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RECORD

DECEMBER 1984
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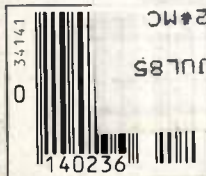
**YOKO
ONO**
THE RECORD
INTERVIEW

**TINA
TURNER**
HOT 'N' RAUNCHY



ON THE SET WITH

**DAVID
BOWIE**



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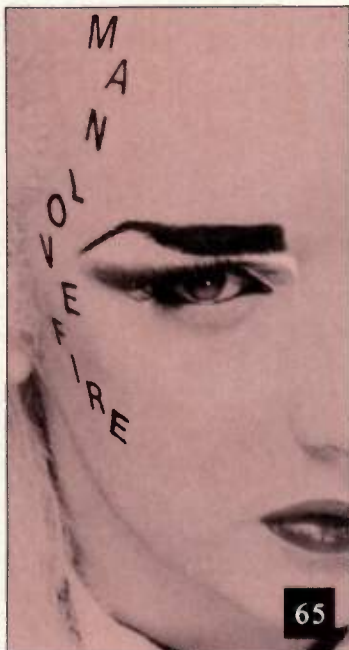
LYNN GOLDSMITH

RECORD

DECEMBER 1984 VOL. 4 NO. 2

ROCK ON 7-15

Introducing a new section of news and notes from the rock scene. Featured this month: Prince hits the road; a close encounter with Prince's opening act, Sheila E.; checking in with Prince protege Vanity, now embarking on a solo career; a look at where Michael Jackson's millions are going; Culture Club's new female vocalist; news about U2's upcoming U.S. tour; Billy Idol takes a break, but his drummer and guitarist play on; Huey Lewis returns from Europe and gets ready for '85; Jason and the Scorchers get to work on a new album; Elvis Presley will be everywhere in '85, the year of his 50th birthday, including on MTV; the Stones plan a busy new year; Missing Persons teams up with Peter Max, heretofore famous for his psychedelic art in the '60s, on a new video. And Dale Bozzio, all of her, shows up in some strange places.



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TAMI LANGAN/LGI

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BIMBO SOME MORE

WHILE GENERALLY NOT in the habit of defending the band I manage against such blatantly misguided and ill-conceived journalistic criticism, I feel I cannot let David Gans' vitriolic piece on Berlin pass without comment.

Point number one. Gans came into the interview clearly intent upon a hatchet job. John Crawford, adept at dealing with far heavier weights than Gans, recognized this and in tones of gently mocking irony made plain his scorn for the man's attempt. Unfortunately it was Gans' own sense of humor that proved lacking.

Second, the surest sign of an underdeveloped, second-rate journalistic talent is the resort to unsubstantiated, puerile name-calling. Rock writers like Gans should not be surprised when their profession is held in such low esteem by those they write about. To sink momentarily to his level, the term Dumbo Hack more accurately captures the essence of Gans' talent than his epithet for Berlin's music.

Third, why is it that David Byrne can perform a song like "Psycho Killer" without being taken for a homicidal maniac, whereas when Terri Nunn sings "Sex" or "Touch" she is reviled as some kind of perverted sex fiend? If Gans actually took the time to comprehend Berlin's lyrics, he might realize that the negativity he perceives is embedded firmly in his own head and not in the songs. Berlin's songs cover various aspects of love and sex all the way from one-

night stands to lifelong commitments. They say, in effect, there is no black or white. Pure sex for sex's sake can be both exhilarating and hollow; long-term relationships can be both rewarding and destructive. If the song "Sex" seems to Gans to "glorify its subject matter unhealthily," then one can only presume that his own concupiscence is not sufficiently expansive to encompass the fiery sexual antics depicted in the lyrics.

Fourth, if as Gans himself states, his job is to "inform and interpret," then I would suggest he not only hone his sadly lacking interpretive skills but that he also get his information right. Berlin's show has never included an act of simulated fellatio nor have any so-called "naughty bits" been toned down for the current tour.

Finally, read your own writing, Mr. Gans. John Crawford didn't think you were going to nail him. He thought you were going to try to nail him, prove woefully inadequate to the task and fall flat on your, er, face.

And 'twas ever thus.

PEREGRINE WATTS-
RUSSELL
Manager for Berlin
Los Angeles, CA

David Gans replies: Point #1: While I must confess I wasn't a great admirer of Berlin going into the assignment, I was not bent on hating them. I have emerged from many an interview with a greater understanding of the artist's motives and character and thereby gained a respect for the music; Crawford's fey and charmless attitude and Nunn's attempt to

cultivate my affection got in the way of genuine communication. It was during the interview, not after, that I came to my conclusion regarding Berlin's intent.

Point #2: "Bimbo Rock" is an ironic title referring to these female vocalists' willingness to assume stereotyped female attitudes, in Nunn's case under the guidance of a man, no less—for money. There's another word for that, but bimbo was funnier.

Point #3: David Byrne has written one song about a psycho killer and dozens of others on a great variety of themes. What proportion of John Crawford's songs are not about sex?

Point #4: I verified my account of Berlin's onstage behavior with several eyewitnesses. One fellow writer told me, "They were both fully dressed, of course. Terri got down on her knees in front of Crawford—it was a visual evocation of fellatio, let's put it that way."

Point #5: I don't know about "nailing" John Crawford. I figure I pegged him pretty good, though, and I also figure you guys are fuming and fulminating all the way to the bank. Just because it sells doesn't mean it's good—or healthy—and for every act that scores on gimmicks and sleaze there are dozens with musical substance and something to say who can't get a video in edgewise.

BUCKED UP

PETER BUCK'S ARTICLE
"The True Spirit of American

Rock" (October RECORD) was the best music article I have read in quite some time. Rest assured, Peter, we who hunger for, listen to and buy the new, interesting independent label recordings, are enjoying alternative music in a way mainstreamers will never be able to understand. The rawness, intensity, and emotions in much of this music keeps us going. Being 42 years old, I feel sorry for many people of my generation, the majority of whom are entrenched in either alcohol, TV sit-coms or Neil Diamond. Who needs drugs, TV or dirges when the music of groups like R.E.M., the Bongos, Translator, Husker Du and Dream Syndicate is out there waiting to stimulate your emotions and expand your life. Music doesn't have to be pretty to be beautiful; it just has to be real.

DENNIS LUPIEN
Howell, MI

AS A MUSICIAN, DISC jockey, music writer and just plain fan, I've seen hundreds of rock 'n' roll shows, but R.E.M.'s performance July 27 in Greensboro was one of the best. After reading Peter Buck's thoughtful article I now know more about why. Making great rock 'n' roll for love, not money, is by definition a thankless job. But I thank God every day for musicians like R.E.M.

LEX ALEXANDER
Statesville, NC

PETER BUCK IS GOD.
JIM WALSH
Minneapolis, MN

Look for an R.E.M. update in February's Rock On section.

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A NIGHT LIKE NO OTHER...

TONIGHT

David
Bowie

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TOP 100 ALBUMS



1 PURPLE RAIN
Prince and the New Power Generation
Warner Bros.

2 BORN IN THE U.S.A.
Bruce Springsteen
Columbia

3 SPORTS
Huey Lewis & The News
Chrysalis

4 PRIVATE DANCER
Tina Turner
Capitol

5 HEARTBEAT CITY
The Cars
Elektra/Asylum

6 SHE'S SO UNUSUAL
Cyndi Lauper
Portrait/CBS

7 1100 BEL AIR PLACE
Julio Iglesias
Columbia

8 MADONNA
Madonna
Warner Bros.

9 BREAK OUT
The Pointer Sisters
Planet/EMI

10 NO BRAKES
John Waite
EMI-America

11 ICE CREAM CASTLE
The Time
Warner Bros.

12 REBEL YELL
Billy Idol
Chrysalis

13 PHANTOMS
The Fixx
MCA

14 OUT OF THE CELLAR
Ratt
Atlantic

15 CAN'T SLOW DOWN
Lionel Richie
Motown

16 STOP MAKING SENSE
Talking Heads
Sire

17 SOUNDTRACK
"Eddie and the Cruisers"
Scott Bros./Epic

18 SIGNS OF LIFE
Billy Squier
Capitol

19 CHICAGO XVII
Chicago
Full Moon/Warner Bros.

20 SOUNDTRACK
"Ghostbusters"
Anista

21 THE WARRIOR
Scandal
Columbia

22 VICTORY
The Jacksons
Epic

23 BANANARAMA
Bananarama
London

24 STAY HUNGRY
Twisted Sister
Arista

25 POWER SLAVE
Iron Maiden
Capitol

26 BREAKING HEARTS
Elton John
Geffen

27 COULDN'T STAND THE WEATHER
Stevie Ray Vaughan & Double Trouble
Epic

28 SWEEP AWAY
Diana Ross
A&M

29 CAMOUFLAGE
Rod Stewart
Warner Bros.

30 SOUNDTRACK
"The Woman in Red"
Motown

31 THE GLAMOROUS LIFE
Sheila E.
Warner Bros.

32 CATS WITHOUT CLAWS
Donna Summer
Geffen

33 THE LAST IN LINE
Dio
Warner Bros.

34 MIDNIGHT MADNESS
Night Ranger
MCA

35 1984
Van Halen
Warner Bros.

36 THE BLITZ
Krokus
Arista

37 METAL HEALTH
Quiet Riot
Pasha/CBS

38 LIGHTS OUT
Peter Wolf
EMI-America

39 PRIMITIVE
Neil Diamond
CBS

40 LEGEND
Bob Marley & The Wailers
Island

41 REFLECTIONS
Rick James
Motown

42 ELIMINATOR
ZZ Top
Warner Bros.

43 GOODBYE CRUEL WORLD
Elvis Costello
Columbia

44 GO INSANE
Lindsay Buckingham
Elektra/Asylum

45 FIRST OFFENSE
Corey Hart
EMI-America

46 INTO THE GAP
Thompson Twins
Arista

47 NEW SENSATIONS
Lou Reed
A&M

48 SUDDENLY
Billy Ocean
Jive/Arista

49 RECKONING
R.E.M.
Sire

50 SELF CONTROL
Laura Branigan
Atlantic

51 SOUNDTRACK
"Footloose"
Columbia



52 LOVE LANGUAGE
Teddy Pendergrass
Elektra/Asylum

53 JERMAINE JACKSON
Jermaine Jackson
Arista

54 PARADE
Spandau Ballet
Chrysalis

55 SOUND SYSTEM
Herbie Hancock
Columbia

56 RIDDLES IN THE SAND
Jimmy Buffet
MCA

57 YOU, ME AND HE
Miume
Epic

58 INSTINCTS
Romeo Void
Columbia

59 SLIDE IT IN
Whitesnake
Geffen/Warner Bros.

60 THE SWING
INXS
Atco

61 HONEYMOON SUITE
Honeymoon Suite
Warner Bros.

62 LOVE AT FIRST STING
Scorpions
Mercury

63 JUST THE WAY YOU LIKE IT
S.O.S. Band
Jabu/Epic

64 NUCLEAR FURNITURE
Jefferson Starship
A&M

65 SOUNDTRACK
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Polygram

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Columbia

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Naked Eyes
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Difford and Tilbrook
A & M

82 LEARNING TO CRAWL
The Pretenders
Sire

83 DESERT MOON
Dennis DeYoung
A & M

84 ALL OVER THE PLACE
Bangles
Columbia

85 CITY OF NEW ORLEANS
Willie Nelson
Columbia

86 SOUNDTRACK
"Streets of Fire"
MCA

87 JAM ON REVENGE
Newcleus
Becket

88 THE TORTURE NEVER STOPS
WASP
Capitol

89 MIRROR MOVES
Psychadelic Furs
Columbia

90 OUT OF CONTROL
The Brothers Johnson
A & M

91 ANTHEM
Black Uhuru
Island

92 1999
Prince
Warner Bros.

93 COLOUR BY NUMBERS
Culture Club
Epic

94 OCEAN RAIN
Echo & The Bunnymen
Sire

95 STEALING FIRE
Bruce Cockburn
Goldmountain

96 SEND ME YOUR LOVE
Kashif
Arista

97 NICK LOWE & HIS COWBOY OUTFIT
Nick Lowe
Columbia

98 NO TELLING LIES
Zebra
Atlantic

99 NOW
Patrice Rushen
Elektra

100 GRACE UNDER PRESSURE
Rush
Mercury/Polygram

Sheila E.:
Protege to
open up

Prince: His
Royal Badness



GARY GERSHOF/RETNA LTD

Vanity:
Wanted a
solo career

ALL THE PRINCE YOU WANT (AND MORE)

As this issue goes to press in early October, Prince is set to begin a mammoth national tour with seven dates, commencing November 4, at Joe Louis Arena in Detroit. Other cities with stops scheduled (all very tentative, since basketball and hockey commitments in many of the arenas preclude certain dates) include Greensboro, North Carolina, Largo, Maryland, Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, Chicago and St. Louis.

Prince protege Sheila E. will take her steamy stage show on the road to open for His Royal Badness (thank you, Greg Tate). The Latin lovely, who has a smash single and hit LP under her belt first time out, says no one was more surprised than her that "The Glamorous Life" stormed up the charts. "I'm very shocked," she laughs. "I thought we'd really have to push 'The Glamorous Life.' I thought it was kind of a mixed-up song. There's so many different things going on in the song that it almost sounds complicated, you know?" And

for the record, Ms. E., daughter of former Santana percussionist Pete Escovedo (and a mean timbale player herself), denies that Prince co-produced her album. "He was doing *Purple Rain*," she explains. "I would call him and say, listen to this, or ask his advice. But he wasn't actually involved in the project."

Meanwhile, the former head nasty girl of the wet dream threesome Vanity 6 has surfaced with a solo album, *Wild Animal*, on Motown. "I can't control it/I need seven inches or more," Vanity moaned on 1982's "Nasty Girl," and her new single, "Pretty Mess," and Venus-in-furs promo campaign are only slightly less explicit. "Prince gave me the name 'Vanity,'" she coos. "First, there was another name he gave me. I don't think I should say it—you wouldn't print it!"

Such modesty is hardly the hallmark of the one-time Prince par amour, who claims she rejected the lead female role in *Purple Rain* to launch her solo recording career and star in the martial arts romance, *The Last Dragon*. "I knew *Purple Rain* was going to be big, so therefore it would have made Vanity 6 very big," reasons the sultry songstress. "And then it would have been very tacky to leave after that. I wanted a solo career and I wanted to do it now. I didn't want to stall." —Anthony DeCurtis



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DURAN DURAN: NEW LP

That new single and live album isn't all you're going to be hearing from Duran Duran right now. Coming up next is a full-length live video with cuts corresponding to those on the album. This is as close to the road as the Durannies will get for the moment. They're taking the holidays off, but come '85 they'll be back in the studio to record another album of new songs for release next spring. Look for a full-scale tour to back up the LP release.



ELENA SHERITT



DAVE HOGAN/LGI

CULTURE CLUB'S NEW FACE

While we feel it's about time to retire that old warhorse of a phrase "gender bender" henceforth for eternity, we would like to note that Boy George, who is not inclined to male fashions, has found a new female singer to replace the amply appointed Helen Terry, now off recording a solo album. The lady in question is one Adele Berteri, a diminutive, androgynous sort whom George took a fancy to after hearing her sing on Thomas Dolby's "Hyperactive." She worked with the Club on its new album, *Waking Up With The House On Fire*, and with George on the *Electric Dreams* soundtrack, and moved into the band's lineup when Terry went off on her own. Before hooking up with Dolby, Berteri was one of the Contortions, the band backing notorious saxman and audience baiter James White, and later formed her own band, the Bloods. About our Boy she seems to have mixed feelings: Asked by a *New Musical Express* reporter about George's *modus vivendi*, she said, "I fail to see just what he's confronting." She conceded, though, that "he's a brilliant craftsman in pop music. The first time I met him he sang 'Love is Love' for me a cappella. I've never seen anyone convey a pop song so totally just with the voice."



JOSEPH STEVENS



NANCY SCARLATI/LGI

U2 IN THE U.S.

Having issued their statement about America on their new album *The Unforgettable Fire*, Irish rockers U2 are preparing

for a full-scale onslaught of these shores come December. In what a spokesman for the band describes as "a big tour," the quartet will open in Philly on December 1, wend their way through the northeast and Canada, then head

westward as Christmas approaches. All will be quiet on New Year's Day and for a couple of weeks thereafter, until the band gears up for several months of dates across the land, winding up sometime in late spring.



A NICE PAIR...

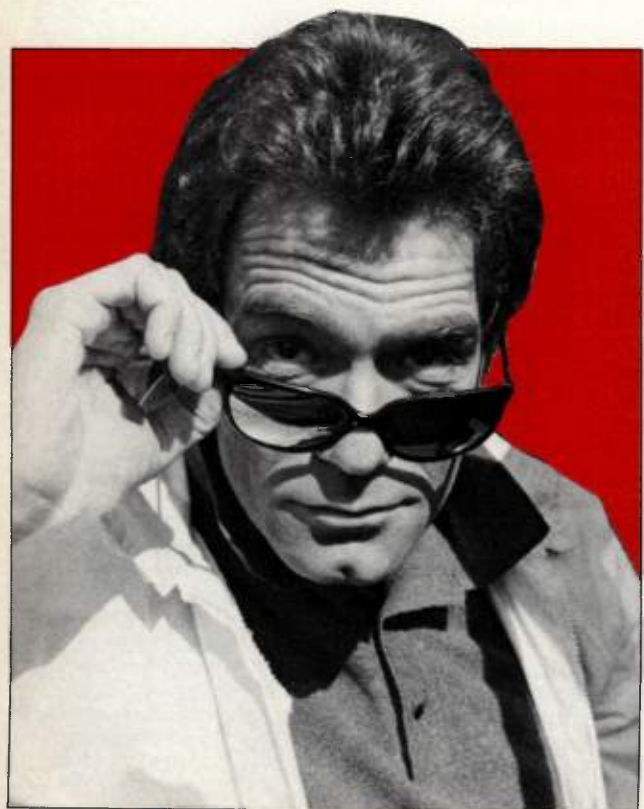
Missing Persons and famed '80s psychedelic artist Peter Max, that is, who teamed up for a truly striking video on the Persons' "Surrender Your Heart" single. Now that we've got that out of the way, let's go on to the really hot news. A typically well-rounded RECORD reader named Geoff Burkman scrutinized our September story on Missing Persons and Berlin ("Bimbo Rock") and fired off a card suggesting we check out the March 1979 issue of *Hustler*. Wrote Burkman: "If that ain't Dale 'Pay my bills' Bozzio, I'll eat my entire *Hustler* collection." Well Geoff, better rush out to McDonald's, 'cause you ain't gonna be eatin' no magazines real soon. Dogged legwork—ahem—by David Gans, author of the Missing Persons/Berlin screed, uncovered—ahem—Ms. Bozzio in living color on pages 39 to 45 of the issue in question. Penetrating—ahem—further into this story, Gans found a more discreetly attired Bozzio gracing the cover of *Hustler*'s February '80 issue. The '79 cover is shown here. As for the other pictures, all we can advise is to heed the words of Casey Stengel: "You could look it up."

THE KING COMES BACK

If RCA Records and the Elvis Presley Estate have anything to say about it, 1985 will be the year a new generation of rock fans gets up close and personal with the King, who would have been 50 years old on January 8. The label's already got a slew of new records out, with the promise of more as the new year progresses. At press time word came that Media Home Entertainment has licensed two Presley TV specials, *Elvis: His 1968 Comeback Special* and *Aloha From Hawaii*, for commercial release, the former due in December, the latter to be available in February '85. And throughout December Home Box Office is airing previously unseen segments from Presley's '68 comeback special.



FRED WARD



RON WOLFSON/LGI

HUEY NEWS

Huey Lewis and the News capped off a big year by taking their sporting ways to Europe for a few weeks before returning to the States in early November. They'll be laying low until their last gig of '85 comes around, a New Year's Eve date at an unspecified venue in the Bay Area. According to a source at Lewis's management, the band may play some more dates come January, but it's more likely they'll be studio-bound for a followup to the platinum-plus *Sports*, now on its fourth single release, "Walking on the Thin Line." Expect a tour by summer.

The Monte Alban

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CLIP AND SAVE

THE WORM'S PARTY GUIDE

Uno – INVITE

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Dos – DRINK

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Tres – EAT

Mexican food goes best. Order it in, defrost it, fix it up



yourself. Or, anything else with spice goes nice—from pizza to barbecue. Eating something interesting while drinking something interesting keeps parties interesting!

Cuatro – PLAY

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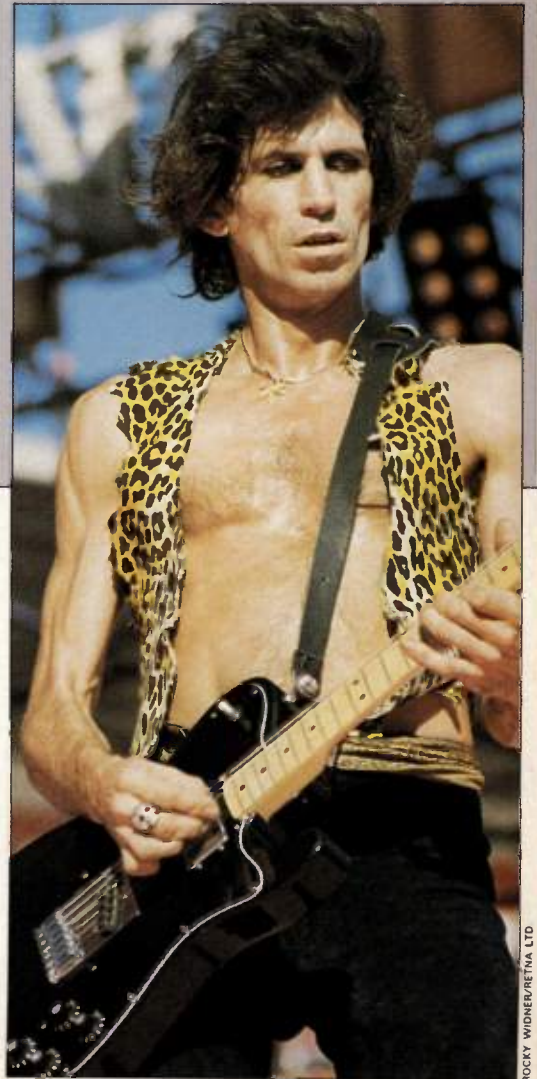
The word on Billy Idol is that he's hoping to get a movie deal wrapped up before returning to the studio in December to begin work on his third solo album. If all goes well, the LP will be out next spring, and he'll hit the road by mid-year or so. Meanwhile, a couple of his band members are keeping busy with other projects. Drummer Tommy Price appeared as a member of Peter Wolf's band on *Saturday Night Live*, but there's no word as to whether he'll join the Wolf Man on the road. Guitarist Steve Stevens—who's rapidly becoming the hot new guitar hero—has been talking to ex-Blue Oyster Cult drummer Albert Bouchard about participating in a recording project with Robert Gordon under Bouchard's direction.



