

JOAN JETT: ROCK HARD AND READY TO ROAR

RECORD

**CULTURE
CLUB**
ON STAGE

**PETER
WOLF**
ALONE

**THE
FIXX**
OPEN MOUTH,
INVERT FOOT



PAGE 32

JANUARY 1985
VOL. 4 NO. 3
\$1.50 U.K. 90p

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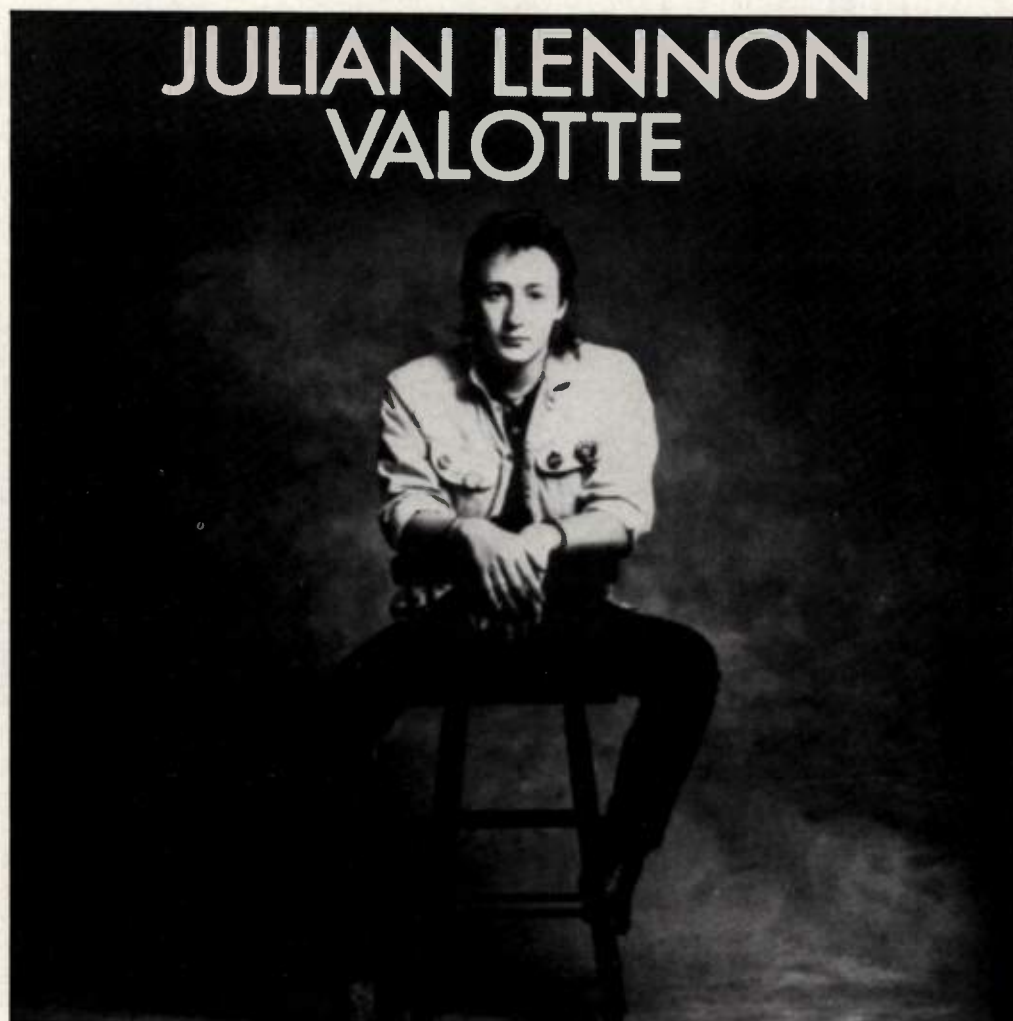
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CAROL FRIEDMAN



PAUL...

IT'S ALWAYS INTERESTING to hear from Paul McCartney ("Once There Was A Way To Get Back Homeward," September RECORD), the most prolific and talented rock legend of all time. I especially liked his comments about the way he integrated his wife Linda into his band. I could never understand all the critics tearing her down. Didn't they notice the obvious? Linda was there because Paul wanted her to be a part of the magic, and she was. And is. She's never done badly; even in the earliest albums, she added a touch of family, love and togetherness, something McCartney admits he needed at the time because of the controversy surrounding everyone involved with the breakup of the Beatles. I would like to thank both of them for many great songs and albums.

JEFF SILVA
Tacoma, WA

I MUST CONFESS A CERTAIN giddy degree of sympathy for the self-described "ordinary fella," Paul McCartney. After all, as he quite rightly concludes, there's no chance in Heaven that he'll ever come close to topping his work with The Beatles. And to have to carry on making solo and band records knowing that the heights of his creativity have long since been scaled must be an extremely daunting prospect to wake up to every day. My question is, why does he even bother?

GARY KIMBER
Downsview, Ont., Canada

AND HIS PAL, MICHAEL

I AM A JACKSONS FAN, but quite frankly I've grown tired of all the ridiculous articles written about them these days. Every magazine seems to be aiming at sensationalism. Anthony DeCurtis' article ("Victory on the Road," October RECORD) was a refreshing exception. He treated Michael and his brothers as talented musicians and kept his appraisal both informative and honest.

MARIBEL PILOTO
Miami, FLA

THANK YOU FOR THE thought-provoking, insightful cover story on the Jacksons Victory tour. Having attended two Victory tour concerts (one in Kansas City, one in Detroit), I can only support DeCurtis' observation that "Michael is a supernova, exploding again and again, more convulsively and radiantly every night." Michael Jackson is the consummate entertainer. He is magic.

DEBBIE KORTOKRAX
Kalida, OH

I HAVE ONE QUESTION: Why??? Why did you have to put *him* on the cover? You know who I mean—the most visible face in America. Whenever I go anywhere—even to Burger King—he's there watching me.

You could have headlined with the more interesting tour: Bruce Springsteen (see November RECORD—Ed.). You could have given Prince the cover he deserves (see this

month's RECORD—Ed.). You could have beaten all the other magazines to covering Bowie (see December RECORD—Ed.). So Mikey can do a mean dance on video. So what? Just gimme some substance on vinyl.

HILLARY BROOKS
Red Hook, NY

A REGULAR RIOT

A FEW COMMENTS about Kevin Dubrow in light of his remarks in your November issue ("Confessions of a Rock 'n' Roll Nerd"):

1. I think he's a good hustler for his band. How else could he get people to spend \$12.50 on a "concert" ticket?
2. I agree with Kev: Ozzy and the Crue are not basically the same as Quiet Riot. They are both infinitely better.
3. Kev is not a good singer from any metal school. A screecher maybe, but never a singer.
4. There's no comparison between Kev and Dio. One is a bonafide metal singer and songwriter, and Kev is not. Also, I don't think Dio have ever covered a Slade song.
5. I would like to challenge Kev to do just one (1) interview without mentioning Randy Rhoads, Robert Plant or Led Zeppelin.
6. Whoever told Kev that he had anything in common with the Legendary Robert Plant was merely being nice.

HUGH NICHOLS
Kalamazoo, MI

RECORD DESERVES A lot of credit for covering a wide

range of popular musical styles, but please do us all a favor and limit your coverage of the garbage called heavy metal, as exemplified by the Kevin Dubrow interview in the November issue. I have little time or respect for a self-described hustler who's thoughts are devoted mostly to (a) how he can make a whole lot of green exploiting the gullibility of his audience, and (b) how many loose dames he can entice into a roll in the hay. I don't want to read about his lost innocence (frankly, I doubt he ever had any innocence) or his latest conquest. I do want to read about where he feels his music fits into the present world of rock. However, that would make for the shortest interview on record.

GARY KIMBER
Downsview, Ont., Canada

LINDA WHO?

THE ANNOUNCEMENT in October's Rock On section that Linda Ronstadt is leaving rock 'n' roll should go down in history as the best piece of news ever printed. I've never understood why someone who doesn't write music, doesn't play an instrument, and certainly can't sing was ever allowed to make records, call it rock 'n' roll and get rich. As for Buddy Holly spinning in his grave over her comments, not to worry—Buddy is in Rock 'n' Roll Heaven, which is a place Linda Ronstadt will never see.

BELINDA BICKFORD
Santa Rosa, CA

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ASSOCIATE EDITORS
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ON STAGE: LET'S HEAR IT FOR THE BOY

CULTURE CLUB
Dallas Reunion Arena
Dallas, Texas
October 25, 1984

The premiere performance by Culture Club on their 1984 Fall U.S. tour made two facts clear: George O'Dowd is first and foremost a talented singer, not a mannequin; and this is a band, albeit one with a genuinely charismatic frontman. Yes, The Boy is still a fashion fiend—in Dallas his now pinkish-red hair was neatly tucked under a pillbox hat with a tassel; and he wore black baggy pants with a black blouse/cape—but it's Culture Club's seamless musical mesh that makes this show satisfying.

Though their third studio album, *Waking Up With The House on Fire*, had not yet been released, the band brazenly played all ten songs from it, a potentially dangerous move, but one that worked because of the material's strength. "The Dive" and "Unfortunate Thing," two

funk-swathed pop tunes that opened the show, displayed a greater compositional depth than earlier efforts while retaining the Club's gift for memorable hooks and catchy melodies. This double-dip, teamed with an invigorating romp through "I'll Tumble 4 Ya," got the joint rockin'.

Drummer Jon Moss and bassist Mikey Craig provided a powerful and inventive bottom to the proceedings, moving from reggae to soul to calypso to rock and back. Roy Hay played tastefully as well, stepping out to solo on guitar synthesizer on the Smokey Robinson-style ballad "Mistake #3," and adding pithy leads to a scintillating "Miss Me Blind." A four-piece horn section also augmented the band, and backing vocals were handled impeccably by Mo Birch and Ruby Turner, rendering Helen Terry's absence inconsequential.

As for Culture Club's lead singer, well, The Boy's a natural. Whether sashaying across the stage or miming hand and facial gestures in time to the music, Boy George never missed a note with his warm tenor. He crooned, he camped, but most of all he piqued emotions without seeming calculated, which made the Club's performance ultimately brighter than serious moonlight.

—Jody Denberg

PAUL NATKIN

MILLER HIGH LIFE® PRESENTS

TOP 100 ALBUMS



1 PURPLE RAIN
Prince and the Revolution
Warner Bros.

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

3 UNFORGETTABLE FIRE
U2 Island

4 PRIVATE DANCER
Tina Turner Capitol

5 TONIGHT
David Bowie EMI-America

6 SHE'S SO UNUSUAL
Cyndi Lauper Portrait/CBS

7 SPORTS
Huey Lewis & The News Chrysalis

8 BIG BAM BOOM
Daryl Hall & John Oates RCA

9 HEARTBEAT CITY
The Cars Elektra/Asylum

10 MADONNA
Madonna Warner Bros.

11 THE HONEYDRIPPERS
Volume One Es Paranza/Atco

12 SOUNDTRACK
"Eddie and the Cruisers"
Scotti Bros. Epic

13 SOUNDTRACK
"Woman in Red" Motown

14 EMOTION
Barbra Streisand Columbia

15 CHICAGO 17
Chicago Full Moon Warner Bros.

16 1100 BEL AIRE PLACE
Julio Iglesias Columbia

17 STOP MAKING SENSE
Talking Heads Sire

18 THE MAGAZINE
Rickie Lee Jones Warner Bros.

19 SUDDENLY
Billy Ocean Jive/Arista

20 BREAK OUT
The Pointer Sisters Planet/RCA

21 I FEEL FOR YOU
Chaka Khan Warner Bros.

22 A PRIVATE HEAVEN
Sheena Easton EMI-America

23 ICE CREAM CASTLE
The Time Warner Bros.

24 REBEL YELL
Billy Idol Chrysalis

25 OUT OF THE CELLAR
Ratt Atlantic

26 STAY HUNGRY
Twisted Sister Atlantic

27 NO BRAKES
John Waite EMI-America

28 ALL THE RAGE
General Public I.R.S.

29 ANIMALIZE
Kiss Mercury

30 POWERSLAVE
Iron Maiden Capitol

31 PHANTOMS
The Fixx MCA

32 SAM HARRIS
Sam Harris Motown

33 DON'T STOP
Jeffrey Osborne A&M

34 THE WARRIOR
Scandal Columbia

35 SWEPT AWAY
Diana Ross RCA

36 VICTORY
The Jacksons Epic

37 VOA
Sammy Hagar Geffen

38 SOUNDTRACK
"The Big Chill" Motown

39 THE LAST IN LINE
Dio Warner Bros.

40 THE BLITZ
Krokus Arista

41 BANANARAMA
Banarama London

42 LEGEND
Bob Marley & The Wailers Island

43 WHAT ABOUT ME
Kenny Rogers RCA

44 IN THE EYE OF THE STORM
Roger Hodgson A&M

45 BREAKING HEARTS
Elton John Geffen

46 JUST THE WAY YOU LIKE IT
The S.O.S. Band Tabu

47 NEW EDITION
New Edition MCA

48 YOU, ME AND HE
Mtume Epic

49 THE GLAMOROUS LIFE
Sheila E. Warner Bros.

50 1984
Val Halen Warner Bros.

51 FB 84
The Everly Bros.
Mercury Polygram



52 DESERT MOON
Dennis DeYoung A&M

53 SIGNS OF LIFE
Billy Squire Capitol

54 MIDNIGHT MADNESS
Night Ranger MCA

55 APOLLONIA 6
Apollonia 6 Warner Bros.

56 INSTINCTS
Romeo Void Columbia

57 NEW SENSATIONS
Lou Reed RCA

58 SOUNDTRACK
"Ghostbusters" Arista

59 VITAL SIGNS
Survivor Sire

60 WILD ANIMAL
Vanity Motown

61 UNDER WRAPS
Jethro Tull Chrysalis

62 SLIDE IT IN
Whitesnake Geffen

63 SHOUT
Devo Warner Bros.

64 SELF CONTROL
Laura Branigan Atlantic

65 AN INNOCENT MAN
Billy Joel Columbia

66 SOUNDTRACK
"Teachers" Capitol

67 CAMOUFLAGE
Rod Stewart Warner Bros.

68 COULDN'T STAND THE WEATHER
Stevie Ray Vaughan Epic

69 LOVE AT FIRST STING
Scorpions Mercury Polygram

70 THE WARNING
Queensryche EMI-America

71 RIDDLES IN THE SAND
Jimmy Buffet MCA

72 THE BIG EXPRESS
XTC Geffen

73 LIGHTS OUT
Peter Wolf EMI-America

74 BEWITCHED
Summers & Frapp A&M

75 SOUNDTRACK
"Footloose" Columbia

76 GEOFFREY MORGEN
UB40 A&M

77 FIRST CIRCLE
Pat Metheny Group
ECM Warner Bros.

78 VALOTTE
Julian Lennon Atlantic

79 RECKONING
R.E.M. I.R.S.

**80 GIVE MY REGARDS TO
BROAD STREET**
Paul McCartney Columbia

**81 GLORIOUS RESULTS OF
A MISPENT YOUTH**
Joan Jett MCA

82 THE ALLNIGHTER
Glen Frey MCA

83 CATS WITHOUT CLAWS
Donna Summer Geffen

84 KNIFE
Aztec Camera Sire

85 FUTURE SHOCK
Herbie Hancock Columbia

86 JUKEBOX
Dazz Band Motown

87 VERTICAL SMILE
Blackfoot Atco

88 GOODBYE CRUEL WORLD
Elvis Costello Columbia

89 JAM ON REVENGE
Newcleus Becker

90 FIRST OFFENSE
Corey Hart EMI-America

91 STONEAGE ROMEO
Hoodoogurus A&M

92 TOOTH & NAIL
Dokken Elektra

93 PRIMITIVE
Neil Diamond Columbia

94 NO TELLING LIES
Zebra Atlantic

95 THRILLER
Michael Jackson Epic

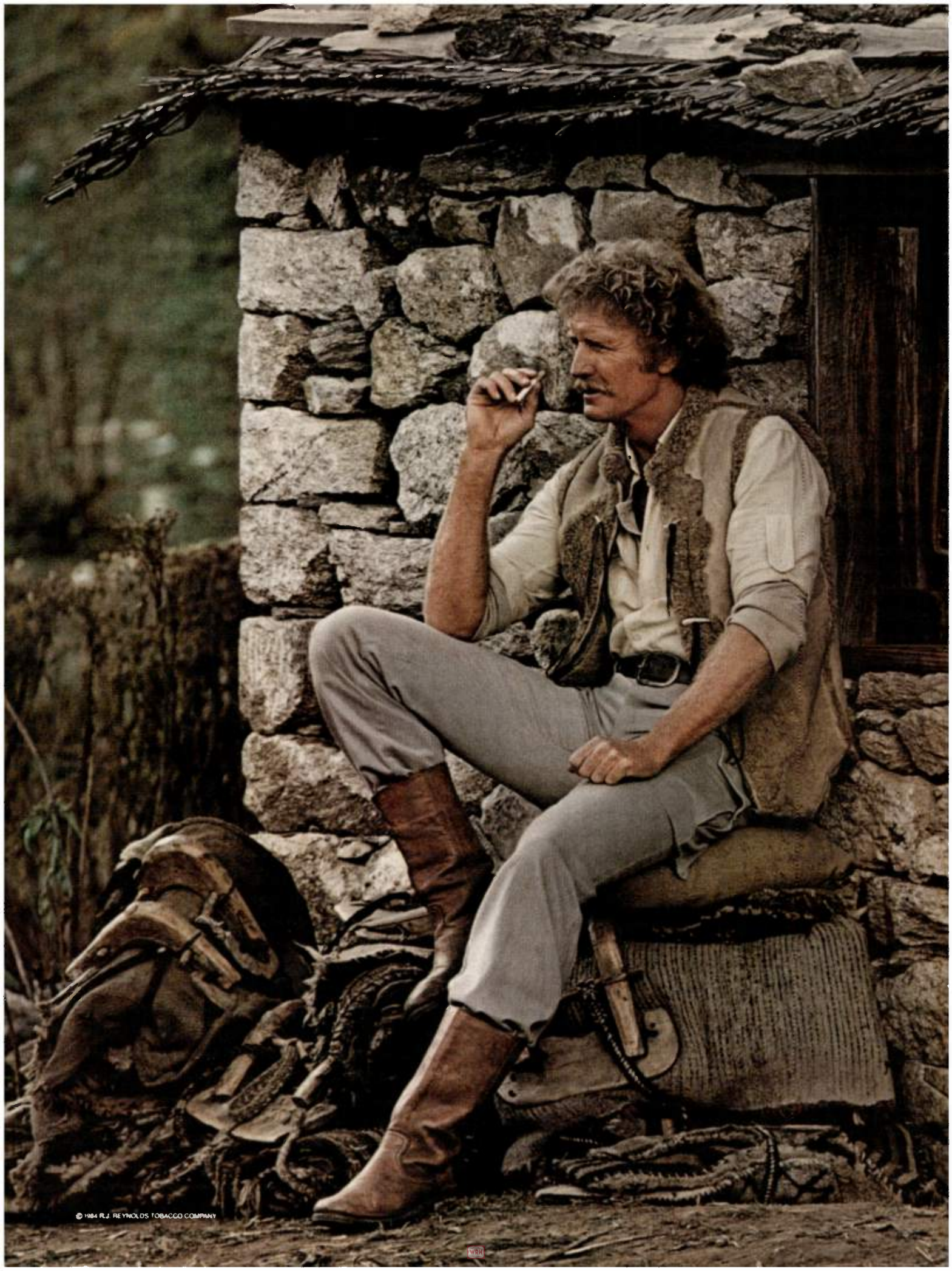
96 I CAN DREAM ABOUT YOU
Dan Hartman MCA

97 GO INSANE
Lindsey Buckingham Elektra

98 CENTIPEDE
Rebbie Jackson Columbia

99 SOUNDTRACK
"Streets of Fire" MCA

100 HONEYMOON SUITE
Honeymoon Suite Warner Bros.



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LYNN GOLDSMITH/RETNA

MORE DURAN

By the time this issue hits the streets there should be a new album in the stores by a band called The Power Station, consisting of two members of Duran Duran, Chic's drummer and veteran blue-eyed soul crooner Robert Palmer. The quartet took shape during a series of meetings over the past few years. Palmer met Duran bassist John Taylor at the Rumrunners Club in Birmingham, England, about three years ago, while Chic skin-pounder (did we really say that?) Tony Thompson was introduced to the Duran Duran ensemble by his cohort Nile Rodgers. One of Duran's backup singers later introduced the band to Rodgers' partner, Bernard Edwards, who got it all down on tape. Says a spokesman: "Apparently everybody has been a fan of everybody else, and some-



how or other it all came together." Regardless of how well the album does, this collaboration smacks of a one-off with no tour to support it, being as how Taylor and Palmer have other obligations pending this Spring (see last month's *Rock On*). —Mark Mehler

SCORING BIG BROTHER

Between the end of their most recent tour in early September and their upcoming studio LP, Eurythmics Annie Lennox and Dave Stewart managed to squeeze in Big Brother, recording the soundtrack for 1984 at Compass Point Studios in the Bahamas. The band laid down several tracks described by an insider as "typically moody, melancholy, odd." Says a spokesman at RCA Records: "During the summer tour, Annie and Dave were viewing the film in pieces, trying to get a feel for the background. Originally, the plan was for simultaneous soundtrack/film release in late October, but we still don't have any idea of a release date." Meanwhile, the next Eurythmics studio LP is set to get underway in December or January, with a spring release on tap.



MICHAEL PUTLAND/RETNA LTD

FRANKIE COMES AND GOES

You've read about them (here, if no place else) and you've probably seen their "Two Tribes" video. Heck, you may have even seen them onstage. Frankie Goes to Hollywood, the latest Big Deal from Great Britain, is making a concerted pitch for the hearts and minds of American youth now. The band's debut LP, *Welcome to the Pleasure Dome*, is available on Island, and Frankie's gang has been here playing a series of concert dates in support of it. In addition to the original material on the records, the band does a couple of notable

cover versions, namely of Bruce Springsteen's "Born to Run" and the Dionne Warwick-via-Bacharach/David hit, "Do You Know The Way To San Jose." We are not joking. And FGTH slipped out to the real Hollywood recently to cut "Relax" for the soundtrack of *Body Double*, the film directed by schlockmeister Brian DePalma. Fashion-mongers will want to be sure to pick up on the new Frankie t-shirt: it bears the slogan, "Frankie Say Shit The Politician."



CATHY MILLER

CALLING JIMBO MORRISON

The never-ending, absurdist struggle to define the boundaries of art and pornography has taken an even lower road than usual with the arrest of Twisted Sister lead vocalist Dee Snider in

Amarillo, Texas, on October 7. Some parents in the audience, offended by the insistent profanity and the "anti-religious, anti-American" content of Snider's onstage remarks, complained to local police, who after the show took Snider into custody on disorderly conduct charges. Snider (known affectionately as "Yes Sir!" around RECORD offices) pleaded not guilty and at press time was expected to return to Amarillo for trial in November.

—Mark Mehler



MATT MAHURN



GENE BAGNATO / LGI

NEW RUN-D.M.C. LP DUE

Run-D.M.C.'s second album, *King of Rock*, originally scheduled for mid-November release, has been pushed back to at least January, due to the rush-release of a fourth single, "Hollis Crew," from the group's best-selling debut LP. Now complete and in the can, *King of Rock* includes 12 tracks, most notably a dub-rap collaboration with Yellowman, "Roots Rock Reggae."

A spokesman for the group's label, Profile, described Run's second outing as "a lot louder than the first album, with much bigger drums and different kinds of stuff, including bits of reggae, rock, even heavy metal." Manager Russell Simmons says most of it, however, is "South Bronx disco fever music, very street." Adds an associate: "It's got the intelligence to set the non-rap world on fire." The group itself is on the road through January as part of the rolling New York City Fresh Fest Tour, with Kurtis Blow and Whodini among the other featured acts.

