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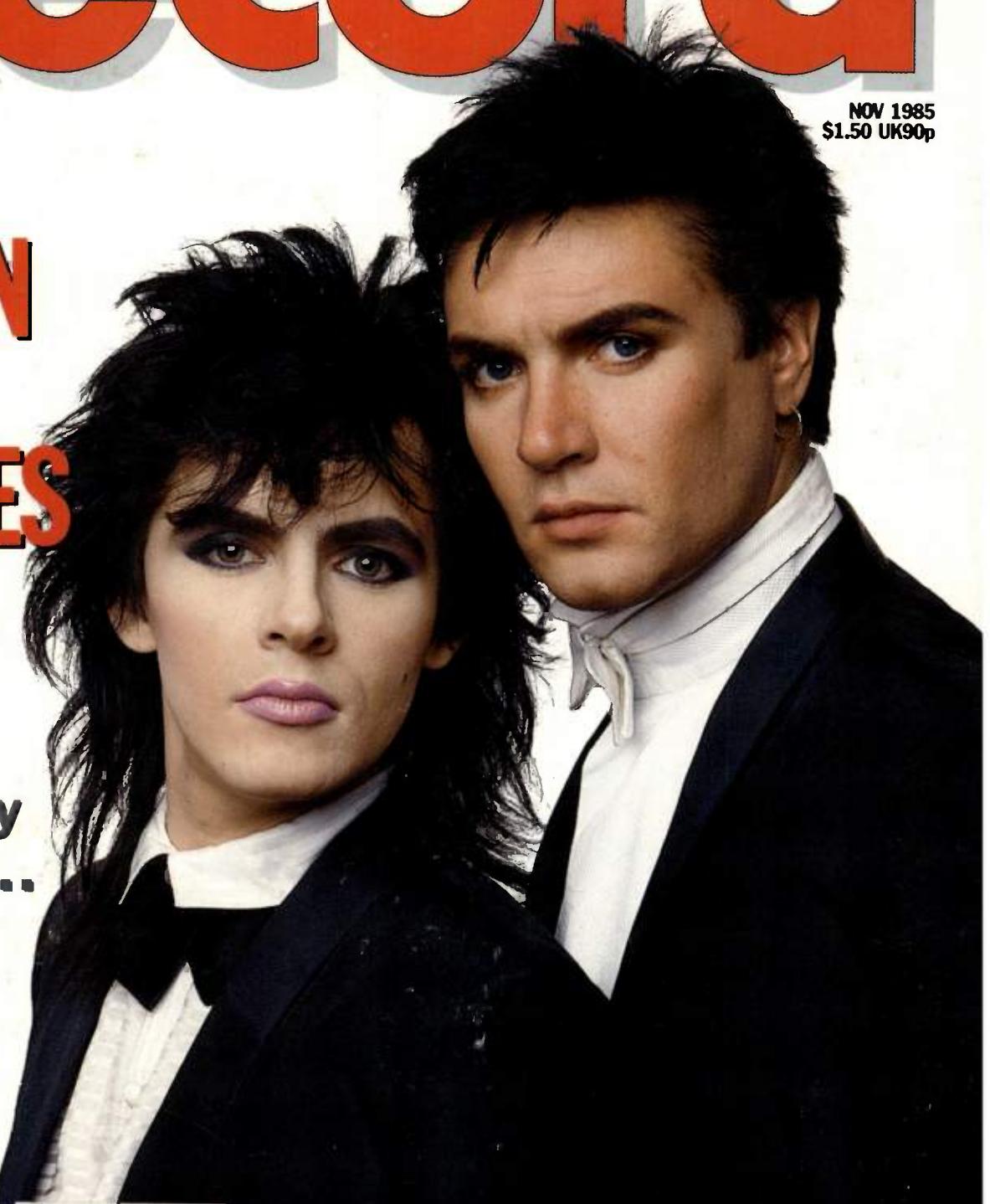
Record Review: John Cougar Mellencamp