GUIDO HARARI/LGI

STONES BUSY IN '85

It's too soon to say anything definite about the Rolling Stones' plans for '85, but all signs point to some heavy activity come mid-year. Mick and Keith will start writing a batch of new material in December, and the band will assemble to cut a new LP in January or February. Look for the album to be released by May or June, and a tour to get underway in the summer. As for solo projects, Jagger's album should be out by the time this reaches print, and Richards is continuing to sift through music to be used on the soundtrack for Alan Greenberg's film biography of Robert Johnson, *Love In Vain* (see **RECORD**, November '83). Stonesophiles will also want to check out the video clip compilation released by Vestron Video for an interesting overview of the group's career. Anyone going for the big ticket purchase should look into Mobile Fidelity's 11-volume original masters release of Stones LPs. Packaged in a sturdy, handsome black box, the set comes with an art book of each original cover, front and back, liner notes included, and a lengthy interview with some of the key people involved in Stones recording sessions from '63 to '69, including engineer Dave Hassinger, the Stones' first manager, Andrew Loog Oldham and, most memorably, producer Jimmy Miller. And for an extra three bucks, you can send in for a poster of the original censored cover from *Beggars Banquet*. The whole package goes for a cool \$250.



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LAURA LEVINE

JASON & SCORCHERS IN STUDIO

1984 saw critically-acclaimed Jason and the Scorchers top off a successful sweep of U.S. clubs with two trips to Britain. Despite a generally grudging attitude towards American bands, the mythic underpinning of the Scorchers' act went straight to the heart of British rockers' long-distance romance with the American south. That behind them, the band has returned to Nashville to put the finishing touches on their first full-length album, due in January on EMI. Producer Terry Manning (ZZ Top, George Thorogood) sees the Scorchers recapturing a lost rock 'n' roll element. "For awhile, people didn't think rock 'n' roll could have rhythm, be dance music; that's why all the kids went to disco. But with the Scorchers—well, rhythm is the first thing you feel." Jason himself isn't afraid of raising expectations for this record. "Our roots may be in Jimmy Rodgers and Jerry Lee," he says, "but we don't see why we can't go head to head with any Motley Crue or Van Halen record out there. We figure there are at least that many people who are ready for a real rock 'n' roll record."

—Christopher Hill



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SAY SAY SAAAY

Precisely how many millions does Michael have and where are they all going? Check out the October issue of *Forbes*—the one featuring the 400 richest people in America—and a fascinating article therein by reporter Alex Ben Block detailing how the Jackson fortune, estimated at just under \$70 million "and counting," is being divvied up. Among reporter Block's findings:

- In 1980, with the *Off the Wall* album selling near eight million copies, Jackson's representatives renegotiated his contract with CBS. The new deal gave Jackson 42 percent of the wholesale price of each album (the average is 10 to 20 percent, with superstar acts commanding upwards of 25 to 30 percent). Adding up the royalties on *Thriller's* seven hit singles, plus Jackson's four-and-a-half cent writer's fee on five of the LP's tracks, produces an additional 22.5 cents for every album sold. The take on *Thriller* alone was said to be \$50 million.
- Jackson will realize a \$3 million profit from his \$1.2 million investment to finance the "Thriller" video, which was subsequently packaged with a documentary as *Making Michael Jackson's Thriller* and has sold 900,000 copies. Cable rights netted him \$550,000.
- The artist received close to \$1 million as an advance from Doubleday for what Block describes as "a book of autobiographical bits, poetry and pictures," edited by Jacqueline Onassis.
- Jackson has formed five new corporations, including a video production enterprise, Optimum Productions, with its own staff songwriters and producers, and Experiments in Sound, which will develop and license new recording technologies. And like his buddy Paul McCartney, Michael has been buying up music publishing catalogues; among his extensive holdings is all of Sly and the Family Stone's music.

Noting that one more *Thriller*-type hit would put Jackson "near the lower rungs of 'The Forbes Four Hundred,'" Block concludes that the maneuvers represent "the start of what any well-run conglomerate does with a cash cow that won't keep producing forever. It diversifies."

Not bad for a guy who watches cartoons all day.

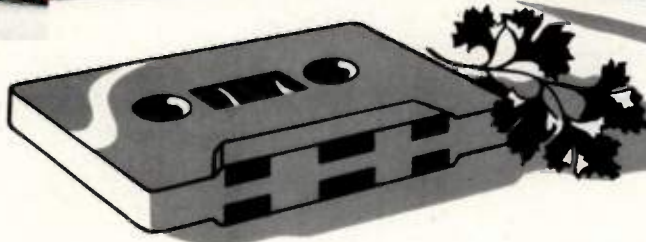
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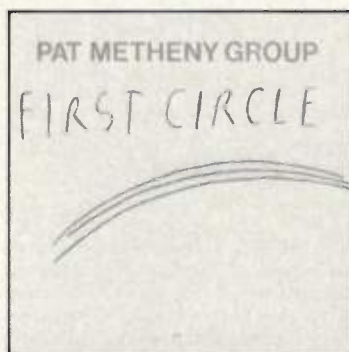


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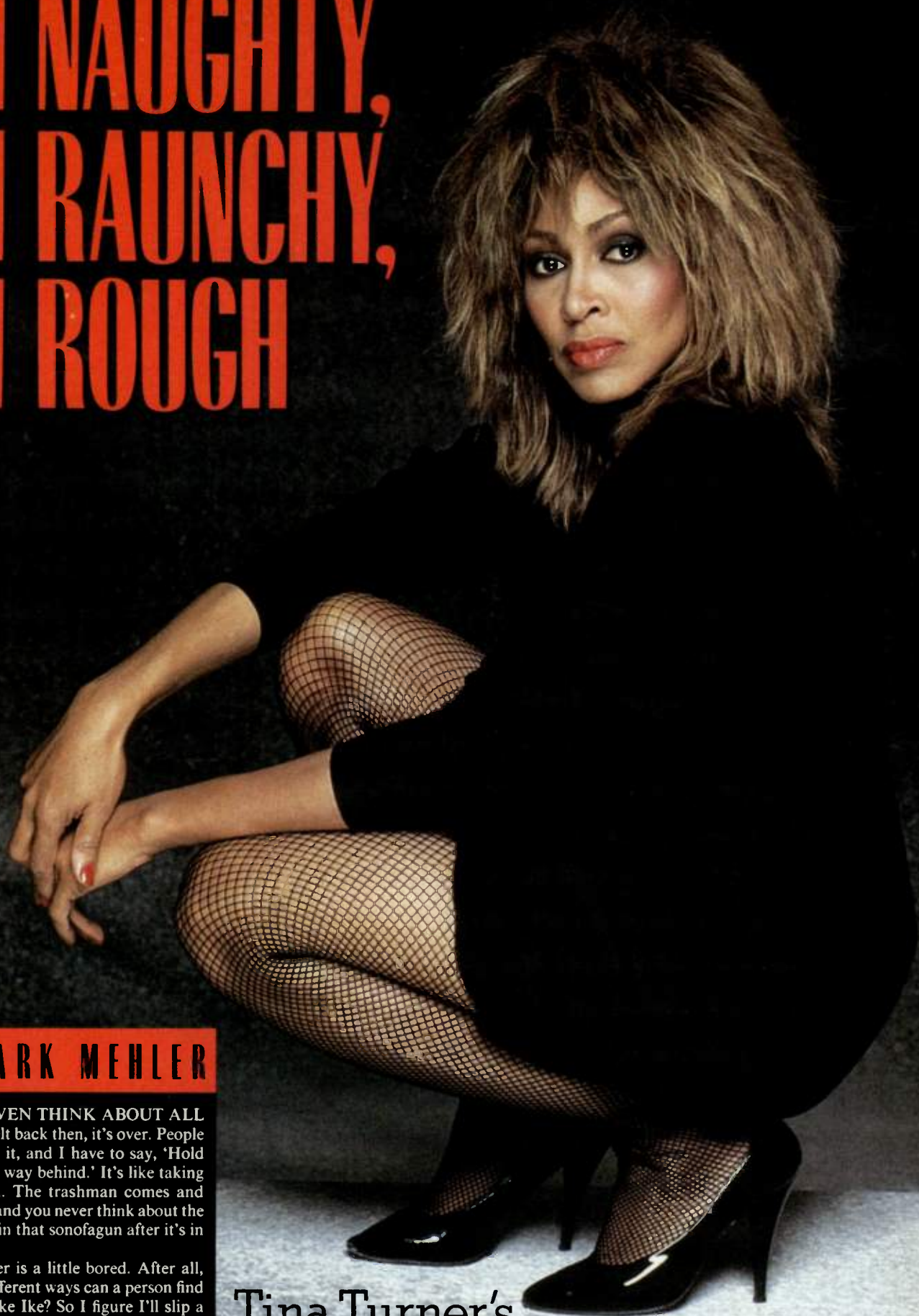
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I'M NAUGHTY, I'M RAUNCHY, I'M ROUGH



BY MARK MEHLER

"I CAN'T EVEN THINK ABOUT ALL the things I felt back then, it's over. People ask me about it, and I have to say, 'Hold on, I left that way behind.' It's like taking out the trash. The trashman comes and carts it away and you never think about the stuff you put in that sonofagun after it's in the river..."

Tina Turner is a little bored. After all, how many different ways can a person find to say I Dislike Ike? So I figure I'll slip a new one by her and ask about the future. She appears stunned, but pleased. The future couldn't be any worse than the past—and given her current high standing in

Tina Turner's Still Shaking That Thing



'Nobody does what I do, nobody has a voice like mine, nobody's had a life like mine—not even Joan Collins'

rock circles, it would seem to be quite promising.

"Let's face it," she states, seated across a small desk in an uptown New York hotel. "I'm naughty, I'm raunchy and I'm rough. That is, the act, not me. And maybe that'll have to change one day. The voice will change, the physical body has to change eventually, and I will change, too. But I remember 10 years ago, people said, 'She's

gonna be 35, she can't possibly go on shaking that thing at 40.' And they were wrong, weren't they?" Turner laughs wickedly, but the subtext is pure Winnie the Pooh.

"I don't think you can really compare me to anyone else," she adds, without conceit. "Nobody does what I do, nobody has a voice like mine, or a life like mine—not even Joan Collins. So whatever it has in store for me 10 or 20 years from now, you

can't just look at me today and try to plot it out like I was someone else."

That Tina Turner is willing to acknowledge the eventual dissolution of the body and consider a future without raunch is indeed further testimony to how far she has come on the road to maturity. She has told the gruesome story of her life with Ike Turner—beatings, infidelities, psychic betrayals—so often that the telling alone has caused her to begin to disassociate from the past. Today, she says she's moved way beyond pain, revenge and guilt, and she refuses to sink back into pathetic whining. "I'm not one of those women crying about how I've been abused by men. I won't put men down. I lived it, and I learned. I always had the control, and eventually all I did was to take it."

Her mammoth comeback album, *Private Dancer*, is nothing if not a musical statement of the here and now, of an artist in control. Though there can be no here and now without a past, the LP views the whole thing as a healthy, albeit sputtering, evolutionary process.

"The songs on the album all relate somehow to the way I lived with Ike and my background before that in the Tennessee fields with my grandmother, and what happened to me since. It's what I lived through, the different sides of my personality, the performing and spiritual sides. But the final product brings it right back to 1984. There isn't one word on the album that doesn't come back to the way I feel now."

One cut, "I Might Have Been Queen," was crafted by producer/writer Rupert Hine following a series of lengthy sit-downs with the singer. "Rupert believes in tailor-making songs for people," Turner explains, "which means getting their psychological measurements. We sat and talked about my life and the song is what came out of that ('I'm a new pair of eyes/Every

time I am born/An original mind/Because I just died").

"I know I'll never be the kind of rock 'n' roller that Rod (Stewart) or Mick is—musicians, writers. I've always been good at picking out what works onstage, but with this album I also learned about picking hit records, going to the people who write really good commercial stuff, like Rupert and Terry Britten, and working with them



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PHOTO BOB GRUEN/STARFILE

How many ways can you say I Dislike Ike?

to make it work for me."

Turner says the original version of the hit single "What's Love Got To Do With It" suggests at least one of the ways she's gained control over her career since the Ike & Tina days. "It still has to be rough, and the song was this sweet, little thing. Can you imagine me singing like Diana Ross or Barbra Streisand, trying to sound velvety and smooth? I really fought. Eventually, we roughened it out instrumentally and I added some (rock) phrasings, and we changed the song's attitude and got a hit. I have input, not just in song selection but in treatment too. I'll never be a musician, but I know what's right."

Tina, of course, didn't always know what was in her best interests. Born in 1939 and raised in Nutbush, Tennessee, the former Anna Mae Bullock describes herself as an independent girl who loved to sing it loud and strong in Baptist churches and anywhere else people would listen. At age 16 Tina and her older sister Eileen moved to St. Louis to live with their mother, who had separated from their father. There she met Ike Turner, who was fronting a popular local band. "I just wanted to sing and dance so bad, and I loved Ike's band," Tina recalls. "His music was what my physical energy was. Whenever I heard that music, I was dancing."

At the start, singer and bandleader were just friends. "It was a long time before I came to know Ike," Tina says. "I was ro-

manically involved with someone else in the band (a liason that produced a son). I was in Ike's group for two years before *anything* happened between us."

Of Mr. Turner as husband, Tina notes simply: "I'll say this for the man, he was consistent. He did the same things after we were married as he did before." Including taking and shedding lovers like Kleenex, "beating up women" and generally being unwilling "to tie himself down to a one-woman relationship."

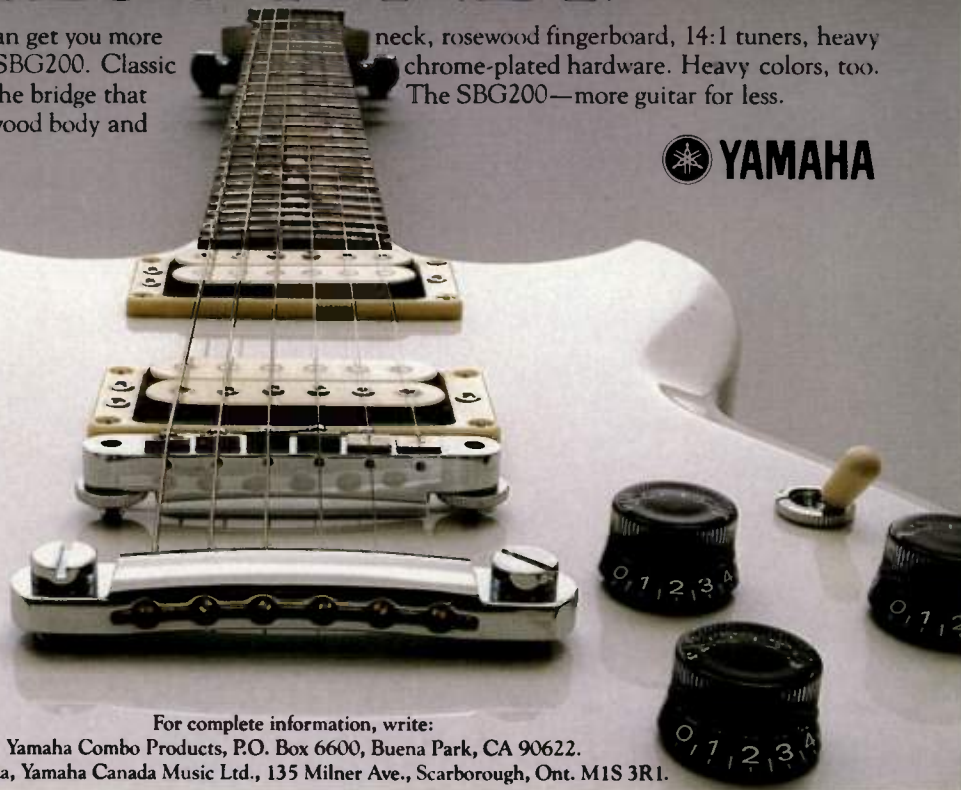
Professionally, Ike and Tina flourished, their popularity peaking in the late '60s when they toured with the Rolling Stones and recast popular rock songs such as "Proud Mary" and "Come Together" in their own inimitable style. Being under Ike's thumb was to pay a heavy-duty psychic toll, though, and in 1975 Tina finally walked out in the middle of a concert tour, but only after a knock-down, drag-out fight with Ike. It was the first time in her life Tina had hit back. When she attempted to make it as a solo artist, jilted promoters were waiting with bated subpoenas. Several years of touring helped pay off the debts, but she left behind an ill-fated solo album for United Artists (*Acid Queen*, an attempt to capitalize on her bravura turn in the film version of *Tommy*) and a long string of empty, Vegas-style performances.

Looking back on that period, Turner says her attitude was "I'll do the things I've been watching on television all these

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years. Put on fancy clothes, lay across the piano, whatever it takes to pay the rent, know what I mean? There was such a great sense of relief not being with Ike. Even the lawsuits weren't so bad. I was laughing through it most of the way."

But she was also growing musically. She popped up with Rod Stewart on occasion for a sizzling duet on "Hot Legs" (most memorably on *Saturday Night Live*, when she came on national TV clad in a diaphanous blouse), and her live shows stunned Manhattan club audiences, particularly Turner's mesmerizing reworking of "Help." Indeed, by late '81 it looked like Tina Turner might make it all the way back. Producer Richard Perry was interested in working with her, but that collaboration bogged down when the singer balked at Perry's idea of doing a straight R&B record.

"I was just so tired of singing the old stuff. It was okay setting up in Vegas or Tahoe to survive, to prove to the promoters I could perform on my own, but it was a cheap copy. It wasn't what I'd become. I had to keep on until I graduated out of Ike and Tina for good."

In 1980 Australian Roger Davies caught Turner's show at the Fairmont Hotel in San Francisco and signed her up for management. In '82 she sang lead on a version of the Temptations' "Ball of Confusion" with members of B.E.F., Heaven 17's independent production arm. Last year Heav-

en 17's Martyn Ware and Glenn Gregory produced Turner's stunning reworking of Al Green's "Let's Stay Together," and that record, plus some sizzling live performances here and abroad, landed her a deal with Capitol Records, which reportedly gave her two weeks to come up with a finished album. With a little help from their friends—Mark Knopfler, Jeff Beck, Hine—Davies and Turner pulled it off.

Today, free of lawsuits, Ike's physical threats and overwhelming financial worries, Tina is looking ahead to making the next *Road Warrior* film in Australia later this fall and going back into the studio in March for a new LP with many of the same faces from *Private Dancer*. She won't talk about her first dramatic role in the third *Road Warrior* film, as director George Miller is a stickler for secrecy. "When I worked with David Bowie, I learned one big lesson: Keep your mouth shut sometimes. Once you put news out, it's never as exciting once the thing happens."

Turner suggests, though, that the *Road Warrior*—the proud man who loses everything and eventually gains back his faith through the power of love and human compassion—has particular appeal to her today. "I've never sung anything I couldn't relate to. That's why I've always been big on changing words in songs, taking out what's in bad taste.

"My music," she advises, "is about my life, my religion and my friends." ○



PHOTO: ROBIN KAPLAN/RETNA LTD

"I'm not crying about how I've been abused by men. I won't put men down. I lived it and I learned."



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A full-page photograph of David Bowie. He is seated in an ornate, dark-colored chair with a high back. He is wearing a white, long-sleeved shirt with a ruffled front and a dark choker. His hair is dark and styled upwards. He is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. The background is a red and gold patterned curtain. The text "ON THE SET WITH" is at the top and "BOWIE" is at the bottom in large, teal letters.

ON THE SET WITH

In Which The
Thin White
Duke Makes
Another Video
Breakthrough

"WHAT WE'RE DOING HERE is bringing back the talkies," David Bowie announces self-mockingly. His livid mask recalls the white-faced clowns and demons of the *Commedia dell'Arte* and the grotesque disguises of the early cinema: pallor so extreme as to suggest a powerful but distinctly unhealthy light juxtaposed with swirling, smoky shadows. His amiable but sly grin seems thoroughly incongruous in this ghastly setting. The dark, sandy hair is immaculately styled, but it is streaked with an unpleasant-looking gel that suggests that an asthmatic dog has just coughed on his head.

10:30 a.m. a fifth floor ballroom in West London. Bowie has been in makeup for a little over two hours. Outside, Kensington High Street is about to spend the day baking until it glazes over. If you follow the street far enough west you end up in Hammersmith, but the High Street takes its role of linking the well-heeled bohemia of Holland park and the crisp upper crust of Knightsbridge very seriously. During the early '70s, designer and entrepreneur Barbara Hulanicki took over the crumbling Derry & Toms department store and turned it into the most grandiose incarnation thus far of what had begun as a boutique called Biba's. The upstairs ballroom became an extremely chic little venue, host to everything from the '20s kitsch of the Pasadena Roof Orchestra to high-octane insolence of the New York Dolls.

By Charles Shaar Murray

BOWIE

Though principally used for conventions and banquets these days, the Rainbow Room is preparing for a fling worthy of past glories. The old stage at the far end of the room has been refurbished into a straight-faced recreation of Hollywood's cheesiest Arabian Nightclub set, all braziers and rugs and cushions and hookahs. David Bowie is commencing the second day of shooting on a new video to accompany a new single called "Blue Jean" under the direction of Julien Temple, a highly-regarded veteran in this field whose credits include the Sex Pistols movie *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle*, and clips for ABC, the Kinks and the Rolling Stones.

"This is going to be like the old-style '50s shorts," explains Bowie. "The song definitely takes second place to the plot and the characters. There's quite a lot of dialogue and different parts of the song crop up in different places. It's about a boy, a girl and a rock star. The rock star gets the girl," he adds with a grin.

Isn't that a little predictable?

"Not the way we're doing it! Just wait and see!

"I think we can promise you," he advises, "a long, boring day with spasmodic outbreaks of interest."

CHOREOGRAPHER DAVID TO-guri is leading his team of 10 dancers through a last-minute revision of their routine. Six men in zoot suits, along with four women in tight, dramatic gowns stalk and twirl around the catwalk built out from the stage. A naggingly familiar figure in blue shirt and cream slacks is seated quietly at one of the tables. He is lean, sharp-featured and sandy-haired and from across a room could almost be mistaken for David Bowie. In fact, his name is Ian Ellis and he's an engineering student and he is the registered David Bowie clone at Lookalikes model agency, whom he contacted after being told over and over how much he resembles Bowie. He's enthusiastic about the idea of getting work as "himself," but here his services are required so that Bowie can play a dual role in the video. "Still," he sighs, "it's better than looking like Christopher Lee."

As the dancers continue working over key steps, "Blue Jean" spills out of the speakers, filling the room. A chugging rock 'n' roll nugget with an explosive alto sax break supercharging the chorus, it awakens instant memories of Marc Bolan and the Rolling Stones (as well as the less harrowing sections of Bowie's own *Diamond Dogs*). Bowie emerges from his dressing room to listen. An old friend of his has shown up with a copy of his old school yearbook, unleashing a flood of reminiscences of Bromley High School, 1959. Excitedly identifying half-forgotten teachers ("Oh God he was a bastard, this bloke!") and mates ("Now he used to get all the girls"), he points out his art teacher, Peter Frampton's father, who created an



Bowie dressed down as a nerd and duded up as Screamin' Byron ('I wish I'd thought of this outfit in '74')


arts course so progressive that "it was almost like being at art school from 11-years-old onwards."