—Mark Mehler

SHE BOPS

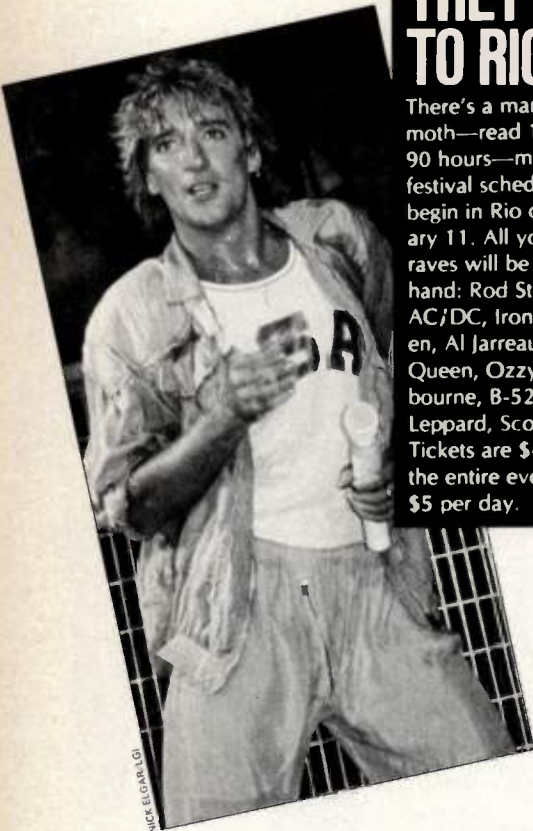
Cyndi Lauper's followup to *She's So Unusual* is tentatively due this spring, assuming she adheres to her management's plan to begin recording anew in January. Right now, says a spokesman in Lauper's office, "We're busy trying to break a fourth single ["All Through The Night"] and sorting through requests for tours of Europe and Australia." Meanwhile, Lauper found some time to cut a "live performance" record in San Francisco with producer Lennie Petze. Lauper's rep says the live disk will not constitute or be part of the artist's second LP release. Cyndi's not so busy that she can't help a friend, though. She's popped up recently in the audience and on stage at several concerts by Face to Face, and at a Chicago show she came onstage for a duet with Face's lead singer Laurie Sargent on "Girls Just Want To Have Fun." And they do . . . Pete Townshend's well into his next solo album, and the word from London is that he's being backed by the Fabulous Thunderbirds with Nick Lowe producing the whole shebang.

—Mark Mehler



THEY GO TO RIO

There's a mammoth—read 10 days, 90 hours—musical festival scheduled to begin in Rio on January 11. All your fave raves will be on hand: Rod Stewart, AC/DC, Iron Maiden, Al Jarreau, Queen, Ozzy Osbourne, B-52's, Def Leppard, Scorpions. Tickets are \$40 for the entire event, or \$5 per day.



NICK ELGAR-LIGHT

NEW YES LP UNDER WAY

Guitarist Trevor Rabin of Yes, relates that the group, having come off the road late last summer, is preparing to rehearse a new album this winter off the coast of Spain. Rabin, Yes's principal writer says the LP is likely to take on the structure of *Abbey Road*. It's that kind of analogy, of course, that will reinforce the image of Yes in some quarters as overblown and over-reaching, despite the startling multi-platinum success of the most recent Yes album, *90125*.

Following rehearsals, recording will begin early next year, either in Canada (Rabin's preference) or in Europe. For tax reasons, it won't be America. Producer Trevor Horn, who did *90125* and is an ex-member of the band, is likely to be back behind the board. "I want to go into the studio and get it done," Rabin concludes emphatically, "not like the last album where we went in and did songs, scrapped them, did them again, scrapped them again and did them yet again. That's why I'm lobbying against a sunny climate. We have too much work to do now."

—Mark Mehler



STEVEN BROWN

UNDER COVERS: STONES, ROCK PIX

In place of another stagey, overpriced tour this year, fans of the "World's Greatest Rock N'Roll Band" will have to settle for two new books out on the Stones. The first, *Symphony For The Devil* (Linden/Simon and Schuster, \$15.95) by Philip Norman, is an attempt at a complete biography in the manner of Norman's Beatles bio, *Shout!* Norman's non-rock background means the Stones don't receive the usual kid gloves treatment, so he often gets their calculation and callousness right, but at the expense of any musical insight (he describes Sam Cooke in 1964 as a singer riding the crest of the Twist craze). The second book, Stanley Booth's *Dance With The Devil* (Random House, \$16.95), focuses on the dark side of the Stones' '60s myth, culminating in his eyewitness account of Altamont. For anyone interested in finding out why the Stones once mattered, Booth's is the one to grab... The only two problems with *Rock Archives* (Doubleday/Dolphin, \$16.95), the guide to the best of the legendary Michael Ochs Archives treasure trove of vintage rock photos from the '50s and '60s, are that the pictures are too small for us to soak up the detail, and there are just not enough of them. Sure, there's some 1100 reprinted here, but when you see just how good they are—check out Ironing Board Sam (right) strutting his stuff, for example—you'll want at least 1100 more.

—Wayne King



LEI/RETNA



The Stones of yore; Ironing Board Sam in action

MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES

GO-GO GONE, CATS STRAY

Go-Go Jane Wiedlin has gone-gone to be a solo artist. The split came in late October, at the end of the band's most recent tour, when the guitarist expressed a desire for "artistic freedom"—we have all been this way before—and a simple need to do something new and more her own after seven years of professional Go-Goism. Regrouping, the Go-Go's have announced that bassist Kathy Valentine will switch to lead guitar. Auditions will be held for a new bass player. The Go-Go's are due to return to the studio next month to begin work on their fourth album.

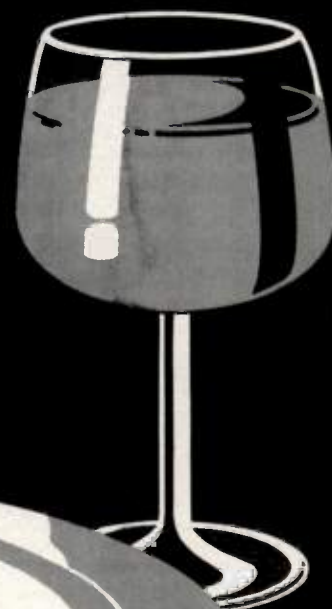
A more definitive split has occurred out on Long Island, where the Stray Cats have called it a day. No clawing and scratching here, either, only a joint decision to "pursue other interests," say the Strays.

And by now the whole world, and RECORD readers too, must know that Tom Petty attempted his impersonation of Toronto Blue Jays pitcher Doyle Alexander with smashing results. Seems our Tom had a similar reaction to ol' Doyle (who busted his pitching hand on a dugout wall following a disastrous outing while with the Yankees) while listening to tapes from his forthcoming LP, although his publicist opined as to how Petty may have been jumping for joy rather than venting his anger on the wall in question. Anyway, Petty wound up with multiple fractures of his left wrist, and doctors refused to speculate on when the artist might be able to resume playing guitar. Petty's reaction? "I did a damn fool thing," he said upon exiting Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles.



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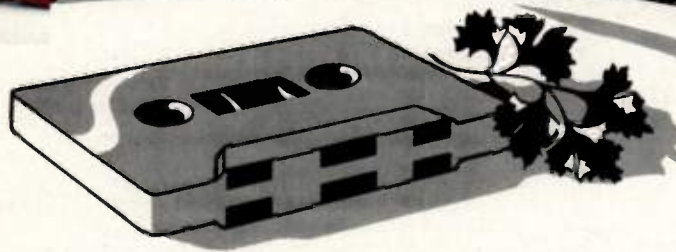
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Wham! sets sail for where the sun don't shine

WHERE THE BOYS ARE

"We've been in New York since Sunday," says singer-songwriter George Michael of Wham! "No, wait, that's not right. We got here Thursday, yeah, Thursday . . . Sunday we were in L.A., I think."

If Michael is confused now, wait 'till next year, when Wham! is due to tour the globe in support of a new LP, *Make It Big*. Some concert dates in their native England take them through Christmas, followed by a Japan tour in early January and an Australian tour later that month. A series of February showcases in the U.S. follows, then it's on to Europe for the full Continental treatment. A nine-piece band will be in tow at all stops.

Michael and his partner, guitarist Andrew Ridgeley, started believing in days like this two years ago, when their early singles, "Wham! Rap!" and "Young Guns," caught on in the U.K. Michael insists, however, that what many have taken to be arrogance in Wham! is merely confidence and good planning (hence the mirthful title for their new LP, *Make It Big*).

"Our present goal is to have four Number One singles in England in eight months. Nobody's ever done that," says Michael unabashedly. "We already have three ["Wake Me Up Before You Go-Go"—the current U.S. hit—"Freedom" and "Careless Whisper"]; one more and we'll have reached that level where we can sit back and relax."

Meanwhile, if it's Tuesday, this must be Manhattan . . .

—Mark Mehler

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WE JUST CALLED TO SAY...

How's Stevie doin'? Glad you asked. According to Wonder's long-time aide-de-camp Ira Tucker, the artist is back home in Los Angeles "cooling out" after nearly five solid months on the road in Europe, where he was, by all accounts, greeted as the Messiah returned. Wonder's also resumed work on his long-awaited new studio LP, tentatively titled *In Square Circle* and due in February. "He's very close to finishing," reports Tucker, adding as a cautionary note, "but then it sounded great to me when I heard it last May. I thought he might let it go then, but he did some more work on it while he was in Europe." Watch this space for further developments.

WHITE ANIMALS, WELL DONE

"We want to make the next great Altamont record," states White Animals singer, guitarist and head rabbi Kevin Gray during a recent stop-over in the Big Apple.

Formerly a hard-core dance-dub group offering a fair sample of '60s hits in their repertoire (see **RECORD**, July '84), the Nashville-based White Animals are only now starting to break out in slightly new directions. The followup to their uproarious *Ecstasy* LP will, according to Gray, feature some eight original songs. Nevertheless, Gray cautions, the gradual shift away from dub covers won't have an immediate impact on the band's reason for being: "Our label is Dread Beat, with the emphasis on the 'beat.' The beat that propels your rear end, that makes your daughter run off to join Elvis Presley (*six feet under?—Ed.*), that drives us 65,000 miles across this country every year to entertain the weekend warriors.

"You can never," he cautions, "get rid of the White Animals."

—Mark Mehler



WARING ABBOTT

LAKESIDE: LOOKING FOR A MONSTER

A nine-man Los Angeles-based funk bunch, Lakeside has a message for the people: "Our single 'Make My Day'—buy it!" After eight albums—including two gold discs—and nearly a decade of dance riot live dates, Lakeside can't be blamed for wondering when the huge crossover hit will make their day. As guitarist Stephen Shockley puts it: "We're looking for . . . a monster."

The band's latest Solar album, *Outrageous*, just might call the monster forth. Its eight

cuts comprise a stylish blend of pop, rock, R&B and funk, an apt mix for a group that cites the Beatles, the Temptations and Jimi Hendrix among their inspirations.

"We wanted to use some of the new technologies to give our album a very contemporary sound," Shockley explains, "But we were a little apprehensive—we still wanted it to sound like Lakeside."

Which means sounding like an outfit that doesn't like to leave the stage till it's burned to the ground. "We never take a break," laughs vocalist Mark Wood as he discusses his band's rep as a devastating road gang. "We try out all our material on stage before going into the studio. That keeps us in touch with the beat of the streets." —Anthony DeCurtis



RON WOLFSON

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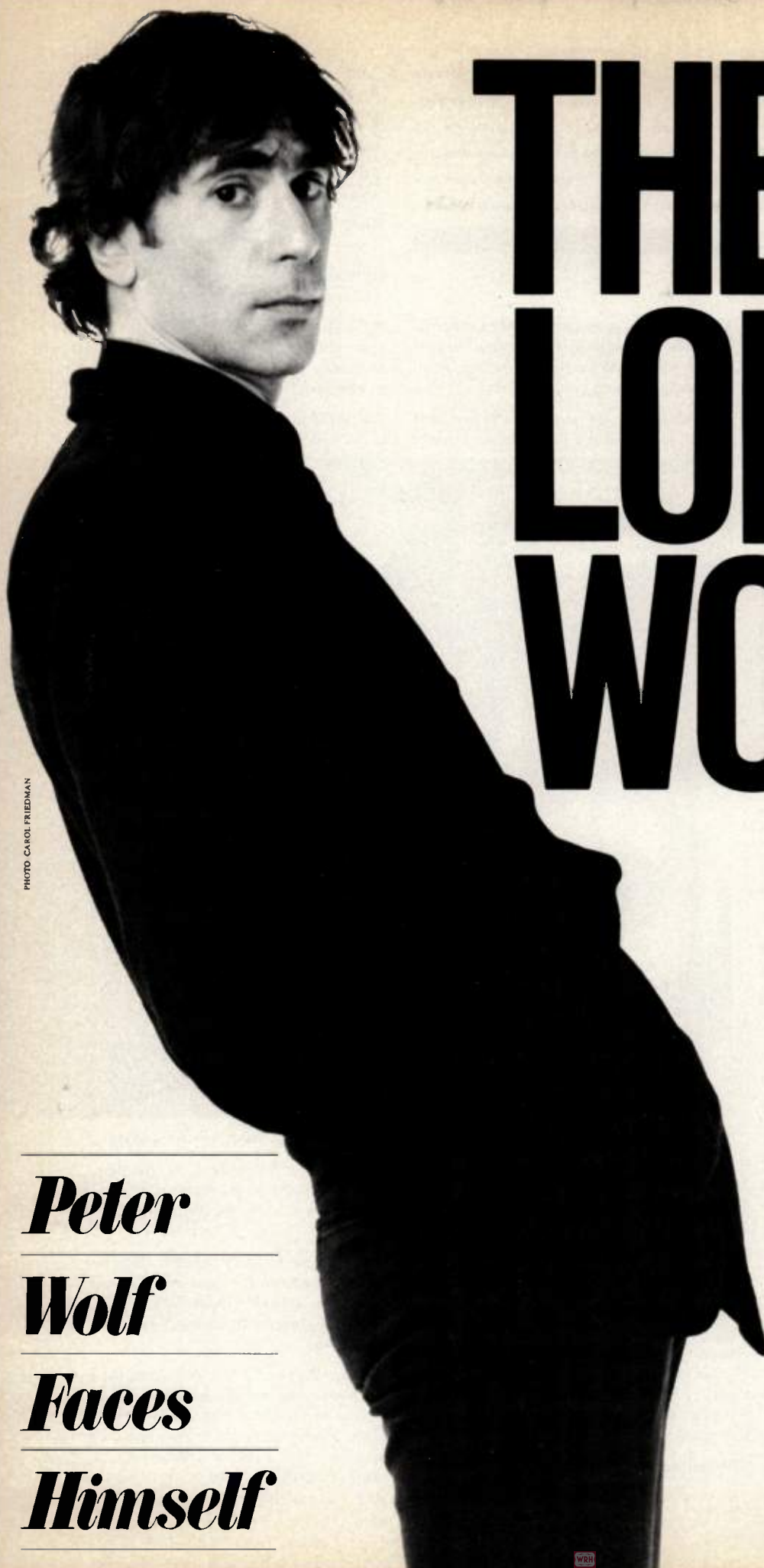


PHOTO CAROL FRIEDMAN

THE LONE WOLF

Peter

Wolf

Faces

Himself

IN CONVERSATION, PETER WOLF walks the line. Rock 'n' roll is a serious subject, you see. "I have a lot of other interests," he says, "like painting and reading, this and that. But (rock 'n' roll) is what I've dedicated my life to and it's all I've been doing. This has been my main obsession. It's what I enjoy most."

Yet, unlike many rockers, Wolf is keenly aware of his own relative unimportance in the grand scheme of things. Rock 'n' roll may get you through the day, but it won't cure cancer. He hates the term "rock star" ("It makes me real noivous; I'm just, like, a dude who makes music"), and, when the talk turns to artistic self-analysis, he says: "I have a hard time sitting here talking about the inner depth, the anguish, the agonies and ecstasies of what I do. 'Cause what I do is what I do. And in the larger panorama of re-

BY JIM SULLIVAN

ality, it's not that important."

An engaging, charismatic chap, Wolf is equally prone to tall tales or thoughtful consideration and reconsideration. He muses about his Bronx upbringing (radical Jewish mother, conservative Italian father—"schizoid craziness," he laughs), how he'd left home at 14, gone to art school in Boston, hung out, and shared his apartment space with many legendary black blues players who played Boston in the late '60s. He spent more than a few late '60s afternoons getting drunk with his old Cambridge buddy, Van Morrison: "I remember we used to sit around two or three in the afternoon, getting drunker than thieves in the night, just bullshitting and I was trying to find out what it was like recording with Jimmy Page and being in Them and he was trying to find out what it was like with Alan Freed and that stuff. But he was just some dude hanging out on Green Street, that's where he lived, and I was living on University Road, behind the post office."

After the interview, we wander out into Harvard Square. Wolf spies—good Lord!—a bar he's never been in. The temptation proves too great. We're in for a beer and Wolf, 38, is soon reminiscing about the long struggle J. Geils went through before hitting the top with *Freeze Frame* in 1982, and good-naturedly recalling the slaggings he suffered with Geils from Robert Palmer (comparing him to Sammy Davis Jr.) and Dave Marsh (suggesting he quit rock 'n' roll). On a serious career note, Wolf says, not vaguely, "I want to do something meaningful."

Wolf goes to make a phone call. The bartender asks if the thin man in the gray-and-black, broad-striped sweater is indeed the creator of "Lights Out." I tell her the truth. As we're leaving

she says to him, "I like your work." "Thanks," Wolf answers, pleased, but a little unsure of what else to add. Walking away, he quips, "She's talking about my work on the neutron bomb."

You're in what seems to me a peculiar position: you're a rock 'n' roller with a hot new album who's not part of a touring band. How do you spend your time?

Well, that's a good question. I'm just now finding out what it's like because I never

trium in Worcester (MA). I remember saying goodbye. Instead of saying good night to the audience I said goodbye.

You sniffed something in the air?

Yes, I guess I did. I had first-hand information.

Well, I've gotta ask the standard question—

(spreads hands a foot apart and smiles) About this big.

Now that we've got that settled, what about your split from Geils? It's still kind of muddy in my mind—fired, quit? Want to clarify it?

(pauses) I guess the only way of clarifying it is... it was unfortunately a deteriora-



At J. Geils' last gig, Wolf said 'goodbye,' not 'good night'

had that experience since I got into music. Usually after an album there was always a tour or things I had to deal with, places I had to fly to. Strangely enough, I find it pretty much the same because in finishing the album there was a video to be done, I did a guest VJ thing on MTV, I flew around the country a little bit, ended up spending a month in Europe doing a promotional tour there. A lot of that kind of stuff and thinking about the next period... But I think what I will be doing is going on the road sometime after January. I'm too itchy just sitting around.

When was the last Geils show?

It was New Year's Eve of '82 at the Cen-

trium in the relationships. It affected the ability to move on so I found myself having to go on as a solo artist continuing to make music.

You told me, initially, when it came down, that you hadn't left voluntarily. In a recent interview you said you *weren't* fired. Geils issued a statement saying you'd left on your own.

(pauses) Again, I don't want to be evasive, but I'm trying to deal with a negative situation as positively as possible. It got to the point where the relationship got so corrosive there was a divorce. Some very heavy stuff went down. The heavy amount of time and emotional investment put into the

band made it a very upsetting situation for me and, quite honestly, I didn't know if I'd be able to swing back at something I really love doing. That was the frightening aspect of it. You start thinking, Was it all luck? What if this was it? I was filled with a lot of insecure thoughts about proceeding. And you get these fantasies of finding yourself at some Scotch & Sirloin doing "Thank you, and then we wrote 'Must Of Got Lost'" with the drum machine. I guess I was prepared to do that if I had to.

Did you really think people would forget you?

Oh yeah! Definitely. It wasn't just a neurotic fantasy. There's a lot of great performers that time has not treated well. It's a very competitive business, rock 'n' roll.



PHOTO BY POK WAI

When someone goes into it, there's something within their soul (that) gets taken away, but if they work hard they can redeem it. It gets very competitive, very cut-throat, there's a lot of strange twists and turns. It's like a high roll in Las Vegas: If things turn out well and you're able to beat the odds, then it's like hitting megabucks. But I've seen it take its toll on a lot of really good people.

I knew I'd spent a lot of time learning my craft, but I really didn't know how I'd bounce back, who I'd bounce back with. I lost my main collaborator (Seth Justman), I lost the people who were sort of like brothers with me for so many years, standing side by side. In the beginning the Geils band had built such a large following and

reputation and did so well. Well, what does Peter Wolf mean in all that? It's interesting. You don't really know. Yesterday, when I was going down to see the fireworks (at Boston Harbor), I walked by and someone went, "Hey, J. Geils! How you doing?" You still get a lot of that.

What level of popularity do you consider yourself at? With *Freeze Frame* you finally hit the top, superstardom and all that. Now, as a solo artist, what do you do? Do you play arenas, theaters, what?

I really don't know. That's part of the exciting thing for me, trying to find out. We started in small bars and lounges and then we played many years in clubs, and then played in small auditoriums as an opening act, then buildings like the Boston Garden. The last tour with J. Geils we were playing a lot of stadiums with the Rolling Stones. I'm adaptable; I enjoy all levels of performing.

I know you had a lot of fear about flying solo when the split first came down. How about now? Has your confidence grown?

I realize a lot of stuff I did for the group, I did alone. I would go to cities ahead and do a lot of the work. It took me a while to get used to—I used to keep saying "we" when I was making the album. I used to say "we," now it's more "I."

Do you have any doubts or fears as a live performer or is it like riding a bike?

There's a lot of anxiety, yeah, there really is. I remember when my agent said, 'It's gonna be exciting to get you back on the road,' and I told him 'I'm not going on the road.' He said 'What do you mean you're not going on the road?' I said 'I'm not going on the road until I feel it's time to go on the road, because I don't just want to start doing what seems to be right. I wanna think about it first' . . . When I see myself in this new situation I find the things that are terrifying about it are the same things that are exciting about it. Once I decided to do it, I realized it's pretty exciting.

I feel like the guy getting ready for his first date, putting in the Certs, trying to make sure the dandruff ain't on the collar saying, "Golly, I wonder if she'll like me?" That's the point I find my whole career at, wondering about the reception and trying to find out as much as I can about myself. I feel like I'm still getting ready to knock on the door and say hello.

The last few times out with J. Geils, you included some political raps from the stage and were quite angry about the way things were going in this country. I expected more of that anger or tension would come into your songs now that you're on your own.

An artist with a political sensibility—when I say political I mean a social sense about things—I always find more interesting. It's something I try to do. A lot of musicians

get political for politic's sake; it's a thin line there. I think we were touring at that time of Reagan Enters American History and it was pretty scary there for a long while—not to say it's not scary now.

So it was a reaction to the onset of the Reagan era?

It wasn't the Reagan era. Things were starting to get very frightening again—this massive military buildup, there was a lot going on, still going on, one gets used to it but it's still horrifying—and where I was in the making of this last album was more or less trying to find a groove because I was working with so many new elements. I was focused on self-survival; a lot of the overt political stuff didn't find its way into the context. But you get something like "Oo-ee-diddy-bop!", there's a sense of frustration and malaise that comes through in that song, a pessimism which a lot of people I know are feeling. A lot of black musicians I was working with are feeling "the hell with it man, I ain't getting up, I need money, can't get it." People work hard all day and it still don't amount to anything. What do they do? Get up and rob a bank or just stay in bed?

I think the '70s was like an aesthetic sensibility, disco land. Now, as the smoke starts to clear, there's a frightening, almost '60s sense of people focusing in on what alternatives there are, and finding out there ain't much. What's the Big Night Out? Going to night school and learning how to play the typewriter of a computer?

So there's a lot of nihilism and a return to drugs, and return to release. In a sense, when I hear "Lights Out! Blast blast blast!" it's like, "Hey, it's Friday night and screw it! I'm getting out of it for awhile!" Which is the theme of a lot of Geils songs, "Getting Out," "Must Of Got Lost," "Sanctuary," "Insane, Insane Again." It's a statement, a feeling that's perpetuated and it's there on "Oo-ee-diddy-bop!" and it's there in "Crazy."

(Politics are) something I'm always aware of, but, again, to do it without seeming pedantic. I guess my answer to your question is: I respect groove for groove's sake, but if something can have groove and a statement to it, it's that much more important. And though I try and do it, it's not something I feel I can do consistently. When it comes out, it comes out.

I get the feeling from you that you would get more pleasure walking through the city and hearing "Lights Out" on a beat box than seeing your record in the Top Twenty.

I think to hear it on a beat box . . . Yeah, I was on Avenue C [in New York City]. There were these cats that had this beat box and they were listening to "Lights Out." To me, that was one of the biggest rushes.

Did you stop?

No, just walked by.



