EP or "mini-album." In simpler times, the EP contained four to six songs, usually pressed on a seven-inch, 33 1/3 RPM disc. This configuration served a couple of legitimate purposes: to make available material that couldn't be found anywhere else in the artist's catalogue, a prime example being Elvis Presley's *Love Me Tender* EP featuring the entirety of that film's four-song soundtrack; and to serve as a low-priced sampler of a forthcoming or simultaneously-released album (and if you were really on a tight budget, you could often buy an entire album in sections simply by purchasing separate volumes of one EP title. RCA offered Presley fans this option by releasing multiple EPs of several of his early albums and soundtracks). In theory, the format was revived in the late '70s as a hallmark of the music industry's new economic frugality and creative pragmatism. The "mini-album" concept, especially when applied to up-and-coming hacks, was even thought to be a stride in the direction of honesty, since it acknowledged that most new groups have only one or two songs that are even of marginal interest. In practice, unfortunately, the new group that records a mini-album usually has songs that redefine "marginal" to mean "interesting only to the well-connected attorney who shoved the deal down the record label's throat," while minimally talented bands continue to make full-scale albums of tedium equalling that observed during any other period when more music was made than was wise.

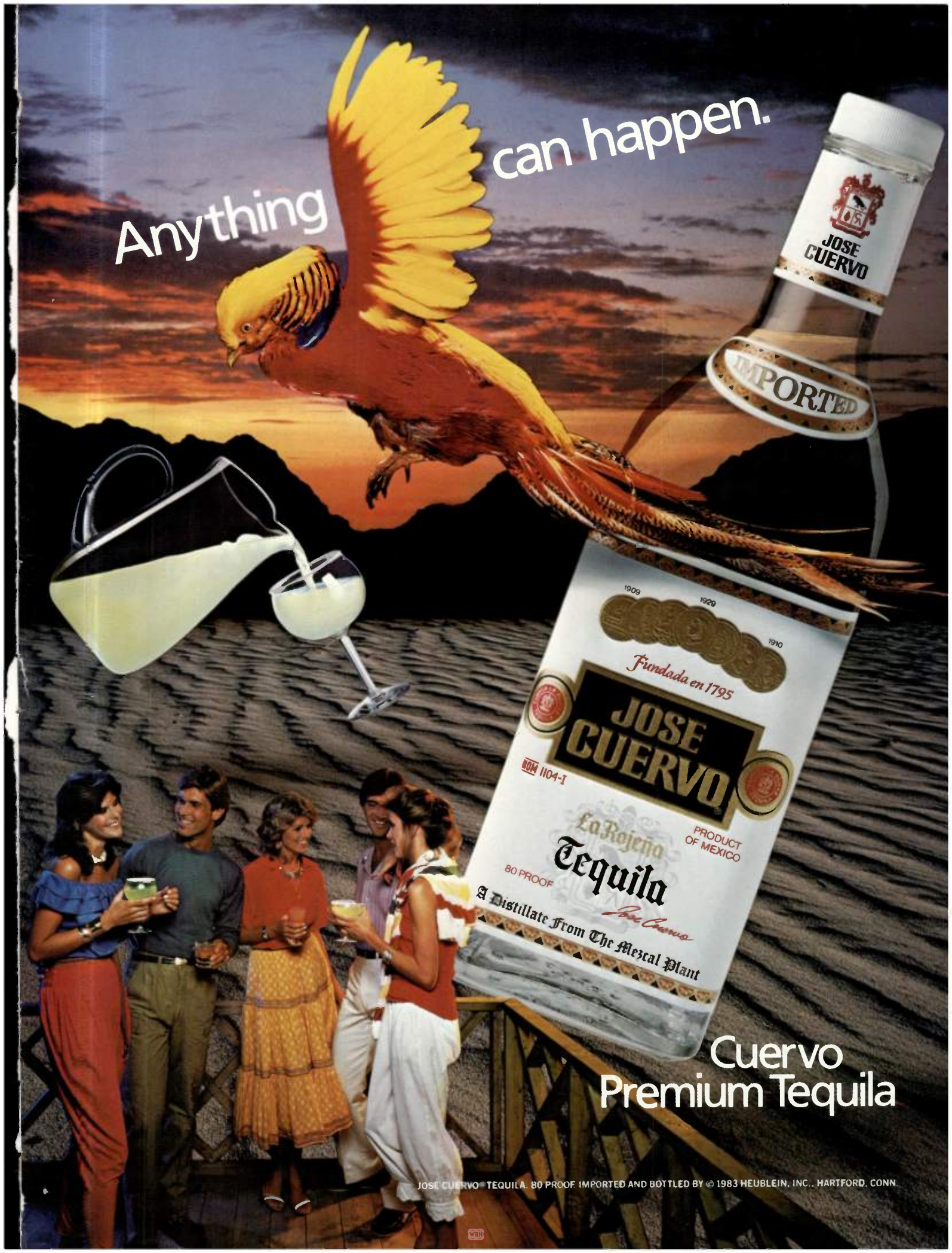
Of course, the *really* important filler advances have been made in singles. True, the CBS blank B-side struck out, but that idea was too avant-garde for the conservative American audience; when it catches on in Britain it will surely be picked up here. Other singles-padding elements are commonplace, all but taken for granted: alternative "dance" mixes, seven- and 12-inch versions of the same song and, often as not, the previously unissued B-side (guess why it didn't make the album).

That's not to say that all these gimmicks are inevitably used as padding. Arthur Baker's remix of Cyndi Lauper's "Girls Just Want To Have Fun" is great—it really *does* extend the song, not just in time but in concept, and it becomes a fascinating comment on the classic original. On the other hand, it's hard to think of anything more gratuitous than "Jellybean" Benitez remixing Elvis Costello, unless it's "Jellybean" Benitez remixing Billy Joel.

A more intriguing example of how padding works is Marshall Crenshaw's import-only *Our Town* EP. The ostensible purpose of reissuing these three tracks from *Field Day* (plus a live "Little Sister") are the new mixes by dance music vet John Luongo. And indeed, *Our Town* sounds better than *Field Day* roughly equal to the degree that *Meet The Beatles* is better than *Get The Knack*. However, it's also true that the reason for this is that *Field Day* was inappropriately produced by the highly overesteemed Steve Lillywhite. (If he's such a genius, why don't his acts have hits? Never mind.) In other words, Crenshaw is in the unfortunate position of having his *album* act as padding for his EP. He makes up for it, kind of, by filling out side two of the EP with an "extended" version of "For Her Love," which all but redefines gratuitous, given how prolific the guy is.

Many such remixes reflect the same problem. Junior's "Mama Used To Say" was an utter mystery to me for about six weeks after it became a hit—sounded great on the radio, terrible at home. Then I realized I had a copy of the *British* single—the American one was completely remodelled. It's hard not to think that the first version was a mistake; there's no reason for both.

The area of padding with the most unexploited potential is clearly the cassette. Talking Heads have been in the vanguard here; you'll notice that all the critics raving about the tape configuration's bonus songs didn't rave equally about how they'd left the best song off the disc. But then, that's the essence of filler. It is targeted with precision at those who'd just as soon have quantity as quality. ○


Anything can happen.
JOSE CUERVO
IMPORTED
1909
1929
1910
Fundada en 1795
JOSE CUERVO
NOM 1104-1
La Rojeña
Tequila
PRODUCT OF MEXICO
80 PROOF
A Distillate From The Mezcal Plant
Cuervo Premium Tequila
JOSE CUERVO® TEQUILA. 80 PROOF. IMPORTED AND BOTTLED BY © 1983 HEUBLEIN, INC., HARTFORD, CONN.