Julien Temple looks highly abstracted. His manner is perpetually rumpled: his shirt bags out of his pants and he is wearing the most bizarre pair of shoes clocked so far this decade. Based on Japanese shoes split between the big toe and the rest to accommodate sandal straps, they have been copied from the canvas prototypes into soft black leather, lending Temple's feet an unsettling, two-toed unhuman look, something like Nightcrawler in Marvel's *X-Men*. "I never wear anything else," he says, "especially for meetings with Hollywood producers." Temple helped develop the storyboards for "Blue Jean" from Bowie's plot and roughs, and then the two of them brought in playwright Terry Johnson to fine-tune the dialogue.

"Bowie's not only very interested in film, but he has a lot of knowledge about it," says Temple. "I get a lot of input from him, which is very different from working with the Stones, who always want you to do everything yourself."

The three musicians who've been hired





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to mime the music are set up on stage with their black brocaded waistcoats, sashes and baggy pants. They are all from different bands (drummer Paul Ridgeley works with Physique, bassist Richard Fairbrass is now the lead singer with Ian Flesh, and guitarist Daryl Humphries plays with the Blondini Brothers) and got the jobs by auditioning, but Bowie later becomes sufficiently enthusiastic about their musical abilities to talk excitedly about using them as his real-life backing band for a charity show he's planning for some unspecified point in the future.

The first section of the performance to be filmed is a tricky little set-piece wherein Bowie starts out holding one end of a long ribbon, the other end of which is tagged to the head of Richard's bass. The move that Bowie and Toguri have concocted requires Bowie to snatch the ribbon loose, run two steps forward and fling said ribbon to the back of the stage, but it takes a few tries to get it right. One take collapses when the ribbon refuses to detach itself from the bass in time, another when it doesn't reach the back of the stage, and a third when one of the scarves in Bowie's costume ends up over his face. Bowie performs "Blue Jean" in the role of Screamin' Lord Byron, a device that enables Bowie to revisit the extravagant role-playing he indulged in a dozen years ago, but this time he caricatures his old approach with considerable deftness. Sliding confidently through Toguri's routine, his movements are fluid and decisive. The choreographer watches approvingly. "Bowie moves like a wave," he observes. "There is a *weight* behind his movements, a real authority. And he makes every move his own. I can't make him move like I do, but I can give him moves that he can make his own. His concentration is extraordinary."

IT'S GETTING CLOSE TO MIDNIGHT and the action has switched to a ringside table where sits Bowie, playing another character named Vic, an earnest nerd who has coaxed his dream girl (played by Louise Scott and named, as it happens, Dream) into coming out with him so that he can introduce her to the Star. Wearing a powder blue suit and a blood-stained piece of elastoplast on his nose, he pushes his way through the extras towards the stage, where an assistant director is wearing the Screamin' pants and boots. Sitting on the edge of the catwalk, he treats the performer to just what everyone needs to hear when they're working. "We're at a table in the corner!" he shouts. "I think you're doing really great—they really like ya!" Suddenly Screamin's boot comes down hard on his hand, and he retreats mournfully towards the table clutching the injured appendage.

By 1:50 everybody except Bowie is showing signs of exhaustion. The air is turning foul and the troupe's supply of cigarettes is exhausted. Bowie's right- (and

left-) hand person Corinne Schwab controls a secret stash of Marlboros in her handbag, and Julien Temple is believed to have a pack of Rothmans somewhere. Ian Ellis is wearing Screamin's offstage drag: powdered and puffed like a Regency rake in a ludicrous velvet frock-coat, he resembles Adam Ant on a bad day. Bowie is chatting to the desperately bored Louise Scott as they await the arrival of The Great Man.

"Must be 'ard to get all that makeup off," he mutters uneasily as the club empties and the star fails to emerge. "Must take time . . . well, it 'as taken time." Suddenly Ellis swaggers into shot, and slides into the vacant chair on Louise's other side. "'ello mate. Sorry, I'm very rude . . . allow me to introduce . . ." his voice dies away as Ellis ignores him, takes Louise's hand and stares into her eyes.

CUT! It's time to swap over: for the eve-

Bowie on the 'Blue Jean' video: "We'll find out how unwittingly comic the public thinks I am."

ning's final shot, Ellis will become the hapless Vic and Bowie will incarnate Screamin' once more. The beer has run out as well as the cigarettes, but Bowie wanders over to share his can before disappearing back to the dressing room for yet another round of makeup and costuming.

"Tiring, this acting lark innit?" he queries. He describes a tune called "Loving the Alien," from the forthcoming album *Tonight*, that deals with "the problem of accepting someone else's religion." The song also concerns certain matters of Biblical history and alludes to the Templar-Saracen conflict and the political coverup through the ages of various circumstances surrounding the death of Jesus. He mentions a book called *The Jesus Scrolls*; I recommend *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail*. "Martin Scorcese and Paul Schrader have been trying for some time to put together a movie on that subject called *The Last Testament*. They've got Harvey Keitel to play Pontius Pilate and I think at one point it was supposed to be DeNiro as Jesus, but now I think they're going for an unknown. Strangely enough, they can't raise a cent of finance for it in America."

At 10 minutes past four o'clock it's a wrap. The end of a 21-hour work day finds Bowie still refreshed enough to hang around and shoot the breeze. This person creeps gratefully off into the dawn to hunt the wild cab.

EIGHT DAYS LATER THE COMPANY reconvenes at the WAG Club in Wardour Street, a location decided upon after Shepperton (home of the Who's business interests and Britain's Greatest Living Novelist, J.G. Ballard) had been nixed. Formerly the Whisky A Go Go, the WAG is tricked out in African murals, kidney-shaped stools and booths upholstered in faded blue plush. Spandau Ballet no longer hang out there, and the toilet seat is loose. The WAG's stage backs onto a huge picture window covered in pink and blue translucent panels and providing a panoramic view of Gerrard Street, London's Chinatown. A circular track for the camera has been laid around the stage, and the drum kit is set up in position. The purpose of today's shoot is to tape a straight-ahead, informal performance video of "Blue Jean" for MTV, the noted protectors and defenders of black music in America. The channel has invited Bowie to participate in its first awards presentation, but since a trip to New York right now is neither feasible nor even desirable, he will send a video billet-doux to represent him at Radio City Music Hall. All concerned are adamant that this clip—much more of a "conventional" item than the sardonic playlet filmed the previous week—is strictly for one-time-only use, even though it would fit easily into the run-of-the-vid-mill pop show.

Temple, as absorbed as ever, is wearing a crumpled white shirt, black leather pants . . . and moccasins! "Bowie is just getting better and better as an actor," he marvels, "and the guy is so acute and precise about what he wants. It's quite amazing to see, actually. I'd like to do a feature with him at some point. On this thing, I've never seen a video crew get so involved with a performer. It's extraordinary in the music field to have someone who understands film like Bowie because film and music don't often mix. The energy is different because of the hours you have to spend waiting around."

"He's also very considerate of the problems the crew might have with lighting, or just working the long hours. He's very supportive, which is . . . unusual. When I was younger, Bowie was really important to me, and he has kept changing in interesting ways where other people haven't. I think maybe he's done that a little too much at certain times, but he's always drawn ideas from the street and been in a position to put them out before maybe the people who instigated those ideas. It's very, very difficult to stay ahead of the game like that. I think he's unique in that sense, and I've always respected that."

Continued on page 56

The Price You Pay

AN INTERVIEW WITH YOKO ONO

LIKE *MILK AND HONEY* BEFORE IT, YOKO ONO'S NEW ALBUM, *EVERY MAN HAS A WOMAN* IS A long-delayed project finally seeing the light of day. It's not quite like any other record Ono's released, however: this one features Ono's songs performed by other artists, including Rosanne Cash, Elvis Costello, John Lennon, Roberta Flack, Trio with Klaus Voorman, Alternating Boxes, Eddie Money, and John and Yoko's eight-year-old son Sean. The LP makes a convincing case for Ono's talent as a pop composer—Cash's heart-rending "Nobody Sees Me Like you Do" should qualify as a classic.

In late summer I spoke with Ono at her apartment in the Dakota. Though reputed to be a tough interview, on this day Ono was direct and unfailingly gracious, even when the occasion demanded questions that were impolite by any normal social standard.

At one point I remarked that while rock'n'roll has always promised you could do what you wanted, it had also pretty much defined doing what you wanted as getting the car or playing hooky. Yet the story of John and Yoko gave us an example of how doing what we wanted could be extended beyond high school—John and Yoko showed how rock'n'roll's promise could last a whole lifetime.

"Well, yes," Yoko nodded. "But what I remember about it is not the legend of John and Yoko. I remember a nice husband. We were always cracking each other up. We had fun together; we made each other laugh." She paused, as if remembering a secret. "And he was human, you know."

How did *Every Man Has a Woman* come about?

John was always saying that if my songs are covered, that's how they'll make it. I think he was very astute in that sense. But I sort of resisted it. In those days we couldn't even dream of anybody wanting to cover my songs. So John said, "Well, how 'bout me covering your songs?" There was a sort of tradition, especially from the Beatles, that whatever lines a person sang were the lines we assume he wrote. And I think he was racking his brains about it. As usual. He had this plan. He wanted my work to be known in the world.

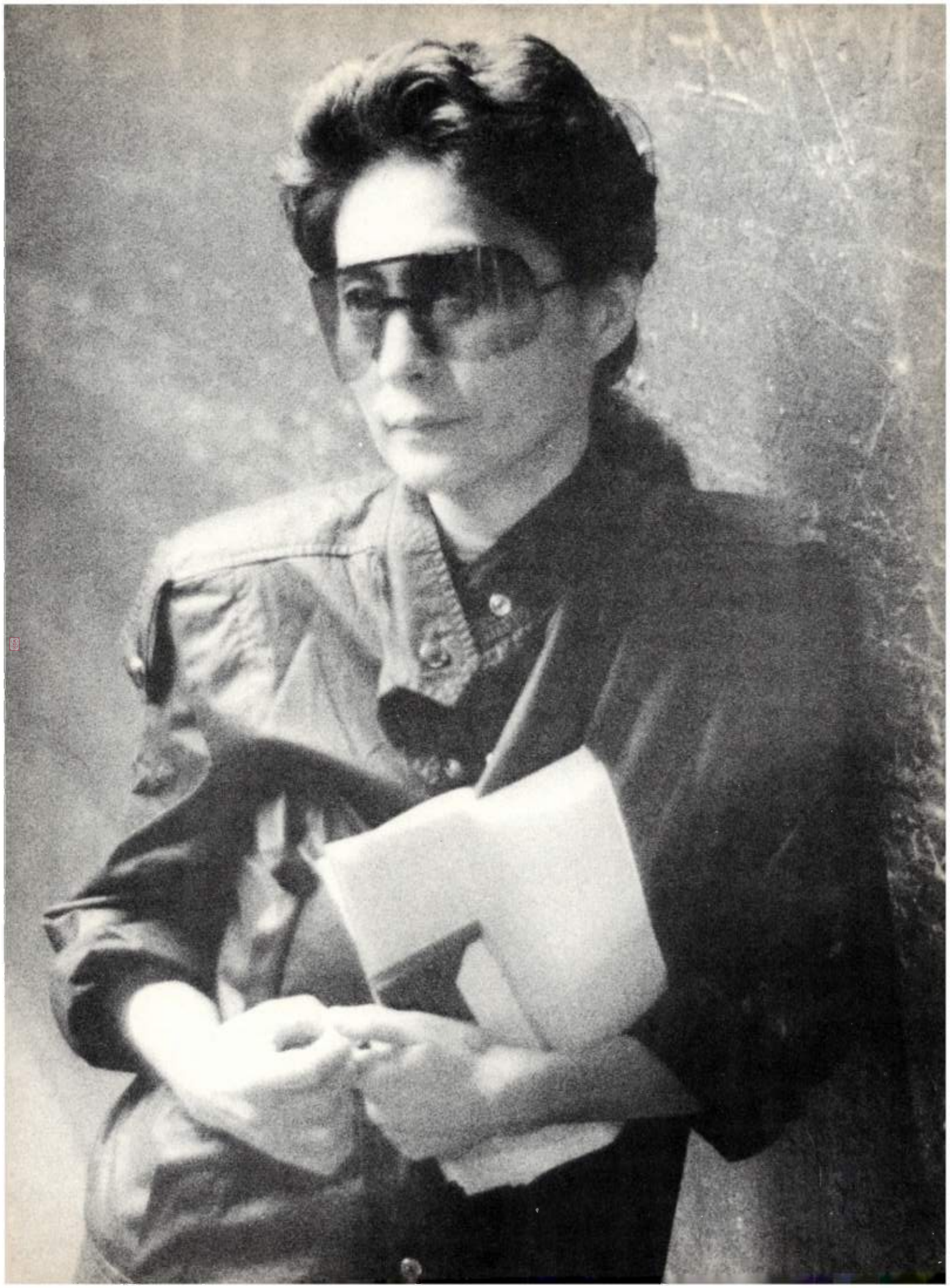
At the time of *Double Fantasy* he sang "Every Man Has a Woman Who Loves Him"—and also "Hard Times Are Over"—and sang it very beautifully. I didn't know the plan, really, but people who were around us told me later that John was going to give me a surprise for my 50th birthday. He was always telling me, "Wait'll you see my gift for your 50th birthday. You're gonna be knocked out." We were always topping each other with birthday presents. My 50th was something he was especially looking forward to.

He wanted a photographer to do a photograph of me with just the right lighting and everything for once, so it looked like

real (laughs) cheesecake. So he could show the world, "Listen, she's okay." And I was resisting that, too, because I'm a feminist. I was saying, "We don't have to do that." So with all the resistance coming from me and the world, John was working around it carefully.

After what happened in 1980, I was more concerned about bringing out *Milk and Honey* in the right way. And having those six tracks sitting in a cupboard didn't make me feel good. So I was concentrating on that and on my songs, *Season of Glass* and then *It's Alright*. But meanwhile my friends were saying, "Well, let's do the other one" and "John would be very happy. You have to do it for the 50th." But it turned out to be an incredible project. The difficult angle was not the artists, it was the record companies. Artists just sort of came naturally, and they all had some sort of natural connection with us. My only specification was not to ask the Beatles, because it's imposing. But we didn't even have to ask around. For instance, the head of the security guards at our sessions, who was around all the time, finally said, "Well, what's wrong with my brother?" "Your brother?" "Eddie Money." "Oh! Well, there's nothing wrong with him. It just didn't occur to me. Okay." That's how it happened. It was very simple. Klaus Voor-

BY BILL FLANNAGAN





Sean and Yoko at home: 'I was first frightened about what exposure would do to him, but then I realized you can't keep him in a box'

PHOTO: TANNENBAUM/SYGMA

man is a family friend for a long time, so it was natural to ask him. Roberta Flack, of course, because our kitchen doors are connected. That kind of thing. Each artist would send me a cassette and wait nervously for how I'd like it. And I loved each one. There wasn't one track I turned down or returned. But they all belonged to different record companies, so getting the permission was pretty difficult. It was amazing. The artists finished their songs and we were all waiting for the record companies to finally sort out things. Waiting patiently for over a year.

Some visual artists who get involved in pop music view it as a means to an end—a way to get their ideas across to a much larger audience than go to galleries or to see experimental films. Other pop artists love the form itself, and make pop music for its own sake. On which side do you put yourself?

I basically love music, and I write poetry. Before I met John, when I was at Sarah Lawrence, I used to write songs. They were more 12-tone-ish. I like the medium of

songs because it combines music and poetry. It's ideal for me. So that's what I was doing, but the form kept gradually changing. I think the main thing I learned from pop music or rock was the beat. I liked that. Like a heartbeat, it's always there. I think classical music lost the beat in a way. The heart's not there and it's just a head game. So in that sense I really liked rock. I'm just doing what I think I'd like to communicate at the time. So each time is slightly different. But it was never a consideration like, "Wow, this is a good way of making money!" That was never my concern. It was also never that this was *instead* of painting or *instead* of another form of art. Even when I was doing music I was simultaneously doing films or performance art or theatrical things. It was always organically natural for me to be doing whatever interested me at the time as an art medium.

We always hear about the effect you had on John's art—that he became more experimental, more honest, more political. What was John's effect on your art?

Obviously I learned all about rock and pop from John. He also had very astute observations about people—on a very realistic level—that I didn't have. He was working class, you know? I was always sort of up in the air, thinking about this and that. He'd say, "No, no. This thing's this way." So we checked each other out that way. It was very good. Surrealism is very natural for me. It's easier for me to describe my emotions in a surrealistic way, a symbolic way. But here was this guy who was very straightforward. If I was beating 'round the bush, trying to say things with symbolism he'd say, "What do you really mean?" He'd come out with it and try and make me face it. "What do you really mean?" "Well, 'I love you.'"" "Well, okay!" He had a very straight side. You know how you can sometimes read a surrealistic poem and not know what they're talking about? It's just word-weaving. Or mind-weaving. You think, "Oh well. It seems very beautiful, but what's the point?" I would have headed toward that, maybe. Little tea parties, classical music and a velvet dressing room. I might have been a nice old middle class spinster. Instead, John gave me back the body. He woke me up from my mind game. That was very healthy for me.

Did John have writer's block in the late '70s? One of the biographies claims he did.

No, he didn't have a writer's block. People are very mean to certain people. It seems that both John and I always had a fill of it. They interpret everything we do in a strange way. You can't believe everybody. If we were dishing out songs they would have said, "Oh, mannerisms" or "They're getting into a rut." If we didn't they talk about writer's block. It was a conscious decision: "Let's see where it goes if we *don't* dish out all the time." In a way, by stopping we thought we would get into some bigger thing.

John said he wasn't going to be singing "She Loves You" when he was 30. He always had that side. "What am I doing?" And because he was so honest to his work, it wasn't like he went to his desk and said, "What's going to be commercial?" and just wrote. It was almost like his diary. It reflected his state of mind. Because he was so honest about it, he came to a point where he said, "Look, I'm not going to be writing all this teenage stuff." Somebody, some book, said that when you're younger your mind process works in lyrical forms, and when you're older it becomes more prose form. I think John's mind was getting to be more prose than poetry. He didn't want to limit his thought to da-da, da-da, da-da and then make it rhyme, "moon" and "spoon." It becomes then more simplified than what he's really thinking. His thoughts were more complex. I kept saying to him, "Well, if that's what it is, why don't you write a book? You're ready for it." He didn't want to make that break yet. So I said, "Well, then write in the complex



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On the BEAT

BOOKS

It goes without saying that **David Bowie's** 1983 tour was one of the rock events of the year. To document the trek, writer Chet Flippo and photographer Denis O'Regan traveled with the former Thin White Duke and entourage and have finally completed a hefty tome called *David Bowie's Serious Moonlight—The World Tour*. It features photos galore, extended ruminations on What It All Meant, and Bowie himself furnishes an introduction. Published by Doubleday/Dolphin at \$16.95... Although the names Stick McGhee and Cecil Gant will probably mean nothing to most rock aficionados, it was their influence (and that of more well-known artists like Screamin' Jay Hawkins and Big Joe Turner) that paved the way for rock and roll as we know it. Nick Tosches' new book, *Unsung Heroes of Rock 'n' Roll* (subtitled "The Birth of Rock 'n' Roll in the Dark and Wild Years Before Elvis"), charts the cause and effect of a lengthy roster of pioneer artists—most of them obscure even in their own time—whose influence is still being felt today. The book, published by Charles Scribner's Sons, retails at \$8.95... As America's most traditional music, bluegrass has enjoyed a resurgence in interest over the last few years. With *The Big Book of Bluegrass*, editor Marilyn Kochman has assembled the best of the interviews with bluegrass luminaries that have appeared in the pages of *Frets* magazine, covering a lengthy list of artists that includes Bill Monroe, Earl Scruggs, Lester Flatt, Ralph Stanley, Don Reno, and Sam Bush. The interviews are balanced out with note-for-note transcriptions and sections devoted to the history of the music. Fronted with a forward penned by Earl Scruggs, the book is published by Quill at \$19.95... For **Laurie Anderson's** *United States Live* just out on Warner Bros. Records, fans will find an appropriate companion piece in a book recently published by Harper & Row, *United States*. It's a visual record of Anderson's 1983 multi-media performance extravaganza, "United States Parts I-IV," and will set you back to the tune of \$19.95... Best known for nailing down the drum riser with Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band, Max Weinberg has apparently become a journalist as well. His new book, *The Big Beat: Conversations with Rock's Greatest Drummers*, sports interviews with percussion kings ranging from Hal Blaine and Russ Kunkel, to Charlie Watts, Earl Palmer, and Levon Helm. Priced at \$9.95, it's published by Contemporary Books... Although all make their living from writing about generally separate areas of music, Allan Kozinn, Pete Welding, Dan Forte, and Gene Santoro have joined forces with a new tome called *The Guitar*. Subtitled



For Science Fiction fans who enjoy an occasional round of "Spot the Observatory" comes confirmation that the video for the **Fixx** single, "Are We Ourselves," was indeed shot at Jodrell Bank in Britain, which houses one of the largest radio telescopes in the world. It's largely used to scan the heavens for signs of intelligent life—which fits in perfectly with the subject of the single. According to Fixx drummer Adam Woods, the tune airs the band's "frequent feeling that we're alone in the world. Jodrell Bank is trying to answer the question of whether we're alone in the Universe."