CAN YOU FIXX

ABOUT CY CURNIN'S HEART BE-ing in the right place, there can be little doubt. And yet, talking to the Fixx's lyricist and frontman, one often finds himself missing the days when pop stars didn't feel compelled to Speak for Their Generation, but only to mumble the occasional platitude of gratitude to their fans, without whom blah blah blah. Unusually affable and gracious though Curnin may be, he tends to make about as much sense as the fine print in a sucker's insurance policy. Along with Adam Ant, he is one of current British rock's premier windbags.

"We're watching the collapse of the Age of Reason," he's apt to exult virtually out of the blue, for instance—albeit lots, lots more verbosely than there's space to relate here. "The average intelligence has outgrown the shackles that keep society manageable. We don't see reason anymore—we don't feel secure, which is all that any human being asks for. But to me the only real security is the realization that there is no security. Once you realize that, you feel totally open.

"When you decide to have a family, for instance, it's to contain the *angst* that every human being has inside, but it also brings out the chemicals that make you want to protect. Your potential is stolen because you have to go out and earn money for the family. You can't pay full attention to every decision that will affect you, so you elect housekeepers, people who feed us a few manifesto ideas around election time and make you secure about things you don't have time to worry about." *You figure it out!*

Curnin met drummer Adam Woods, with whom he co-founded the Fixx, over a decade ago, when Woods was teaching drama. "We originally formed the band to shock audiences," he recalls, "not just to entertain them or make them clap and eat more popcorn, but to make them *feel* something."

As they've grown older and prospered, to the tune of three successive hit albums and their newly-acquired status as Major Headliners, their aims have become more exalted. They'd like now, Curnin says, "to inspire people to think about the reasons that they do the jobs they do and if, in the

positions they're in, they can connect with those around them to provide strength for change, as opposed to just individual status from job improvement. We're obsessed with the idea of finding out whether those people who had a dream in the '60s and early '70s can bring those dreams to fruition now that it's not so much *angst* stopping them as brainless politicians." *You figure it out!*

For about six months in late '82 and early '83, it was impossible to watch MTV for more than 15 minutes without seeing the Fixx's "Stand or Fall" video, in which Curnin looked unnervingly like Bobby Rydell, the scourge of post-payola-scandal American pop. *Shattered Room*, from whence the track sprang, stayed on the album chart for nearly a year. Then, in 1983, "One Thing" and much, much touring with the Police and A Flock of Seagulls helped turn its follow-up, *Reach the Beach*, platinum. And yet, "we're still on the same salary as three years ago," at least in part because "we're saving our money to make the film that Adam and I have been writing for the past three years.

"Basically, it's about a man who, after being shipwrecked, discovers how fragile the human condition is. He discovers a rejuvenating drug that drives him mad, and has moments of regression when all these demons come up from his past and play a circus for him on the beach of his island."

The group—which also includes bass guitarist Dan Brown and keyboardist Rupert Greenall—will play all the characters, direct it (with the help of their sometime lyricist Jeannette Obsoj, who oversees their videos), "and make a lot of naive mistakes, I suppose. There won't be that much of a script—*what* you say is more important than how *much* you say. It will be quite Dadaistic, with lots of space for musical interpretation.

"If we go down with it, then we'll go down with it. But we have to put our balls where our mouth is. As far as it being a 3-D point for our generation to grasp hold of, we'll feel far better losing money that way than losing it because some guy in an office says, 'This film isn't commercial.'" *You figure it out!*

"I haven't seen a good film in quite a few

years," Cy sighs. "They all have such terrible scripts—there doesn't seem to be even a germ of an idea around." He's especially venomous about *Streets of Fire*, which he found "insulting to the intelligence of its audience"—and to which soundtrack his group contributed a song. *You figure it out!*

One of the principal frustrations of touring as much as the Fixx has is that it severely curtails the amount of time available to work up tomorrow's hits. "We could probably write five or six songs—really good quality material—in a week," Curnin confides melancholically. "But as it is, you record an album and you're stuck with those twelve songs for a year. As soon as you let the business take over, your creative output is locked. You live, breathe, eat, and shit the group twenty-four hours a day. At first, that's very frustrating. But we've learned to fight back. I used to feel that we were upsetting people [that is, their management] by arguing for time off, but now they understand that we don't know where the next songs are coming from any more than they do."

None of which is to imply that Curnin finds performing unfulfilling—it's the *fans* he has trouble with. Since meeting "somebody who said they'd have committed suicide last year if it hadn't been for something I'd written," he claims to have taken to dashing for the stage door at the end of every performance on this, the Fixx's first headlining tour. "Meeting people who say something that strong makes you want to crawl away," the big-beaked young groaner says, with customary obliqueness. "We don't own this success—it's just been passed through us. We can't be accused of enjoying it—as soon as you stop to, you start having paranoids about being egotistical.

"Either you throw yourself totally overboard and become everybody's monkey or you become so together and business-like that people think there's nothing there. Where do you go? Has the Pope got anything there? Fuck! Has the head rabbi got anything there? Fuck! They've got the responsibility of the human race on their shoulders, but so has every other human being. Until we start breaking down those levels of communication, we're so far apart that I'd *advocate* that people commit suicide." This is one way to rid yourself of

B Y J O H N M E N D E L S S O H N

NO, WE'LL HAVE

IT, DOC?



ROBIN KAPLAN/RETNA LTD

overbearing devotees, but . . . you figure it out!

Having spent nearly as much time striking anguished poses on the stages of North America in the past three years as languishing in virtual obscurity in his own fatherland, Curnin reveals, "I see a lot of broken spirit in this country. I sometimes walk around feeling there's not much value

in life, and I can see why kids have suicide pacts. If one person's feeling the joy of life, it must be at someone else's expense."

As the time comes for him to head for the Fixx's first headlining performance at the Universal Amphitheatre, one of Los Angeles' most prestigious venues, Curnin's mood brightens. "We're all responsible for all of humanity," he asserts. "I don't see

people throwing their lives on the line and looking for oneness, but I see the potential for it. Our generation's potential is vast—we can grow to be really honorable and not just wander around living in the shadow of our parents. Where there are broken spirits, there's light coming through the cracks."

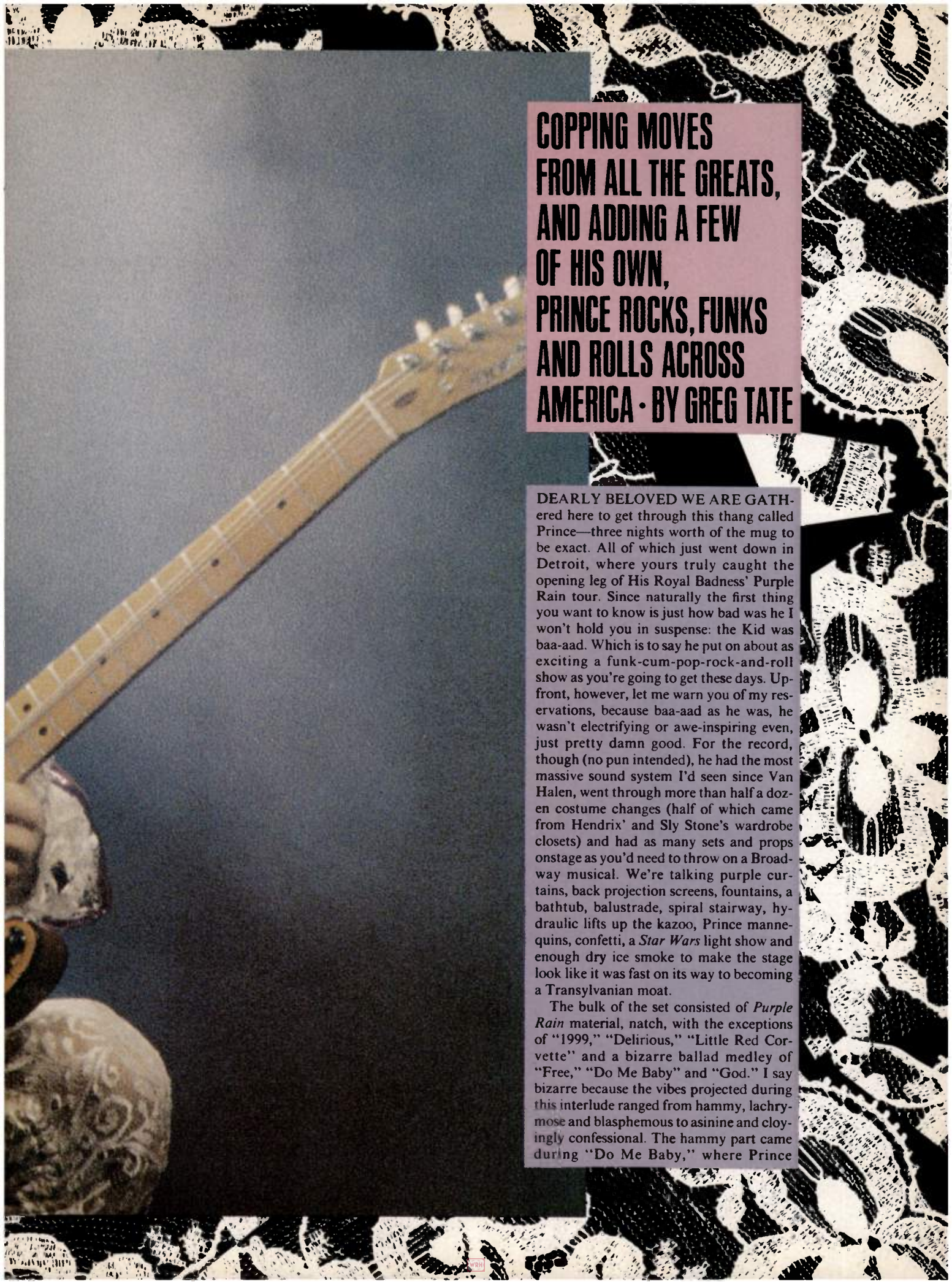
You figure it out!



E TO AMPUTATE

**...And
He Was
Ba-a-aad**

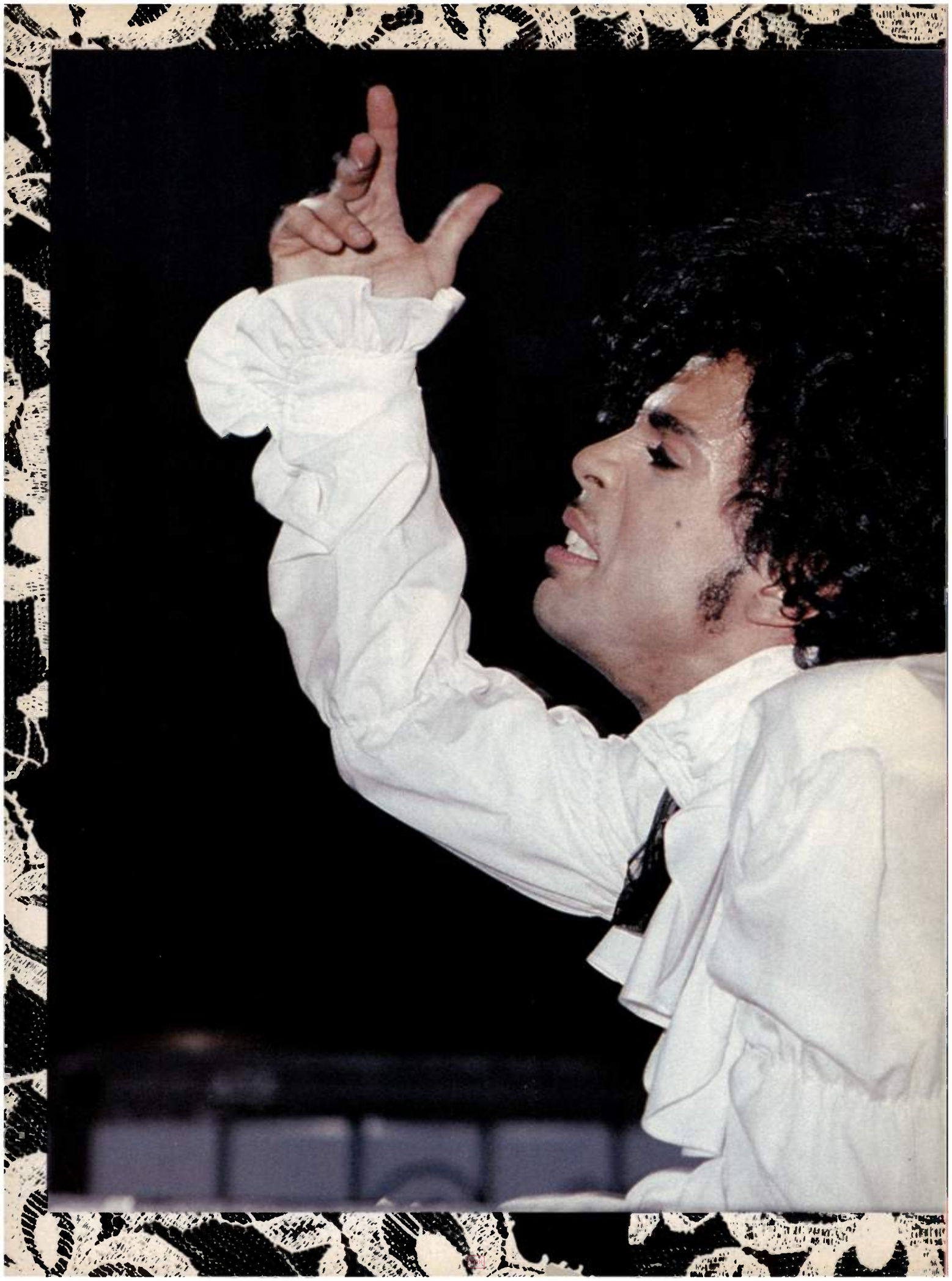





COPPING MOVES FROM ALL THE GREATS, AND ADDING A FEW OF HIS OWN, PRINCE ROCKS, FUNKS AND ROLLS ACROSS AMERICA • BY GREG TATE

DEARLY BELOVED WE ARE GATHERED here to get through this thang called Prince—three nights worth of the mug to be exact. All of which just went down in Detroit, where yours truly caught the opening leg of His Royal Badness' Purple Rain tour. Since naturally the first thing you want to know is just how bad was he I won't hold you in suspense: the Kid was baa-aad. Which is to say he put on about as exciting a funk-cum-pop-rock-and-roll show as you're going to get these days. Up-front, however, let me warn you of my reservations, because baa-aad as he was, he wasn't electrifying or awe-inspiring even, just pretty damn good. For the record, though (no pun intended), he had the most massive sound system I'd seen since Van Halen, went through more than half a dozen costume changes (half of which came from Hendrix' and Sly Stone's wardrobe closets) and had as many sets and props onstage as you'd need to throw on a Broadway musical. We're talking purple curtains, back projection screens, fountains, a bathtub, balustrade, spiral stairway, hydraulic lifts up the kazoo, Prince mannequins, confetti, a *Star Wars* light show and enough dry ice smoke to make the stage look like it was fast on its way to becoming a Transylvanian moat.

The bulk of the set consisted of *Purple Rain* material, natch, with the exceptions of "1999," "Delirious," "Little Red Corvette" and a bizarre ballad medley of "Free," "Do Me Baby" and "God." I say bizarre because the vibes projected during this interlude ranged from hammy, lachrymose and blasphemous to asinine and cloyingly confessional. The hammy part came during "Do Me Baby," where Prince





makes like the lyrics' show of vulnerability so embarrasses him that he just cannot finish the song and must leave the stage before losing face. (Naturally the nubile screaming-meemies in attendance stroked his ego enough to save him from a total wimp-out. Manhood secure, homeboy continued on with the show.) Lachrymose was Prince falling to his knees whining that the powers that be had never given him any awards. Asinine was Prince shaking his little tail-feather and sneering as to how he wondered when they'd be giving out awards for the best ass. The blasphemous portion of the show came when after leading the crowd through a Sunday school hymn ("God made you/God made me/God made us all equally") our anti-hero went through a Jekyll-and-Hyde bit at the keyboard, became possessed by devilish sexual temptation and asked God if he'd like to take a bath with him. At which point he ascended a staircase, stripped to his caballero pants, slid into his tub for a neon green shower and descended hydraulically to the smoky lower depths beneath the stage (when he came up for "Computer Blue" he was in S&M garb). Now while I ain't no born-again Christian and certainly don't think sex is a sin before God, this kinky little tableau put about as chiller a vibe on me as I've ever gotten from a concert; not in the least because it was soon followed by backwards running tapes and the arena being plunged into abyssinian darkness. Too weird for the kid y'all.

In any event, for journalistic purposes let me acknowledge that on opening night the Cool Ruler clearly came out nervous and jittery, racing through a raggedy ver-

sion of "Let's Go Crazy" and not settling down until about halfway through when he sat at the piano for the ballad medley and thanked Detroit for their years of support, explaining that was howcum he'd chosen to have the tour's first party there. Trip is, though, the audiences for all three sell-out shows in the 22,000 seat Joe Louis Arena were 90 percent white, so the people Prince were thanking weren't even the ones who'd been his backbone before *Purple Rain* proved the power of movies and MTV to make or break you in pop America. Last tour Prince did six nights in Detroit at the Masonic Temple, so the locals told me, and damn near nothing but black folks rocked the house for those shows. So now check this out: while you figure Prince knows he's conquered this apartheid-oriented culture to the point where there's gonna be some palefaces showing up at his gigs that weren't there a year ago, even he didn't have any notion that the brothers and sisters were mostly missing in action from this year's Detroit stop. What proved this to me was when Prince tried to get the audience to do the dog chant you'll hear if you been to any black concerts recently (any post-P-funk's "Atomic Dog" tour that is). After trying to rouse the crowd into doing the dog with him and getting nothing back but blank stares he asked, "Is this Detroit?!" Which said to me something's going on here but Mr. Prince don't know what it is; that on a certain level he might as well have been saying "I don't think we're in Kansas any more, Toto."

No one I talked to in Detroit gave me an adequate explanation for why so many bloods chose to miss out on presumably



The Crown Chameleon of Pop: Now that he's got America eating out of his hand, what's he gonna feed 'em next?

ALL PRINCE PHOTOS: ROSS MARINO

the biggest concert event of the year. Unlike the Michael Jackson fandango, it wasn't because of ticket prices or venue: \$17.50 was tops in the first balcony and Joe Louis Arena is in the heart of downtown Detroit. The answer may lie in a combination of factors. Some said it's because us black folks are notorious for waiting until the day of the show to cop tickets (though in my hometown of Washington, D.C., the brothers and sisters bought 130,000 seats in six hours for Prince's mid-November shows there). Others I talked to said they'd seen him seven or eight times already and didn't feel pressed to catch him this time around. Still others professed that while Prince had made his bones with Detroit's hardcore funk crowd, the ratio of rockers to funk numbers on *Purple Rain* just plain turned the mugs off; maybe even cost him some of his black audience. It's a mystery to me just what the real deal is far as this racial imbroglio goes, but I do know that

before he came back for his encore that first night, bloods were screaming at the top of their lungs for Prince-funk like "Erotic City," "Lady Cab Driver" and "Irresistible Bitch." One brother in fact wanted to hear the latter so bad he got to hurling obscenities at Prince—as in "Play 'Irresistible Bitch' you bitch, you faggot mutha!" Listening to Detroit's black radio stations, however, you didn't get any sense that he'd lost a black audience: flipping from station to station you could hear "Erotic City" non-stop, like it was damn near on a citywide tape loop. And in fact one local deejay of reknown, "The Electrifying Mojo," nightly devoted his entire graveyard shift to nothing but the music of Prince, with maybe a little Time, Sheila E., Apollonia 6 thrown in to relieve the routine of radioactive splendor.

If the Detroit shows proved anything—besides the fact that next to Michael Jackson Prince is the biggest black crossover

act in pop history—it's that he's out to prove himself the living embodiment of every baa-aad mutha who ever rocked, funky and rolled the American stage. I mean this cat done copped all the moves, man—James Brown's, Jimi Hendrix', Sly Stone's, Little Richard's, Elvis', Mick Jagger's, Cab Calloway's, the Nicholas Brothers'—and got a few of his own to boot, like the humping-the-speaker, ho'ding-one-leg-behind-his-back bit he does during "Darling Nikki," which I've seen turn women from 16 to 60 into quivering bowls of Jell-o. Funny thing is, for all his eroticism Prince really doesn't come off as any more electric a performer than Michael Jackson, as everybody has been predicting he would. Reason being that Michael not only got just as much fire but more grace and precision, not to mention originality, in his moves; and the media saturation of him on film and video for lo these many months undercut Prince's dynamism in an arena, where intimacy is lost alongside the novelty of his routine. As energetic as the shows were, they also had an air of the perfunctory about them, not so much because it felt like he was going through the motions, but because he had shot so much of his wad in the movie. Making me realize that this was the first time he'd ever gone out on tour having to top himself. In sum, while Prince rose to the challenge—dancing, singing, and playing his booty off—there was an emotional depreciation to experiencing the event that, again, I think derives from how dramatically the film set up his moves and music. Where the live performance transcended the film, though, was in the encores of "I Would Die 4 U" and "Baby I'm a Star," and then the second encore of "Purple Rain."

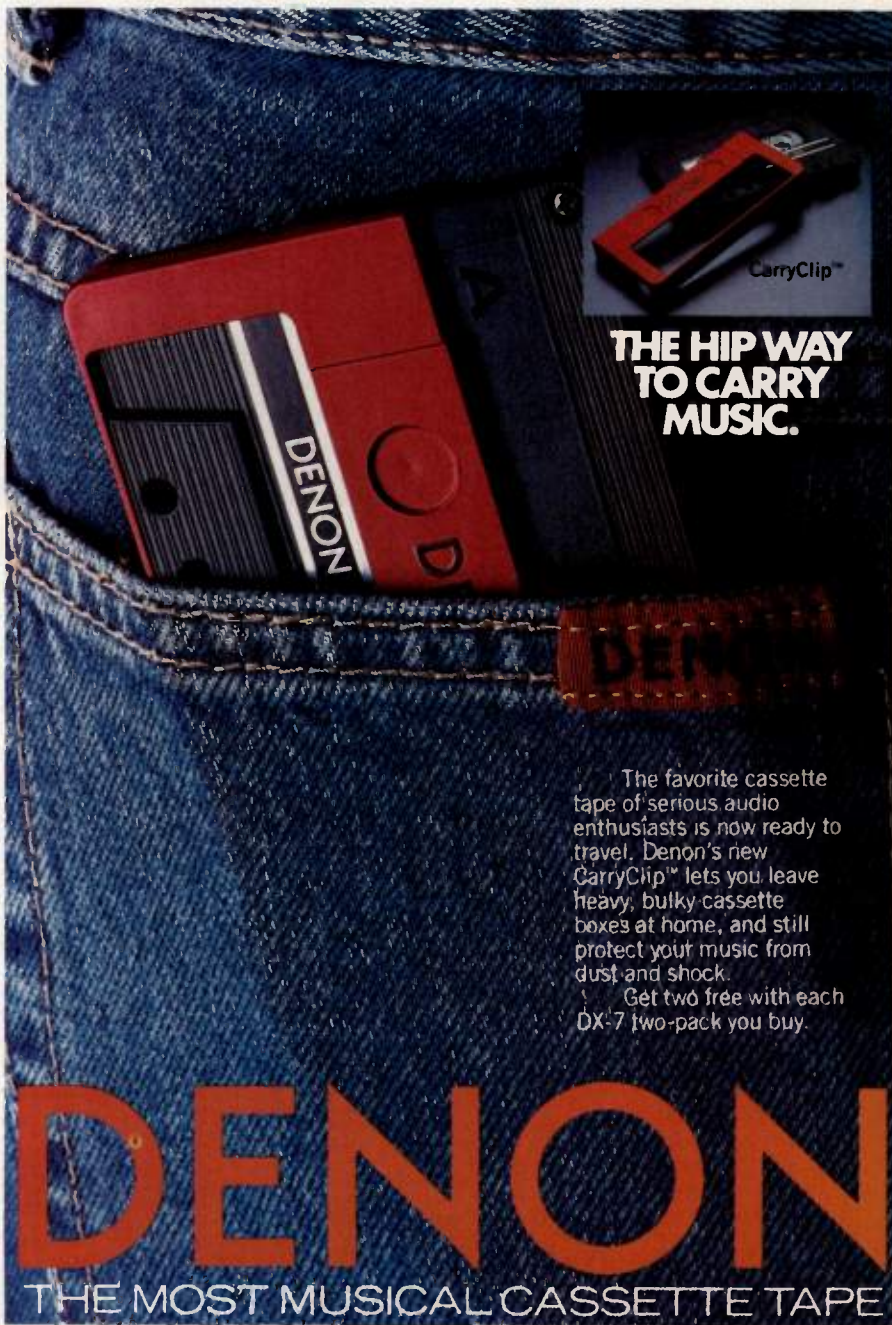
"Baby I'm a Star" is especially killer because it's like Prince's version of the James Brown/Sly Stone revues combined: I'm saying here's where the brother bust out with his fanciest amalgam of dance steps yet, the splits, the breaking, the works. Even gets to telling the band to give him five stoptime breaks on the one, just like the Godfather of Soul does. For the second night's encore he even brought on Jerome Benton, Billy Sparks, Apollonia 6 and Sheila E. for some impromptu jamming and throwing down. And matter of fact, soon as Jerome hit the stage I thought to myself (while boogying along) how sorry I was that the original Time had disbanded; because while Prince might be more versatile, Morris Day and crew got the funk in their bones like no other band I've heard since Parliament-Funkadelic. And any body want to talk choreography knows the Time's unison steps so smooth, supple and slick they make Prince look like he got two left feet for days. Another problem I had with Prince's act now, matter of fact, is that he's really the only one up on stage who throws down visually in terms of that terpsichore. Guitarist Wendy Melvoin and bassist Brown Mark look cool and doo-

hickey on the frontline, but the Prince band with Dez Dickerson and Andre Cymone was too chill. Yet if the loss of Dez and Cymone cost Prince's show a measurable degree of fire and stage presence, losing his black audience of old to the MTV generation may end up costing him something more precious as far as emotional and spiritual gratification goes. I really didn't pick up this vibe until the final encore of "Purple Rain," truly the evening's transcendent moment all three nights. Principally because it's there Prince kicks into a torrid and explosively intense 10-minute guitar solo ablaze with Hendrixian fury (albeit if not ablaze with Hendrixian imagination). The spiritual pull Prince exerts stretching out this anthem is both riveting and chilling, because for perhaps the first time in the show you feel as plugged into whatever energy he's been drawing on as he himself does. The upshot is that on the third night he got so into it his face and body were visibly wracked with pain, suffering, tears and, dare I say it, a need to be loved. And however he came to sense it, he seemed to know that his audience that night was not feeding back to him what he was pouring forth in incendiary ergs. And during the end of the solo he began screaming and cursing at the crowd, the rage clearly evident on his face. I suddenly thought of Hendrix back when he was playing his heart out to stadiums full of drugged-out zombies who could no more reciprocate his energy than catatonics; only this crew wasn't spiritually void by way of substance abuse (I may have smelled but one or two joints each evening) but by way of music videos. Concerts simply aren't the Events of One's Young Life as they were when I was coming up. The rock audience of today is so saturated by music, its heroes so accessible by way of television, film and home video that much of the magic of live events seems to have been considerably diminished. Walking out of the show with Prince's audience I felt none of the excitement or electricity in the air that I know would've been there when me and my friends were 16-, 17-, 18-years-old; that night I felt like I was with people who were heading home after watching a giant video screen light up then fade to black. And I got to wondering what would happen to Prince when, like Hendrix, he got tired of being the circus freak and just wanted to receive as much respect for his musicianship as for his visual razzle-dazzle and highly sexual showmanship.