"The History, the Music, and the Players," the book tells the entire saga of the instrument, exploring the different pathways taken over the years (country, jazz, blues, classical, rock), while focusing on its most influential players. *The Guitar*, published by William Morrow and Company, sells for \$12.95. ■

SCREENINGS

For those who haven't been watching their MTV and heard the news, the music channel is planning to make the big move into the feature film business in collaboration with Warner Bros. The first cinematic work will be based on that "Lost Weekend" promotional deal that MTV ran with **Van Halen** earlier this year (a viewer got the chance to hit the road with David Lee Roth and Co.), and it will focus on the adventures of a small-town girl who wins a similar trip. Henry Winkler (a.k.a. the Fonz on *Happy Days*) is one of the producers, and the project will be billed on-screen as "MTV Presents"... In a further bid to overtake and subdue Western Civilization As We Know It, MTV is set to kick off its so-called "second service" on New Year's Day. Although by

press time MTV hadn't figured out what to call it, the new 24-hours-a-day music channel will be aimed at a more mature 25-49 year-old "contemporary music audience." This follows MTV's recent pact with Tokyo's Asahi Broadcasting Corporation to broadcast several hours' worth of Nina Blackwood and Company on Japanese television every week. Subtitles will be the order of the day... It's understandable if you missed it, but the **dBs** recently appeared on an NBC special called "The Funniest Person in the World." Produced by Walter Williams (the hand behind Mr. Bill and the producer of the dBs "Amplifier" video), the show was taped in the Jazz and Gospel tent at the Louisiana World Exposition. Sharing the stage with the dBs were comedian/juggler Michael Davis, Allen Touissant, Alan Thicke, Michael O'Donoghue, and the Amazing Kreskin. Thrilled to be in such stellar company, the band later went on to play an impromptu set at Jed's Lookout (on the World's Fair site), where they were joined for a brace of tunes by Alex "Big Star/Boxtops" Chilton and R.E.M.'s Peter Dinklage... **Roger Daltrey**, no stranger to portraying life on the wrong side of the law following his role in the film *McVicar*, is currently trying to get another exercise in cinematic villainy off the ground. The subject this time centers on Britain's notorious crime duo and all-around "nasty bits of busness," the Kray Twins. Daltrey, it's presumed, is eyeing both roles. ■

MISCELLANIA

It was touch and go for awhile, but under a court injunction, **Paul McCartney's** black leather trousers were finally yanked off the auction block and stashed inside a safe prior to Sotheby's annual rock memorabilia sale in London. The auction house had been approached with the holy pants by Allan Williams (the Beatles' unofficial manager during the Cavern days), who claimed McCartney had parted with same in Liverpool 23 years ago in lieu of payment for a now-forgotten restaurant meal. Unfortunately, the pants (lot #214 in Sotheby's catalogue and described as "altered and worn and with a letter of authenticity") weren't Williams' to sell. A sentimental McCartney decided he wanted them back, lawyers went into a huddle with a British judge, and the leathers were withdrawn from the auction pending official ruling. Williams, who'd hoped to make at least 900 pounds from the relic, consoled himself by reading lot #46, a Hamburg expense sheet of McCartney and **John Lennon**, in which our Paul claimed (for income tax purposes) that the pants had cost 23 pounds—a figure Williams laughed at feebly, noting that it was the



Times obviously haven't changed since the early hours of silent film when theater patrons would bolt from their seats, terrorized by the projected image of an oncoming locomotive. During the premiere screening of the **Talking Heads** film, *Stop Making Sense*, at San Francisco's International Film Festival, a flying wedge of Heads enthusiasts charged down the aisle and rushed the onscreen image of band frontman **David Byrne** as if it were a live concert. Meanwhile, in the midst of the melee, Byrne himself sat quietly in his seat, unnoticed as he tried to watch the film.

"Twist and Shout" ... Joining **Stevie Ray Vaughan** on stage at New York's Carnegie Hall a few weeks back: Dr. John on piano ... Those who are still braving collapsed arches and urban carbon monoxide fumes in the quest for runner's euphoria might be interested in a new release from CBS Masterworks called *Momentum I*. Billed as the first pre-recorded cassette created exclusively for the jogger, it contains 60 minutes of continuous synth music that "provides a fabric of con-

stantly evolving musical textures and rhythms which work with the steady regularity of the jogging experience" ... The Bay Area's **Nightranger**, still doing brisk business in the charts with *Midnight Madness*, is holed up back home in San Francisco, laying down tracks for the group's next album ... Claiming to find it more intellectually stimulating than lying around on a beach copping a tan, PIL kingpin and retired Sex Pistol **John Lydon** (ne Rotten) has taken up scuba diving. ■



With all the books on the **Rolling Stones** cramming the shelves and the bargain tables down at your local bookseller, you'd think that putting out yet another tome on England's oldest rock stars would be akin to beating a long-dead horse. Authors continue to take the plunge, however, and two more books have just appeared which, if not shedding much in the way of new light, at least serve to underline just why the Rolling Stones are still around after all these years. Stanley Booth's *Dance With the Devil* takes the form of a "personal journey"—specifically focusing on his extended experience with the Stones in 1969. It took Booth more than a decade to complete the project. The book is published by Random House and costs \$16.95. On a different tack, concentrating heavily on the band's beginnings, then tracing the myth and the reality of the Stones up through the dawn of the Eighties, Philip Norman's *Symphony For the Devil* takes the same not-so-rosy approach used in *Shout* (his earlier, critically acclaimed opus on the Beatles). Published by Linden Press, it goes for \$17.95.

equivalent of four weeks' worth of Beatle wages. Still, collectors of rock flotsam and jetsam who attended the Sotheby's event had plenty of other Beatle items to drool over. Among the usual dolls and wigs, there was the collection of Elvis and Everly Brothers EPs that the late Beatle **Stu Sutcliffe** had played in Germany. There were original lyric sheets with scribbles and deletions such as "Cornet solo here" [sic]. There was an Apple Boutique stock book, testifying that **Patti Harrison** had borrowed fur boots and Ringo a cape in the Spring of 1968. There was a signed Christmas card from John, Cynthia, and baby **Julian Lennon**, circa 1966. A man with a white moustache and blue pinstripe suit held up his bidding number, then forked over 17,700 pounds for Lennon's exercise book from the Nelson Grammar School (inscribed inside: "This Book Has Many Good Uses And Should Go Down Well—Sanitary Journal"). In addition, a battered acoustic guitar that had belonged to Lennon fetched 15,500 pounds. The two-day event wasn't solely limited to Beatle memorabilia, however, as the final segment was turned over to general rock collectibles, with the spotlight on the **Rolling Stones**. **Bill Wyman's** ancient Framus bass appeared on the auction block, as did **Brian Jones'** white teardrop-shaped Vox guitar. (The latter was snapped up for a mere 3,200 pounds.) The party who'd hoped to sell **Elton John's** piano for 4,000 pounds didn't fare as well, however. As the auctioneer's gavel came down for the last time and the room cleared out, the cloud-painted upright was still standing forlornly against the side wall, unsold ... Although they hardly copped prime space on the Eleven O'Clock News during the Democratic Convention last summer, **Greg Kihn** and Romeo Void's chanteuse **Debora Lyall** did their bit for democracy by entertaining some 10,000-plus conventioners on Pier 45 overlooking San Francisco Bay at the "Oh What a Night" rally. The duo joined voices on the Isley Brothers/Beatles screamer,

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On protecting Lennon's memory: 'If I do something it's because I want to or I think John would have wanted to. The reason I don't do certain things is because it's too painful for John'

form without rhyming or anything. And if it doesn't fit into the beat then we'll *change* the beat—and we'll go into some different area. We can afford to do it. Maybe five thousand people will buy it instead of a hundred thousand.

"That's how classical music developed. First it was like this—Schumann and Brahms. Then it went into Berg and Schoenberg. Maybe this is a natural process for Lennon. And maybe when we put music to that kind of lyric, we'll find the music will become more complex, too. With more complex rhythms."

"But then the rock beat will be lost." He didn't feel like making that transition. For what reason is another problem. If he did that, the beautiful body rhythm would be lost. Maybe it would have been more esoteric and more precious. And we would have been sitting in a velvet dressing room together.

So maybe it was better that we didn't go that way. But there was a moment when his mind was getting bigger than the lyrics he was writing. That wasn't a block. He was thinking of what to do about it.

In our society, in normal circumstances, everyone assumes and accepts that a man's wife is the person nearest him. But John was viewed with such extraordinary affection that people reacted jealously as if he were their husband/wife/lover/best friend. How do you walk the line between being the custodian of John's memory and falling into a Graceland situation where John's memory is exploited?

I don't think of that sort of thing at all. Maybe objectively you would think that, but we were part of each other. So whatever I think is natural to do, I will do.

Whenever I do something I always think in terms of, Would this hurt John? Rather than, Will this hurt John's *image*. Would he like it or would he not like it? And I have my own sort of answer to that. "Exploiting" is a word you can use when you're outside of me. From my point of view, the reason I don't do certain things is because it's too painful for John. But if I do something it's because I want to or I think John would have wanted to. That's all. So there's no word like "exploitation." How do you exploit yourself?

You mentioned Graceland. What happened to Elvis happened before John left us. It was, in a sense, a very, very good example. It taught me a lot. There were things I didn't do because of that example. I didn't open a private home to the public. But it doesn't necessarily mean I'm right or wrong. I just know John wouldn't have wanted it and I don't want it. And also, we're in the lucky position that we don't *have* to do it. In fact, we don't have to bring out anything for *money*. So each time I decide to bring out something it's for other reasons. That's lucky.

Sean is on *Season of Glass*, his photo is on the back of *It's Alright*, he sings a song on the new album. Do you worry about exposing him too much?

No, because, first of all, I'm not going to push him into doing anything. If this was

something that he had to practice and practice to do, there would be no point to it. He said he knew "It's Alright" because he'd heard me singing it. I was first frightened about what exposure would do to him. But then I realized, you can't keep him in a box. He's a living person. His friends all want to go to these rock concerts, so whenever there's a concert he says, "Mommy, I want to go." "Well, you can't go, Sean, 'cause it's dangerous for you. It's not dangerous for the others." Then I started thinking, You mean this child has to stay at home? What is this? You can't do that to him; he has to have a normal life. And this is normal to him. If I were to make him do an LP, get a voice teacher—that would be wrong. I'm not doing any of that. He just tags along when I go to the studio. He sees me wearing ear phones and he wants to try it out. I think that's fine.

So it's a little exposure each year. Just a tiny bit. And next year if he feels like he wants to be a scientist and have nothing to do with it, that's fine, too. I always tell him to take it easy.

You said earlier that everything happens for a reason. I don't know if I can quite buy that...

I know what you mean. I think that, too. All the time. What a price to pay. Hopefully some of the things we did might have touched people. If we made them happy even for a moment, made them wiser—if only by not making the mistakes we made, then it's beautiful. ○

TWISTE



PAUL LANGRAN 1/84

D L O G / C

(I'd Say Severely Bent)

IT IS A FUNDAMENTAL CONCEIT of Heavy Metal that teenagers are a great oppressed underclass, forced to take out garbage, load dishwashers and do homework with little to sustain their spirits but cable TV, video games and the vile, repellent and loud form of entertainment known as Heavy Metal.

Metal is nominally a style of music, but music is virtually beside the point. What's important is that the performers, staging, graphics and sound be as vile, repellent and loud as possible—because the payoff is not aesthetic satisfaction. The true purpose of Heavy Metal is to piss off parents, irritate teachers, take one's mind off roaring rivers of hormones, and antagonize shopping mall security personnel—those oppressors whose true purpose is to snuff out fun and abridge teenage freedom.

Twisted Sister is a Long Island-based quintet led by Dee Snider, who serves American youth by being vile, repellent and loud for all whose desire to be vile, repellent and loud is constantly being repressed by parents, teachers, hormones and mall security personnel. That I find Twisted Sister vile, repellent and loud—and very repetitive—simply identifies me as one of the Enemy.

Be that as it may, I'm not trying to snuff out teenage fun, or abridge teenage freedom. It was while watching Twisted Sister that I realized I am *supposed* to find Heavy Metal vile, repellent and loud. It's not Dee Snider's fault that I'm no longer oppressed by parents, teachers, hormones and mall security personnel, any more than it's my fault the American entertainment establishment is so devoid of concern for its own children that it actively promotes this swill for profit.

Snider is an energetic, earnest and likeable New Yorker whose explanation of his *oeuvre* makes perfect sense. His rap is easier to believe than some of the bunk spewed out by more "respectable" artists. Too bad for me if I'd rather drink gasoline than ever

see Twisted Sister perform again—I ain't gonna stop *you* from going.

Snider's account of his musical development describes a stairway to Hell: Beatles, Paul Revere and the Raiders, Led Zeppelin, Black Sabbath, Alice Cooper and later—"a big influence"—AC/DC. There's a gradual but inexorable march away from melody, harmony, dynamics and—once Led Zep is behind him—instrumental technique and verbal subtlety; with the influence of Alice and Sabbath come the themes of angst and hammer-and-tong vengeance fantasies. It all leads inevitably to Heavy Metal, says Snider, because "three chords can have *more* drive and *more* intensity than 12 chords."

Snider honed his skills until his act was so vile, repellent and loud that he's now able to make a nice living at it—in cruel, deliberate spite of the fact that Dee Snider is a classically-trained vocalist and won awards for choral singing in high school.

Twisted Sister's stage and costuming suggest a bad acid trip catered by Frederick's of Berchtesgaden. Snider, guitarists Jay Jay French and Eddie "Fingers" Ojeda, bassist Mark "The Animal" Mendoza and drummer A.J. Pero flail about in leather, metal and torn duds on a stage dominated by a tall red cyclone fence topped with barbed wire. In between the vile, repellent and loud songs, Snider—and sometimes French—shout the usual stuff at the crowd to incite them to party (and plugging in local references so everybody remembers where they are) and loudly introduce great concept songs like "You Can't Stop Rock 'n' Roll."

A key feature of Twisted's act—along with the obligatory sludge-o-matic guitars, huge drum kit played brutally but simply, anthemic hooks repeated endlessly, and (for the time being, at least) the most vile, repellent and loud new twist on the comic-cum-wet dream Freudian overkill visuals that characterize HM—is a gusher of profanity. Snider's stage rap isn't merely peppered with vulgarities; "peppered" implies seasoning, that which is applied sparingly to enhance food's flavor. Snider's speech is

slathered, smothered, *suffocated* in the f-word the way bad meat is obliterated with barbecue sauce. To abridge his phrases would be unfair, to render them verbatim unacceptable to the editors; therefore, consider every appearance of the word "yessir" as a substitute for the various forms of *that* word in the following. And keep in mind that there is no typeface bold enough or italic enough, nor capitals capital enough, to render Twisted's tone faithfully—so just keep in mind the words "frenzy" and "decibel" as you read.

I told you all that so I can tell you this: The house lights are up and Dee Snider is inspecting the crowd—"I see a Twisted Sister banner over there—great!"—like a cross between a drill sergeant and Monty Hall. But something's wrong: "Some of you people up in the balcony are SITTING DOWN!! You're too yessir *cool* for Twisted yessir Sister!" He leads the audience in chanting "GO YESSIR HOME! GO YESSIR HOME!" until a sufficient number of deadheads get on their feet and Snider, satisfied, can move on to the next cheer: "What do we say to people who don't want to party *seven days a week, 365 days a year?* YES SIR! YES SIR! YES SIR! YES SIR!"

Putting away his makeup after the show, Snider explains the value of yessir. "When people meet each other they're very formal. Then you start to think, 'This guy ain't a bad guy,' and all of a sudden the curses slip in. You're showing a *comfortable* feeling." Snider likes to get *very* comfortable. "If I don't curse on stage I feel a separation between me and the audience. It's a subtlety, but it's the subtleties that make a performance."

When Snider takes the stage, he says, "I tap into everything negative in my personality." He said it, I didn't. "I think about the things I hate, the things I'm angry about. I let it all out—I curse, scream, roll around—and afterwards, I feel good."

And he does it so his audience can feel good, too. "Metal is an outlet for negative emotions—anger, frustration, hostility. There's always anger, and you need to let it go. You want to punch somebody in the

By David Gans



PHOTO: CHRIS WALTER/RETNA LTD

"I tap into everything negative in my personality. I think about the things I hate, I curse and scream..."

face—Heavy Metal, you punch your fist in the air. You want to stomp on somebody, you stomp on the floor. You want to scream at your parents, you scream into the air." For the fans, a Heavy Metal show is one place they can shout "YES SIR" at the top of their lungs and not get detention.

Snider remembers his own angry, frustrated and hostile years, and how Alice Cooper helped him through them. "When Led Zeppelin talked about sex it was always interstellar forces merging," he recalls. "Cooper went straight to the yessir point: 'We yessired.' I realized that this was what I needed—plain talk, words I understood. 'I'm eighteen, I'm a boy and I'm a man'—YES! That's the problem! Speak to me, Alice. Let me watch you and forget about my problems, Alice. Let me get out my frustrations, Alice.' I couldn't put it into words myself."

He can now. Snider writes all of Twisted Sister's songs, and he knows what his audience wants to hear. His lyrics address the frustrations of being set upon constantly by parents, teachers, hormones and mall security personnel, expressing teenagers' quotidian rage as inarticulately as they do themselves. The beauty of a line like "We're not gonna take it" is that it's gener-

ic—"it" can be anything—so each listener plugs in his plight and credits Snider with knowing *exactly* what's bugging him.

And it works for girls, too. It is to Snider's credit that females don't serve as appliances in his songs. "I don't feel Heavy Metal is an exclusively male form of music," he explains. "I don't feel like eliminating a whole section of humanity based on my sexual preferences. Women have frustrations and anger, too."

So Dee Snider may not have any taste, but he does have principles—as further evidenced by the fact that he doesn't give a yessir who knows he's married, has a son, doesn't take drugs (including alcohol), and digs sports. "I've done everything the way I want to do it, and if nobody wants to be out there to hear it that's fine. But I'll be damned if I'm gonna do it somebody else's way just because they think you gotta be drunk and stoned to go on stage," he asserts.

But what about his obligations as the poster boy for the United Sociopaths Appeal? "The hero game is a tough one. I am trying to be a hero to these people, but they're gonna think what they want. I've seen it—I did it. They'll say, 'Dee Snider—what a bullshit artist! He's straight—

RIGHHHHHHT! He probably just don't want the cops bustin' him because he's got so much coke in his pocket!' And if I said I was drunk all the time and they wanted to believe I wasn't, they'd go, 'He's just sayin' that... I never see him stumble!'"

Snider could be seen as a hypocrite, urging his fans to party party party and abstaining from partiables himself, but he says the idea is to "shock these people out of their hangups. Every band in the world has tried the nice approach, and it doesn't seem to work. I'm beatin' 'em over the head with a yessir club, and at the same time we're havin' fun!"

"Sure, we say 'yessir' to the people who are sittin' down. The *fact* is, most of those people *aren't* enjoying themselves. You know how I know? Because I used to sit down. And one day I said, 'I'm impressing everybody with how yessir cool I am but nobody gives a shit—they're down in front having a good time!'"

"We're yellin' because they're sittin', and one day they're gonna realize that they wasted their yessir life sittin' there. *That's* the point, so YES SIR! The audience is laughin' and sweatin' and feelin' good. And that's the bottom line."

YES SIR!

○

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SPECIFICATIONS

AMPLIFIER SECTION

Output Power

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Signal-to-Noise Ratio (*66IHF/DIN)

Phono—80dB/66dB

Video/Aux/DAD/Tape—100dB/67dB

RIAA Phono Equalization

± 0.5dB (20Hz -20kHz)

S.E.A. SECTION

Centre Frequencies—63, 160, 400, 1k,

2.5k, 6.3k, 16kHz

Control Range—± 10dB

FM TUNER SECTION (*78 IHF)

50dB Quieting Sensitivity

Mono—14.8dBf Stereo—38.3 dBf

Signal to Noise Ratio (IHF-A Weighted)

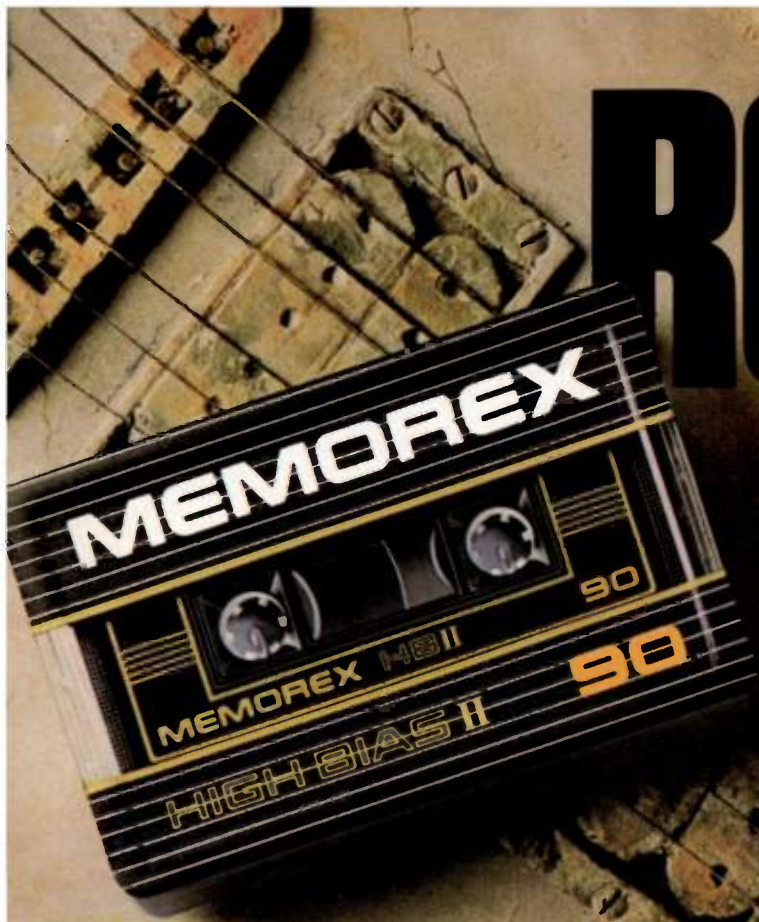
Mono/Stereo—82dB/73dB

The R-X500B puts an advanced microcomputer in charge of the digital synthesizer tuner and references it to the accuracy of a quartz oscillator, making it highly versatile and easy to use. The microcomputer lets you preset 15 AM and 15 FM frequencies, scan them all for 5 seconds each, read out aerial signal strength in 5dB increments, plus much more.

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WHAT'S NEW

SCRATCHMASTER GOES SOLO

D St's monster "Mega Mix"

NEW YORK—There's a great new 12" single out on Celluloid Records right now that will pick you up in the morning and lay you right out in the evening, if you can get to that. This guy D St used to be called Grandmixer D St and I suppose he dropped the honorific 'cause why restate the obvious, right? Anyways, D St's come up with a scratchparty deathmix called "Megamix II: Why Is It Fresh" complete with a few industrial-strength sounds like have never been used quite this way before—screams, raps, horns, sirens, a touch of "Rockit" (yeah, he snuck it in there—nice little head and shoulder fake, D, bet CBS didn't even notice), exhortations to "Hear it on the radiooooo!" where of course you won't. But that's radio's problem, you dig?

To quote the disc, why don't we make believe we're in school? D St's a former drummer turned scratcher who got into the wild style scene in his native Bronx, took his talents to Manhattan's Roxy a couple of years back and got noticed by Laswell and Beinhorn of Material. They produced a couple of D St singles for the innovative Celluloid label, and then picked him up as the secret ingredient to help put Herbie Hancock's "Rockit" way, way over the top. Now he lays claim to being the first scratch DJ to perform on stage as part of a band, as he's doing now on the road with Hancock. On its way is a full album of D St doing what he does, and he's also worked on a updated take of the Last Poets' "Mean Machine," due out as this goes to press. If you miss it, bubba, it's your loss.

—Ed Norton



FRIENDS OF THE FORMS

Brave Combo takes its polkas seriously

DENTON, TX —"I feel like there's a network of eccentrics around the country," opines Brave Combo singer/guitarist/keyboardist Carl Finch. "Brave Combo gets me in contact with all these eccentrics, and it makes me realize there are people trying to do things for reasons other than monetary gain."

Formed by Finch in 1979, the Combo (Finch, bassist Lyle Atkinson, saxophonist Jeffrey Barnes, drummer Mitch Marine) quickly gained notoriety playing polka versions of Doors, Hendrix and Beatles songs. Among the highlights from the quartet's second album (*World Dance Music*, Four Dots Records, Box 233, Denton, TX), in fact, is a knockwursted version of "People Are Strange." So when Finch declares his band arose out of "a strong desire to play non-commercial music," you can take it to the bank.

"A really good gig for us," he observes, "is when we feel we've been true to the forms, and got the energy of the forms across to people; where people are listening the same way they would listen to the Clash."

—Thomas Anderson



WHAT'S NEW

CHILE TODAY, HOT TAMALE

Red Hot Chili Peppers on a platter

LOS ANGELES—Inspired by a Grandmaster Flash concert, rapper Anthony Kiedis decided to put together a rap tune with his high school chum Flea, who has played with James White and the Blacks, What Is This? and Fear. To help develop that one rap piece, and create more, they borrowed What Is This? guitarist Hillel Slovak and drummer Jack Irons. When What Is This? landed a record deal, Slovak and Irons were replaced, respectively, by the no-slouch team of Jack Sherman (who's worked with John Hiatt) and Cliff Martinez (a Captain Beefheart alum). Voilal The Red Hot Chili Peppers, whose first live performance consisted of one song, and who remain dead serious about kidding around, were born.

Live, the Peppers have made their name behind a combination of bizarre funk, Kiedis' grandmaster growl, and a grab bag of outrageous antics (Flea once mooned a hostile Oingo Boingo audience). The Peppers recently poured their strange brew onto vinyl for EMI. *The Red Hot Chili Peppers'* ominous metal-funk intensity recalls early Gang of Four—hardly surprising considering the disc was produced by Gang guitarist Andy Gill.

The standard Peppers question remains, What is this stuff? Says Kiedis: "I would describe it as hard-core, fast-driving, furious, somewhat psychedelic power funk."

That pretty much covers it—and he's not kidding.

—Duncan Strauss

GORL JUST WANTS TO HAVE FUN

But there's this hostile computer...

NEW YORK—Gorl just wants to have fun. So what's stopping him? Well, the computer for one.

"It was horrible," recalls Robert Gorl (pronounced Girl), another German synthesizer maven. "I was working on material for my next album (his current one is *Night Full of Tension*, on Elektra) and I had all the melodies and bass lines programmed in. Suddenly, the machine starts to sputter and make all sorts of noise, and then prints out 'Complete Error.' It was all lost, in an instant."

Fortunately, Gorl is one of the few electro-poppers who believes trees ought not to die in

vain, and he had written most of the material out on paper. Nevertheless, the experience of watching the CPU spill his hard-earned efforts into never-never land is one he will not soon forget. "There's too much thought in (electronic) music today and not enough feeling," he explains. "No machine can substitute for your heart." —Mark Mehler





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NOVEMBER 1970

TOP 10 POP SINGLES

- 1 **I THINK I LOVE YOU**
The Partridge Family
- 2 **THE TEARS OF A CLOWN**
Smokey Robinson & the Miracles
- 3 **INDIANA WANTS ME**
R. Dean Taylor
- 4 **WE'VE ONLY JUST BEGUN**
The Carpenters
- 5 **GYPSY WOMAN**
Brian Hyland
- 6 **FIRE AND RAIN**
James Taylor
- 7 **5-10-15-20**
The Presidents
- 8 **SOMEBODY'S BEEN SLEEPING**
100 Proof
- 9 **YOU DON'T HAVE TO SAY YOU LOVE ME/
PATCH IT UP**
Elvis Presley
- 10 **MONTEGO BAY**
Bobby Bloom

TOP 10 ALBUMS

- 1 **LED ZEPPELIN III**
Led Zeppelin
- 2 **ABRAXAS**
Santana
- 3 **CLOSE TO YOU**
The Carpenters
- 4 **NEW MORNING**
Bob Dylan
- 5 **THIRD ALBUM**
The Jackson 5
- 6 **SWEET BABY JAMES**
James Taylor
- 7 **GREATEST HITS**
Sly and the Family Stone
- 8 **GRAND FUNK LIVE**
Grand Funk Railroad
- 9 **GET YER YA-YA'S OUT**
The Rolling Stones
- 10 **WITH LOVE, BOBBY**
Bobby Sherman

INDIANA GOT HIM

Trivia time: Who was the first white artist on Motown to have a number one record? Try R. Dean Taylor—not a pseudonym for Indiana U. b-ball coach Bobby Knight, but a regular Joe whose "Indiana Wants Me," the tale of a wanted man on the lam, topped the chart in late '70. Formerly a Motown staff writer, RDT's other claim to fame is for having penned the Supremes' hit, "Love Child." We couldn't find a mug shot of R. Dean, so we're running this picture of Coach Knight, not in honor of his splendid coaching job with the Olympic basketball team last summer, but for his unique method of dealing with an obnoxious fan: He deposited the poor sucker in a trash can. Bobby, we salute you.



CHRIS CROWELL/INDIANA DAILY STUDENT

U K T O P L P S

- 1 **THE WOMAN IN RED**
Stevie Wonder (Motown)
- 2 **DIAMOND LIFE**
Sade (CBS)
- 3 **PRIVATE DANCER**
Tina Turner (Capitol)
- 4 **ELIMINATOR**
ZZ Top (WB)
- 5 **POWERSLAVE**
Iron Maiden (EMI)
- 6 **NOW III**
Various (EMI/Virgin)
- 7 **PURPLE RAIN**
Prince (WB)
- 8 **NO REMORSE**
Motorhead (Bronze)
- 9 **THE WORKS**
Queen (EMI)
- 10 **LEGEND**
Bob Marley & the Wailers (Island)
- 11 **PARADE**
Spandau Ballet (Chrysalis)
- 12 **HUMAN'S LIB**
Howard Jones (WEA)
- 13 **CAN'T SLOW DOWN**
Lionel Richie (Motown)
- 14 **SELF CONTROL**
Laura Branigan (Atlantic)
- 15 **BREAKING HEARTS**
Elton John (Rocket)
- 16 **THRILLER**
Michael Jackson (Epic)
- 17 **UNDER WRAPS**
Jethro Tull (Chrysalis)
- 18 **KNIFE**
Aztec Camera (WEA)
- 19 **1100 BEL AIR PLACE**
Julio Iglesias (CBS)
- 20 **BREAK OUT**
Painter Sisters (Planet)
- 21 **PHIL FEARON AND GALAXY**
Phil Fearon and Galaxy (Ensign)
- 22 **DREAMTIME**
The Cult (Beggars Banquet)
- 23 **GREATEST HITS**
Queen (EMI)
- 24 **JUST THE WAY YOU LIKE IT**
SOS Band (Tabu/Epic)
- 25 **BORN IN THE USA**
Bruce Springsteen (CBS)



SL. BETINA LTD.

NEW ON THE CHARTS

This month's top charted new artist on the U.K. Top 25 is London face-girl fashion plate, Sade Abu, with her album *Diamond Life* on CBS. "I've never dreamed of being in a band," the singer—whose group goes by her first name—told *New Musical Express*. "For me it's fresh. It's new because I don't think anybody sounds like us. Any band with a sound is going to be new."

As for her high-style diamond-life image, Sade is no masochist: "I do care about clothes and glamour, but not because I'm a singer. When you have a photograph taken of you, it's a permanent thing so you make an effort. If someone comes up to you at a party with a camera you don't then start scratching your ear unless it's for a joke."

U.K. LP chart reprinted from *New Musical Express*, September 29

"Light my Lucky."

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B L A C K L P S

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|--|
| 1 | PURPLE RAIN
Prince (WB) | 13 | CATS WITHOUT CLAWS
Donna Summer (Geffen) |
| 2 | SUDDENLY
Billy Ocean (Arista) | 14 | SEND ME YOUR LOVE
Kashif (Arista) |
| 3 | ICE CREAM CASTLES
The Time (WB) | 15 | DREAM STREET
Janet Jackson (A&M) |
| 4 | JUST THE WAY YOU LIKE IT
SOS Band (Tabu/CBS) | 16 | EGO TRIP
Kurtis Blow (Polygram) |
| 5 | THE WOMAN IN RED
Stevie Wonder (Motown—Soundtrack) | 17 | MADONNA
Madonna (Sire) |
| 6 | YOU, ME & HE
Mtume (Epic) | 18 | BREAK OUT
Pointer Sisters (Planet) |
| 7 | ALL OF YOU
Lillo (Capitol) | 19 | WILD ANIMAL
Vanity (Motown) |
| 8 | I APPRECIATE
Alicia Meyers (MCA) | 20 | REFLECTIONS
Rick James (Motown) |
| 9 | THE GLAMOROUS LIFE
Sheila E. (WB) | 21 | STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART
Peabo Bryson (Elektra) |
| 10 | PRIVATE DANCER
Tina Turner (Capitol) | 22 | VICTORY
Jacksons (Epic) |
| 11 | LOOKIN' FOR TROUBLE
Joyce Kennedy (A&M) | 23 | SAM HARRIS
Sam Harris (Motown) |
| 12 | SWEPT AWAY
Diana Ross (RCA) | 24 | LOVE LANGUAGE
Teddy Pendergrass (Asylum) |
| | | 25 | NOW
Patrice Rushen (Elektra) |



ROBIN RAPAN/RETNA LTD.

TIME BOMB

Can't tell what's going to happen when the purple rain starts to fall. After the first two Time albums charted, sartorially resplendent frontman Morris Day high-stepped into the spotlight with his hilarious supporting role in Prince's cinematic extravaganza, *Purple Rain*. Now, with the Minneapolis funk brigade's third LP (*Ice Cream Castle*, title courtesy of Joni Mitchell's "Both Sides Now") at Number Three on the Black Album Chart, Morris the cool cat has stepped out solo. He's currently reading movie scripts and writing songs—plotting his next big move, in short, and conspicuously enjoying his celebrity. Meanwhile, the Time march on.

H E A V Y M E T A L L P S

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|--|
| 1 | OUT OF THE CELLAR
Ratt (Atlantic) | 14 | RIDE THE LIGHTNING
Metallica (Megaforce) |
| 2 | STAY HUNGRY
Twisted Sister (Atlantic) | 15 | WALKIN' THE RAZOR'S EDGE
Helix (Capitol) |
| 3 | POWER SLAVE
Iron Maiden (Capitol) | 16 | HONEYMOON SUITE
HoneyMoon Suite (WB) |
| 4 | ANIMALIZE
Kiss (Polygram) | 17 | TOOTH & NAIL
Dokken (Elektra) |
| 5 | LAST IN LINE
Ronnie James Dio (WB) | 18 | SEE YOU IN HELL
Grim Reaper (RCA) |
| 6 | CONDITION CRITICAL
Quiet Riot (Epic) | 19 | Y&T
Y&T (A&M) |
| 7 | 1984
Van Halen (WB) | 20 | TWO STEPS FROM THE MOVE
Hanoi Rocks (RCA) |
| 8 | THE BLITZ
Krokus (Arista) | 21 | BLACK 'N' BLUE
Black 'n' Blue (Geffen) |
| 9 | V.O.A.
Sammy Hagar (Capitol) | 22 | DANCIN' ON THE EDGE
Lita Ford (Mercury) |
| 10 | LOVE AT FIRST STING
Scorpions (Mercury) | 23 | W.A.S.P.
W.A.S.P. (Capitol) |
| 11 | SLIDE IT IN
Whitesnake (Geffen) | 24 | MARCH OF THE SAINT
Armored Saint (Chrysalis) |
| 12 | NO TELLING LIES
Zebra (Atlantic) | 25 | THE WARNING
Queensryche (EMI) |
| 13 | SHOUT AT THE DEVIL
Motley Crue (Elektra) | | |



ANDY FREEMAN

CRUNCH TIME

Few crunch combos get their metal dented as often as Quiet Riot. Part of the problem seems to be this biz of ripping off singles by the British trash-glam gang, Slade—from last year's "Cum On Feel the Noize" to the current "Mama Weer All Crazee Now." Another part of the problem seems to be, er, chops, or lack of same. Still, after years of blowing out clubs on the L.A. circuit, this outfit's too psyched on the platinum sales of *Metal Health* and *Condition Critical* for the critics' salvos to sting too much. As for the long-term effects of chronic head-banging—if they're worse than the short-term ones, this band's condition is definitely critical.

Heavy Metal and Black LP charts researched and compiled by Street Pulse Group

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WRN

Not since 1977's revelation of the Secret Alliance of Rock Magazine Editors' resolution not to write another nice syllable about Rod Stewart until his death or 92nd birthday—which ever comes first—has anything stirred so much behind-the-scenes controversy in the rock world as the recent emergence of The Better Video League, whose innocent-sounding name belies the fierceness of its vigilantism.

One's first response to the League's avowed intention to damage the kneecaps of any rock video programmer whose selections fail to conform to its rigorous guidelines after January 1, 1985, can only be horror. But in the face of the realization that we have all of us, at one time or another, yearned to kick at least one male MTV VJ smartly in the genitals, such horror soon gives way to consideration of the guidelines themselves. At which point one is apt to discover himself in Everly Bros.-like harmony with the League on a variety of points.

Being technically white myself, I both understand and endorse the League's determination to rid the airwaves of the appalling spectacle of white singers other than Madonna, a former top professional, trying to dance. I have suffered Billy Squier's invertebrate-like writhings in his "Stroke Me" clip, a discredit not only to the white race but to the *human*. These old eyes have further beheld John Cougar Mellencamp, whose very pirouette ends with him staggering out of frame, and Pat Benatar in "Love Is a Battlefield," and Bruce Springsteen's "Dancing In The Dark." So I have known firsthand the excruciating embarrassment that nurtured the League's resolution to harshly censure those who would wreak more.

Asserting, and quite rightly so, that "yes, goddamnit, it *is* too much trouble to get up, walk over to the TV, and turn the sound down," the League condemns the use of gape-inducingly stunning women in provocative attire to make the excruciatingly unlistenable videos of such ghastly old fools as Chicago and recently-emerged younger ones as Van Stephenson irresistible to heterosexual male viewers.

If the League has its way, such physically repulsive performers as Billy Joel, '38 Special, Joe Jackson and Rush will henceforth be allowed to appear in their own videos for no longer than eight bars or 10 seconds at a stretch. One really feels for the Joe Jacksons and Geddy Lees, who, through no fault of their own, may have



Billy Idol: Will someone give this man a pair of cement overshoes?

been in the wrong lines when God was passing out good looks. It's harder—and how!—to work up much sympathy for the '80s, though, whose deficient grooming is a matter of choice, or for Joel, whose strangely simian screen presence seems a function of his arrogance.

Speaking of good looks and arrogance, I think we can agree that, just as there's no better-looking male rock singer on videotape today than Billy Idol, there's certainly no more obnoxious one either. It's always been my own conviction that Bill ought to have been drowned years ago, but here the League surprises us by showing itself to be molded of less stern stuff. While he and all others are expressly forbidden to throw pulled punches at the camera, the League is willing to allow Bill to continue to work in the medium that made him a star in spite of his consummate lack of talent as long as he henceforth sneers but once, and then for

no longer than two bars, or eight seconds—which ever comes first—per video.

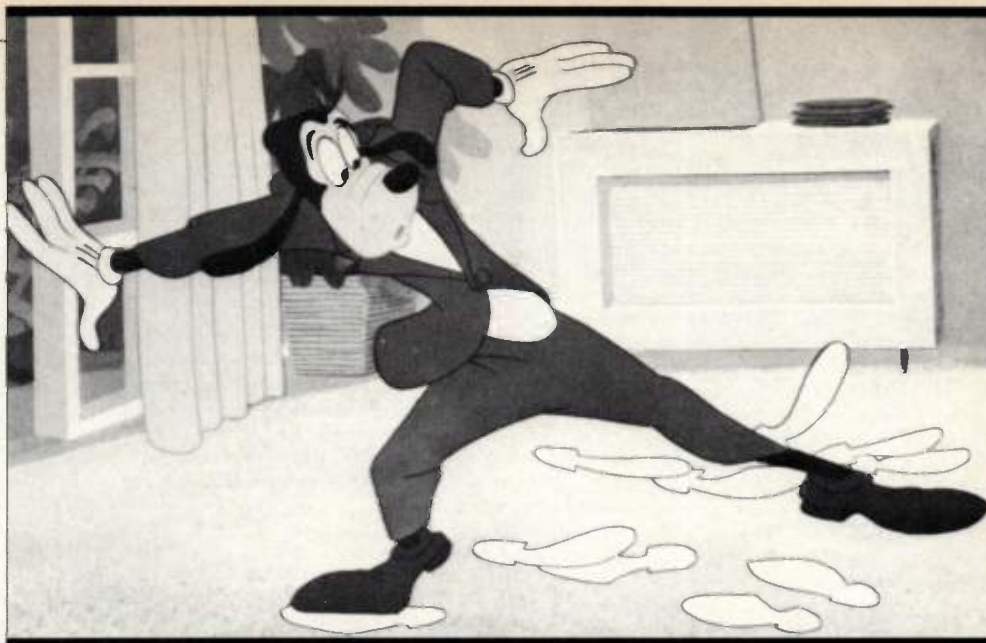
My guess is that we'll soon be free of him—that Our Bill, the Frankie Avalon of punk, could no more restrict himself to a lone sneer than Berlin's Terri Nunn or Duran Duran's Nick Rhodes could restrict themselves to a single pout or D.L. Roth a single swagger.

In the end, the League waives all other considerations in the face of the expression of the best rock 'n' roll's joyfulness. We approve in spades, that is, of such videos as Van Halen's "Jump," Cyndi Lauper's "Girls Just Want To Have Fun" and, in spite of the spaz dancing, the above-mentioned Springsteen—videos in which a musician or singer seems to be having such a good time as to render all other considerations, like coherence of storyline, production values and so on, utterly irrelevant.

And so do I.

PHOTO MARK LEALONIA/LOI

Mickey-and-Minnie smooch-athon with Hall and Oates' "Kiss on My List" as its theme. The initial package of clips (13 to 16 per package is the plan) will list for \$29.95 . . . Two new home video releases worth checking out: **The Police—The Synchronicity Concert** spotlights rock's top bottled blondes on the road. Includes 15 songs performed live, from "Every Breath You Take" to "Message in a Bottle" and various stops in between. Available in VHS Dolby Stereo and Beta Hi-Fi; suggested list price is \$39.95; from the Archive Film Production in association with Fox/Lorber Associates comes **Rock And Roll: The Early Days**, an hour-long video compilation of performances and historical perspective (in the form of footage of adults condemning rock 'n' roll in the '50s and scenes of Alan Freed at work on his "Moondog Matinee" show). Among the featured artists: Elvis Presley on the Milton Berle show, Little Richard, Jerry Lee Lewis, Buddy Holly, and Fats Domino. Suggested retail price is \$29.95 . . . Those looking for some serious throwdowns on the musical race lines of America ought to find **Midnight**



Goofy gets down for DTV: Better than your average hound dog

Star in Concert (USA Home Video, \$39.95) worth the effort. Both "No Parking on the Dance Floor" and the instant classic "Freak-a-Zoid" are part of the deal—could there be any higher recommendation? . . . The video 45 market has belonged to Sony for a couple of years now, but Pioneer Artists is entering the fray with some gusto, offering music video on

8" laserdisc at a suggested list price of \$10.99 for most titles. The first releases were from David Bowie, the Motels, Phil Collins, J. Geils Band, Kajagoogoo, Sheena Easton, Stray Cats, Naked Eyes and Iron Maiden, all of whom are also represented on Sony Vid 45s.

(After RECORD'S November issue went to press we received the sad news of the death of John Fa-

cenda, the 72-year-old NFL films narrator who was prominently featured in our Video Notes column that month. Facenda's commitment was to excellence; his instrument was his voice, and he played it with a virtuoso's mastery. We mourn his passing.—Ed.)

Video notes by
Alan Hecht
and David McGee

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Blondie Live

D: Stan Harris 55 min./MCA Home Video/\$29.95

In which evidence is presented that Blondie should have never left the club circuit, where tight confines helped mask their utter lack of stage presence and personality. In fact, Blondie rarely worked well out of the studio, save for powerhouse drummer Clem Burke, who was always the best part of any Blondie show. Billed as "the last and best concert by Blondie," *Blondie Live!* is a portrait of burnout. Deborah Harry has trouble singing on key, moves like someone's shoved a cob up her rear and displays a conspicuous lack of life in her eyes. Chris Stein, never an onstage charmer, makes a couple of desultory attempts to be personable, but to no good effect. Guest guitar ace Eddie Martinez is the only musician who seems to be enjoying himself, but he's rarely allowed the opportunity to display his considerable chops (and what's this "Eddie Martinez, jazz guitar" credit?). Let it be said that Blondie made a few very good records in its time; that Chris Stein has a real feel for recasting disparate musical styles in a pop context; that on vinyl Deborah Harry's Ice Queen pose was sometimes the stuff dreams are made of. And then let it be.

—David McGee

Stray Cats

"She's Sexy + 17" (D: Ian Leech);

"Stray Cat Strut" and "Rock This Town" (D: Julien Temple); "I

Won't Stand In Your Way" (D: Peter Heath)

13 min./Sony Video 45/\$16.95

Give the Cats credit: the Blasters and certainly Billy Burnette have done more towards finding a contemporary groove for rockabilly, but these Long Island strays introduced a lot of people to the form who might otherwise have never known or cared about it. As video stars they're fairly right on, too. All of the clips here are marked by the trio's infectious enthusiasm and a lively visual style, particularly those directed by Julien Temple. A tad short for the price, but worthy of repeated viewing.

—D.M.

The Snowman

D: Diane Jackson 26 min./Sony Video 45/\$24.95

Raymond Briggs' acclaimed children's story about a young boy's snowman who comes to life and takes him on a magical mystery tour of the North Pole, where other snowmen are celebrating the season. Poignant, heartwarming and well near mystical in its effect, *The Snowman* will sit well with all ages. Superb animation—the scenes of the snowman and his

young charge flying to the Pole are breathtaking, particularly when they soar past the Northern Lights; and the music, by Howard Blake, is as key to the story's passion as any other element. Must viewing.

—D.M.

Styx: Caught In The Act Live

D: Jerry Kramer 87 min./A&M Video/\$39.95

For those so inclined, a video greatest hits package keyed to the like-titled album. Styx at least tries to be socially relevant, but their music is so bloated it leaves no room for lyrical subtlety. Excruciating viewing for those allergic to arena rock and all it stands for, but Styx fans ought to get down to this one.

—D.M.