One thing I've never felt Prince has gotten enough credit for is how much he truly loves music in all its varieties and forms. The *Purple Rain* album is proof positive of this with all its quotes and homages to Hendrix, Stevie Wonder, Yardbirds, hip-hop, Zep, Keith Jarrett, Chick Corea and hosts of others. I've never felt like the physicality of Prince's talents as a performer were just phony bits of stage busi-

ness; clearly he loves dancing and showboating for the crowd as much as he does writing and composing—yet the danger is in getting trapped in his audience's expectations for him to continually play the freak for them, and losing his musicality to the antics in the process. But I've got hope that this won't happen to the Kid. More than any other rock star besides David Bowie (whom I'm convinced Prince has learned a few lessons from), Prince long ago showed himself savvy enough to know that to stay ahead in this business you've got to never let people get too familiar with your music or your face. And it's for that reason that I, like every other Prince fan of old, am waiting to see what he's going to come up with for an encore, if

for no other reason than that he's capable of so many unpredictable metamorphoses and musical coups. (With "Erotic City" he's given funk the crossover appeal George Clinton has been attempting for years, and through protege Sheila E.—who put on a killer show opening for him, sporting the tightest band choreography I've seen since the Time—he's managed a provocative and popular synthesis of Latin pop new wave like August Darnell/Kid Creole has been wanting to get over with for half a decade now.) Meaning that in the final analysis the big question with regards to the Crown Chameleon of Pop is now that he's got America eating out of the palm of his hand, what's he gonna feed 'em next? Stay tuned. ○



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On the BEAT



BOOKS

With *Big Bam Boom* and their current world tour raking in the bucks, **Daryl Hall and John Oates'** star is continuing to soar. The Philly-bred duo's climb, however, has spanned a full 15 years, and it hasn't always been such easy sailing. With Nick "Hellfire" Tosches manning the typewriter, that climb has now been chronicled in a book entitled *Dangerous Dances*. Unlike most biographies, though, the artists-in-question actually have a hand in this one. Hall contributes a stack of odd drawings. Both men contribute a wealth of anecdotes, info, and rare photos. Priced at \$10.95, *Dangerous Dances* is published by St. Martin's Press. . . . Although British rock writer Michael Oldfield is best known for his byline in *Melody Maker*, he also has the honor of being a former schoolmate of **Dire Straits'** guitarist Mark Knopfler. Calling on both credentials, he's written a book titled *Dire Straits*, billed as the authorized biography of same. The book charts the rise of the band and their razor-edged, Dylan-inflected sound—from their early hours of struggling to get "Sultans of Swing" to sound right, to their current incarnation as one of Britain's Finest. At \$9.95, the book is published by Quill Books. . . . At the rate things are going, true rock radio may soon be a thing of the past. With, for example, New York's WNEW-FM truthfully touting itself as the last bastion of rock in town, the stranglehold of the dread-

In the increasingly shadowy area between rock and mainstream sports, England's **Thompson Twins** and L.A.'s own **Berlin** showed what kind of stuff they're made of during a recent concert swing through Canada. It seems the Twins, on tour across North America with Berlin since late last summer, are closet cricket buffs, and with the thrill of *Life On The Road* wearing thin, they offered to teach the L.A. upstarts the finer points of The World's Most Boring Game. Berlin, eager for anything new to fill their off-duty hours, jumped right in—with comically predictable results. **Terri Nunn and Company's** private shame finally went public during a stopover in Toronto. At the huge exhibition grandstand shortly before showtime, the hapless Californians were re-enacting something that resembled Custer's Last Stand in the center of the empty arena, flailing their cricket bats in a losing battle against the massed might of the Twins. Unbeknownst to both victors and soon-to-be-vanquished, however, Grandstand officials had decided to let the concert audience enter early. As a result, the members of Berlin suddenly found themselves clutching the shreds of their dignity in front of a growing mob of ticketholders—as the Twins moved in for the kill. By the time Berlin bit the dust, nearly 10,000 fans were cramming the stands, witnesses to the spectacle. Berlin tried to pin the blame on Terri Nunn. The Thompson Twins, sportspersons all, just grinned and strolled away.

ed All Hit (i.e., Top Forty) format has clearly become Serious Business. Top Forty has been around for a couple of decades now, and jocks like Alan Freed and Murry the K were spinning the hits for years before the term "alternative radio" was even invented. Broadcasting exec Rick Sklar's book, *Rocking America*, helps explain why such a limited musical menu continues to have so much appeal, charting the rise of the All Hit stations and the people behind them. (St. Martin's Press, \$13.95) ■

MISCELLANIA

REO Speedwagon continues to raise questions as to whether they *really* want to make these silly videos that are supposedly all the rage. Back in 1981, for example, the week before they were due to shoot their videos for *Hi*

Infidelity, guitarist **Gary Richrath** broke his elbow playing basketball. In 1982, barely seven days before they were due to go before the cameras for their *Good Trouble* videos, singer **Kevin Cronin** busted his thumb playing basketball. Now, word has come down that, right before the band was set to make the videos for their newest LP, *Wheels Are Turnin'*, the ever-graceful Cronin and Richrath collided head-on while shooting for the hoop (that old devil basketball again!). Richrath's eye swelled up like a watermelon, and Cronin suffered a lump on the top of his skull. . . . Fans of the reclusive **Kate Bush** are probably wondering about the lady's long silence since the release of 1982's *The Dreaming*. Reports are still sketchy as to when her in-progress follow-up will come out, but it's definitely on the way. In the meantime, EMI in England has been doing brisk business with *The Single*

File, a boxed collection of the 13-45s released there to date. All are in their original color sleeves, and a full-color booklet is included. The original sets were numbered, to please collectors and rabid fans, but the practice apparently has been stopped since then. While there seem to be no plans to release *The Single File* in the U.S., several import dealers around the country are stocking it (including Straight-Line Marketing, P.O. Box 8822, Durham, North Carolina 27707)... **Siouxsie and the Banshees** have released a special four-song EP in the UK. The tunes, recorded some time ago, feature Siouxsie Sioux backed by the full might of none other than the London Symphony Orchestra... Traditionally the bastion of rampant adolescence, rock 'n' roll is now in danger of becoming Adult Entertainment. At least that's what the Street Pulse Group has found in its latest nationwide survey. After collaring shoppers in music outlets across the land, the market researchers reckon that one-third of today's record buyers are over the age of 24. As far as musical preferences are concerned, however, the survey has found that the tastes of this increasingly "mature" audience are divided between soft rock and New Wave. ■

through such classics as "Blue Suede Shoes," "Are You Lonesome Tonight?" and "Heartbreak Hotel," he managed to squeeze in a bit of jamming with ace guitarist **Scotty Moore**, drummer **D.J. Fontana**, and friends **Alan Fortas** and **Charles Hodge**, who recorded with him in the early days. The powers-that-be at HBO describe this new special as "a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity

to catch a glimpse of the very warm and human Elvis the way his still-strong following remembers him." Check local listings for air times... That new 24-hour MTV channel geared toward a "target audience" of 24-to-49 years of age has finally been named: VH-1. The VH stands for Video Hits, which may give you a clear idea of what (and what not) to expect. The kick-off date is New Year's Day. ■



Ballantine Books is plugging into the rock market in a pocket-sized way. Their new Top 40 Series is barely underway, yet there are already 14 titles in the catalogue. Among the artists covered: **Boy George and Culture Club**, **Duran Duran**, **Eurythmics**, **Cyndi Lauper**, **Prince**, **Bruce Springsteen**, and **Sting and the Police**. The standard paperback format makes the Top 40 Series less visually spectacular than many rock volumes currently flooding the market, yet the no-frills character and the price tag under five bucks mean that you can read about your faves in the privacy of your own home without needing to take out a small bank loan.



As tie-ins with Elvis Presley's 50th (!) birthday, RCA Records has released several Presley packages. The most massive is a six-record set called *Elvis Presley—A Golden Celebration*. It contains many live tracks (including selections from the 1956 Mississippi-Alabama Fair and Dairy Show) that were made early in the King's career.

SCREENINGS

In the *Gone But Not Forgotten* department, **Elvis Presley** still exerts a strong influence over his fans, nearly seven years after his passing. To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the King's birth, HBO has an epic special lined up for January called *Elvis: One Night With You*. Produced with the cooperation of the late singer's estate, the program features concert footage (much of it never screened before) that was taped 16 years ago for Presley's 1968 network TV special—Elvis' return to the tube after an absence of more than eight years. While working his way

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Meet The Bangles

(sorry, that title's been used)

LET'S SEE... FIRST THERE WAS the Dave Clark Five. Then there were the Monkees, of course. And don't forget Wishbone Ash or NRBQ. Those are just a few of the bands that were doomed to oblivion or (in NRBQ's case) eternal torment because some dunderhead referred to them as the "new" or "next" Beatles.

The curse of King Tut's tomb is kids' stuff compared to the "New Beatles" whammy. Will the Bangles end up as just another name on that accursed list of hapless bands? After all, this all-woman quartet from L.A. did release a debut album, *All Over The Place*, earlier this year that is absolutely drenched with Beatles influences and sounds circa *Revolver* and *Rubber Soul*.

Needless to say, some dunderhead has already surfaced and made a crack about the Bangles being the next Beatles, an almost sure sign of impending disaster. But in this case the dunderhead in question is Bangles drummer Debbi Peterson, and she made the flip remark to a writer for a national magazine. Oh, surely this group is headed for certain calamity.

Or are they? "We meant that totally as a joke," protests Bangles lead guitarist, chief songwriter and head spokesperson Vicki Peterson, "and it was taken in the wrong light. The guy talked to us for about four hours, and everything we said about the Beatles he used, which made us sound very one-dimensional. Obviously, there is no next Beatles and there never will be."

Then, just as you begin to relax, Peterson adds with a coy smile, "And even if there was, it wouldn't be anything new, and we don't want to be that. We want to

be the next Bangles."

Well, at least the Bangles have the right attitude—a fearless one—and with their album they've made the right start. It's a gorgeous rock LP with almost overpowering '60s pop overtones, from the breathy double-time vocals of "All About You" to the haunting "Going Down to Liverpool." Already the band's abilities to pen perfect pop pastries has attracted the attention of the likes of Prince (who's reportedly trying to romance rhythm guitarist Susanna Hoffs) and Elvis Costello, who is particularly enamored of the song "James" from the new LP.

The Petersons and Hoffs began working together in Los Angeles in early '81 after meeting through a blind classified ad placed in a local throwaway. They were soon joined by bassist Annette Zilinskas, and started gigging first as the Mothers, then as the Bangs. The latter evolved to Bangles (another band already had a lien on Bangs), and in '82 the quartet cut a well-received EP for the Faulty Products label. Shortly afterwards, Chrissie Hynde lookalike Michael Steele replaced Zilinskas. The Bangles are all in their 20s, with Vicki Peterson the oldest at 26.

Their music, from Hoffs' perspective, sounds as it does because the musicians "tend to write songs in an old-fashioned style, which is why some people think we sound sort of '60s. Instead of taking the rhythmic groove emphasis that a lot of the songs in the '80s are based on, we're after the song. It's the structure of the song, and the vocals, and the classic structure of the verses and choruses, and maybe a bridge and guitar solo. It keeps the songs short and concise." Indeed, the album clocks in at barely 30 minutes, total.

"We have lots of influences in common," Steele chimes in. "We're all kinda nuts about folk-rock and all that English



revivalist stuff like Fairport: Convention. But at the same time we like a lot of the rock stuff, old and very new."

Vicki Peterson: "I think what we're doing is working within the format that has been classic rock, two guitars, bass, drums, and vocals with harmonies. The actual sounds are coming from instruments that have been around for a while." (Talking with the Bangles usually means conversation by committee—they'll frequently finish each other's sentences without stepping on each others' toes.)

By Dean Johnson



And who's inspired them as musicians? Not to press a point, but it was . . . the Beatles. "I'd have to say that the first guitarist I ever listened to was George Harrison," says Vicki Peterson. "He was so linear and melodic and simple; a lot of people say I play like that."

Debbi Peterson took up the drums in high school so she could be in her sister's band. "Actually, I wanted to be a bass player," she confesses, "because my idol had been Paul McCartney. But they needed a drummer, so I said I'll play anything."

"We got all that (Beatles) music second hand," Vicki adds, "but it wasn't like we were 15 and all of a sudden we happened to hear our older sibling's *Abbey Road* or something. What it was was that we were so young, like five and three, and our families were so into pop music and the radio—my father was a Beatles fanatic—that we had it all the time and we knew it when we were that young. In 1964 I was five years old and I saw *A Hard Day's Night* 10 times."

That's when the Petersons' rock 'n' roll

die was cast. But it took a few more years for the obsession to fully take hold. "We played at this hootenanny at a club in Redondo Beach, California," Vicki Peterson recalls, "and it was the first show Debbi and I had ever done with a trio. Right after—actually during—the show I thought, This is it. Forget school. Forget college. This is what I want to do with the rest of my life."

She pauses, then adds for emphasis: "This is what I want to do *with my life*."

Banglemania anyone? ○

LIFE IN THE JET

ALL THINGS ARE AS THEY SEEM

IT IS A BEAUTIFUL AUGUST afternoon, and the traffic is relatively light for such a gorgeous Friday in late summer. The sun is streaming down, gently reflecting off the two- and three-story buildings lining the main drag of the quiet Long Island suburb, its glare bouncing off the hood of the Jaguar gently idling at the traffic light. The engine of the sleek machine responds to its owner's touch, purring as if it really were the spotted jungle creature whose name it bears. To any casual observer of the scene, all appears as it should be.

So why is it I see the spectre of the Grim Reaper dead ahead?

Maybe it's because I make a lousy passenger, being an incurable backseat driver (no matter what part of a car my butt happens to be parked in). And maybe it's because being splattered over the pavement has been one of my deepest phobias/fantasies ever since that time years ago when a careening drunk came down the wrong side of Jersey's worst highway and just missed me, going on to kill himself and an off-duty nurse right behind. But as I lean forward to put my head between my knees and practice the cynic's version of civil defense, I realize exactly that which makes



STREAM



my mindset so grim: I've run afoul of the RECORD editorial automobile death wish. Longtime readers of the magazine may recall contributing editor Anthony DeCurtis' narrow escape from the Great Beyond while cruising the streets of L.A. with the Go-Gos' Kathy Valentine last spring. And since my driver happens to be noted hellraiser and rock 'n' roll star Joan Jett, she of the notoriously Bad Reputation, and since this Jaguar is fresh from six months in the shop (seems Joan was in an accident just weeks after getting the sucker, but it was the other guy's fault—*yeah, sure!*), and since she's buckling her seat belt prior to liftoff and talking as if the 50 miles she needs to break this baby in properly might be traversed in, say, the next 3.14 seconds, I realize that the last sight I'm ever gonna see before sweet oblivion is mine forever is a sign on a corner storefront which reads (oh, irony of ironies!) **COMPLETE DRIVING LESSONS IN JUST THREE HOURS.**

The light changes.

Death and destruction do not ensue.

Nothing is quite as it appears to be.

WE'RE SITTING POOLSIDE AT THE beautiful three-story manse of Joan Jett's "adopted" family, the Laguras. Jett first hooked up with manager/producer/co-songwriter Kenny L. and his wife Meryl during the thankfully abortive soundtrack sessions for a cinematic misadventure called *We're All Crazee Now* (the footage left over from this fiasco has since been spliced together by people once described by the Jett Lag management company as "vultures and whores" and made into a movie renamed *du-BEAT-e-o*; the result is so bad that Joan says "No one who remotely likes me should go see it"). She was then at her lowest ebb, following the breakup of the Runaways in 1979 (you know the Runaways—that much-maligned group of young ladies whose only reason for existence at times appeared to be to ask "how high?" when crafty *popmeister* Kim Fowley would tell them to jump, and who nonetheless managed, mainly through Joan's mighty efforts, to be a beacon to all females who wanted to play rock 'n' roll and were always being told to get themselves hence). Following a story of success that is truly one of rock's finest and most deserved in this past decade of diminished possibilities—and which is not recounted here in full, despite its

BY WAYNE KING



PHOTO: GEDFREY THOMAS

Joan and her Blackhearts, plotting further sneak attacks against the Bad Reputation Nation

overwhelming importance in the Jett scheme of things, for the simple fact that the tale has been told in every story and publicity release about the raven-haired rocker since "I Love Rock 'N' Roll" made its seemingly preordained ascent up the charts back in 1982—the Lagunas own this sumptuous spread which includes a room on the third floor for Joan whenever she chooses to flop there, which is quite often. Outside of having to keep an eye out for stray golf balls slicing and hooking their way into the back yard from the neighboring country club, the atmosphere at the Bad Reputation Plantation (as the house is referred to) is most conducive towards finding out why Joan Jett is not quite what she appears to be.

Let's start with the business about the Jaguar. Yes, she just got it back after the darn thing had spent six months being repaired. Yes, she only had the wheels for a short time before the accident. Yes, she had buckled up after getting in. But not in preparation for wrapping my body around a telephone pole—she put the thing on for safety. Joan Jett, it turns out, drives responsibly. Seems she only got her license last year. What the hell kind of rock and roll star is that?

Well, for one, she doesn't consider herself to be a star: "The weirdest thing happened to me about a year ago. I always listen to music when I'm getting ready to do something; I was getting dressed, and I was listening to David Bowie's *Ziggy Stardust* album, and the song 'Rock And Roll Star' came on. So I'm sitting there putting makeup on, and towards the end of the song there's the lines 'I could fall asleep at night as a rock and roll star/I could fall in love alright as a rock and roll star.' And all of a sudden it hit me—when I was fourteen

or fifteen I was dancing to this song and learning to play guitar by myself. It hit me, like, there was a complete circle, going from dancing to being what people call a rock and roll star." It's the last part that's most important to her; now *she's* claiming things are not always as they appear to be. "I still feel like I'm like everyone else. When people say 'You're a rock star,' I look to see who's standing behind me—I really do. Maybe that's from years of the abusive language directed at the Runaways. It was beaten into my brain how shitty and horrible I was, what a gutter-mouth, and this and that."

That initiation into the biz left her totally burned out: "I felt I had nothing, nada, no future (she sings the latter to the tune of the Sex Pistols' "God Save The Queen"). It was a very depressing time, but it was one of the best things to happen to me; I was being tested. Hitting the bottom like that, as low as I was at that point with absolutely no... You start to think maybe everybody's right, but I never really believed girls can't play rock 'n' roll—I never believed it for a second."

No, and she never should have doubted it, not with her nervy way on a stage. But now get this—she's trying to tell me that she's "actually shy," and—stop the press!—that "I think a lot; I'm a deep thinker." She laughs. "I know it sounds funny." Not half as funny as the looks I'm going to get telling that one around the cracker barrel. Shee-it, a rock 'n' roller whose specialty is the type of punchy gut-bucket raunch and roll that's just about gone out of style in this decade, and now I'm supposed to buy the notion that she's got a brain? Next thing you know she'll be trying to sell me the Brooklyn Bridge.

But who am I to say? Just because Joan

Jett's not the most articulate rocker around doesn't mean there's not some meat on those synapses (wha?). The mixture of punk, heavy metal, pop and rock that was her contribution to the Runaways and that she's maintained at a consistent level of quality with her Blackhearts (especially on the new record, *Glorious Results of A Misspent Youth*, their best yet) is one whose formula would seem to be easy enough to determine—except how come no one can seem to actually do what she does anymore? Maybe it's only instinct (although a well-developed instinct is just a different kind of intelligence), but there's definitely some savvy there that doesn't get recognized by all the authorities. Putting all those elements together and having the answer come up "rock 'n' roll," a music which has always been a rarely-attained synthesis, is something that a lot of so-called geniuses haven't been able to do of late. Maybe Jett figures we shouldn't throw the old form out until we're done with it, which at this rate may be never.

KEEPING IN MIND THAT THINGS

are not always as they appear (where *have* I heard that before?), equal time should be given to the Won't Get Fooled Again school of thought, the main lesson of which is not to take rock at face value. Still, if this little entourage is trying to pull a fast one here, they'll have to do better than having Kenny Laguna *offer* a story to the effect that, until a friend clued him in just recently, he had no idea who Francis Ford Coppola and Martin Scorsese were (both had expressed interest in meeting, and maybe working with, Joan). Or letting me listen to Joan record some concise comments regarding some of *Glorious Result's* songs for a promotional cassette, and hearing her voice a desire to describe the song "Hold Me" as "a piece of shit" (she ends up calling it "a little sappy"). Or watch the manager of an internationally known artiste yell at said artiste for swinging a wiffleball bat in his living room, or for trying to teach his young daughter some intricate yo-yo tricks, or have that manager drive the writer back to the big city while being in less-than-complete control of his faculties.

No, it's not just a nice day in the country with plenty of access to the "star" (we'll give you the quotes, kid) which lets the story run out this way. It's knowing that *Glorious Results of A Misspent Youth* will soon be in the stores, that Jett and the Blackhearts will be taking off on special "sneak attacks" throughout the country in order to teach her gospel, that she'll be back on the road in December after a tour of Europe with the Scorpions (you wanna talk dues), crisscrossing America for as long as it takes to get out there with her message, also known as Bruce Springsteen's Eleventh Commandment: Let It Rock!