Eddie And The Cruisers

D: Martin Davidson

100 min./Embassy Home Entertainment/\$79.95

This rock 'n' roll mystery, based on a novel by P.F. Kluge, deals with Eddie Wilson (played by *Streets of Fire* hero Michael Pare), a pioneering New Jersey rocker whose mysterious car crash back in 1964 is being investigated by a television journalist in the wake of an '80s Jim Morrison-like revival of his music. Eddie's body was never found, of course, and neither were the tapes for his visionary LP, *A Season in Hell*—title by way of French poet Arthur Rimbaud—that his record company had rejected. The whereabouts of those tapes and even Eddie himself is the mystery the movie attempts to solve. Unfortunately, in doing so, it only creates a bigger one: how did a film so devoid of coherence, pacing, style or recognizable intelligence ever get made? Only the music, solid work from John Cafferty and Beaver Brown (reminiscent of another famous Jersey musician, used to sing about the Jersey shore and stuff like that), comes close to reviving this cinematic cadaver. Of the many unintentionally funny lines in the movie—and like all the others, delivered with a solemnity that shames *The Day After*—the best comes from "Sally," the group's bass player now working the local Holiday Inn as an oldies act. "Guys like you and me," he informs the Cruisers' old keyboardist, "they strike oil under your garden, all you get is dead tomatoes." And guys like me, Sally, all we get are movies like *Eddie and the Cruisers*.

—Wayne King

MUSICVIDEO TOP TEN

- 1 **HEARTBEAT CITY**
THE CARS
Warner Home Video
- 2 **LINDA RONSTADT: WHAT'S NEW**
LINDA RONSTADT
Vestron Video
- 3 **THE LAST WALTZ**
THE BAND
CBS/Fox Home Video
- 4 **BILLY JOEL LIVE**
FROM LONG ISLAND
BILLY JOEL
CBS/Fox Home Video
- 5 **A KISS ACROSS THE OCEAN**
CULTURE CLUB
CBS/Fox Home Video
- 6 **DAVID BOWIE: SERIOUS MOONLIGHT**
DAVID BOWIE
Media Music
- 7 **MAKING MICHAEL JACKSON'S THRILLER**
MICHAEL JACKSON
Vestron Video
- 8 **RICK SPRINGFIELD PLATINUM VIDEOS**
RICK SPRINGFIELD
RCA/Columbia Pictures Home Video
- 9 **PAT BENATAR HIT VIDEOS**
PAT BENATAR
RCA/Columbia Pictures Home Video
- 10 **DURAN DURAN**
DURAN DURAN
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 **LET'S GO CRAZY**
PRINCE
(WB) D: Albert Magnoli
- 2 **WHEN DOVES CRY**
PRINCE
(WB) D: Larry Williams
- 3 **THE GLAMOROUS LIFE**
SHEILA E.
(WB) D: Mary Lambert
- 4 **WHAT'S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT**
TINA TURNER
(Capitol) D: Mark Robinson
- 5 **SHE-BOP**
CINDY LAUPER
(Epic) D: Edd Griles
- 6 **DANCING IN THE DARK**
BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
(Col) D: Brian DePalma
- 7 **LUCKY STAR**
MADONNA
(Sire) D: Arthur Pierson
- 8 **JUMP**
POINTER SISTERS
(RCA) D: Richard Perry
- 9 **GHOSTBUSTERS**
RAY PARKER JR.
(Arista) D: Ivan Reitman
- 10 **DYNAMITE**
JERMAINE JACKSON
(Arista) D: Bob Giraldi

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 October.

This Is Spinal Tap!

D: Rob Reiner, Marty DiBergi

82 min./Embassy Home Entertainment/\$69.95

In this year of completely useless comebacks—Yes, BTO, Slade, etc., with Deep Purple dead ahead—no film could have been more timely than *This Is Spinal Tap!*, the absolutely hilarious parody of every AOR/metal cliché ever foisted upon the public. So correct in its every detail as to make anyone connected to the business contemplate a change of profession, this "rockumentary" of "one of Britain's loudest bands" as they stumble across America has more than enough real comic genius to be required viewing for anybody interested in a good larf. And it's reassuring to realize that the people responsible—namely director Reiner along with co-writers/Tap members Michael McKean, Christopher Guest and Harry Shearer—must have a more-than-passing fancy for the musical lifestyle they so deftly harpoon. Homevid bonus: the band's video clip for their classic "Hellhole" and a late night TV commercial for a Tap greatest hits package entitled *Heavy Metal Memories*.

—W.K.

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Produced by Patrick Montgomery
Written and Directed by Patrick Montgomery and Pamela Page

VHS
hi-fi
Beta
hi-fi

WRN

BOWIE

Continued from page 27

A STOOL HAS BEEN SET UP ONSTAGE, and Bowie, clad in a seriously disruptive black and white print jacket, appears next to it, clutching an acoustic guitar. Temple's sound men run the tape and Bowie moves through the song, getting rid of guitar, jacket and shoes halfway through the take. The second time around he begins the number sitting on the stool ("I feel like Segovia," he quips before handing the guitar to a girl sitting on the stage), then dumps the jacket and steps out to try a few Elvis Presley shimmies. A sax player brandishing one of those cream plastic alto saxophones that Ornette Coleman used to play has been added to the ensemble, and when he blows along with the track he's wildly out of tune, but he looks the part and that is the order of today's business.

Between takes Bowie chats to the extras and the sax player or sits on his stool strumming the acoustic, improvising flamenco lines, little modal riffs and even absently playing a snatch of "Space Oddity." A bleary-eyed extra wanders up to confide eagerly that this video is being re-shot because the original was "too raunchy for the BBC."

"Okay, let's do this *please*," bawls Temple, and they go for it again, Bowie swinging his jacket off for a string of bullfight

moves and ending the song with a perfect Elvis pose. As the extras applaud him, he bows and applauds them. At four o'clock they break to re-set the rails for the camera. Bowie and Temple go into a huddle to discuss the spoken introduction to the track. Temple suggests, "My fellow citizens, we have just outlawed America." Bowie promises to go upstairs and write himself some lines.

An hour later Bowie has penned the magic words. "Good evening," he begins. "This is David Bowie and his band the Aliens giving you a big welcome from sophisticated downtown Soho with a lunchtime gig. And our first number is called 'Blue Jean.'"

Take two: "You weady to wock 'n' woll? This is David Bowie, his band the Aliens and some of the prettiest people standing after a lunchtime gig..."

Finally, he gets it down pat: "... and the *only* people still standing after a lunchtime gig. This is for all our friends in the American Empire, and we would like to *launch* into the first of our lunchtime songs..."

The end of the tune brings howls for more from the audience. "Now we'd like to do for you," cries Bowie, "the groove on the end of the record!" Even Bleary is dancing now and by the time Bowie and Temple decide to overdub live backing vocals and handclaps by the audience over the existing track, a kind of crazy heat-

struck euphoria has gripped the entire room.

"WOOOOOOOHHHHHHH," chants the assembled multitude, "THE WHOLE HUUUUUUMAN RACE!"

"I'VE HAD SO MUCH FUN ON THIS thing with Julien," Bowie announces a couple of days later. "I can't wait to see it. If it works the way I hope it works... it's nothing particularly revolutionary in story terms; it's pretty lightweight, it's comedy material, it's very *acceptable*... and it's quirky. I think one thing it does do is serve as a demythification of the rock star. I do a very campy type of rock star and a very Ernie type of character, which is fun. One always wants to do something like that."

So you're blowing up the old bridge, then?

"Oh, yeah! It really does blow it up quite a lot! If it works as a piece of cinematic material, it will encourage me a lot to continue striving to pull my own production together, but I've needed something like this to get past the three-minute boundary and... adding words. I think I'm perceived as being quite po-faced (*Poker-faced, inscrutable—Ed.*), but not any more! Not after they see this thing!"

They'll be screaming "*Bring back the po-face!*"

"Or," Bowie surmises, "we'll find out how unwittingly comic they think I am." ○

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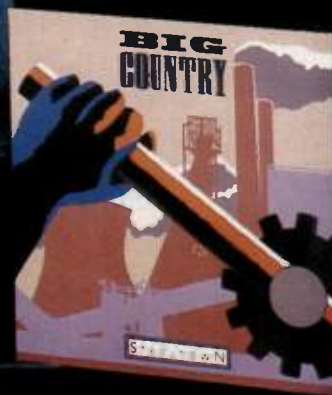
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HOLIDAY

BUYING • GUIDE

Accessories for the video cool from **Recoton**: **V468 Stereo Gold Connection Cables** connect both the audio and video functions of one VCR to another for dubbing or for hookup to a stereo-video amp or switcher (\$19.95); the model **V614 Deluxe Home Entertainment Control Center** will accommodate up to four video sources (VCR, games, pay TV, outdoor antennas, satellite receivers, etc.). Two video outputs allow for simultaneous viewing and recording. Comes complete with **Gold Connection hookup cables** (\$109.95); and the **V615 Stereo Color Processor** will make up to four tape copies from one source while correcting color level, tint and contrast. (\$329.95).

General Electric's new **VHS Hi-Fi** is the perfect vehicle for viewing some select music video titles: (from left) *The Everly Brothers Reunion Concert*: The reunion is more than musical on this stunning concert filmed last year at the Royal Albert Hall in England, when the brothers played together for the first time in over a decade. **MGM/UA Home Video** (\$59.95); *This Is Elvis*: A quasi-documentary recounting of Presley's career, using doubles to portray the King in his early years and some key scenes later on. Flawed but powerful, especially the music. **Warner Home Video** (\$69.95); *Styx: Caught in the Act*: Video counterpart to the album of the same name. **A&M Video**. (available in VHS Hi-Fi, \$39.95); *Culture Club: A Kiss Across the Ocean*: Pop event of the first order, with the Boy in good form. Recorded live at London's Hammersmith Odeon in December '83. **CBS/**



Fox Video Music (available in VHS Hi-Fi, \$29.98); *Duran Duran*: A best-selling collection of Duran Duran's early videos. **Thorn-EMI Video** (\$39.95); *Stray*

Cats: The Cats' in peak video form on four cuts, including "(She's) Sexy + 17" and "Rock This Town." **Sony Video** 45. (Beta Hi-Fi, \$16.95)

Photos: Corinne Colen



(Center) **Micro Fidelity's Mi-Fi Speakers**, model MFS-6300, can be used with almost any portable or personal stereo system. Each speaker weighs only 1.5 pounds and has a built-in 3.5 watt amplifier with a maximum power handling of 20 watts per channel (\$70/pair). At left is the **Aiwa HS-U07**, a pocket-sized personal stereo with auto-reverse play-back and an AM/FM stereo tuner pack. (\$150). At right is the **Sony SuperWalkman**, model WM-F10, touted as the world's smallest AM/FM cassette unit. Features include lightweight in-the-ear headphones (\$130).

Casio KX101: A stereo "boom box" with AM/FM/cassette recorder and built-in keyboard that features 11 instrument sounds, 12 Casiochord keys and 12 background rhythms. (\$500).



Clockwise from bottom left: **Onkyo TX36B receiver**; **Pioneer CT-1050W Dual Deck Cassette** (a deluxe dubbing deck that can be programmed to play or record up to eight selections in any order. \$290); **Sennheiser HD-414SL Headphones** (an update on an ultra-lightweight—less than two ounces—headphone design with user-serviceable parts. \$84); **Boston Acoustics A-40 Speakers** (two-way speakers with 3/4-inch dome tweeters and 6 1/2-inch woofer that can handle power supplies of five to 40 watts per channel. \$75 each); **Yamaha CD-X1 Compact Disc Player**, priced at about \$500, brings digital music within an affordable range; **TASCAM's 225 Syncaset** looks like a standard cassette deck, but allows for sound-on-sound (bouncing between channels) and independent recording on each channel. \$349.95.



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ALL THE RIGHT MOVES

WAKING UP WITH
THE HOUSE ON FIRE
Culture Club

Virgin/Epic

By
Laurice
Niemtus

Who would have thought that Boy George still had some more tricks up his elegant sleeve? By now, two albums into the most successful career launch since the Beatles, fan and foe alike no doubt thought they had young Mr. O' Dowd figured.

But maybe they didn't: *Waking Up With The House On Fire* certainly isn't the album one might expect for that milestone third



release.

First of all, there's almost no reggae of any kind on it. There are a couple of calypso-like numbers which, invariably and perhaps unfortunately, recall Carmen Miranda rather than the Mighty Sparrow. But no matter, for now. The real news is what *does* show up on this album.

There's '60s R&B with a real, brassy horn section. There's vintage 4/4 rock 'n' roll studded with a sax section and what sounds like that old roller rink warhorse, the Hammond B-3 organ. There are strings, and lush layers of Helen Terry sounding like a heavenly choir. There's doo-wop made into sugary pop. And there's even a piece that sounds like old Led Zeppelin trying to be new Top 40.

What's missing from *House on Fire* may be equally impor-

tant, however. This time, there's no funky heat a la "Love Twist" on the first album or "Black Money," from *Colour By Numbers*. Additionally, there's little of the raucous fun and high wit of tunes like "I'll Tumble 4 Ya."

What we have here instead is a group that wants to become *your* band. And if Top 40 is your thing, they are likely to succeed, because every tune sounds calculated to stand on its own without artsy esoterica to confound the masses. The first single, for instance, "War Song," is so simplistic and naive it's hard to take seriously. "War, war is stupid/And People are stupid/And love means nothing/In some strange quarters," warbles George, which at least brings the debate down to a level even small children can understand. But it *does* have a hook that won't let go.

The rest of album's lyrics are equally oblique or nonsensical, but all of them are wrapped in the prettiest, bounciest pop around, complete with all those historical references that are bound to catch ears of all ages. The sweet soul ballad, "Mistake No. 3," is George's best performance, and Terry's great gospelly counterpoints to the swing-tinged rock and roll of "Prime Time" seems certain to make it a hit.

All in all, this album fails to fulfill the recombinant promise of Culture Club's first two, but nay-sayers should beware: Boy George didn't become pop's newest phenomenon by making bonehead plays. And he's still making all the right moves.

GLORIOUS RESULTS OF A MISSPENT YOUTH Joan Jett and the Blackhearts

Blackheart/MCA

By
J. D.
Considine



In some ways, the worst mistake Joan Jett ever made was recording "I Love Rock 'n' Roll." Sure, it was a great record, an instant classic, if you will. But that's the problem—ever since, her fans have expected her to follow that great single with an even greater album, while her new label seems to think that such a hit can only be followed by a bigger one. Caught between all this, Jett sounds like she's been pulled every way but loose.

Just look at the album's credits: there are no less than five separate production teams listed for the dozen songs here, and though it's not quite a case of too many cooks, it certainly does little to give the album a sense of inner unity. Instead, *Glorious Results of A Misspent Youth* sounds Balkanized, with the material jumping genres rather than making connections. You get all the musical types you'd expect to hear on a Joan Jett album, but almost out of a sense of obligation.

That's not to say the material is second-rate. From the old Runaways tune "Cherry Bomb" to more recent efforts like "Frustrated" and "Someday," Jett's writing is tough and insistently catchy, while her singing is more assured than ever. Similarly, the Blackhearts punch their way through each tune with inspired vigor, doing themselves proud throughout. Which makes the lumpish package all the more annoying. Taken out by cut, the music here leaves little room for complaint; grouped together as an album, these songs just don't hang together.

THE MAGAZINE Rickie Lee Jones

Warner Bros.

By
James
Hunter



On her talent-to-burn debut, Rickie Lee Jones sang like the loosest girl in Los Angeles. On "Company," her and Alfred Johnson's neo-torch song, she was incredible: vibrant and vain, shrugging and grave, tortured and elated, the artless child and the art-fed girl, all at once. Shivering in the mix, her catholic soprano broke, bled, and then healed itself, slowly—very, very slowly. But "Chuck E.'s In Love," bopping around some joyous hooks, made her a star, proving once again that most people prefer fast. Most pop fans, though, really did prefer this wild singer/songwriter and her jazzy ocean of charisma—why, Jones herself loves the big waves—and the proof was the gold record achieved by 1981's *Pirates*, her experimental second album, and no embarrassment of hooks. Last year, she released the EP *Girl at Her Volcano*, with her Beach Blanket Beat Queen's version of the Drifters' "Under The Boardwalk," the heartbreaking "Walk Away Renee," and her trenchant treatment of Tom Waits' "Rainbow Sleeves." Who knows how this curious item sold; its assumption of cult-dom for itself made it irrelevant anyway.

How *The Magazine*, unambiguously her third album, fares in the 1984 pop marketplace, though, isn't irrelevant, or so the album suggests. Rickie Lee Jones will never work as a waitress again; however, as serious as she is about fusing pop and poetry, as much as she rejects functioning as "just" a singer or songwriter, she does seem to want *The Magazine* to act like a hit. But the record is finally as ambitious as *Pirates*—it's elaborately structured around one group of seven tracks and another smaller cluster called "Rorschachs," each group with its own prelude and theme—but is more familiarly melodic, less formally alien. As important to the record's relatively unelusive appeal as tunefulness and concision, though, is this: L.A.'s loosest is more irresistible than ever. She sings her difficulties away.

Her audience has a need, a hungry taste in the head for her that no one else on the planet can satisfy—she's that original. Like a late party arriver, she delays her entrance on *The Magazine*. But when she does finally show up, on a feisty, complex song called "Gravity," loudly insisting "There are wounds that stir up the force of gravity"—as if she knows it all about wounds and forces—she's unmistakably herself. There she sings about "The small

things that float to the top" and throughout *The Magazine* it's these deceptively small things about her performances that always put her compositions over, like the charming moment in "Jukebox Fury"—teeming with its own kineticism—when all stops cold and Jones commands "Look." Or the easiness in "Deep Space" when she leans back slow—very, very slow—and conjures a place "Where the lord's face/Is an all night cafe." Not that she doesn't do big things, too. In the careful, zig-zagging title song, she eventually throws a lovely fit—"I don't think you know what you're doing," she charges—and then calms down by repeating "Carol, Carol, Carol."

Three songs, though, have virtually no experimentalism about them. Jones is the sort of singer who'd sound unfettered in a straitjacket and she's incandescent lighting up tightly-structured numbers like the graceful "It Must Be Love," the punkish "The Real End," and "Runaround," the record's peak. These pieces form the chart section of the *Magazine*, but they're hardly inferior to Jones' designated Rorschachs like the *Amarcord*-esque "Theme For The Pope" or "The Weird Beast." (Best of that bunch is "The Unsigned Painting," where, after she's described ladies in church and their "wiry bold hats," she breathily emphasizes, "That is the picture that I see.") On "Runaround," where she overdubs herself into an unpredictable background chorus of Rickie Lee Ronettes, and where Steve Lukather's guitar adds that sterling L.A.-rock touch, she keeps complaining "I could get this anyway," with the accent oddly on "way." It's the most natural sounding, surest demonstration of her magic. And the Jones magic is the terrific cover story of her *Magazine*. Glad she made the assignment.

APOLLONIA 6 Apollonia 6

Warner Bros.

WILD ANIMAL Vanity

Motown

By
J.D.
Considine



Rock 'n' roll has never been prudish

about sex songs; how could it be, given the lubricious etymology of its very name? But where rock's erotic nature has been apparent from the start, it nonetheless managed to be fairly coy about it. Even as late as the mid-'70s, there were still people who thought that the Who's "Squeeze Box" was about playing accordion and that

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"Y.M.C.A." merely celebrated keeping in shape.

No need to worry about listeners missing the point with the current crop of sex songs, though. Ever since Donna Summer panted her way through "Love To Love You Baby," the door has been open for any willing wench with a breathy voice and pouty publicity photo. That was basically the joke when Prince first put together Vanity 6—play off the conventions of sex-crazed sirens in slinky clothes, but treat it with humor and good-natured exaggeration.

That was the idea, anyway. But Vanity looked at it as a career, split from the Prince stable to make it on her own, and now there's Apollonia 6 in addition to Vanity 1.

Apollonia is, of course, Patti Kotero from *Purple Rain*, and though she played a sort of generic sexpot in the film, she doesn't quite fill the bill on record. There's a lot of silliness and flirtatious humor to *Apollonia 6*, but none of the giddy edge that made its predecessor such a camp delight. OK, the album does boast such screamers as "I get a fever when you touch my lingerie in public," but come on—Rick James can do as well.

Vanity, on the other hand, still treats the topic with wicked finesse. Although some of her wordplay is sheerer than any negligee (you'd have to be about as sharp as a bowling ball to miss the point of "Strap on, 'Robbie, baby'"), she does know what to leave unsaid, as in "Pretty Mess," where she never quite comes clean about what stained her dress. And though singing isn't exactly her long suit, her melodies verge on the catchy. Who knows? Vanity may well be a singer worth watching for other than the obvious reasons.

THE SWIMMING POOL Q'S The Swimming Pool Q's

A&M

By
Christopher Hill



Anyone who doubts that something unusual and exciting is happening to American rock 'n' roll isn't listening to bands like the Swimming Pool Q's from Atlanta. As with the best new American groups, they are fiercely involved in the specifics of their time and place. The power of their sound—whether guitar barrage or keening lead lines over frantic folk picking—seems to spring directly from the mundane details that the lyrics evoke so sharply—a

dusty clapboard church, the eerie green light inside a Trailways bus at night.

Anne Boston's folk-styled alto provides a tart countertexture to the guitar ruckus. In "Purple Rivers," when she sings, "Can you turn these purple rivers to gold/Like the robes of Roman Caesars of old?," her leap into falsetto on the last word suggests in an instant something unimaginably ancient and changeless—real goosebump material.

Guitarist Jeff Calder's songs unfold by way of dramatic changes, suggesting tales cryptically told. Most dramatic of all is "Just Property." Guitars rumble lonely and inexorably over Calder's beautiful evocation of desolate farmland until everything stops but the drum's slow march. Then Calder and Boston begin to chant in arid harmony, "Wind won't change this land/Fire will make us diamonds," as the guitars rise to a crescendo and sail off over the horizon.

These aren't anthems, and you won't wave your fist in the air to this music—it's too indebted to plain realities. But the best songs of the Swimming Pool Q's hint at a wild beauty hiding behind that plain mask.

KNIFE Aztec Camera

Sire

By
Christopher Hill



Well, it's just gorgeous. A great feast of gorgeousness, with no small credit going to producer Mark Knopfler, who has taken pains to preserve every one of this record's countless textures in crystal and velvet. Crashing synthesizer waves; swirling draperies of acoustic guitar; cascading piano arpeggios; languid, poignant lead lines. Yes, this record sounds like a storm front moving through, a deliciously indulgent show of aching emotionality.

Apart from instrumental grace—which this band has on a breathtaking scale—the real point of *Knife* is the creation of a persona for frontman Roddy Frame. Like all singer/songwriter records—and this is one—the aim is to establish a consistent personality through which listeners can see their own suffering reflected and glorified in the singer's exquisite sensitivity. So it doesn't matter whether he's saying something ridiculous like "I shall seek your holy lunacy" or something great like "There's a sense we didn't have/And I feel it in the other five." Or that softheaded, Manilowesque arrangements are populated by thoroughly captivating hooks. It's the personality that counts. And when

straightforward emotion does cut through, Frame's open-hearted singing can be perfectly charming. "The Birth of The True"—just Frame and acoustic guitar—is about the freshest distillation of young love and youthful idealism since Steve Forbert sang "Going Down To Laurel," and you'll find yourself humming it for days.

So what the heck. Stir up the fire, pour the wine, watch the rain beat against the window pane, and put on Aztec Camera. If this be mush, make the most of it.