Some things are *exactly* as they appear to be. ○

FRANCO IS STILL DEAD

But the Nobodys salute him

NEW YORK—Let's hear it for Francisco (yes, he's still dead) Franco. He may have been a Fascist SOB, but he did his small part to further the cause of American rock 'n' roll. That is, if you believe Alex Blanc, guitarist for the Los Angeles-based Nobodys, now represented with a debut LP *No Guarantees*. Says Blanc: "22 years ago, my family was liv-

ing in Madrid. My father was in the Ministry of Agriculture and when he wanted to put through an ambitious project and his two superiors put the clamp on it, he went over their heads right to Franco, whom he had known from before. Anyway, what my father didn't know was that the two superiors were relatives of Franco. After that the family started receiving all kinds of threats. My father would have stayed, but when they threatened his children, he packed up the family and moved to California."

30-year-old Alex, his 34-year-old brother Safeway Goya (yes) and their three colleagues continue to wrestle



HERVE GRISON

with the past. "Still, I guess I was lucky," Alex explains. "The Christian brothers taught me a lot about love, and before

they got to the bad stuff, we were already on the beach in California."

—Mark Mehler



GARY NICHAMIN

IS IT ROLLING, BOB?

Dylan drops in on the Textones

LOS ANGELES—"I think our music has gotten more country-ish and soulful, less Merseybeat, less of that Searchers' jangly guitar," explains Textones singer-songwriter-guitarist Carla Olson. "I mean, I even sold my 12-string when I needed money."

So much for hard times. Change is on the horizon for this acclaimed L.A. band, and it bodes well for all concerned. First, after a series of personnel changes, which hurt the Textones but gave bass players to the Go-Go's and the Dream Syndicate, the lineup has been stabilized with the addition of bassist Joe Read (who's played with the Call, Bram Tchaikovsky and Code Blue) and drummer-vocalist Phil Seymour, one-time cohort of Dwight Twilley.

Second, the Textones'

debut LP, *Midnight Mission*, on A&M, is a potent rock record fused with soul, R&B, and country, and bristling with passion. Most of the songs were written by Olson, but one non-original is Bob Dylan's "Clean Cut Kid." Olson had wanted to cover a Dylan song to thank him for featuring her in his "Sweetheart Like You" video. There was a catch, though. Dylan hadn't recorded "Kid" because he felt it needed a bridge. "I went into a panic," Olson recalls. "How would you feel if you were asked to write a bridge to a Bob Dylan song? I was pretty intimidated." Dylan liked it, and the cut turned out to be one of the album's best.

Now, will Dylan turn up in a Textones video? Stay tuned.

—Duncan Strauss

WHAT'S NEW

WHAT'S NEW

DAYLIGHTS AHEAD

Living Daylights get plenty of action

COSTA MESA, Ca.—What would you call a band that (a) is unsigned, (b) hasn't made a video, but appears briefly in a forthcoming Columbia Pictures film, *Fast Forward*, (c) plays rhythmic, textured, soaring rock that has drawn comparisons to early Gang of Four, Van Halen and U2, (d) and is good enough to have elicited interest from Jim Rismiller (formerly Los Angeles' top concert promoter, now a booking agent), producer Derek Bramble (*Bowie's Tonight*) and a handful of major label A&R execs?

You'd call the band fitting this description the Living Daylights. An Orange County-based quintet (singer Gregory, guitarist Rusty Anderson, bassist Jon Kallas, plus regular sidemen John Nyman and Scott Richmond), the Daylights have built a reputation as a powerful, captivating live act,

with Anderson's ingenious guitar work and Gregory's uplifting stage manner and vocals out front. Unfortunately, at a recent gig at Wong's West, heavily attended by the A&R crowd, technical problems shortcircuited the group's usual stage magic.

Nevertheless, the audience responded enthusiastically, and left the Daylights looking ahead. By the time this reaches print, a major label deal should be theirs—which won't come a minute too soon for the group. "Right now the business negotiation is 180 degrees from being 17, playing guitar in a garage and being joyous beyond belief," says Gregory. "Hopefully we can get back to that."

—Duncan Strauss



WINNING COMBINATION?

Take one LeRoi, add a T-Bird...

AUSTIN—Take one LeRoi Brother, one Fabulous Thunderbird, combine them with a veteran local drummer and what do you get? Swamp rock, what else? At least that's how singer/guitarist Don Leady describes his band's heady mixture of hard rock and Cajun folk music. "Mostly what it is is traditional riffs, anything from accordion riffs to fiddle riffs, with a heavy rock beat in a three-piece format. Back in the '50s they called Louisiana rock 'n' roll 'swamp pop,' so I just decided we were gonna come out with 'swamp rock.'"

Leady, a founding member of Austin's LeRoi Brothers, formed the Tail Gators in July with drummer Gary "Mudcat" Smith, who's worked with Stevie Ray Vaughan. Recently recruited bassist Keith Ferguson was with the T-Birds for nine years. Augmenting this lineup of late has been Alex Napier on frottoir, a Zydeco instrument similar to a washboard.

When asked how this compares to the blues-rock they've always played, Leady explains, "This has just as much R&B in it, but most of the songs have a definite folk melody. If you hear it, you know you gotta dance." —Thomas Anderson

(The Tail Gators' vinyl debut, a mini-LP, is due for release in January. For information write the band at 3601 B Tallison Terrace, Austin, Texas, 78704.)



EVAN WILCOX

D E C E M B E R 1 9 7 2

TOP 10 BLACK SINGLES

- 1 **SUPERSTITION**
Stevie Wonder (Tamla)
- 2 **KEEPER OF THE CASTLE**
The Four Tops (Dunhill)
- 3 **WHY CAN'T WE LIVE TOGETHER**
Timmy Thomas (Glades)
- 4 **I GOT A BAG OF MY OWN**
James Brown (Polydor)
- 5 **LOVE JONES**
Brighter Side of Darkness
- 6 **ME AND MRS. JONES**
Billy Paul (Phila. Intl.)
- 7 **SUPERFLY**
Curtis Mayfield (Curton)
- 8 **CORNER OF THE SKY**
The Jackson 5 (Motown)
- 9 **TROUBLE IN MY HOME**
Joe Simon (Spring)
- 10 **YOU OUGHT TO BE WITH ME**
Al Green (Hi)

TOP 10 POP SINGLES

- 1 **YOU OUGHT TO BE WITH ME**
Al Green (Hi)
- 2 **CLAIR**
Gilbert O'Sullivan (MAM)
- 3 **ME AND MRS. JONES**
Billy Paul (Phila. Intl.)
- 4 **ROCKIN' PNEUMONIA AND THE BOOGIE WOOGIE FLU**
Johnny Rivers (UA)
- 5 **IT NEVER RAINS IN CALIFORNIA**
Albert Hammond (Mums)
- 6 **I AM WOMAN**
Helen Reddy (Capitol)
- 7 **YOU'RE SO VAIN**
Carly Simon (Elektra)
- 8 **I WANNA BE WITH YOU**
The Raspberries (Capitol)
- 9 **FUNNY FACE**
Donna Fargo (Dot)
- 10 **SOMETHING'S WRONG WITH ME**
Austin Roberts (Chelsea)



JANET MACOSKA / STARFILE

THE MAN

By 1972 Al Green had firmly established himself as The Man, pumping out hits with his Memphis cohort Willie Mitchell as if it were kids' play, and selling 30 million albums in the process. The good news is he's still The Man, when he wants to be. His new album, *Trust in God*, finds him searching for the spiritual center of some interesting secular numbers, specifically Joe South's "Don't It Make You Wanna Go Home," Ashford and Simpson's "Ain't No Mountain High Enough," and the Supremes' "Up The Ladder To The Roof." On this date in history, one of his most scintillating Hi sides, "You Ought To Be With Me," topped the pop charts, and was resting at Number 10 on the Black chart after falling from Number 1.

U K T O P L P S

- 1 **THE UNFORGETTABLE FIRE**
U2 (Island)
- 2 **DIAMOND LIFE**
Sade (CBS)
- 3 **TONIGHT**
David Bowie (EMI)
- 4 **THE WOMAN IN RED**
Stevie Wonder (Motown)
- 5 **ELIMINATOR**
ZZ Top (WB)
- 6 **PURPLE RAIN**
Prince and the Revolution (WB)
- 7 **SOME GREAT REWARD**
Depeche Mode (Mute)
- 8 **WE ARE FAMILY**
Sister Sledge (Cotillion)
- 9 **PRIVATE DANCER**
Tina Turner (Capitol)
- 10 **NOW III**
Various Artists (EMI/Virgin)
- 11 **TRUE COLOURS**
Level 42 (Polydor)
- 12 **GEOFFREY MORGAN**
UB40 (Dep International)
- 13 **THE WORKS**
Queen (EMI)
- 14 **HOW MEN ARE**
Heaven 17 (Virgin)
- 15 **CAN'T SLOW DOWN**
Lionel Richie (Motown)
- 16 **RATTLESNAKES**
Lloyd Cole and the Commotions (Polydor)
- 17 **PARADE**
Spandau Ballet (Chrysalis)
- 18 **KNIFE**
Aztec Camera (WEA)
- 19 **THE AGE OF CONSENT**
Bronski Beat (London)
- 20 **STREETSONDS ELECTRO V**
Various Artists (Streetsounds)
- 21 **THE MAGAZINE**
Rickie Lee Jones (WB)
- 22 **HOPE AND GLORY**
Tom Robinson (Castaway)
- 23 **LEGEND**
Bob Marley and the Wailers (Island)
- 24 **ANIMALIZE**
Kiss (Vertigo)
- 25 **SELF CONTROL**
Laura Branigan (Atlantic)



S. L. RETNA LTD.

BEAT IT

The three professional gays who comprise Bronski Beat invite the listener into a disco world of pain, titillating the amateurs, gay and straight, with variations on that theme. Those genuinely interested in sexual victimization would do better to read James Baldwin, John Rechy or Hubert Selby, Jr. for a more provocative look at the urban gay experience.

U.K. LP chart reprinted from *New Musical Express*, October 20

B L A C K L P S

- 1 **PURPLE RAIN**
Prince and the New Power Generation (WB)
- 2 **WOMAN IN RED**
(Soundtrack)
Stevie Wonder (Motown)
- 3 **PRIVATE DANCER**
Tina Turner (Capitol)
- 4 **ICE CREAM CASTLE**
The Time (WB)
- 5 **YOU, ME AND HE**
Mtume (Epic)
- 6 **SUDDENLY**
Billy Ocean (Arista)
- 7 **JUST THE WAY YOU LIKE IT**
S.O.S. Band (Tabu)
- 8 **I APPRECIATE**
Alicia Meyers (MCA)
- 9 **JERMAINE JACKSON**
Jermaine Jackson (Arista)
- 10 **ALL OF YOU**
Lillo (Capitol)
- 11 **THE GLAMOROUS LIFE**
Sheila E. (WB)
- 12 **NEW EDITION**
New Edition (MCA)

- 13 **WILD ANIMAL**
Vanity (Motown)
- 14 **SWEPT AWAY**
Diana Ross (RCA)
- 15 **I'VE GOT THE CURE**
Stephanie Mills (RCA)
- 16 **DREAM STREET**
Janet Jackson (A&M)
- 17 **MADONNA**
Madonna (WB)
- 18 **CENTIPEDE**
Rebbie Jackson (Col)
- 19 **I FEEL FOR YOU**
Chaka Khan (WB)
- 20 **VICTORY**
Jacksons (Epic)
- 21 **APOLLONIA 6**
Apollonia 6 (WB)
- 22 **SAM HARRIS**
Sam Harris (Motown)
- 23 **DON'T STOP**
Jeffrey Osborne (A&M)
- 24 **RUN-D.M.C.**
Run-D.M.C. (Profile)
- 25 **DANGEROUS**
Bar-Kays (Mercury)



SPECIAL EDITION

All the way from the street corners of Boston's Roxbury ghetto to Main Street U.S.A. That's the journey New Edition has taken since its founding members, Michael Bivins, Bobby Brown and Ricky Bell—all of about 10 years old when the group started—began singing for change to go to the movies. The now-teenage quintet—lead singer Ralph Tresvant and Ronnie DeVoe joined up four years ago—New Edition took the independent route to success. Their "Candy Girl" single, cut for Streetwise Records, reached Number One on the Black Singles chart. Signed by MCA, New Edition came up with a slicker but still fresh street beat influenced by the Jackson Five, the Temptations and the Sylvers, primarily.

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

- 1 **POWER SLAVE**
Iron Maiden (Capitol)
- 2 **OUT OF THE CELLAR**
Ratt (Atlantic)
- 3 **ANIMALIZE**
Kiss (Mercury)
- 4 **STAY HUNGRY**
Twisted Sister (Atlantic)
- 5 **REBEL YELL**
Billy Idol (Chrysalis)
- 6 **LAST IN LINE**
Ronnie James Dio (WB)
- 7 **THE BLITZ**
Krokus (Arista)
- 8 **CONDITION CRITICAL**
Quiet Riot (Epic)
- 9 **THE WARNING**
Queensrÿche (EMI)
- 10 **VOA**
Sammy Hagar (WB)
- 11 **SLIDE IT IN**
Whitesnake (WB)
- 12 **LOVE AT FIRST STING**
Scorpions (Mercury)
- 13 **RIDE THE LIGHTNING**
Metallica (Megaforce)

- 14 **SHOUT AT THE DEVIL**
Mötley Crüe (Elektra)
- 15 **TOOTH AND NAIL**
Dokken (Elektra)
- 16 **IN ROCK WE TRUST**
Y&T (A&M)
- 17 **KISS THE SKY**
Jimi Hendrix (WB)
- 18 **SEE YOU IN HELL**
Grim Reaper (RCA)
- 19 **VICES**
Kick Axe (Pasha)
- 20 **BLACK 'N' BLUE**
Black 'n' Blue (Geffen)
- 21 **W.A.S.P.**
W.A.S.P. (Capitol)
- 22 **DANCIN' ON THE EDGE**
Lita Ford (Polydor)
- 23 **BURNS LIKE A STAR**
Stone Fury (MCA)
- 24 **NO REMORSE**
Motorhead (Polydor)
- 25 **MARCH OF THE SAINT**
Armored Saint (Col)



LASTEST WITH THE MOSTEST

After a loud and resounding tour of the Eastern bloc—Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary—British headbangers Iron Maiden were unmasked as true lying dogs of Capitalism. The band had made a bold and repeated claim to being the first Western rock group to tour behind the Iron Curtain. However, a RECORD reader describing himself as an "Cn-The-Alert Headbanger" informs us that UFO, for one, made extensive concert and TV appearances in Poland nearly two years ago. And to that we might add Joan Jett (who's played East Germany), the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, Elton "Sasson" John and Ian Gillan to the list of more or less rock artists who've done their part to make democracy safe for the Commies.

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

MIKE SHEA ●

EVERYONE
ADMITTEDCasio's
CT-6000
satisfies
pros and
novices alike

Casio Electronics' recent entry into the professional musical instrument field is, in and of itself, unremarkable; but to its considerable credit, the company has not forsaken the beginning player. In fact, one of its new keyboards is not only easier to learn on than the average professional keyboard, but is full functioned and expandable as well. In other words, this is an instrument the novice will not necessarily grow out of in a short time, if ever.

The state-of-the-art CT-6000 is designed intelligently with human interface and expression in mind. A five-octave keyboard with 61 full-sized keys, the unit is equipped with 20 pre-set sounds, ranging in quality from fair to excellent. There are 10 accompaniment tones to choose from, and combinations of sounds as well; separate accompaniment, melody, main and rhythm volume controls facilitate variable mixing. The 20 realistic rhythm patterns provided not only kick off with a click track-like intro, but allow the musician to add some of the smoothest fill-ins around. Like chords, the solid-sounding bass line can either be played automatically or manually. In addition to a pitch bend wheel, the instrument also has a pitch depth range control that will render anywhere from a one-semitone to a full octave bend—either continuous (portamento) or step (glissando) in nature—in semitone

steps. Other notable features include built-in switch-variable effects such as automatic doubling, chorusing, sustain and vibrato; switch selectable transposition to all 12 keys; and rear panel tuning, which allows the user to tune this instrument to any other one. The rear panel also provides jacks for sustain and volume pedals, headphone and automatically mixed stereo pre-amp level outputs. All this plus a MIDI interface for synchronizing the CT-6000 with other instruments and sequencers. Software for this type of operation will become available to the general public early next year.

Though the CT-6000 is a polyphonic instrument (allowing eight keys to be played at the same time for the formation of chords), it can adapt to one- or multi-finger chords, memorize a chord sequence in step or play the chords automatically in perfect time and pitch and follow along with what the player is doing. In the super accompaniment mode, it can add in rhythm, chords and a bass line, then vary these in accordance with the method and style of playing. As if that weren't enough, the instrument also judges timing, chord progressions, pitch, speed and even touch pressure on the keyboard in order to determine the proper changes in the patterns of rhythm, bass and chords. Though the touch-sensitive keyboard judges the pressure placed on the keys, this is by no means

simply a loud or soft positioning feature: several degrees of loudness are available, along with other tonal effects. The touch sensitivity works in two ways: first upon the initial keystroke pressure and then by an after-touch effect, which increases the sustain and overall volume, even if pressure is applied after a note has been played. The touch sensitivity also affects tone. For example, hitting the keys harder while playing the sax preset results in a more raspy tone. This feature continues during automatic accompaniment, and also affects the volume of the chords, bass line and rhythm pattern as well, resulting in some of the most dynamic sounds I've ever heard from an electronic keyboard.

An impressive unit on a number of levels, the CT-6000 offers specific, important advantages for the young musician. In addition to new aids for beginners, the unit incorporates the advanced functions of a professional model with the easy play functions of less expensive ones. List price is \$999, a real bargain considering the quality of the instrument. For more information, write to Casio Incorporated, Electronic Musical Instruments Division, 15 Gardner Road, Fairfield, NJ 07006; tel. 201-575-7400.

Mike Shea is a graduate instructor at the Institute of Audio Research in New York City. Readers are invited to submit questions concerning audio, video or recording to Mike Shea/Hands On, RECORD, 745 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10151.

Casio's CT-6000: A pro instrument that won't befuddle beginners (\$1000)



RECORD

MARTIN PORTER ●

HIGHER FI

The lines were once clearly drawn: if you were into electronics you were either into audio or video—rarely both. Those who spent their spare change on the latest moving coil cartridge would never have dreamt of investing in something that *only* plugged into their TV. Likewise, those who were the first to buy a VCR usually had little interest in the upgrades that could construct a state-of-the-art hi-fi.

No more. In fact, anyone who separates their audio from their video these days is out of touch with the latest goodies the gizmo gremlins have wrought. You can blame the changes on music video; stereo broadcast television has played its role, too. Besides, engineers had run out of visual special effects to keep the videophiles coming back for more, so they figured something new was in order; that *something new* was sound.

Either way, for those who care about tunes as much as television, the time is ripe to start jury-rigging a new hi-fi—one that packs some picture into the standard component combination and even offers some high-end audio opportunities for those who thought they'd have to buy a CD to enter the sanctified realm of higher fi.

Not so very long ago "VCR sound" was akin to "military music"; it was nothing you ever really wanted to listen to by itself. Even a stereo VCR couldn't achieve half the sound quality of a decent audio cassette machine. And with audio ears being tuned to new heights by the dynamic range of the Compact Disc it appeared that, in strict audio terms, the videocassette was going to be lost in the new-age audio shuffle.

Then along came Sony and Beta Hi-Fi. The Beta camp had been trailing its VHS opponents in terms of video sound quality for a couple of years. However, Beta socked the VHS camp with a one-two punch when it achieved true video high fidelity in 1983. Beta Hi-Fi, as their product



Sony's model VCR7200 Beta Hi-Fi goes for under \$700

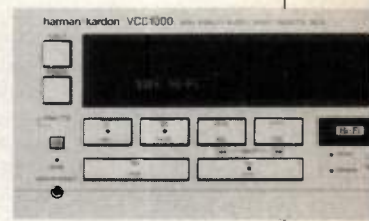
is known, not only achieved Beta stereo but could also boast specifications approaching those of the much ballyhooed Compact Disc. It was this innovation that spawned Sony's Video 45s and boosted the Beta band's stock in the VCR sweepstakes.

Beta Hi-Fi is a complete departure from VCR sound recording techniques, taking advantage of a video head that spins faster than conventional VCR methods. The result is video sound quality rated at 80 dB.

Sony has maximized the audio potential of the Hi-Fi video technology with its new SL-2710 (approx. \$1250), which also incorporates the necessary stereo-ready circuitry to decode stereo TV broadcasts. On the video side of things, the SL-2710 will allow programming of nine different events over a three-week period. It carries a tuner that can cover an extra-wide band of cable channels and its control panel includes Sony's range of high-quality special effects, including a crystal-clear freeze frame.

You don't have to have deep pockets to enjoy this audio-for-video potential. **Sony** has introduced its model VCR7200 Beta Hi-Fi VCR with equal sound quality but fewer video features for under \$700. As

with the Sony model, it claims a dynamic range of better than 80 dB, a frequency response of 20Hz-20kHz and a harmonic distortion less than .3 percent. On the video side it carries an eight event/14-day timer, and 105 channel tuner with 12 pro-



Harman Kardon, a respected name in audio, has introduced its first video product, the VCD-1000 VHS Hi-Fi unit (\$1250)

grammable presets.

While Beta Hi-Fi promoted an entire new breed of higher-fi videotapes, it also made a serious but subtle impact on the audio marketplace. For those eager to record up to six hours worth of Compact Discs or high quality recorded music onto a single 1/2-inch cassette, the medium proved to be a superb audio as well as video component. Video trade observers claim that half those Beta Hi-Fi units sold in Japan were used for strictly *audio* purposes.

The VHS family of video companies wasn't taking this audio one-upmanship sitting down. In a VCR competition that has been back-and-forth between Sony and JVC since the mid-'70s, it was inevitable that the latter firm would match Beta Hi-Fi audio quality sooner or later.

It was sooner rather than later. The result is VHS Hi-Fi, which was introduced last summer by a range of leading VHS VCR manufacturers. Their announced specifications match the Beta Hi-Fi entries

Sony's SL-2710 Beta Hi-Fi: Maximizing the audio potential of hi-fi video (\$1250)





Boston Acoustics' A40V: Retooled for use with TVs (\$85 each)

spec-for-spec, though the method by which they achieve this audio improvement (not to be confused with VHS stereo) is quite different.

VHS Hi-Fi is based on a process called Depth Multiplex in which audio and video signals are recorded on different layers of a tape's magnetic coating, with the audio buried beneath a video signal. In the playback mode the audio signals are read "through" the video information on the surface. As with Beta Hi-Fi, VHS Hi-Fi tapes also carry a conventional audio track

chores as well as selects between broadcast TV and video sources.

As a further indication of the merging of audio and video, names that once had strict audio implications are now joining the vid-

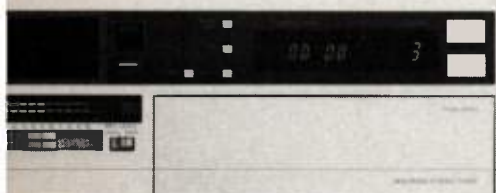
nates high frequency distortion. They've also packed the machine with a four-program/14-day timer, audio level meters and controls, as well as an internal decoder for receiving stereo TV broadcasts.

THE RECEIVING END

With stereo television on the broadcast horizon the question before the hardware community is how to get the new sound into home TVs and out of their speakers. There are several alternatives:

Sony has introduced a multichannel TV sound decoder (MLV-1100; approx. \$200) that plugs into any TV equipped with a multiplex output jack and enables it to receive stereo TV broadcasts. The unit also lets video "listeners" hook their tubes into their stereo amp or receiver so the decoder can be integrated into the home hi-fi.

Meanwhile, Technics has built the stereo TV decoding capability into its integrated audio/video receiver, the model SA-850. The unit combines a 100 watts per channel amplifier with an AM/FM tuner with 16 station presets, along with a VHF



so they are compatible with standard VHS equipment.

JVC packed its first VHS Hi-Fi unit (HR-D725U; approx. \$1295) with all the frills it could muster including a four video head system, a 139-channel tuner and a 14-day/eight-event programmable timer. The unit also comes with level controls for audio-only recording and LED peak level indicators for right and left channels. The unit also carries an infrared remote control that handles all fast forward and reverse

Sansui has packed the audio/video essentials into its model S-X1130 AM stereo/FM stereo receiver with video signal processing facilities (\$950)



Polk Audio, noted for its blow-away hi-fi speakers, has three new models for use with VCRs: From left, the VS-25 (\$200 each); the VS-19 (\$150 each); the VS-12 (\$100 each)

eo fray. Harmon Kardon, for instance, has introduced its first video product in the form of a VHS Hi-Fi unit (the VCD-1000; approx. \$1250) that contains custom audio circuitry that improves the VHS Hi-Fi noise reduction scheme as well as elimi-

television tuner capable of receiving all standard broadcast signals. If the TV sound isn't truly stereo the model will simulate dual channel audio with a phase adjustment of the midrange, which doesn't quite meet strict stereo standards but still

creates a richer sound. The receiver has enough inputs to handle every video and audio power and switching need.

Sansui has also packed the audio/video essentials into its model S-X1130 (approx. \$950). The unit features a powerhouse of 130 watts per channel output into eight ohms, as well as a synthesizer tuner that can handle eight FM and eight AM station presets. It even comes with a built-in AM stereo decoder, but requires an auxiliary stereo TV decoder. However, the receiver truly shines with its audio/video interfacing possibilities: This technological wonder can handle two different VCRs, a videodisc machine and can even help facilitate video dubbing with a picture sharpness and fader control.

HEARING DOUBLE

And what about the venerable boob tube itself? How is it changing with the audio-for-video times? For those eager to achieve quality video sound, traditional TVs have caused only earaches; with their four-inch speakers even 25-inch sets could produce audio vibes more akin to a transistor radio than the reigning king of high-tech home entertainment.

However, with the announcement of an impending stereo broadcast TV standard last summer, the television makers quickly went to town to produce sets that could accommodate, without help, the new audio-for-video vibes.

That meant building the necessary stereo TV decoder into the traditional television package. Inconspicuous to the eye, this decoder circuitry is able to split the audio signal for two speakers and even provide a third, bilingual channel when it appears.

Toshiba, for example, has built this stereo decoder into its new CZ-1484 (approx. \$800), though you'll have to provide the extra set of speakers to handle the multi-channel sound you'll receive either from the air (as in broadcast) or from an attached stereo or Hi-Fi VCR. Either way, the set also comes with a detachable remote control, 133-channel tuning and three sets of audio/video terminals.

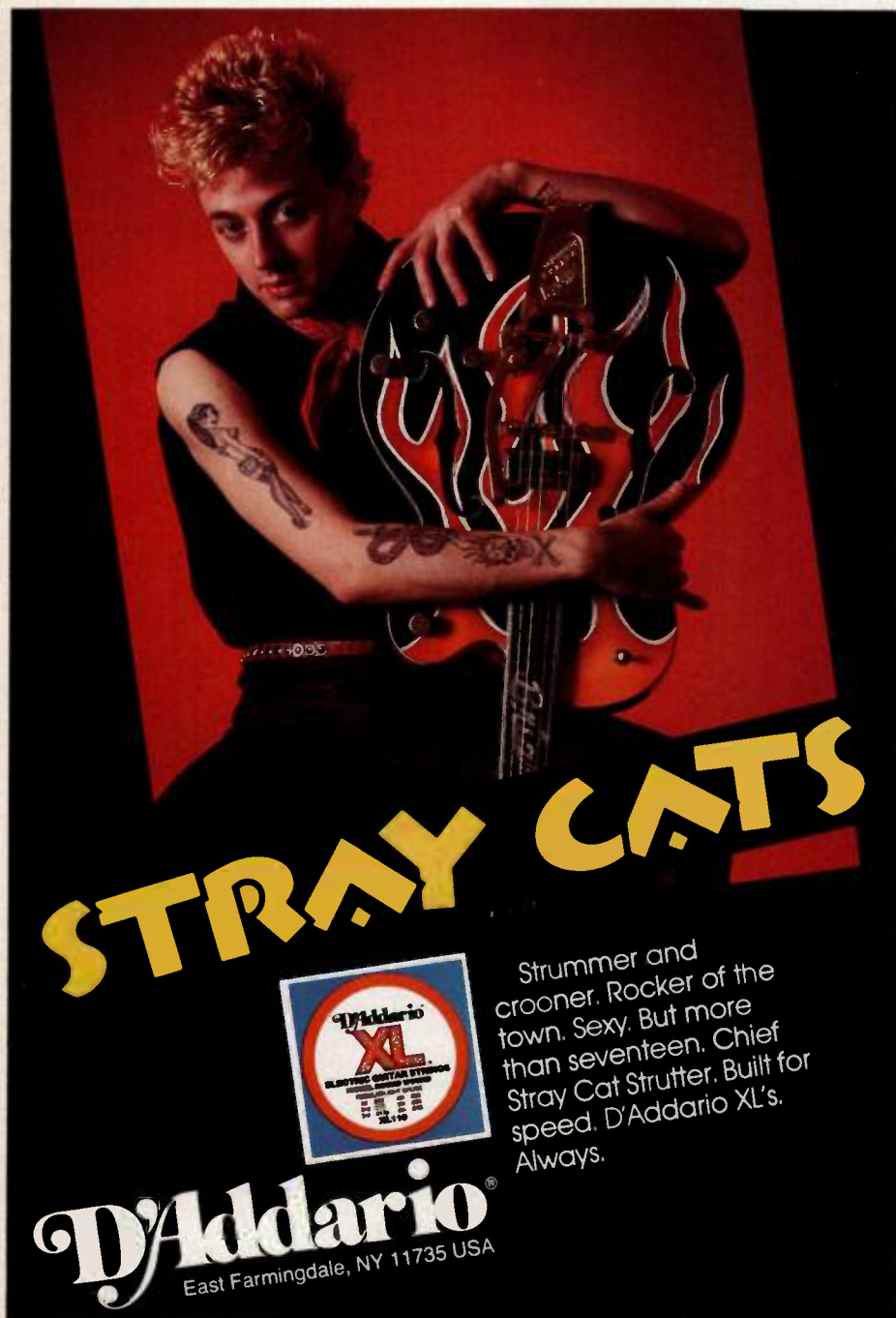
Panasonic has taken a similar approach with its Omni-Series of component TVs. It has packed a stereo TV decoder into its model CTF-2077R (approx. \$960). This 20-inch, cable-ready monitor carries a stereo amplifier that can provide four watts per channel to internal or external speakers. Other functions include volume level and a sleep/timer that will shut off automatically.

And what if the sound your television can provide doesn't pack the punch a true-blue rock 'n' roller is accustomed to? You'll have to hook the monitor and VCR to your hi-fi amp or receiver and add a pair of hi-grade speakers that ordinarily kick out your audio-only jams.

SPEAK TO ME

Sounds easy; in terms of wiring it is, but therein lies a dilemma. Most likely you'll set those nice wood grain loudspeakers beside the video tube and expect that everything will be dandy. Not so. With expensive component TV amplifiers rated at only five watts per channel, attached speakers have to be mighty efficient to produce adequate sound. Besides, ordinary speakers contain magnets that wreak havoc on video picture quality. The result is good sound but lousy video.

Consequently, in order to do their video stuff ordinary speakers must sport shielded magnets. Boston Acoustics has thus created a TV version of its popular A40V (approx. \$85 each) featuring the same 3/4-inch tweeter and a magnetically shielded version of the 6 1/2-inch woofer. Meanwhile, Polk Audio, a company noted for its blow-away hi-fi loudspeakers, has introduced video speakers as well. Three models were designed with extra deep cabinets to take advantage of the extra space around most TVs and to achieve better bass performance. The models (VS-25 for 25-inch sets, approx. \$200 each; VS-19 for 19-inch sets, approx. \$150 each; and VS-12 for 12-inch sets, approx. \$100 each) are all designed with shielded magnets to eliminate interference with the video picture screen. Like the Boston Acoustics speakers, these pack high efficiency drivers that can perform with as little amplification as five watts per channel.



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CRAIG ANDERTON

STRING ALONG WITH ME

Stringed instruments make a comeback

After being largely overshadowed by electronic instruments for the past decade, stringed instruments are making a strong comeback. There are many theories as to why this is happening; one is that MTV has placed more emphasis on visuals, and few would argue that someone playing a guitar can be a lot more exciting to watch than someone rooted to a keyboard. Another theory involves changing musical tastes. Many synthesizer players, either incapable or unwilling to become virtuosos on their instruments, often settled for clichéd or novelty-oriented sounds that turned out to have little staying power. As a result, when guitar-based groups such as the Police, U2, Van Halen, Big Country, the Pretenders, et al., started exploring new directions for the guitar, listeners were ready for something different. Also, thanks mainly to the new-found popularity of heavy metal music, there are now several "guitar heroes" who have inspired younger musicians to take up the instrument. Eddie Van Halen's flashy style has won almost universal acclaim, even from those who don't particularly care for his group's music; and Prince, while not yet in the same league as someone like Jimi Hendrix, has a seemingly instinctive knowledge of how to use the guitar both as a musical instrument and as a creative visual prop.

But the main reason for the guitar's renewed popularity just might be the fact that good electric guitars have never cost less. Many people in the industry credit Hartley Peavey with helping drive the cost of electric guitars downward; several years ago he decided that an American company should be able to compete effectively with foreign-made guitars, and started an automated guitar production process that not only turned out guitars faster and cheaper than before, but also maintained a uniformly high level of quality in a low-cost instrument. Several other manufacturers have adopted similar manufacturing techniques to cut costs, while other American companies produce guitars offshore in an effort to keep prices under control. The result: A buyer's market for guitars, with a remarkable choice of styles, prices and options. While a decent polyphonic synthesizer still lists for at least \$1000, manufacturing processes for the guitar have become so finely-tuned that many good guitars are now available with a list price under \$200.

The renewed interest in guitars has



Roland's GR-700 guitar synthesizer: Like a farmer, outstanding in its field

spawned new technical developments as well: For high-tech fans, there's even renewed interest in the much-maligned guitar synthesizer. Roland's MIDI-compatible GR-700 leads the field, but now JTG of Nashville has demonstrated a prototype guitar synthesizer that also seems to be able to faithfully track a player's style and articulation. MIDI compatibility promises much to the guitarist, including the ability to drive any MIDI-compatible keyboard synthesizer from the guitar, and the use of a variety of MIDI accessories. These include computer programs for sequencing and composition (where notes played on the guitar are stored in a computer and played back through the guitar synthesizer's electronics, or through any other MIDI keyboard) and automated scoring (the computer gives a printout in accurate musical notation of whatever you play on the guitar).

But technological improvements mean more than just guitar synthesizers. Vibrato tailpieces are now more reliable and trouble-free than ever, which is good news to all guitarists who like to play in tune. Pickup manufacturing has reached a very high level of sophistication; in fact, a guitar made by Player Instruments (not available as of this writing, but due for introduction in early '85) is designed specifically to take advantage of the wide variety of available pickups. Stock pickups are housed in small modules that slide into the guitar body from the back, thus allowing guitarists to

change pickups—and therefore the sound quality—in a matter of seconds.

We're even starting to see the appearance of new styles of stringed instruments, such as the Gittler guitar (as featured in the Police video for *Synchronicity II*). While functionally equivalent to a standard guitar, its looks are anything but standard—as those who have seen Andy Summers thrashing away on it can attest. Then there are what I call the "unguitars," such as the Chapman Stick (profiled in the November 1983 RECORD), and now the Starrett Touchboard. Like the Stick, the Touchboard is designed to be struck or tapped rather than plucked; the instrument itself is a large square piece of wood, with long frets laid horizontally across the board and several chromatically tuned strings stretched vertically over the board. Therefore, to play a chromatic series of notes, you can either slide on one string from fret to fret (a la standard guitar) or play on one fret but jump from string to string. For complex chords, jazz runs, or just plain lightning-fast playing, the Starrett Touchboard is unique and highly playable.

Add advances made in the manufacture of amplifiers (the subject of a future Musical Electronics column) and even guitar cases, and it's clear that the guitar has few rivals when it comes to low-cost, portable, expressive instruments. In short, electric guitars are better, and more cost-effective, than ever. ○

MUSICVIDEO • REVIEWS

Ashford & Simpson

"IT'S MUCH DEEPER" (D: Simon Milne), "STREET OPERA" (D: Keef), "HIGH RISE" (D: Mark Robinson) 21 min./Sony Video 45/\$16.95

"Penthouse Soul," if you want it. Nicholas Ashford and Valerie Simpson have much to recommend them, but they're strictly medium cool here. Of course, the view from the luxury suite is not quite as provocative as it is from the street, so maybe that's the problem. These two certainly know their stuff and they strut it well, smoldering mightily but, unfortunately, never igniting. Make that "Lite Soul"—Sounds great! Less filling!

—David McGee

The Police

The Synchronicity Concert (D: Godley-Creme) 75 min./I.R.S.-A&M Home Video/\$39.95

This trio is a shot of pure adrenalin. While others lament the predictable state of concert videos, the Police and directors Godley-Creme have simply revolutionized the live performance tape with their production of *The Synchronicity Concert*.

To be accurate, it's not entirely live. What it is is a marriage of powerful concert footage (shot

over a number of nights during the band's most recent tour, with most of the footage here coming from shows at the Omni in Atlanta) to the mood and context of their video clips. The directors complement the Police's outstanding musicianship by creating different conceptual video designs for each song. Thus, the black and white clip for "Every Breath You Take" sits comfortably beside the flash-cut extravaganza of "Synchronicity" and the eerie electronic lighting look of "King of Pain." Exotic slo-mo, computer animation and extreme closeups further define this fantastical music video environment.

Note: Originally shown as a pay-cable special on Showtime, the home video version of *The Synchronicity Concert* includes an additional four songs, including the immortal "De Do Do Do, De Da Da Da."

—Alan Hecht

Happy Hour with the Humans

D: Human Eyes, Sterling Storm, L.B. Johnson, Stephen Greenberg 40 min./Pacific Arts Video Records/\$29.95

An adventure-fantasy midway between art and slapstick, *Happy Hour with the Humans* is a step into the future of long form music video. Seven songs by the band are connected via clips,

blackout sketches, visual reprises, video paintings and instrumental segments in service of a crazed look at the human condition.

More character and circumstance than storyline, the video expresses itself through the eyes of bandleader Sterling Storm. Whether hot on the trail of the Invisible Man or waiting at the station for a train that hasn't run in years, Storm's travels are funny, warm and startling if not always coherent. The quirky synthpop music and Storm's expressive voice keep the soundtrack rocking along while video effects and imaginative writing drive the action. And there's even a sexy finale. What more could you ask for in a video?

—A.H.

Pat Benatar: Hit Videos

"Anxiety (Get Nervous)," "Shadows of the Night" (D: Mark Robinson), "Lipstick Lies" (D: Juliano Waldman), "Love is a Battlefield" (D: Bob Giraldo) 25 min./RCA-Columbia Pictures Home Video/\$19.95

Make that hit-or-miss videos. In "Anxiety," Benatar squirms through a one-joke farce that plays off her fear of the dentist (lots of depth here). The only burning question is the amount of voltage she used to get a hair style that rivals the Bride of Frankenstein's. "Lipstick Lies" rips off the *Flashdance* working girl character, with the star trading in her overalls for an inconsequential glamour girl fantasy—even the audio quality is poor on this one. Only Bob Giraldo's "Love is a Battlefield" has some spunk. Casting Benatar as a runaway trying to make it on the streets of New York, Giraldo elicits some spark from his underachieving protagonist. Despite the obligatory Michael Peters-choreographed dance number (they're starting to look alike, these street scenes), "Battlefield" does carry a legitimate *Rocky*-style feminist statement.

Oh—there's a "Making of 'Love is a Battlefield'" documentary tacked on the end of this cassette, but it serves only to extend the cassette's running time, without offering anything in the way of insight.

—A.H.

Kool Street Video

Various Artists D: Dennis Da Vallance 60 min./Continental Video/\$29.95

Unwittingly, one assumes, this collection of clips from top black artists helps point up the outrageous racism of music video. The most mediocre white artists get big bucks for the lamest songs, while deserving acts such as Kool and the Gang, Midnight Star (which does have its own concert video) and Rick James are stuck with low budgets that leave them little margin for error.

The clips here vary little—there's lots of undulating men and women in sequins doing their thing in cheap video environments. Rather than trying to out-effect the Cars, performers and directors would do well to study Prince's "Little Red Corvette" or Van Halen's "Jump" as models of what can be done on a low-budget. And about those directors... even Earth, Wind & Fire (blessed with a large budget for "Let's Groove") and Stephanie Mills (who attempts a concept video for "Pilot Error") are left in the cold by bad ideas, presumably from the person in charge. Only the Whispers' "In the Raw" shows promise, integrating as it does street paintings with their dance routines. An uninspired voice-over by Colonel Fast Freddy links the clips. Definitely not too kool.

—A.H.

The Last Waltz

D: Martin Scorsese 117 min./CBS-Fox Home Video/\$29.98
Their fame came at first from their association with Bob Dylan, but The Band etched a place of

MUSICVIDEO TOP TEN

- 1 HEARTBEAT CITY
THE CARS
Warner Home Video
- 2 A KISS ACROSS THE OCEAN
CULTURE CLUB
CBS/Fox Home Video
- 3 THE LAST WALTZ
THE BAND
CBS/Fox Home Video
- 4 MAKING MICHAEL JACKSON'S THRILLER
MICHAEL JACKSON
Vestron Video
- 5 DURAN DURAN
DURAN DURAN
Thorn-EMI Home Video
- 6 DAVID BOWIE:
SERIOUS MOONLIGHT
DAVID BOWIE
Media Music
- 7 THE ARMS CONCERT
VARIOUS ARTISTS
Music Media
- 8 POLICE SYNCHRONICITY CONCERT
THE POLICE
I.R.S./A&M HOME VIDEO
- 9 RICK SPRINGFIELD
PLATINUM VIDEOS
RICK SPRINGFIELD
RCA/Columbia Pictures Home Video
- 10 PAT BENATAR HIT VIDEOS
PAT BENATAR
RCA/Columbia Pictures 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 WAKE ME UP BEFORE YOU GO-GO
WHAM!
(Columbia) D: Duncan Gibbons
- 3 TORTURE
THE JACKSONS
(Epic) D: Jeff Stein
- 4 CARIBBEAN QUEEN
BILLY OCEAN
(Arista) D: M. Geoghegan
- 5 THE GLAMOROUS LIFE
SHEILA E.
(WB) D: Mary Lambert
- 6 LUCKY STAR
MADONNA
(WB) D: Arthur Pierson
- 7 BETTER BE GOOD TO ME
TINA TURNER
(Capitol) D: Brian Grant
- 8 SHE-BOP
CYNDI LAUPER
(Epic) D: Edd Griles
- 9 TWO TRIBES
FRANKIE GOES TO HOLLYWOOD
(Island) D: Godley-Creme
- 10 WE'RE NOT GONNA TAKE IT
TWISTED SISTER
(Atlantic) D: Marty Callner

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 December.

their own in American music with Robbie Robertson's exquisite song craft, a wealth of instrumental talent and three of the most distinctive singing voices on record. When they decided to quit the road in 1976 after 16 years, they returned to San Francisco's Winterland Arena—the first place they performed as The Band—for a spectacular farewell concert that featured more than a dozen of their peers and colleagues.

Bill Graham served Thanksgiving dinner to 6000 people, and when the dishes were cleared the music began. The Band played a set on their own, and after a short break they returned for a set in which they were joined for a number or two each by a parade of giants, including Ronnie Hawkins (who first brought this quintet together as his backup band The Hawks), Neil Diamond, Joni Mitchell, Muddy Waters, Dr. John, Eric Clapton, Paul Butterfield, Van Morrison (who brought the house down with "Caravan"), and Dylan himself.

The Last Waltz is director Martin Scorsese's document of The Band's spectacular farewell concert interspersing highlights of the show with brief interviews in which Robertson, Rick Danko, Levon Helm, Richard Manuel and Garth Hudson recall lean times and magic moments from their years together. There is a sense of history in their talk that deepens the effect of the music they play, and the camera finds angles that show the subtle communication among the musicians. The show was a well-rehearsed labor of love, and the film—which includes "The Weight" (with the Staple Singers), "Evangeline" (with Emmylou Harris), and "The Last Waltz," filmed on a bare soundstage—is a superb portrait of a great group going out in a blaze of glory.

—David Gans

Rock and Roll: The Early Days

D: Patrick Montgomery and Pamela Page 60 min. / RCA-Columbia Pictures Home Video / \$29.95

Reminiscent of Andrew Solt and Malcolm Leo's heralded TV special, *Heroes of Rock & Roll*, *Rock and Roll: The Early Days* traces the music's origins and evolution through the '50s, highlighting the major artists of the era and, unlike the Solt-Leo project, probing the varied sources of the music that became rock 'n' roll. Contributions made by black artists are the major topic of discussion, and the directors have aptly noted that rock is, as Alan Freed says at the outset of the show (in a scene from the film *Rock, Rock, Rock*), a river of music—the tributary streams being urban blues, country blues, black vocal harmony and New Orleans rhythm and blues. Much of the footage is predictable—by now you can't do a history of '50s r&r without including the Rev. Jimmy Snow and various representatives of the Alabama White Citizens Council—but the story remains compelling. And sad, too, as the end is chronicled in relentless detail: Elvis goes to the Army, Jerry Lee up and marries his *cousin*, Little Richard gets religion, Chuck Berry fools around with a minor, Buddy Holly dies—and poof! Fabian and Paul Anka take up the fallen standard. Some of the directors' observations are open to argument—Was Frankie Lyman's sound "sweet, innocent and white"? Did Elvis never again achieve the originality of his earliest recordings? Didn't the Everly Brothers do more than make rock safe for white folks?—but mostly they give an objective, dispassionate account of the forces, pro and con, that shaped rock's early history. Note: Montgomery and Page are also preparing another histori-

cal home video, *Whole Lotta Shakin': The Roots of Rock and Roll*, for fall release. —D.M.

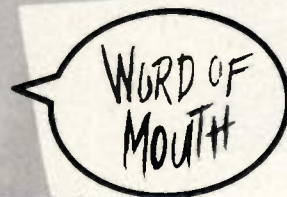
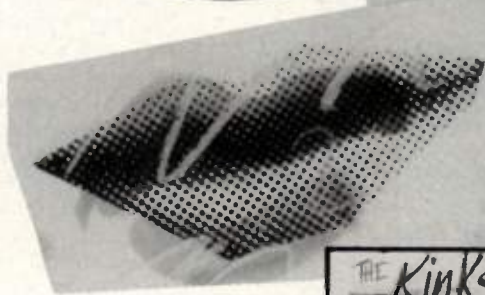
Rolling Stones: Video Rewind

D: Julien Temple 60 min. / Vestron Music Video / \$29.95

A journey through the Stones' past, vintage '70s and '80s, via clips and concert footage. Save for scenes from Robert Frank's proscribed Stones-on-tour documentary *C.S. Blues*, most of the footage here will be familiar to the group's fans. Included are clips from the band's movies, and recent videos for the *Undercover* album, including the unabridged version of "Too Much Blood." There's also a couple of quintessential Keith moments when, in response to a remark that the guitarist has had a problem with drugs, he observes: "Not with drugs—with the police." And when the interviewer asks him where the inspiration came from for *Let It Bleed*, Richards responds: "I'd say if we

were doing it right now, it'd be the sight of your face." Linking all the segments together are some rather amusing scenes featuring Mick Jagger and Bill Wyman, the latter portraying a security guard at the Museum of Mankind who enters a sealed room full of Stones artifacts, among them Jagger encased in glass. And those who feel the Stones' treatment of women has been rather uncharitable over the years should be advised that the bound and bruised girl who was the subject of the controversial *Black and Blue* billboard shows up here—bound and bruised and stored away in a refrigerator. Upon finding her, Jagger, a look of concern on his face, leans down and says, "I'm hungry. Got anything to eat in there?" She hands him a TV dinner and he closes the door. Another consciousness-raising experience in Stonedom. Stones videophiles take note: the '81 tour film, *Let's Spend The Night Together*, is now available at the reduced price of \$29.95. —D.M.

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PHOTO: LISA SEIFERT

Del-Lords: Love as a stone cold necessity for survival

A BIG HUNK OF AMERICA

HOW WILL THE WOLF SURVIVE?

Los Lobos

Slash/Warner Bros.

MIDNIGHT MISSION

The Textones

Gold Mountain/A&M

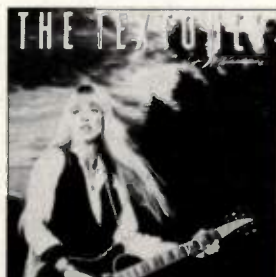
FRONTIER DAYS

The Del-Lords

Enigma/EMI America

**By
Wayne
King**

In September, while stumping in southern New Jersey, Ronald Reagan mentioned



the "hopes and dreams" of all Americans as expressed in the songs of Bruce Springsteen. This appropriation of the work of New Jersey's favorite son went ahead despite the fact that a request from the Reagan camp for Springsteen's appearance at the rally had been turned down. Given the mechanics of *The Big Lie*, few people probably caught Bruce's onstage references to the President's usurping his vision in Pittsburgh the following night.