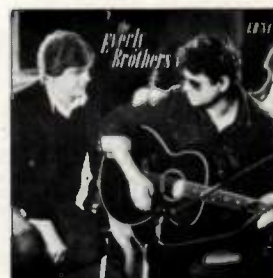
EB 84 The Everly Brothers

Mercury

RIFF RAFF Dave Edmunds

Columbia

By
Wayne King



In 1977, Dave Edmunds released *Get It*, a rock 'n' roll album so good that it not only set a standard of recorded excellence he's been unable to match since, but helped to recapture and re-define rock's past at a time when contemporary bands like the Sex Pistols and Clash were mapping out much of its future. Well, Edmunds has finally got his name on a record as good in its way as *Get It*. No, it's not *Riff Raff*, his third try for Columbia, but *EB 84*, the album he's produced for the Everly Brothers.

Maybe it's not so strange that Edmunds has made a better record for the Brothers than he's made for himself. His long suit has always been producing, and given his love for the Everlys (he recorded "Let It Be Me" ten years ago, and he and Nick Lowe teamed up for a runthrough of four Everlys numbers on a disc included with early pressings of the *Rockpile* LP), one can assume his focus was firmly on their comeback try.

Regardless of the exact circumstances of its creation, *EB 84* is so splendid a comeback as to defy any attempt at labeling it or the Everlys as golden oldies or revivalists. From the opening track written specially for the duo by Paul McCartney, "On The Wings of A Nightingale," through the gorgeous ballad of Don's which gently puts the record to bed, "Asleep," the Edmunds/Everlys collaboration never takes a false step. On tunes such as "Danger Danger," "You Make It Seem So Easy" and "More Than I Can Handle," Edmunds frames Phil and Don's harmonies—still one of rock's most precious resources—with just enough modern sonic

punch ("You Make It Seem So Easy" sports both voicebox and a lilting reggae rhythm) to let the songs fall into that special place between rock and pop that their classic work always managed to. And the Brothers respond to his fannish enthusiasm by paying back a couple of other devotees who kept the faith through the years: namely, McCartney (Don's "Following The Sun" evokes the Beatles' "I'll Follow The Sun") and Bob Dylan, the latter by way of an offbeat version of "Lay, Lady, Lay."

If only Edmunds had anything left over for *Riff Raff*. That he's again working with Jeff Lynne is baffling—outside of a shared fondness for Chuck Berry, there's no reason why the superior Edmunds should associate with the former ELO maestro-turned-hack. Let's ascribe this let-down to his being split between so many projects (he's also involved in McCartney's *Give My Regards To Broad Street*), and hope that next time out he'll give himself the same break he gave the Everlys, and make a real Dave Edmunds record.

.....
**BEAT STREET,
 VOLUME 2**
 Various Artists
 Atlantic

By
 James
 Hunter



Unless you hadn't heard a dance track since

Saturday Night Fever, *Beat Street*, Vol. 1 was energetic activity you could ignore. The real surprise of *Beat Street*, Vol. 2 is that you can't—it's cut by cut smarter, funnier, more passionate. Its heart is Arthur Baker's electricity-and-strings production of Tina B's "Nothin's Gonna Come Easy," a song capable Tina (Mrs. Baker in real life) is geared up to belt out into a velvety show of fortitude over a sizzling Desmond Child-like Hollywood punch. And its amazing wit is found in the Treacherous Three's shrewd "Santa's Rap," which rips the Bloomingdale wrappings off Christmas and goes down like pure candy from a stocking. Neither is to be missed.

Not that the rest of the record is filler—that can be found on the first one. Jenny Burton, who has star quality and a rich, dynamic range, doesn't deal in subtleties on her beautiful "It's Alright By Me"—she ain't got nothin' to hide, baby, and she wants to be your wonder woman. And if Baker and Rocker's Revenge want to hit you with hard fastballs of rhythm on "Battle Cry," the La La girls want to take you

Continued on page 72

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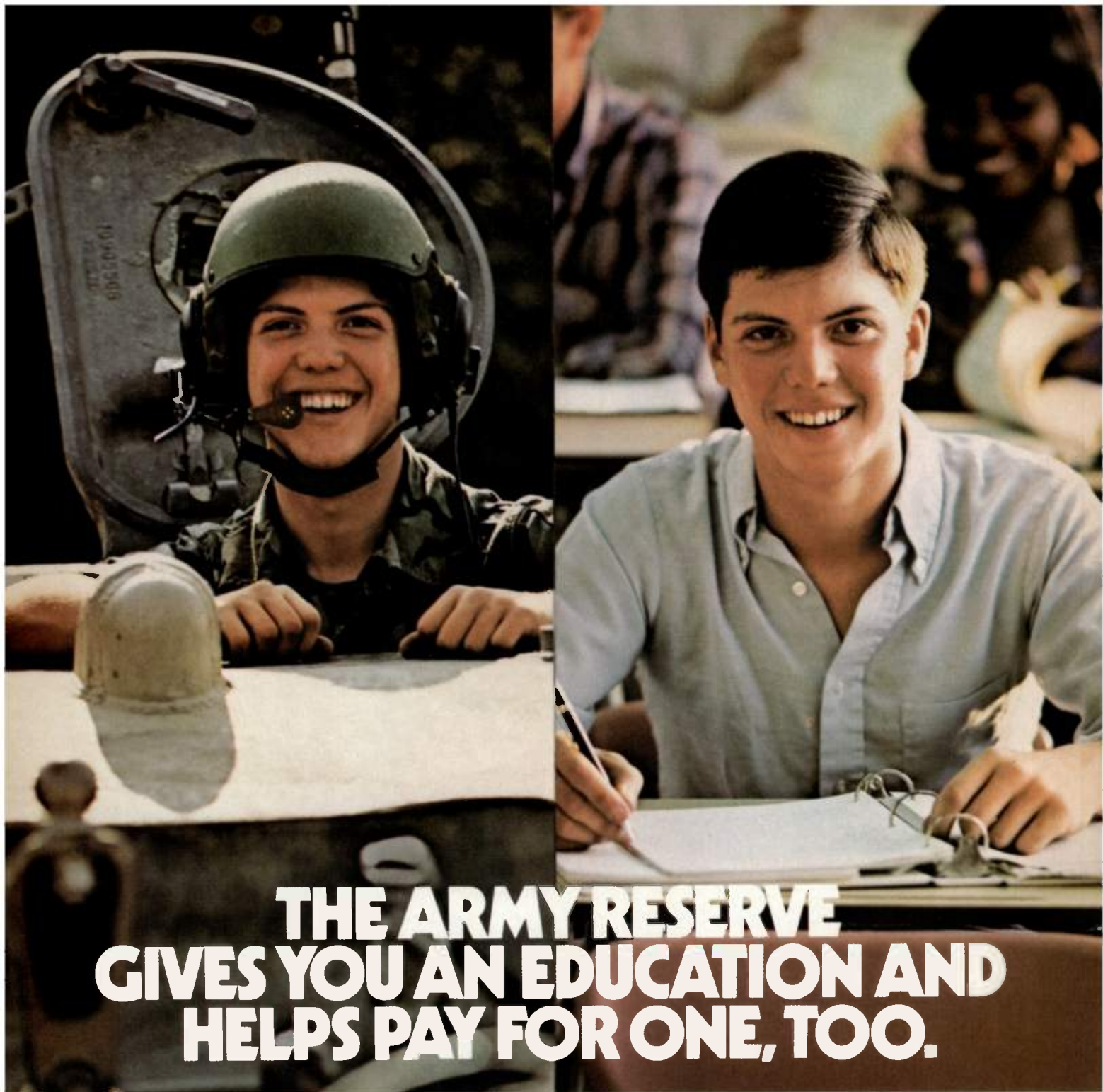
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S I D E

THIS MONTH WE'RE GOING TO LEAN HEAVY ON YER MESSAGE music; meaning songs with some serious sociopolitical conscience and relevance going for 'em. Don't fret, though, because I ain't never been one for sacrificing the groove to the cause.

CAMEO

"Talkin' Out the Side of Your Neck" (POLYGRAM)

Outside of Grandmaster Flash's "The Message," you'd have to go back a ways to find some hardhitting funk that speaks this directly to the problems in the world today. Coming on with a strong anti-Raygun vibe, Cameo nails the target to the wall with lyrics like: "You carry the weight but we carry the vote/And that's how we'll start rocking the boat/You think you get away with political crimes/But don't take it for granted/You're still on our minds/Some of the people some of the time/But not all of the people all of the time/Tricky Dicky Ford/Ronnie Reagan too/You're talking out the side of your neck/You're gonna get what's coming to you yet." Undergirding this impeachment threat (insurrection even) are multiple synthesizer blitzkriegs from guitarist Charles Singleton reminiscent of Bernie Worrell's best work with Parliament and some thrash-and-grunge axemanism from same that sounds like it was lifted straight from an outtake of Funkadelic's *Maggot Brain*. A monster track.

GIL SCOTT HERON

"Re-Ron" (ARISTA)

As in we don't need no re-Ron sez Gil. 'Cause "30 years after segregation was banished from the nation/Here it comes again discrimination/And the world's watching our reaction to the Third World because the stakes are the Third World War... It's millions more for El Salvador/And he's up to his keister with the Sandinista/Would we take Fritz with our grits?/We'd take Fritz the Cat/Would we take Jesse Jackson?/Hell, we'd take Michael Jackson." Which is all fine and good if you got the lyric sheet right in front of your face, because unlike Scott-Heron blasts in the past (such as the brilliant "B-Movie") the message on this one gets a little muddled under Material's technofunk production, which, as funk goes, don't exactly qualify as footstompin' music, Bernie Worrell or not.

STEEL PULSE

"Roller Skates" (ELEKTRA/ASYLUM)

In which the best reggae band in the world puts out an All Points Bulletin on some character named Smokey who ripped off David Hinds' radio in the park one day, moving us from indictments against those who perpetrate crimes against humanity to those who commit black-against-black crimes. Reminding me that I could listen to this band make music on any subject they please, no matter how banal, if only because Hinds' vocals are so strictly crissus and they ridims always make me wanna yell *murdaaaa!!!!*

THE SPECIAL A.K.A.

"Free Nelson Mandela" (CHRYSLIS)

To make a brutally long story short, Nelson Mandela is the Sakharov of racist South Africa, sentenced to life on Robben Island, that regime's version of the Gulag. Nearly blind, his body degenerating more every day, Mandela is a martyr and a symbol of the evil of that country's apartheid government. All due praise to Jerry Dammers and crew for producing this upbeat ska-cum-highlife anthem in honor of the justness of his cause. Nuff said?

FRANKIE GOES TO HOLLYWOOD

"Two Tribes" (ISLAND)

I haven't seen the video for this one

yet, which from what I hear is spozed to be a real hoot what with Reagan and Chernenko going at each other's family jewels during a settle-all-complaints Texas rules wrasslin' match. Far as this single version goes, however, the glitzy John Phillip Sousa-goes-Eurodisco track on the A side is cool if you go for that sort of thing, though the lyrics and vocals don't do the subject matter justice much; and the reprise of Edwin Starr's "War" on the B side only serves to remind me of how advanced a polyrhythmic orchestrator Norman Whitfield was back in the early '70s.

PATRICE RUSHEN

"Feel So Real" (ELEKTRA/ASYLUM)

Just so you don't get overwhelmed by all this musical sociorealism, we'll take a breather and close out on my ravefave mainstream black pop confessions of the month. This one I throw on the turntable at least five or

six times a day, spinning it endlessly like a mantra for mellowing out on. Small details and nuances make it happen for me: Freddy Washington's serpentine bass syncopations and some chicken-licken guitar which brings to mind Ronnie Drayton, not to mention the sweetness and life with which petit Patrice vamps and murmurs the infectious chorus.

D TRAIN

"Something's On Your Mind"

(PRELUDE)

D Train, case ya don't know, are basically vocalist James Williams and keyboard man Hubert Eaves, who have over the course of three albums carved out a niche for themselves in the technofunk age that doesn't compromise their affinity with mainstream black pop of the mid-'70s a la Gamble-Huff and the Philly International sound. This is their most effective

Cameo's Larry Blackmon: Nailing Raygun with hard-hitting funk



BY GREG TATE
TRACKS

tive ballad to date, a plea for some honest response from the party of the second part before things get the showdown at the Love T.K.O. Corral. Poignant and pointed, with a warm and soothing vibe for those evenings when you're stuck home alone or with yer main squeeze and he/she ain't talkin'.

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Continued from page 69
straight "Into The Night" by trading leads and choruses on their grab at the brass ring. Sure, Jazzy Jay's scratching could be scratchier on "Son of Beat Street" but it's an ear-opening outing with Lenny Underwood's moody synth chords. And since Juicy has a fabulous falsetto that can rap wonders, it's a shame that on "Give Me All" he only sings well. Still, this Beat Street is the one to travel.

THE BEST OF GIL SCOTT-HERON

Gil Scott-Heron

Arista

By Mark Moses



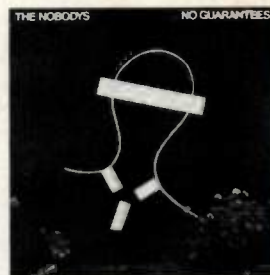
Greatest hits compilations invariably smack of gratuitous corporate profit-taking, just the sort of greed that would enrage an enlightened skeptic like Gil Scott-Heron. But in his case, such a summing up provides a valuable overview of a career that's always been appreciated but rarely celebrated. Most rockers get "topical" with the same mercenary flair that they go "disco" or go "commercial," or worse, simply because they lust after the same power over their audience that politicians have. But Scott-Heron's commitment over the long haul is neither passing fancy nor an attempt to ascend the throne. And his *Best Of* comes from both an unassuming old pro and an ordinary man who can't keep his mouth shut after reading the morning paper.

Best Of traces Scott-Heron full circle from playing godfather to rap (the mad free associations of 1974's "The Revolution Will Not Be Televised") to his recent tips of the hat to the fast-talking form he helped pioneer (the anti-Reagan monologues of 1981's "B' Movie" and this election year's timely "Re-Ron"). In between, you can hear him stretching his rhythms (the latinized locomotion of "The Bottle") as he cuts his voice with compassion and humor ("Ain't No Such Thing As Superman"). Out of all the album's contentions, two seem to map out Scott-Heron's range: the 1975 take of "Winter in America," streaked as it is with despair and a distrustful calm, and "Re-Ron," where Scott-Heron flings his jokes and puns against Material's pitiless electronic trudge. Within the limits these two songs define, *Best Of* gives the ten-year succession of Scott-Heron's career the grit and ardor of good hard work. Pragmatist that he is, Scott-Heron should appreciate such a favor just fine, thank you.

NO GUARANTEES The Nobodys

EMI America

By Wayne King



I took to being very worried for this band, who would seem to desire nothing less than instant consignment to oblivion for their fate. But then I got to cogitating on this "Nobodys" thing and realized just what a role the concept has played through the years.

Just think of the wisdom inferred by a title like "Nobody Knows When You're Down and Out." And the tribute Carly Simon granted generic John Does everywhere with "Nobody Does It Better." There's the flip side, of course; Graham Parker told us "Nobody hurts you harder than yourself." Enough to give nobodies (*sic*) a bit of a bad name, but we can see that—good or bad—nobodies have been an influence.

Whether or not these Nobodys add to the illustrious legacy is a hard one to call. Their driving mixture of guitar plucking laid over basic synthpomp sounds pretty nifty, and the singing—courtesy of co-songwriters Alex Blanc and (get this) Safeway Goya—is a two part harmony recreation of vintage Dylan. *What* the Nobodys sing about is sometimes a little weird (check out "Just One of Your Legs" for a relevant example), and the occasional Spanish vocal and musical inflections make the package even more puzzling. So there might be those who echo the sentiment of '60s pop geniuses the Human Beinz, who "(didn't) want nobody but you." Me, I'm gonna keep in mind the Beinz' magnificently contradictory stance on the subject—if they didn't want "nobody," how come they shout the name out 46 times in 2:16?—and play this damn thing until somebody tells me to stop.

REMOTE LUXURY The Church

Warner Bros.

By Jim Farber



The Church are a real find: a relatively unknown Australian foursome (they released

Continued on page 74

NOISE TO GO

By John Leland

The underground movement remains the place to hear some of America's most intelligent and provocative music. Here are some of the more important releases to see the light of day since our last roundup ("Noise To Go," Records, October RECORD).

The Trypes sprang from the ashes of the Feelies, the introspective rhythm group whose 1980 LP, *Crazy Rhythms*, put the Hoboken scene on the map. Like their forebears, the Trypes owe it all to the Velvet Underground and pre-ambient Eno on their *The Explorers Hold EP* (Coyote, P.O. Box 112 Uptown, Hoboken, NJ 07030). The key to the band's sound is the tension between the music's folkie/psychedelic surfaces and its potentially explosive underpinnings. Like the Velvets, the Trypes never deliver the climax and subsequent release we've come to expect from pop music—they just keep on building.

San Francisco's scruffy noise boys, Flipper, hit an apex of sublimity with their 1981 dada classic, "Sex Bomb," a crunching one-riff that either changed your life or insulted your intelligence, depending on your perspective. Their second album, *Gone Fishin'* (Subterranean, 577 Valencia St., San Francisco CA 94110), finds them carrying their grinding *modus operandi* into the realm of high fidelity. The operative reference for Flipper remains the Stooges, but the fishy four substitute irony for Iggy's intense physicality. A quintessential cult album, *Gone Fishin'* lives up to the credo on its jacket: "Flipper suffered for their music. Now it's your turn."

With bands like the Necros, the Meatmen and Tesco Vee, the Touch and Go label (P.O. Box 716, Maumee, OH 43537) is a solid bastion for hardcore in the Midwest, and Die Kreuzen and their self-titled LP are another fine addition to the label's roster. These four boys from Wisconsin are fast and tight. But

some creditable musicianship went into the 22 songs presented here; even at warp speed, the metallic lead guitar articulates phrases.

The Drongos came to New York by way of New Zealand. For all their travels, they offer nothing too exotic on *The Drongos* (Proteus, 9 W. 57th Street, Suite 4503, New York, NY 10019)—just good songwriting, good playing and good singing. Remember power pop? I wouldn't be too surprised if these guys wore black vinyl shoes.

With Chris Spedding behind the board, the New York four piece *Dolce Vita* keeps the guitars out front, sharp and ringing, on their self-titled EP (Braineater, Box J, Island Park, NY 11558). *Dolce Vita*'s convoluted song structures and gritty melodicism evoke a tougher version of the dB's, but without the corresponding '60s pop reverence. The four songs on this EP strike out in four different directions, but the center holds, and two of the cuts—"Beginning All Over" and "Break Down Those Walls"—are strong enough to

stand out on their own.

What the world needs now is another ska band, right? Well, you can put a button on that smirk, cause South Carolina's *Pressure Boys* have the buoyant tunes and sharp horn charts to transcend the genre. Working with Mitch Easter's right hand man, Don Dixon, for *Rangledoon* (A Root Da Doot Doo Records, P.O. Box 305, Cary, NC 27511), they use their source material not for format—ska's biggest limitation—but for beat, so they get a lot of tension without making a lot of noise. I hear shades of the Selecter and Haircut One Hundred on this one-sided EP, but mostly I hear a nifty pop sound.



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Continued from page 72

one LP on Capitol in '82) presenting neo-psychedelia without pretension. Like R.E.M., the Church explore the free-wheeling swirl of vintage tie-dye period rock without stumbling into the style's darkest depths. Their sense of mystery, evident in Steve Kilbey's deep, chant-like vocals and the band's haunting arrangements, avoids the "mind expanding" excesses of the Doors-to-Echo and the Bunnymen school, opting for a wistful ride-the-wind allure that comes closer in general mood to the Byrds or a less mellow Youngbloods.

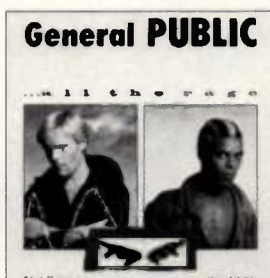
The way the Church establishes this kaleidoscopic mood is very much their own, though. The music on *Remote Luxury* features sharply chiseled acoustic guitar lines up front, with a lovely gliding electric guitar behind. The bass and drums are often attention-getting as well. "Constant In Opal" begins with a protuding bass line and hypnotic acoustic guitar, while "Violent Town" is equally magical with a distinctively blunt drum beat, pulsating bass and the Church's trademark of cascading guitars. Steve Kilbey's longing vocals throughout may be similar in tone to the Bunnymen's Ian McCulloch, but his moodiness is never self-conscious or overwrought. His lyrics are trippy, self-involved dreamscapes, and his melodies are almost all lovely.

The band do feature several variations on their usual pop-psychedelic style. On the positive side, "Into My Hands" has a formal British folky feel (Kilbey's voice comes across here a bit like Trevor Lucas'), while on the down side there's "Maybe These Boys" (a more "heavy" synthesized psychedelic number which doesn't really suit the band). Still, almost every other track is top rate, establishing the Church as the next band really worth tumbling for.

ALL THE RAGE General Public I.R.S.

By
Crispin
Sartwell

Last July Dave Wakeling, who had spearheaded the late, lamented English Beat, was quoted in these pages as saying his new band, General Public (co-founded with former Beat-er Ranking Roger), "will be the band the Beat was going to be in our fantasy." But on *All The Rage*, GP's debut album, fantasy collides with ugly reality. The Beat was slick and sincere, simple and sophisticated; the Public is merely slick and sophisticated. The Beat was the best



dance band new wave produced; the Public is, uh, not.

General Public actually sounds an awful lot like the Beat, thanks to Wakeling's distinctive vocal style, Roger's celebratory toasting, and the similar strategy of rock with a reggae inflection. But that's part of the problem: GP never establishes its own personality. And though there are some fine songs on *Rage*, notably "Tenderness" and "Day-To-Day," you can't help thinking that the Beat would have done them better. Still, there's some great potential here, just as there was for the English Beat. One hopes Wakeling and Roger don't pull the plug again just at the moment that potential is being realized.

LIKE THIS The dB's

Bearsville

By
Anthony
DeCurtis

Before record company wrangling and the good-bye of brain-boy guitarist Chris Stamey sidelined them for two years, the dB's were the hot white hope of underground American pop. Now the big-label LP is here and the dB's are cranked up to broaden their listenership beyond critics and cultists. As its title suggests, *Like This* displays how deftly and tastefully this move can be made while retaining many of the self-described "unpigeonhole-able" qualities which earned them their rep.

Sonically, producer (and ex-Waitress) Chris Butler has crafted tracks that deepen and embellish the deeb's spare double-guitar/bass/drums sound without softening its bite. The pleasing quirks of *stands for deciBels* and *Repercussion* have largely been mainstreamed (some of this was inevitable with Stamey gone), though songwriter/guitarist Peter Holsapple's sensibility remains as skewed and literary as any band aspiring to popularity could stand. In striking this delicate balance, *Like This* seems less the witty honors project of star students at rock 'n' roll grad school—as the two dB's imports sometimes did—than the honest creation of seasoned rockers out to make a living at the work they love.