While the Jersey musician's rebuke was mild, under the circumstances, it was direct. That's appropriate, because what Springsteen writes about on *Nebraska* and *Born In The U.S.A.* runs totally counter to the entire "look the other way" attitude necessary for the Reagan Age of America's public relations campaign to succeed. And while Spring-

steen may be the most prominent musical spokesman for the people in this country being shut out of this New Age, thankfully he's not the only one, as evidenced by these three new records by Los Lobos, the Textones and the Del-Lords.

Los Angeles' Los Lobos, whose 1983 EP *...and a time to dance* was one of the best debuts this decade, are not an overtly political group—their strengths remain musical (they're easily the most precise and sophisticated of the three groups here). The winning mixture of spritely accordion, ringing guitar, singing saxophone and propulsive rhythm section—Conrad Lozano drives a bassline like Dr. J—which sparked the Tex-Mex square dance sound of the EP still holds for *How Will The Wolf Survive?*



**THE EXPERTS SAID THEY HEARD EXCELLENT FREQUENCY RESPONSE,
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IT'S WORTH IT.

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But the turf they've staked out for themselves, mixing Mexican folk styles with assorted blues and R&B styles, is a bold one. Along with their appearance—the average Lobo tends to be a little hefty, and dresses in jeans and flannel shirts—it guarantees they're unlikely to be greeted with open arms by an industry hellbent on cloning itself into oblivion (it is noteworthy that all three acts here are signed to custom labels, and not directly to the majors). Los Lobos will undoubtedly find that taking on the traditional role of the outsider or the immigrant—preserving the best of a native culture while taking advantage of the freedom of America's melting pot—will be met by stiff resistance and blatant prejudice. But the desire, as expressed by drummer Louie Perez in a March '84 RECORD feature, to unite and expand upon a community beyond their own Chicano one deserves to succeed. "Will the wolf survive?" they ask on the album's closing number. On the basis of their two records so far, the answer's a resounding yes.

Another L.A. band, the Textones, is the most traditional sounding group here; the music of *Midnight Mission* often resembles the type of generic "El Lay" style that dominated the late '70s. The concerns of songwriter/guitarist Carla Olson go well beyond the laid back musings of the lazy, spoiled brats who spearheaded that genre, though. With songs like "Hands of the Working Man" (co-written with saxman/keyboardist Tom Junior Morgan), "Number One Is To Survive" or "Luck Don't Last Forever," she and the 'tones consistently evince a brassy power reminiscent of Graham Parker's debut, *Howlin' Wind*. When truly inspired, as on the title track, Olson's singing reaches out to the lost souls lined up at the Midnight Mission—the people who get lost in the shuffle of changing government definitions of poverty.

Best of all is her take on Bob Dylan's unreleased "Clean Cut Kid." This tribute to an all-American boy who lost everything he had following a hitch in Vietnam lists the simple pleasures of childhood so plainly, so matter-of-factly, that the betrayal—personal and national—that marked our involvement in the war chills the heart. It is a pertinent reminder of the loss involved in war at a time when the second Reagan term might very well see America's youth on the march again in foreign lands.

The Del-Lords, from New York City, probably stand the best chance of making it big—their ripping neo-rockabilly-influenced guitar attack will see to that. Leader Scott Kempner—whose efforts with the Dictators (under the pseudonym of "Top Ten") to help bridge the gap between punk and arena, the fringe and the mainstream, went virtually unnoticed—owes much to Springsteen with his tales of middle class struggle and salvation. But Kempner adds the anger that is so often missing from the Boss's work, placing it right up front with

"How Can A Poor Man Stand Such Times And Live?" and "Get Tough."

That's not to say that this is a typically brutal and cynical New York record—far from it. The Del-Lords' punk roots are evident by the hot "Double Life," a rewrite of the Flamin' Groovies' "Shake Some Action;" by the "Secret Agent Man" riff in "Mercenary;" by the playful garage band boasting of drummer Frank Funaro in the hilarious "I Play The Drums." And if songs like "Livin' On Love," "Burning In The Flame of Love" and "Pledge of Love" suggest a Springsteenian obsession with subject matter, they also declare a deeply held belief in love as a stone cold necessity for survival, as well as the key to establishing a one-on-one community, which serves as the foundation for the larger, more universal one.

This message of love's redemptive powers and its use as a basis for establishing relationships beyond just man and woman has been a vital part of rock's process since the early days. Then, church-raised singers changing their focus from the Promised Land above to this world down here signified a desire to reach out to people that was often merely sexual, but at its greatest—listen to singers like Aretha Franklin, Al Green or Sam Cooke for an inkling of it—linked the physical, the social and the spiritual in glorious ecstasy. What Kempner acknowledges, in "Get Tough," is that "you can get nonchalant about whatever comes down," but that you can't escape the connections that bind us all together on this planet. He screams out over a pounding beat: "Do you think I'm naive/Yeah, well maybe/But it's a big world, I'm one guy/I ain't gonna let it drive me crazy/So I'll shout as loud as I can/Because I care about/Every living boy, girl, woman and man." Rarely has a man, and a band, made it so explicit. And because the Del-Lords, along with Los Lobos and the Textones, are out there digging away at all the barriers, all the lies dividing and splitting this country every which way, anyone with a stake in it should be out there digging away with them.

.....

DON'T STOP Jeffrey Osborne

A&M

By
John
Strausbaugh

Even back in the days of L.T.D., Jeffrey Osborne was more than just another funk band's front man. His rubber ball phrasing could bounce an average Mo-



town wang-dang like "Back In Love Again" clean out of its groove and make it something different and special.

On his own, Osborne has gradually refined his act into something as distinctive as, if less ubiquitous than, Michael Whos-it's or Lionel Richie's. Where Richie has found success by putting great distance between himself and the earthy funk of the Commodores, Osborne has figured out how to cross over without compromising his funkster origins or softening his very physical approach to music. Last year's platinum-selling *Stay With Me Tonight* was certainly a breakthrough for Osborne, but, like his first solo album, it contained some throwaways. *Don't Stop*, on the other hand, comes minus all gimmicks and mannerisms, and fully integrates the singer's powerful mid-tempo funk with producer George Duke's tasteful rock and synthpop appropriations. If there's no prize-winning bell-ringer on the album, there's also no filler.

Instead, *Don't Stop* is a solid, focused, methodical collection of songs and images, an exercise in control that compresses a lot of energy and experience into a tight, compelling groove. The title track and "The Borderlines" come closest to recapitulating the previous album's hit formula. Both songs throb to a danceable but rather brooding pulse hinting at dangerous sexual urgency. Where most popular music derives its sensuality from adolescent jitters, Osborne conveys—can this be said without torpedoing his career?—a mature adult's understanding of love, loss and needs that are as much emotional as glandular. The interplay here between Osborne's intensity and the muted exuberance of Duke's arrangements is sophisticated and sexy.

"Is It Right" is a thumping paean to the paradoxes of success. "It's true nobody wants you when you're down and out," Osborne sings. "Now your phone is ringing off the hook/So use your money like a diamond drill/Learn how to cut your problems with a dollar bill." It's as hard to picture a Lionel Richie expressing such bitter caution as it is to imagine Osborne faking a Caribbean accent.

Which isn't to suggest that *Don't Stop* is in any way a somber affair. "You Can't Be Serious" is pure fun, a bouncy novelty hummer about UFOs. "The Power" and "Live For Today" are whole-new-generation anthems that would be appropriate for *The Wiz*. And even the darker studies are enlivened by the irrepressible snap of Duke's arrangements and Osborne's signature break-outs into the upper registers.

"Live for today," Osborne sings, "hope for tomorrow." Good advice, and appropriate. Confident, assured and in complete control of his material, Osborne has made *Don't Stop* his best album yet. Even more exciting, though, are the directions it suggests the artist's heading in. Don't stop, indeed.

Continued on page 52

S I D E

NOT THAT YOU'D KNOW IT FROM READING OUR FIRST TWO COLUMNS, but guess what: Big-name pop stars put out singles, too. So given that we've paid our respects to those deserving of wider recognition, maybe we can now do a little justice (or injustice as the case may be) to some folks who need no introduction—and probably very little in the way of publicity either.

PRINCE

"Erotic City" (WARNER BROS.)

If you haven't heard the unexpurgated version of "Let's Go Crazy" 's B-side on your favorite station, it might be because to make it programmable might demand so many bleeps it wouldn't even be listenable. Especially given lyrics like: "We can fuck until the dawn/Making love until the cherry's gone." Musically and vocally, however, it's something different from His Royal Badness—and if I'm not mistaken, that something is a send-up of Stevie Wonder and Zapp. Because for all the porn scatology involved, the tune is actually mellow—mantric even. Hypnotic technofunk with uncanny touches of industrial ambience thrown in for good measure under some seductively plaintive vocoded vocalizing.

CHAKA KHAN

"I Feel For You" (WARNER BROS.)

What we have at work here is a confluence of black pop geniuses, insofar as the tune was written by Prince, sung by Chaka and harped on by Stevie Wonder. All of whom turn in performances ranging from the perfunctory (Prince) to the passionately predictable (Chaka) to the sublime (Stevie). More noteworthy than the namedropping facets of the production, however, is Arif Mardin's contribution as producer: Role-playing that owes huge debts to scratch deejaying (if not Trevor Horn) given how he uses staggered, staccato rhythms and spliced passages—for a treat don't miss the cute reprise of Little Stevie Wonder's hit "Fingertips," which gets interjected after Stevie's harmonica solo.

JEFFREY OSBORNE

"Don't Stop" (A&M)

In all the fuss over Mr. Michael last year, Jeffrey Osborne's super LP *Stay With Me Tonight* was at least underappreciated if not overlooked. If this first single hits like it oughta, though, it will do loads to rectify the situation. Osborne is at present the most distinctive and masculine vocalist in black pop; not macho, mind you, just husky-throated and intimate with the joys of love post-maturity. Besides a deft rave-up of a guitar solo, this tune has going for it an upbeat, uptempo groove that races along at a clip beneath Osborne's measured and matured warbling.

CULTURE CLUB

"The War Song" (EPIC)

Actually an anti-war anthem, which means its sentiments are on the side of peace rather than Armageddon. Problem is that when compared to Culture Club singles of yesteryear (well, last year), this one doesn't sound so committed to getting across the idea at hand. All the right elements are in place—George aping Stevie Wonder again, the Philly soul moves peppered with the right amount of pan-ethnic sweeteners, the Club's bright and outgoing orchestration. The melody, however, has more bounce than body going for it, the lyrics are pedestrian and only backup singer Adele Bertei's possessed gospel-diva break on the outchorus rings with any real passion.

DAVID BOWIE

"Dancing With The Big Boys" (EMI)

This here is the B side of Bowie's current single, "Blue Jean," which I find pretty perfunctory as things that go Bowie in the night go. The flipside, though, co-written with Messrs. Iggy Pop and Carlos Alomar, is something else altogether: a kind of Bowieized reprise of late '60s Motor City heavy metal a la Iggy and the Stooges, but more sophisticated and urbane than you'd expect from the Thin White Duke. Kick-ass rock 'n' roll all the way through.

SCRITTI POLITTI

"Wood Beez
(Pray Like Aretha Franklin)"
(WARNER BROS.)

Arif Mardin also produced this ditty, a slice of black bubblegum pop that more than favors the present-day incarnation of Michael Jackson. Least insofar as the British singer Green's vocal is concerned (see, that's his whole name, kinda like Fabian, or Prince even, case you thought I'd skipped over some formal introductions somewhere). While Green has the fey side of Sensitive Mike down, he lacks MJ's pent-up fire. Even still, the hip-hop ripoff production values carry the tune along swimmingly,



Jeffrey Osborne: The most distinctive vocalist in black pop

and while I haven't heard the mug on the dance floor, years of listening tells me this one is gonna be a club fave in no time.

THE ART OF NOISE

"Beatbox Diversion 1" (ISLAND)

Trevor Horn, the ringleader of this studio act, is currently about the hottest producer in pop, given his work this year for Yes, Frankie Goes to Hollywood and The World Famous Supreme Team. And truth is, while

I'm giving Arif Mardin the benefit of the doubt by declaring he ripped all his stuff straight from the hip-hop crew, my guess is he was less inspired by the genuine article than he was by Horn's work. At its best, Horn's is a more original extension of the scratch deejay cut-up aesthetic than Mardin's, as this record masterfully demonstrates. If I had to break it down I'd say it was like a cross between Afrika Bambaataa's "Looking for the Perfect Beat" and Brian Eno's *Music for Airports*. Ambient hip-hop, if you can get ready for that, with a beatbox backbeat overlayed with a symphony of diverse vignettes stylistically ranging from musique concrete sound effects to passages flush with AOR romanticism. Best instrumental pop record since "Rockit," hands down.

BY GREG TATE TRACKS

VINYL ANALYSIS

BRUCE COCKBURN

Stealing Fire / Gold Mountain-A&M

Like his closest American counterpart, Jackson Browne, Canada's Bruce Cockburn is an appealing singer despite his limited melodic range. His strong suit is in his lyrics, however, and unlike Browne's recent work, he wastes little time beating around in pop music's banal bushes. *Stealing Fire* is by far his most inspired effort yet. Side two was written during a 1983 trip to Central America, and his angry observations should give radio programmers looking to jump on the patriotic bandwagon cause to pause: "Here comes the helicopter, second time today/How many kids they've murdered, only God can say..." Haven't we been through this before?

—Rico Mitchell

THE FORCE MDS Love Letters / Tommy Boy

Up until Afrika Bambaataa's collaboration with James Brown on "Unity," what was missing from the New York rhythm revolution was *soul*. The M.D.'s continue the injection of sweet, intense, gospel-flavored singing into hip hop, and dabble in everything from doo wop to reggae to scratch. The results, unfortunately, are mixed. When TCD sings "Tears" in a heartrending Smokey Robinson falsetto, you think you've heard the Next Big Thing. But on other cuts, the M.D.'s eclecticism degenerates into incongruity.

—Crispin Sartwell

JIMI HENDRIX Kiss The Sky / Reprise

Kiss my ass is more like it. Limited edition quality vinyl notwithstanding, this is just another of self-appointed Hendrix leech Alan Douglas' efforts to line his wallet, this time with a totally random selection of previously released album cuts along with distinctly inferior studio outtakes and even worse live concert tracks. More galling still are the liner notes which suggest that this album will initiate a new generation of Hendrix fans. How Reprise can even allow this album to exist when a legitimate minor classic like *Hendrix In The West* is out of print is beyond comprehension.

—Jonathan Gregg

THE HOODOO GURUS

Stoneage Romeos / A&M

Australia's Hoodoo Gurus dedicate this record to such characters as the New York Dolls' Arthur Kane, Larabee from *Get Smart*, Arnold Ziffel of *Green Acres*, and others of ill-repute. One guy they left off was Frederick Jackson Turner, the turn-of-the-century American historian whose "frontier" theory goes a long way, it seems to me, towards explaining why so many genuinely quirky and eclectic pop records keep flowing out of "Oz." Except for the better murmurings heard down South, the last time any American music sounded like this was on the West Coast in the late '60s. Maybe that's why the Gurus themselves sound like they're from that time, only before the drugs arrived and made every song an hour long. The Gurus keep the beat driving throughout; the result, on a number like "I Want You Back," affirms *Stoneage Romeos* as one of the sharper debuts this year.

—Wayne King

HUNTERS AND COLLECTORS

The Jaws of Life / Slash-Warner Bros.

Few bands have a better handle on white funk

than Hunters and Collectors. Where ersatz soul men paste together pale approximations of R&B, this Australian ensemble goes after the loping pulse of the dance beat with brisk single-mindedness that doesn't waste time on the niceties of nuance. Not that the band is without soul—just check their growling remake of Ray Charles' "I Believe To My Soul" (listed here as "I Believe"). Singer Mark Seymour sounds as strong throughout the rest of the album, from the kinky tautness of "Betty's Worries, or The Slab" to the brutal romance of "42 Wheels." Even when his lyrics leave the listener on the outside looking in, there's enough meaning to be found in the music, with its jangly guitar, throbbing rhythm section and occasional burst of brass. If anything, the music is so entrancing that the Hunters ought to have gone for a double album, the better to delve deeper into these dark grooves.

—J. D. Considine

THE JACKSON SISTERS

Since *Thriller*, the Jacksons have come up with a new marketing strategy: instead of selling forty million copies of one album, they're trying to sell one copy each of forty million albums. A year from now, we'll discuss the solo efforts of Marlon, Tito, Randy, Jackie and so on. For now, we'll contemplate the female of the species: Rebbie, Janet and LaToya. Each of their records is formulaic and almost wholly devoid of individuality. All the sisters sound roughly the same—tuneful and lightweight—and each warbles over carbonated pop funk (carbonation courtesy of Pepsi, no doubt). Their songs are bubbly, sweet and innocuous to the point of vapidness. Of the three, Rebbie's *Centipede* (Columbia) offers the best material and the most interpretive authority. She's the oldest of the sisters, and she's the most relaxed and personable of them on record. Wayne Henderson's production infuses Rebbie's album with a subtlety and sophistication lacking on the other two. And *Centipede* has some commercial punch; the title cut went Top 40 pop and Top Five on the black charts.

At 18, Janet's obviously got a lot of potential, and her voice is already the crispest of the three. *Dream Street* (A&M) is her second solo album, and it's a considerable improvement over the first. But Janet—an erstwhile television actress—remains a characterless singer who rarely takes chances. Producers Giorgio Moroder and Pete Bellotte don't challenge her to widen her horizon.

LaToya's *Heart Don't Lie* (Private I) is easily the most emotionally and intellectually arid of the bunch. She's shamelessly derivative, and rips off George Clinton, Prince and brother Michael with a faith bordering on servility. Buy the other 39,999,999 if you must, but give this one a miss.

—C.S.

PAUL JOHNSON

Escape to Reality / Hepcat

Paul Johnson is a born-again surf guitarist who many years ago, at age 15, wrote the surfing classic "Mr. Moto" for the Belairs, long before he had ever heard a Dick Dale record. That's no more astonishing than this collection of surf-style instrumentals celebrating the power and the glory. Johnson is a magnificent player, with a touch like Robert Quine's or Jody Harris's, the muscle of Dick Dale, the depth of John Fahey. There's no proselytizing here, though, simply a man being productive with his gift. It's not what he says, but how he says it that leaves a lasting impression. His take on the hymn "Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus," for example: It starts out sounding like Al Wilson's "The Snake," makes a change and heads for "Ghost Riders in the Sky" territory, and finally settles into its own melody at a breakneck, exhilarating clip. Unusual and potent. Available on cassette only from Hepcat, Box 749, Vista, CA 92083.

—David McGee

THE NEVILLE BROTHERS

Neville ization / Black Top Rounder

Recorded live in 1982 at Tipitina's in New Orleans, this album captures one of the nation's finest bar bands in action. Funk, jazz, rock, reggae—if it's got soul, these guys toss it in the pot and stir it up wit' the gumbo. Where else are you gonna find a Caribbean-flavored version of Duke Ellington's "Caravan" followed by the rollicking Mardi Gras street chant "Big Chief"? Aaron Neville's classic 1966 R&B ballad, "Tell It Like It Is," is faithfully reprised here, as is the Meters' polyrhythmic phone call home, "Africa." All four contribute to the distinctive four-part harmonies on Art Neville's "Why You Wanna Hurt My Heart?" While I've heard them a little hotter live, at least I know where to go to get "Neville-ized" until they venture my way again.

—R.M.

THE RAMONES Too Tough To Die / Sire

Incredible but true: the Ramones have been in existence for ten years. That's a *decade* of Ramonomania, for chrissakes. And despite the revolting fact that mass audience acceptance remains elusive, America's most thrilling rock 'n' roll band refuses to throw in the towel, preferring to slug away 'til the walls come tumbling down. The band that made three joyous rock 'n' roll classics in a row (*Ramones*, *Ramones Leave Home* and *Rocket To Russia*)... the band that lit the fuse to the entire '70s punk/new wave explosion in Britain... the band that launched a thousand lousy imitators (i.e., 99% of all hardcore)... the band that sent Linda Ronstadt out of a NYC club screaming into the night (perhaps their most socially significant act to date)



... that band is alive and kicking with a vengeance.

Just check out two examples. The first is "Howling At The Moon" (guest-produced by Eurythmic Dave Stewart!) which features one of the all-time great "sha la la" choruses. The second is "Chasing The Night," a nocturnal rave-up of epic proportions that's liable to turn Springsteen into a headbanger. Either one of these superb sonic booms is guaranteed to put you in orbit; I'm still flying high and have no intention of coming in for a landing. Ramonmania rules!

—Craig Zeller

TOMITA

Canon of the Three Stars / RCA Red Seal

Is it enough to point out with all these so-called synth-pop wizards around that Isao Tomita is one of the unheralded masters of the machinery? That no less an authority than Stevie Wonder sings hosannahs to his name? On *Canon of the Three Stars* Tomita has truly gotten down, to the tune of converting (allow me to quote from the liner notes 'cause this is too wild to paraphrase) "the wave forms of electromagnetic emanations from various stars and constellations into equivalent audio waves ... to form the various sounds of the sections in his orchestra." Then he thanks five astronomers (Carl Sagan among them) for their help in creating the album. Check out the ID for the Dawn Chorus among the players in the Plasma Symphony Orchestra: "The Magnetosphere above the 'Star' named 'Earth.'" It's deep, podnabs, it's deep. And when Tomita rolls into the "Cosmic Chorus" (better known as Bach's "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring"), you will understand what it must sound like in Heaven, for this music has truly been touched by God.

—D.M.

VARIOUS ARTISTS

Sun's Greatest Hits / Rhino

BOB STONER

If You Want It Enough / Sun

If you missed it in the '50s and didn't pick up on

it in the '70s when Charly Records imported a host of classic Sun sides, the fellows at Rhino have stepped in to fill the breach. Only the title is arguable here: so many Sun sides were one-of-a-kind that to pick out 14 and call them the label's greatest hits is a bit presumptuous, but any album that fits Jerry Lee's "Great Balls of Fire" on a disc with Warren Smith's "Ubangi Stomp" is okay by me, no matter how old it is. Primitive, wild and still enlightening nearly 30 years later. The Sun label isn't dead, however, but merely sleeping until the right thing comes along. The right thing may well be Rob Stoner, best known for leading Bob Dylan's backup band in the mid- to late-'70s. Stoner, though, is a stone rockabilly through and through, and just to press the point, he's gone to Memphis with a clutch of rockin' original songs plus a couple of inspired cover choices (Pomus-Shuman's "Marie's The Name" and Lennon-McCartney's "I'll Cry Instead") and cut them for the Sun label. Rockin' Rob is the one-man band and sole vocalist and his effort shines with the honesty that's been a hallmark of his New York shows for so many years. A damn fine effort at updating rockabilly without losing its essence. The record number is Sun 1031—if you can't find it, demand it!

—D.M.

TOM VERLAINE Cover / Warner Bros.

Because of the work of his three previous solo efforts, and as the "star" of Television, Tom Verlaine has a pretty grand reputation to live up to on *Cover*. Those critics who consider Verlaine the finest guitarist in rock, and a superior songwriter whose left-field imagery and tales are consistently compelling, won't be disappointed. The record's first line, in fact, is vintage Verlaine: "Deep is the long that I feel." A powerful, deceptively simple line; one that, for a moment, lesser artists think they could come up with—much as others thought they could write like Hemingway.

Verlaine plays by his own rules as a lyricist to

the extent that in "Lindi-Lu" he sketches a shattered romance scene with "Thought she was mine for keeps/Then she wandered away/And like a willow I weeps"—and it works! And to extend his otherworldly reputation, there's "Swim," which opens with a stream of unconsciousness: "... at night ... I'd ... it's hard to say ... I'd sort of fly around ... yeah, that's it ... fly around ..."

Backed by guitarist Jimmy Ripp, drummer Jay Dee Daugherty and ex-Television bassist Fred Smith, Verlaine wraps all these lyrics in nine pulsing, melodious songs, with his own fluid, inventive fretwork pulling the material into delightfully strange places. Though he and Ripp do lock into some inspired interplay, it's Verlaine's own solos that are absolutely transcendent ... even in 1984 there's a guitarist you wish would solo more often.

—Duncan Strauss

XTC The Big Express / Geffen

XTC has a strange problem. Where other groups struggle with songs, reaching for riffs and fumbling hooks, XTC seems absolutely deluged by melody, with tuneful tidbits bulging from every verse and chorus of their output. Funnily enough, that doesn't really help, because despite their overwhelming melodic interest, few of these compositions are genuinely catchy. "The Everyday Story of Smalltown" boasts a McCartney-like chorus with all the charm of "Penny Lane," and none of the saccharine. But rather than sit satisfied with a strong melody, Partridge sends the song down a series of musical back alleys, crowding the cut with ridiculous flourishes and absurd overdubs. Similarly, "Shake You Donkey Up" insists on its barnyard noises, while "Seagulls Screaming Kiss Her, Kiss Her" seems so obsessed with its own cleverness that it loses sight of the listener. Granted, XTC's continued lack of commercial acceptance might well have convinced the band to pursue its own, self-satisfying agenda, but be warned—this express goes nowhere.

—J.D.C.

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TONIGHT
David Bowie
EMI America

By
**Rico
Mitchell**



If *Let's Dance* was David Bowie's Serious Moonlight Serenade to the '80s, then *Tonight* must be viewed through the critical telescope as an ill-timed lunar eclipse. Don't bother to dust off the tuxedos for this one, boys; we're talking serious obfuscation of a celestial body here.

In the final analysis, *Let's Dance* may have been just another triumph of style over substance (emotional conviction has rarely been foremost among Bowie's artistic priorities). But beneath the theatrical vocals, co-producer Nile Rodgers assembled a genuinely combustible studio band including Stevie Ray Vaughan, who improvised bluesy fills that consistently put the spark to Rodgers' persuasive funk arrangements.

One keeps waiting for *Tonight* to generate similar heat, but it never does. The fault lies not so much with the musicians, although Carlos Alomar lacks Vaughan's killer instinct as a soloist. Nor should Bowie's co-producers, Derek Bramble and Hugh Padgham, share the blame—if possible, *Tonight* is even more aurally impressive than its predecessor. No, the problem is Bowie himself. At a time when almost anything he puts out is guaranteed to sell, he simply doesn't appear to be trying very hard, either as singer or songwriter.

Several of the tunes are recycled collaborations between Bowie and his friend Iggy Pop. "Don't Look Down," from Iggy's 1979 *New Values*, re-emerges in a reggae riddim, with Bramble copping the bass line from Bob Marley's "Natural Mystic" and the Thin White Duke attempting to evoke the Rastaman's warble. It doesn't work, primarily because Bob usually had something specific on his mind, whereas David and the Ig merely wander "from New York to Shanty Town" repeating the title like lost tourists gone paranoid from too much ganja. "Tonight," from Pop's 1977 *Lust For Life*, also gets the reggae-go-round, and comes away healthier for it (although Bowie should have given guest singer Tina Turner a verse to herself instead of relegating her to back-up duty—I mean, *show some respect* . . .).

Bowie and Pop share a couple of kicks with the Borneo Horns (as the brass section is dubbed) on side two's "Tumble And Twirl" and "Dancing With The Big Boys," but it's a case of too little, too late. On "Loving The Alien," one of only two new-Bowie originals here (the other being

the flimsy single, "Blue Jean"), he sings about humanity "believing the strangest things/loving the alien . . ." The lyrics refer to Christianity, but given Bowie's perennial identification with outsiders, from Major Tom to The Elephant Man, they might also apply to himself. Could it be that after all the years and all the changes, he's a bit disconcerted by his renewed popularity (even if it seems so characteristically calculated)? Once the disappointment with *Tonight* sinks in, I dare say the chameleon on the cover won't be the only one with a blue face.

BIGBAMBOOM
Daryl Hall
and John Oates
RCA

By
**Craig
Zeller**



It's not exactly a secret that Hall and Oates have been riding the hot streak of their lives since the '80s began. *Voices*, *Private Eyes* and *H2O* were all solid if unspectacular success stories that continually unleashed a slew of memorable hit singles on an insatiable listening public (of which I am an avid member). I tune in loud and clear when I hear a Hall and Oates 45 coming at me over the airwaves. And we're talking *durable*, brother; all the saturation airplay in the world is not gonna dim the glow of something as propulsively vibrant as "Say It Isn't So."

On *BigBamBoom*, the mercury keeps rising as the hot streak continues—hitwise, that is. In one of the great double plays of the year, "Dance On Your Knees" (featuring a wicked assist from hip hop mixmaster Arthur Baker) serves as a brilliant prelude to "Out of Touch," destined to be regarded as one of their quintessential heartache workouts. This is touchdown rock 'n' soul (pardon the switch from horsehide to pigskin metaphors) in which Daryl runs the multiple option H&O offense to perfection, spinning the chorus at the end every which way—one of his favorite maneuvers—to reach paydirt.

What follows on the rest of *BBB* is pretty much your standard Hall and Oates fare. The increase in streetwise production techniques gets things too cluttered at times and frequently the songs are needlessly extended. Side one hangs together better than side two, which closes with the LP's other highlight: "Possession Obsession," a moving evocation of yesteryear Philly soul.

Ultimately this is a fair-to-middling effort from an often dynamic duo. Now

bring on the overkill airplay for "Out Of Touch."

TINA B
Tina B
Elektra

By
**Wayne
King**



No doubt about it—*Tina B* has to be one of the finest records ever made where the singer was sleeping with the producer. Now, if you can lift your minds out of the gutter for just one moment, and stop trying to learn what all inquiring minds would want to know, we can explain that Ms. B happens to be Mrs. B—that is, she's the wife of producer Arthur Baker. That relationship may be why Baker has generally refrained here from his often overblown production style. For Tina, possessor of fragile pipes (relative to, say, the men Baker has produced for Tommy Boy), the sonic fury that the mixmaster is capable of unleashing is withheld in favor of a sound which gives her voice—and the songs—room to breathe. Only "Honey To A Bee" and the boasting "Queen Beat" indulge in heavy duty chanting and blasting.

The rest of *Tina B* is a showcase for Mr. and Ms. B's command of sundry soul stylings: the Motown-modeled "Ooh Baby"; "Gotta Make This Love Last," a tender duet sung with Pete Byrne; "I Always Wanted To Be Free," which ends the record with a Moroder-like throb running alongside scattershot vocal dubs.

Best of all is the string-laden ode to initiative and perseverance, "Nothing's Gonna Come Easy" (a shorter version of which highlights the *Beat Street*, Vol. 2 record). Congratulations go out to the Bakers on producing such a healthy offspring, and hope the future brings more of the same.

YOU'RE GETTIN'
EVEN WHILE I'M
GETTIN' ODD
The J. Geils Band
EMI America

By
**Crispin
Sartwell**



Through eleven years and eleven albums, the

J. Geils Band was one of the world's best and most underappreciated rock acts. They deserved platinum records and packed arenas; instead, their singles usually peaked near the bottom of the Hot 100, and the band slowly sank into debt. Even so, they maintained their lineup and their sound through the '70s. They were perhaps the only top American rock band to do so.

Then came *Freeze Frame*, rave reviews, and the band's first Number One, "Centerfold." Success did what commercial failure never could: it broke up the sextet. After the band issued *Showtime*, a fine live album, singer Peter Wolf left (or was pushed) to pursue his own projects.

After a two-year hiatus, both the singer and the band have come back strong. Wolf's *Lights Out* is one of the year's best rock albums. And the latest Geils release is typical of their output: crisply played, effortlessly traditional, gloriously salacious.

Stilling rumors that the band would hire Southside Johnny or some other vocalist, keyboard player/producer/arranger/songwriter Seth Justman and drummer Steven Jo Bladd handle all the vocals. They do a credible job, although neither has Wolf's strong voice or unique line of jive. It helps that *Odd* is one of the best sets of songs the band has ever worked with; Justman, like Wolf, seems to have been invigorated by the chance to go it on his own.

The best thing about the album, typically, is Magic Dick's horn and harp work. He has come in to his own as a sax and trumpet player, and nails down each song with precise, hard-hitting horn charts. There are only four harp solos on the LP, but as is usual from the man who single-handedly invented rock harmonica, they will come as a revelation to harp players everywhere.

In short, don't get mad; get *Odd*.

CHINESE WALLS Philip Bailey

Columbia

By
James
Hunter

What was Phil Collins supposed to give Philip Bailey that George Duke—who sound-photographed *Continuation*, Bailey's vivid 1983 solo debut—couldn't? Bumpy rhythms and thick tunes? A gawky sense of humor? Collins' rock audience? Who knows, but it's unlikely that admirers of either the Earth, Wind and Fire falsetto sorcerer or the Genesis drummer counted the days until this collaboration of the sublime and the noisy hit the racks.



Chinese Walls, though, begins well. Negotiating the sneaky melody of Jerry Knight and Davitt Sigerson's "Photogenic Memory" over anxious chord changes, Bailey's a love analyst turning frisky advice into delicious dance rock. Collins wraps his bulleting percussion tracks around "I Go Crazy" so snugly the arrangement squeals; it's sensational hearing Bailey strike out on the choruses like a caged lion. And on "Walking On The Chinese Wall," Bailey's high cries and Collins' low drum moans build a ravishing porcelain-and-concrete groove, with EW&F's Phenix Horns holding the track together.

But "Easy Lover," Collins and Bailey's vocal duet, is excruciating—the kind of birdbrained catchiness that gives catchiness a bad name, plus the kind of enthusiasm from Collins that makes him sound like England's biggest ham. He really only stars Bailey's extraordinary voice on the wrenching "Show You The Way To Love." On Glen Ballard and Cliff Magness' elegant "For Every Heart That's Been Broken," Collins is a coarse Quincy Jones; on the charging "Time Is A Woman," he's a klutzy Maurice White. The great Philip Bailey record may require more grit than George Duke ever deemed appropriate, but it will also need a more fluid hand than Collins'. And that record is still begging to be made.

.....

I FEEL FOR YOU Chaka Khan

Warner Bros.

I'VE GOT THE CURE Stephanie Mills

Casablanca

I APPRECIATE Alicia Myers

MCA

By
Steve
Bloom

What Chaka Khan, Stephanie Mills and Alicia Myers have in common is that they began their careers in the '70s and have managed, with varying degrees of success, to extend them into the '80s. Though Chaka has failed to consistently cross over, she has picked up where Aretha Franklin left off, and is undoubtedly the most potent black female singer of her generation. Mills, like Evelyn King and Deniece Williams, continues to absorb pop trends in hopes of developing her own personal style. And Myers, a relative newcomer, seems to have lifted some pages out of Roberta Flack's songbook in fashioning her



strong solo debut, *I Appreciate*.

Simply put, Myers can wail, as is evidenced by the album's first single, "You Get The Best From Me (say, say, say)," on which she offers a stunning *capella* intro before the "say, say, say" vamp begins. While this track is easily the album's best, not to be ignored is the rhythm-and-bluesy second side that displays her Flack—and sometimes even Aretha—vocal chops.

Mills' *I've Got The Cure* is an example of how even a talented singer will often find it necessary to rely on several producers and a gimmick to market a record. The theme here is nursing; the music white-on-black, anesthetized, bed-ridden funk. Stephanie's nurse persona has some healing powers, most of which are demonstrated on the raunchy, ridiculously suggestive single, "The Medicine Show." When Stephanie informs her patient, "I'm the only one who knows what to do/You need a little bit of this medicine/Momma's gonna give you some medicine," she ain't talking about Vicks Formula 44. Unfortunately, the rest of the album collapses under the weight of too much production and too little substance.

The same could conceivably be said about Chaka Khan's fourth solo album, *I Feel For You*. But Chaka has always had the unique ability to rise above her material, no matter how weak it may be. *I Feel For You* brings together nine producers, 21 songwriters and a collection of all-star musicians for a date that is memorable only when the guest of honor unwraps her predictable but absolutely breathtaking pipes. Highlights: her searing solo on the Prince title tune (not to mention Grandmaster Melle Mel's rap cameo, Stevie Wonder's harmonica and drummer Steve Ferrone's infectious cymbal beat), and "Chinatown," which captures Chaka in top form—sassy, bitchy, but vulnerable.

After so many years in the music business, Chaka remains the one to watch. But while Alicia Myers has taken a giant step in the right direction, Stephanie Mills is still looking for the cure.

.....

WELCOME TO THE PLEASURE DOME Frankie Goes To Hollywood

ZTT/Island

By
J. D.
Considine

According to the press out of Britain, Frankie Goes To Hollywood is the hottest thing since Duran Duran discovered eye-



liner. The Liverpool quintet's first single, "Relax," was banned by the BBC and went straight to the top of the charts. Their second single, "Two Tribes," ignited the interest of every young Briton opposed to cruise missiles, with the result that every trendy worth his wardrobe began turning out in one or another Frankie T-shirt, broadcasting the band's blandishments to the world at large.

The NEXT BIG THING, right?
Wrong.

As much as this album makes a pretense of addressing some issue or other, the net effect is so stagey and sophomoric that it's hard to imagine any listener taking its twaddle seriously. It isn't that the Frankies have nothing to say—although a legitimate argument could be made that they are mere puppets for ZTT masterminds, producer Trevor Horn and journalist-turned-entrepreneur Paul Morley—but that the medium completely overwhelms the message when an album makes such a big deal over its self-conscious slickness.

American listeners are most likely to draw the line at side three (yes, this is a two record set), where the Frankies move from a drippy "Ferry 'Cross The Mersey" to a dippy "Born To Run." Apart from the band attacking the Springsteen classic with all the ferocity of a Holiday Inn lounge act, what really sinks their version is the ease with which it is followed by Bacharach/David's schmaltzy "Do You Know The Way To San Jose?" OK, so the Frankies are trying to make a point about rock road songs and how they peddle myths. But all that comes across is that this band can't rock, and has lousy taste in cover songs to boot.

Not that it matters, since few listeners will even make it to the third side, what with two sides of disco overkill to wade through on the way. Even with both British hits, *Welcome To The Pleasure Dome* is inferior to its parts, like a concept album produced by Dino DeLaurentis.

Can't wait for the video.

SCATTERED LIGHTS The Skatalites

Alligator

By
Ashley
Kahn

Hoof-beats sound, a voice cries "Here comes

Ringo!" and two gunshots ring out as a loping rhythm begins—scratchy offbeat guitar, dry rat-a-tat rim shots on the drum and then a horn arrangement catchy like a doubledutch rhyme. This is the tide-turning sound of the Skatalites, the legendary



Jamaican instrumental combo that in the early '60s defined the dance music of ska and singlehandedly lifted the island's music out of its folk past, paving the way for the reggae revolution a few years later.

"Ringo" is one of twelve classic Skatalites numbers just out on *Scattered Lights*, a long-overdue package of mostly unissued tracks that presents the true calypso-cum-big band roots of this seminal outfit. Originally recorded in 1964 and '65 for producer Justin Yap's Top Deck label in Kingston, the sides on *Lights* not only capture the core of this group (notably tenorman Roland Alphonso and trumpeter Baba Brooks) at its creative peak, but also preserve a rare musical moment.

Unlike their mostly unrepresentative chart hits available on various ska collections, *Lights* sparkles with high-powered intensity: clean, crisp production (atypical for most ska recordings), superb solo work, and enticingly expressive compositions. Most outstanding are three tracks written by master trombonist and arranger Don Drummond—"Reburial," "Confucious," and "Marcus Jr."—echoing with diverse inspiration from Duke Ellington and Fats Domino to spaghetti western soundtracks.

Lights is the Jamaican musical primer that should not be passed up by those who take their reggae seriously—it's what Booker T and the MG's *Best Of* is to soul fanatics. Without the framework of ska, reggae would be inconceivable; without the "groundation" of the Skatalites, Jamaica might be hardly worth a footnote in the annals of popular music.

THE HONEYDRIPPERS, VOLUME ONE The Honeydrippers

Es Paranza/Atlantic

By
Anthony
DeCurtis

Featuring a fame-drenched cast that includes Jimmy Page, Jeff Beck and Robert Plant, this five-tune tribute to early rock could have easily tipped into ego-stroking nostalgia or, worse yet, camp. Hearteningly, the music assumes its full, simple dignity here, and the result is a stirring set of standards well worth any fan's attention.

Producer Ahmet Ertegun (credited as Nugetre, the backwards spelling of his surname that he used for his writer's credit on early Atlantic singles) and the "Fabulous Brill Brothers" fashioned tasteful orchestral and big band arrangements for this EP's tunes—testing but never violating the



songs' basic structures. The guitars burn hard, but evenly, on "I Got A Thrill" and "Rockin' At Midnight," adding contemporary sting to their period settings. And Plant is outstanding, especially on the disc's two ballads, the Phil Phillips hit "Sea of Love" and Pomus-Shuman's "Young Boy Blues." He croons these cuts with a dramatic restraint and flair for phrasing charged by his admirable regard for the material.

On the down side, the inclusion of Ray Charles' "I Got A Woman" was obvious and unnecessary, while "I Got A Thrill" and "Rockin' At Midnight" never quite attain the grandeur of the EP's two slower numbers. The whole of *The Honeydrippers* transcends its parts, however—just as the music it salutes proves, once again, to be more than a dated curiosity, but part of a vital, continuing tradition.

CYPRESS Let's Active I.R.S.

By
Adrian
Lance



Following last year's charming *Afoot* EP, Cypress is Let's Active's first full length album. While the band has clearly matured on several levels, in the process some of the ingenious sparkle has waned.

On the positive side, the band's production chops remain enviable, thanks (of course) to leader Mitch Easter, he of Drive-In Studio fame. Along with tougher, more seasoned performances, Let's Active have definitely forged a sound of their own: rich, ringing guitar playing, quirky, strategically placed drum fills and a sturdy low end, all spiced with atmospheric fillips of sound. "Easy Does," "Waters Part" and "Flags For Everything" are the best examples of the progress the band has made in the conception and performance of their material.

Yet rather than pursue the classic '60s pop sounds that characterized the best moments on the EP, Easter seems to have deliberately chosen a more dense, less accessible melodic route this time. Pointedly abstruse titles such as "Prey" and "Ornamental" reflect a cryptic sensibility that extends to the tunes as well, and ultimately nothing on the album packs the melodic clout of *Afoot*'s "Every Word Means No" or "Room With A View." Hooks as strong as these should be cultivated, not buried, even in an effort to defy categorization. Which leaves one hoping that Let's Active's next effort will successfully incorporate all of their considerable skills.

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SNAP, CRACKLE, CRUNCH

By Mark Moses

For all its vaunted outrage, hardcore's dirtiest secret may well be its basic conservatism. Punk thrived by forming a response to the dead-end mid-'70s; hardcore only forms a response to punk. Being an exaggeration (doubled tempos,

the Byrds' "Eight Miles High," gave us a foretaste of *Zen Arcade* (SST Records, P.O. Box 1, Lawndale, CA 90260). On a song about the glory of transcendence, this Minneapolis trio's caterwauling told us about the ardor of such transcendence. Their new album's musical sprawl and lyrical introspection have that song's feel of a quest being repeatedly tripped up and then continued. It's fitting on an album where each lyric catches its narrator making a crucial choice—from spurning parents ("Whatever") to con-

them for immersion in the mundanity and horror of the world.

San Pedro's *The Minutemen* share the Hüskers' thwarted idealism and taste for populist philosophizing as well as their distrust for pop's language and glamor. Yet the Minutemen seem wary of even Hüsker Dü's propensity for the expansive rave-up. On *Double Nickels On The Dime* (SST), Minutemen bassist Mike Watt and guitarist D. Boon favor chopped-up basslines that turn in on themselves and coiled guitar figures that wander off

promised pleasure was surveying its debris from the shelter of a car.

Minneapolis' *The Replacements* wouldn't balk at the prospect of such a joyride, however fatalistic. Out of all the bands allied to hardcore, this quartet seem the most like disenfranchised rock 'n' roll ruffians, suspicious of Saturday night but looking hard for it anyway. Among the many pop genres these trashmen pick over, they love hardcore for its velocity and catharsis rather than for its dogmatic allegiances. On their third LP, *Let It Be* (Twintone Records, 445 Oliver Avenue S., Minneapolis, MN 55405), the fuzzed-out textures and knockabout lunacy are often a cover for some of the prettiest, most aching tunes they've come up with ("Sixteen Blue"; the single "I Will Dare"). Their grab-bag eclecticism remains intact; they whirl through a cover of Kiss' "Black Diamond" with the same ragtag charm by which they tenderly define an "Androgynous" couple. Guitarist/songwriter Paul Westerberg's singing may be getting more hoarse than even the demands of the garage require, but his wayward grit speaks for the dead-end hopes of the subculture this perennially underground band exemplifies. Even if the Replacements never connect their frustration in songs like "Unsatisfied" and "Answering Machine" with anything beyond clubland, there's undeniable joy in hearing them bounce off the walls.

In a way, *Black Flag* may be the clearest evidence of hardcore's underdog desperation. The band that, at the time of 1981's *Damaged*, came closest to being hardcore's spiritual (!) and stylistic focus have, on *My War* and the new *Slip It In* (SST), transmuted into a wobbly heavy metal machine, grinding out that genre's sexist cant (the title track) and doom-mongering ("Rat's Eyes," "Obliteration") as if they thought them up themselves. However subversively they court the great unwashed mass of heavy metal fans (who prefer their paranoia a little more baroque than *Black Flag* can muster), they're only exchanging one set of chains for a rustier one.



PHOTO ANN SUKANA

The Minutemen: Thwarted idealism and a taste for populist philosophizing

layers of feedback) of a style it concurs with, hardcore concerns itself with holding high the banner of discordance, as if any transgression beyond its circumscribed limits would constitute treason. Four albums by American bands who have often been lumped together under the hardcore label (whether by their shared anger, ungainliness or primitivism) show how they are eluding those limits. In two of these cases—Hüsker Dü's *Zen Arcade* and the Minutemen's *Double Nickels On The Dime*, both two record sets—the efforts signify a coming of age, the unmistakable sounds of bands finding their own voices.

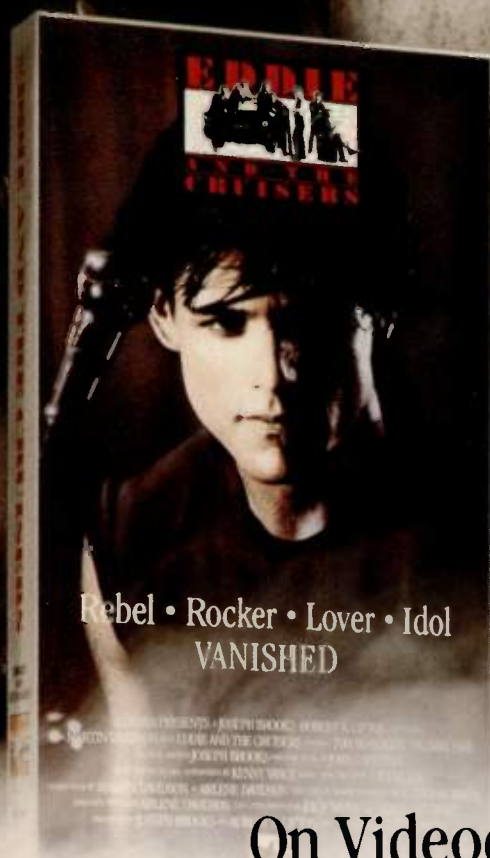
Hüsker Dü's summer single, a careering demolition of

fronting death ("Pink Turns To Blue") to confronting the intricacies of choice itself ("Indecision Time")—that the band takes it biggest liberties. Guitarist Bob Mould has always been able to cram baying asides into the most cramped spaces. His knack for shaping undifferentiated sound in distinct opposition to the longing *Arcade* grapples with is best illustrated by the suppressed violence of his reverse-tape loops and modulated feedback roar. Side four lays out the album's extremes most boldly; if the 13:47 jam of "Reoccurring Dreams" is the band's most needlessly discursive moment (the inverse of every hardcore thrash), then "Turn On The News" might be their most pointed, an ambivalent an-

toward jazzy dissonance, apt counterpoint to 90-second monologues that creak with humor and rage. But because of their brevity (the soul of wit, after all), their disjointedness, and their comic confusion, these songs get across the way little leftist rock ever does. Whether assailing logic ("God Bows To Math"), the succor of media surface ("Political Song For Michael Jackson To Sing"), passivity ("The World According To Nouns") or unfathomable atrocity ("Untitled Song For Latin America"), the Minutemen never lose their bead on Everyman helplessness. Each side of this 45-song set ends with the sound of an auto engine turning over, as if in the closed-off world these songs bray at, the only uncom-

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