A whiz at exploiting and subverting pop-song structures, Holsapple sharpens the hooks of *Like This*' eleven songs with word-play that targets the emotional interplay between desire ("Love is for Lovers," "She Got Soul"), isolation ("A Spy in the House of Love," "Lonely Is (As Lonely Does)"), vulnerability ("Amplifier"), and bitterness ("Spitting in the Wind"). If these sound like heavyweight ruminations



for pop tunes, it's also why the dB's are more than a pop band—and why you should check them out.

THE LAS VEGAS STORY

Animal Records

THE BIRTH, THE DEATH AND THE GHOST

Gun Club
ABC Records

By
Christopher
Hill



Beautifully agonized rock 'n' roll from an hallucinatory southwestern desert of the spirit, *The Las Vegas Story* isn't so much about the darkness at the edge of town as it is about the delirium behind every air-conditioned door. *Miami*, Gun Club's previous studio album, explored a humid region of roots music that has since become fashionable territory. Now, as if to confound any traditionalist expectations, Jeffrey Lee Pierce, Gun Club's guiding intelligence, has shifted into a looser, almost improvisatory instrumental approach, while keeping the band's basic, stripped-down rhythm attack. Meanwhile, a new live import, *The Birth, The Death and the Ghost*, vividly captures the band's fiery, preaching version of Delta blues.

Pierce claims that he was after a more fluid sound on *Las Vegas Story*, and that's true of his lead playing, at least. There's a real moonlight-on-the-salt-flats looniness in its keening howl, more than ever reminiscent of Tom Verlaine's work in Television—or is it John Cippolina with Quicksilver Messenger Service? Sometimes fluidity is just simple slackness, though. Without the tension that produced a white hot charger like "She's Like Heroin To Me" on their first album, these new songs can tend to ramble. "My Man's Gone Now" has an interesting burnt-out jazzy texture, but, like several other tracks, it sort of wanders along looking for a central idea.

No such problem with *The Birth*... These are culled from some hot sets, the band at the peak of its "American Music" phase. The last four cuts—"Going Down the Red River," "Willie Brown," "Field Holler" and "Sex Beat"—form a sort of unified coda, a wild ride through Pierce's fevered vision of musical history, where punk becomes the direct heir of country blues.

Gun Club surely belongs with the love
Continued on page 77



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G O L D R U S H

Whether 1984 will go down as a banner year in rock history is yet to be determined. What is clear is that it has become easier to appreciate rock history through the efforts of independent labels like Rhino Records and Solid Smoke, who package and distribute compilations of rare and out-of-print records, and the sporadic efforts of the majors (Polygram and Arista have been leading the way, however tentatively, of late). Below are just some of the many compilations and reissues which have come out recently, with many more—the Spencer Davis Group, the Troggs, the Nazs, the Velvet Underground, Hank Williams—on their way.

THE ANIMALS Rip It To Shreds: The Animals' Greatest Hits Live /I.R.S.

These old Animals bring almost as much freshness and invention to their definitive pop/R&B as Springsteen, Petty, Johansen, and the others who have covered these songs more recently. Age has leant Eric Burdon's voice a sense of fatalism that gives a new dimension to "We Gotta Get Out of This Place." Hilton Valentine still has flashes of the know-nothing inspiration that made him one of the '60s great fuzz geniuses. In fact, the whole band—especially on "It's Too Late"—plays as if something much more than a reunion tour was at stake. —Christopher Hill

GENE CHANDLER The Duke of Soul (Chess) Stroll On With The Duke (Solid Smoke)

For those who remember Gene Chandler only as "The Duke of Earl," these two well-considered reissues of that classic and other Chandler hit sides—he had 21 chart records during the early and mid-'60s—offer an exciting overview of a first-rate rhythm and blues singer. Chandler could be as tender as Smokey Robinson or Sam Cooke or come on with the bravura of a Joe Turner, all of whom he resembles at times. Of particular interest here is the live version of "Rainbow In My Heart" on *The Duke of Soul*, which finds the artist eliciting squeals of delight from the ladies in the crowd and engaging in some vocal pyrotechnics that'll leave a listener wondering why his moment seemed such a brief one. Of historical note: as Chandler didn't write his own material, he was dependent on outside help, and he got it in large part from fellow Chicagoan Curtis Mayfield, several of whose songs are included here (side two of the Chess album is all Mayfield-penned tunes, save one by Jerry Butler), including "A Man's Temptation," notable for Chandler's note-perfect Mayfield vocal take. Extensive historical liner notes give the Solid Smoke package an edge over the Chess issue, but buyers are well-served by both.

—David McGee

BOBBY DAY The Best of Bobby Day/Rhino

Bobby Day (born Robert Byrd) is best known for the 1958 Top Ten smash, "Rockin' Robin," but as this compilation attests, there was more to the man than just a one shot novelty number (yeah, like numerous novelty numbers, such as "Little Turtle Dove" and "The Bluebird, The Buzzard and The Oriole"—maybe this ornithological bent had something to do with the guy's Christian surname). Seriously, folks, Bobby Day wrote a goodly number of songs so great that they were covered successfully into the '60s (the Dave Clark Five with "Over and Over") and '70s (the Jackson Five with "Little Bitty Pretty One"). Outside of "Robin," though, Day never scored with his renditions—inexplicable in light of the evidence collected here which shows him to be an extremely personable performer.

—Wayne King

THE EVERLY BROTHERS 24 Original Classics /Arista

This two-record set is a definitive representation of the Everlys; it packages all their best songs in marvelous fashion, with outstanding sound quality and liner notes. I'd forgotten just how *country* these boys were—their great early songs can now be heard as the direct descendants of Hank Williams. The fourth side presents a vivid picture of decline, the sad spectacle of the Everlys imitating artists (Dylan, the Byrds, the Mamas and the Papas, Simon and Garfunkel) who had, at one time or another, made a living imitating them. A must for anyone turned on to the Brothers by their comeback record, *EB '84*, or anyone interested in gorgeous, timeless harmonizing.

—Crispin Sartwell

THE KINKS A Compleat Collection- 20th Anniversary Edition /Compleat

Compilations proclaiming that the band in question evolved "a new philosophy of making records" by "attempting to make every track on (their albums) count for something unique" hip you right up-front that the hits will not keep on comin' on this disk. A find like "Wonder Where My Baby Is" is always a delight, and classics like "A Well Respected Man" and "Sunny Afternoon" must be owned. But why you need 2 of 4 sides devoted to not especially inspiring Kinks covers is kinda unclear to me. This reviewer assumes no responsibility for the listening satisfaction of non-kultists.

—Anthony DeCurtis

GENE PITNEY Anthology: 1961-1968/Rhino

Gene Pitney is Fabian with rock 'n' roll credibility—an early associate of Phil Spector and Roy Orbison; the author of "He's A Rebel" and "Hello Mary Lou"; present on hidden scatological Stones bootlegs; the first performer to land a Jagger/Richards tune on the American charts; Italy's favorite pop singer. How cool can you get? Cooler. Because that's not even mentioning sizzling bits of "It Hurts To Be In Love," "Mecca" and "Town Without Pity." Sure, four sides of Pitney's grinding heartache can get tiresome. But this man was the King of Pain when Sting was in knickers.

—C.H.

THE SHIRELLES Anthology: 1959-1967/Rhino

First off, the Shirelles did *not* produce two discs worth of chart hits. And "Dedicated To The One I

Love," "Will You Love Me Tomorrow," and "Baby It's You" are available on innumerable Shirelles and girl group compilations. But second, the Shirelles sang some mind-boggling songs that never charted and have subsequently been shamefully neglected. This roughly perfect compilation includes all the hits, and adds forgotten classics like "Putty," "Abra Ka Dabra" and "His Lips Get In The Way." —C.S.

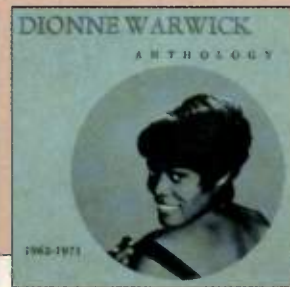
VARIOUS ARTISTS Wonder Women, Vol. 2 /Rhino

Purists may contend that like its companion, 1982's Vol. 1, *Wonder Women* blurs some theoretical distinction of just what constitutes a girl group record by including solo performers. The rest of us can simply enjoy another delectable compilation that reminds us how stirring and weird the Shangri-Las could be ("I Can Never Go Home Anymore" is a perfect example of what attracted a budding Pop Artist like Pete Townshend to their Shadow Morton-produced records). And tells us how much better Betty Everett's version of "You're No Good" was than Linda Ronstadt's. And makes us appreciate the musical sophistication of so many of these sides, like Evie Sands' "I Can't Let Go." And lets us savor the late period Chiffons gem, "Sweet Talkin' Guy," full, as always, of the hope tinged with sadness in those four gorgeous voices that seemed to define the girl group sound. (Mild admonition to Rhino, the best American reissue label going: let's not take two years for Vol. 3, OK, guys?)

—W.K.

DIONNE WARWICK Anthology: 1962-1971/Rhino

Just as Lieber and Stoller had the Coasters, so did Hal David and Burt Bacharach have Dionne Warwick. And in each case the result was great, enduring records. One could argue, with this two-record Rhino collection as evidence, that the American pop song reached its most perfect form of expression with the Bacharach-David-Warwick collaboration. The writers' inclinations were for the broad stroke—strings, surging choruses, all manner of subtle instrumental touch, Broadway grandiosity; the singer came out of a gospel and R&B background, and brought the emotional resonance of those forms to Top 40 songs. This set collects 28 of Warwick's Scepter singles, most of them familiar save for a couple of forgotten gems such as "Make The Music Play." Many of her Scepter albums can be found in the cutout bins, and the curious might want to look for her second LP, *Make Way for Dionne Warwick*, and her gospel album, *The Magic of Believing*, with the Drinkard Singers. Of the albums she cut for Warner Bros. in the mid-'70s, the best bet is *Track of the Cat*. Here, friends, is a Singer. —D.M.



Continued from page 74

'em or hate 'em bands of rock lore; their music is harsh and cacophonous, their subjects dark and threatening. But Pierce and his band care obsessively, imaginatively and, yes, responsibly for some of the land's profoundest musical traditions, and they're finding out how to make that music live in new ways. Besides that, any rock 'n' roller who can write lines like "When I was all alone in the palm drunken night/When I was all alone, bejewelled in the night" is an artist who deserves your support and mine.

GO INSANE Lindsey Buckingham

Elektra

By
Craig
Zeller

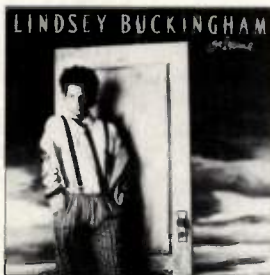
Go *In-*sane is one strange record. On it

Lindsey "Go Your Own Way" Buckingham opts for Boy Wonder à la Prince and Todd Rundgren by singing, playing and fiddling about on roughly 98.6% of everything that takes place. Most of the time he sounds a little out of whack and *all* of the songs are touched by some form of technical bizzaritude. Some may find it unusually absorbing, but for the moment it strikes me as an inspired throwaway at best.

The big problem here is the disposable nature that afflicts the compositions. One thing I've always liked about Fleetwood Mac is that the band members rarely save their best material for solo albums. On *Go Insane*, Buckingham continues to uphold this proud tradition. He's also carrying on the group standard of refreshing AM accessibility: *Law And Order*'s one good song, "Trouble," was a hit, and so is *Go Insane*'s one really good song, the title track, which could serve as a good lead-in to Prince's "Let's Go Crazy." Besides being possessed of a deceptively happy sounding cruise-along chorus, it's one of the few instances where Buckingham's emotional output is as strong as his studio razzle dazzle.

The rest of *Go Insane* is simply not up to snuff. There are all kinds of gimmickry, offbeat twists and turns in an attempt to gussy things up so maybe you won't notice that the melodies are a little on the insubstantial side. "I Want You," "Slow Dancing" and "Bang The Drum" are interesting examples of lightweight songs camouflaged by overly busy arrangements.

If I may be so bold as to simultaneously advise Lindsey, Stevie and Christine: get back to the Mac Attack, if only to help Mick Fleetwood pay his bills.



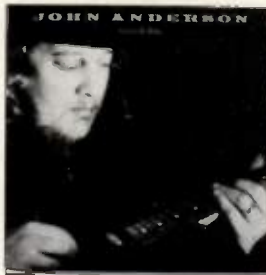
GREATEST HITS John Anderson

Warner Bros.

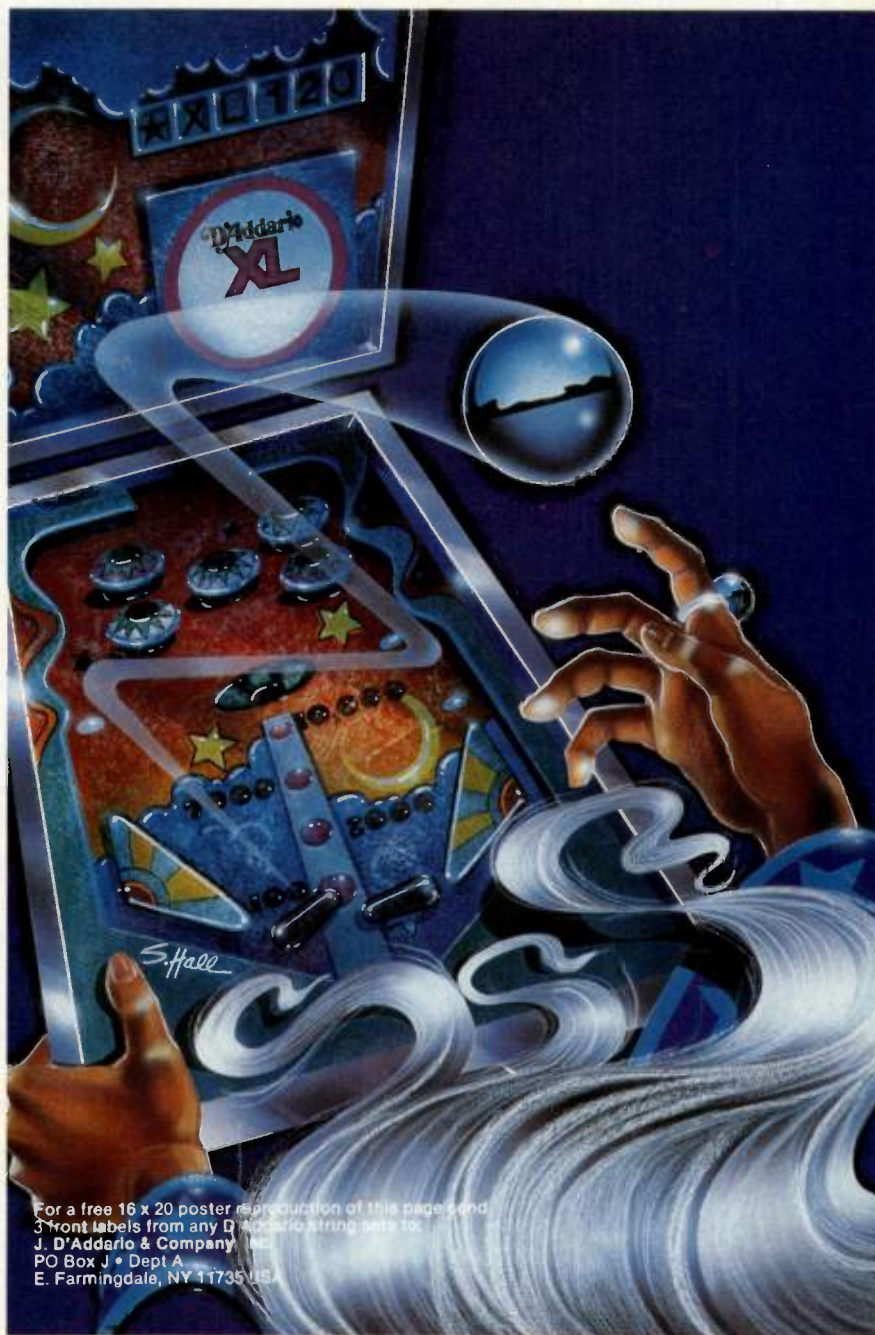
By
Crispin
Sartwell

This one should have been subtitled *Vol. 1*.

John Anderson dominates the country charts like the Soviets dominate Eastern Europe, and he'll generate another LP's worth of hits before you can say "Constan-



tin Chernenko," assuming for the sake of argument that you *can* say "Constantin Chernenko." Anderson's hegemony is well-earned: quality and consistency mark both his material and his interpretation of it. Indeed, one of the most striking aspects of *Greatest Hits* is how it demonstrates Anderson's knack for picking out butt-kicking country songs by other composers (he doesn't write much himself). And like Merle Haggard, who's also has been known to latch onto a good tune by someone else, Anderson's material runs the gamut from string-laden tear-jerkers to rowdy anthems. And no one sings cheatin' songs with more pathos. Minor quibble: the exclusion of the deliciously vicious single, "I Wish I Could Write You A Song."



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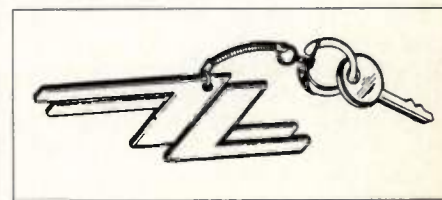
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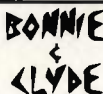
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THE STEEL RAIL STILL AIN'T HEARD THE NEWS

By David McGee

Corporate cowardice is nothing new in the music business, or in any other major industry for that matter. In Steve Goodman's case, it prevents him from being properly featured on the covers of national music publications despite his considerable contribution to American music, and at the outset of this decade it cost him his major label affiliation. Woe be to those who are called to achievement at a time when gestures and posturing mean more than God-given talent applied honestly in service to humanity.

This is not to ascribe to Goodman a greatness unwarranted by his art: a quick check through his catalogue finds much to treasure. Goodman came out of a lively, vibrant and fertile folk scene in his native Chicago in the early '70s. In the Windy City, on the stages of clubs such as the Earl of Oldtown, musicians young and old—fathers and sons, as it were—stood as contemporaries, learning from each other. It wasn't nostalgia that brought these artists together, but rather a love for folk traditions—topical songs, robust humor, memorable melodies, scintillating musicianship—being carried forth and expanded upon. Remember it was Steve Goodman who took



Jethro Burns on tour, introducing him as a mandolin virtuoso when a good part of the audience probably remembered him only as one of the funny guys on a corn flakes

commercial in the mid-'60s. Burns wasn't along for Goodman's last tour, but his artistry had long since been honored on the latter's *Affordable Art* album (cut for Goodman's own Red Pajamas label, established after he was dropped from Elektra), which opens with a jubilant, Goodman-penned instrumental, "If Jethro Were Here."

The Jethro Burns episode was indicative of Goodman's concern for talent left unrecognized. Absolutely selfless in his promotion of artists whose work touched him deeply, he was one of the first to record a John Prine song ("Donald and Lydia," *The Essential Steve Goodman*); he was also the first to put Prine back on vinyl by teaming up with him for a chilling duet on Prine's "Souvenirs" (*Affordable Art*). Then there's Mike Smith, who recorded one album for Polygram years ago and disappeared, only to assume near-mythical status among folk audiences thanks to Goodman's sensitive interpretations of his songs, particularly "The Dutchman" (the recorded version can be found on *The Essential Steve Goodman*), the heartrending story of the fierce love between a de-



voted wife and her elderly husband, who is closing out his days lost in memory (key lyric: "He's mad as he can be/But Margaret only sees that sometimes/Sometimes she sees their unborn children in his eyes").

Goodman clearly stood in awe of Prine, Smith and their like. He wouldn't admit it, but he was their equal. Of "City of New Orleans" (*The Essential*) there is little left to say. It's a great song, and like all great songs it works on many levels, as its most noted interpreter, Arlo Guthrie, proves by continually uncovering new reservoirs of meaning in the lyrics.

Goodman's own version is as defiant as that train rollin' "through the Mississippi darkness . . . down to the sea"—mirroring Goodman's own indomitable personality. Most important, it—indeed, the artist's way of life—indicates a quintessentially American point of view marked by compassion and tolerance. Constantly bemused by the sheer variety of folly in this country, Goodman responded with humor, used both to entertain and to convey pointed social commentary: game shows got stung on "Door Number Three" (*Jessie's Jig*), the health food kick on "Chicken Cordon Blues" (*Somebody Else's Troubles*), and maudlin country songs took a ribbing on "You Never Even Call Me By My Name" (co-written with Da-



vid Allan Coe). He reached a peak of topicality on *Affordable Art* with "Vegematic," the story of a man who falls asleep watching late-night TV and dreams he buys everything advertised on the tube in the wee small hours of the morning—the Pocket Fisherman, Ginsu Knife, Boxcar Willie, et al.—only to wake up and find "all that shit was here." The same album also features "Watching Joey Glow," an account of a post-nuclear nuclear family with a radioactive son—"Joey the human hot plate," as Goodman referred to him in concert—who henceforth will serve as a sort of living microwave oven down in the fallout shelter.

Other follies simply weren't amusing. Goodman's finest hour came when he told the truth loud and clear on "The Ballad of Penny Evans" (*The Essential*). Just as Dan Daley's "Still in Saigon" reminded us of the horrors faced by those who fought, returned and were forgotten, Goodman's, written and recorded in 1974, painted an indelible portrait of the oth-

er forgotten warriors: the immediate families of those who died in Vietnam; in this case, Penny Evans, a 21-year-old widow with two infant daughters. Memory fails to recall so vivid a treatment of the human tragedy of the Vietnam War. Here Goodman recounts the young couple's courtship, the



birth of their second daughter a month before her father's death, and Evans' monthly ritual of tearing up and returning her monthly check "from some Army bureaucrat" ("Do they think I'd fall for that?" Goodman sings in an incredulous tone). And finally, in a voice strong and proud and undefeated: "My name is Penny Evans and my age is 21/A young widow in the war that's being fought in Vietnam/And I have two infant daughters/And I thank God I have no sons/Now they say the war is over/But I think it's just begun."

You wouldn't know it by consulting the charts, but you can hear America singing through the spiritual darkness that's descended on popular music. You can hear it in the records noted on this page: it's there in the great good humor of "Chicken Cordon Blues" and "Vegematic"; in the poignancy of "The Dutchman"; in the ache of the acoustic guitars and the ragged voices on "Souvenirs"; in the glory of "City of New Orleans." Lord, who will sing these songs now?

Hear that lonesome whistle blow? The steel rail still ain't heard the news. God bless.

(Essential listening: *The Essential Steve Goodman*—repackage of Goodman's first two albums for Buddah; *Jessie's Jig and Other Favorites*; *Words We Can All Dance To*; *Hot Spot*, featuring several Goodman-Mike Smith collaborations; *Artistic Hair*, *Affordable Art* and *Santa Ana Wind*, Goodman's last three albums, all on his Red Pajamas label. Available by mail order for \$8 from Red Pajamas, P.O. Box 233, Seal Beach, CA 90740).



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