Record

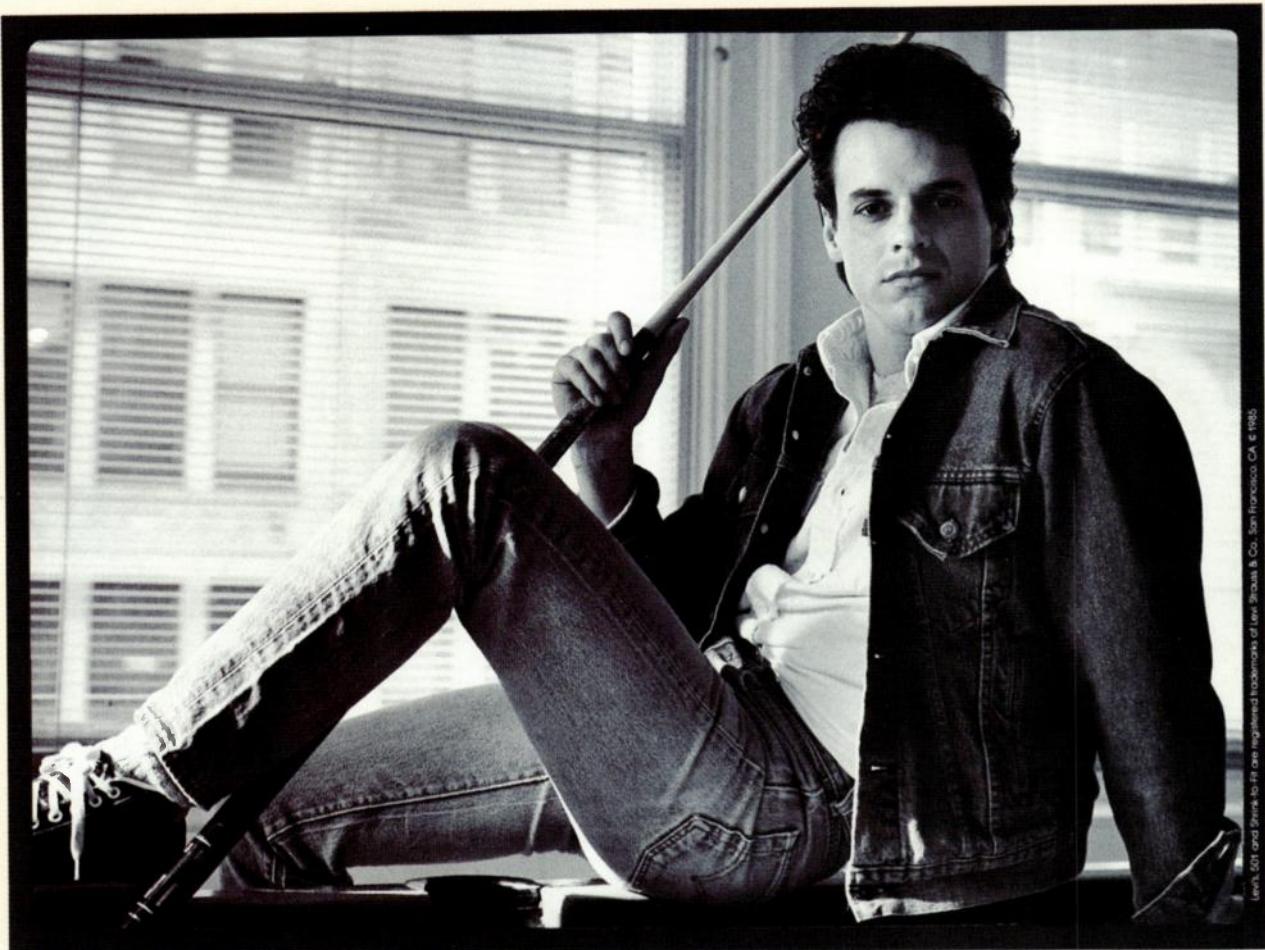
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ROGER, SIMON AND NICK have banded together under the *nom de disque* Arcadia, on the theory that some might like it hotter. Checking in with the flip side of Duran Duran's solo coin.

By DAN HEDGES

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THE RECORD REVIEW: "Life sweeps away the dreams that we have planned," sings John Cougar Mellencamp on his new album, *Scarecrow*, but this powerful, ambitious LP is ultimately about people, ideals and relationships that fight life's sweep and proudly endure. An inside look at this compelling statement with comments from Mellencamp and co-producer Don Gehman.

By ANTHONY DECURTIS

Stacked

39

RACK SYSTEMS: more than two decades after being introduced to the audio world, the rack is still with us. Today's rack, though, is sculpted, matched and preened with finesse. This month, a buyer's guide to rack systems of varying prices and sizes.

By MARTIN PORTER

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HOT AGAIN: Their last two albums had caused barely a ripple on the sales charts, and when Heart went into the studio to record again, they sensed it was now or never. Aided by producer Ron Nevison, Ann and Nancy Wilson and company delivered: *Heart* is Top 10, as is its first single, "What About Love." Here's how they did it.

By J.D. CONSIDINE

8-mm Video

54

SONY'S new home 8-millimeter video camera is a marvel of state-of-the-art technology: it boasts all the traditional components of a VCR and can also double as an audio-only record deck for digital sound. It also records digital sound off the air: that is, you can tape CD recordings broadcast in stereo on this deck and a four-hour video tape becomes capable of 24 hours of digital audio recording. And there's more.

By ALAN HECHT

ON RECORD

Chatting with Bobby Womack and Ron Wood; circumnavigating the Weather Girls; on stage with Dire Straits; new artists: Zeitgeist, Chris Isaak 7

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Cover photo by Larry Williams

Record

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LETTERS

MUSIC CITY RETORT

ON BEHALF OF THE NASHVILLE ENTERTAINMENT COMMUNITY we wish to express our shock and dismay that your national periodical could publish a theme issue titled "Music In America" (October RECORD) without profiling the only city in this country whose economy revolves around the music business. Nashville has proudly and deservedly borne the title Music City U.S.A. for 35 years. We are now America's second-biggest recording center, having passed Los Angeles several years ago in number of sessions. The exclusion of Nashville from your coverage is indefensible on any grounds. Even without mentioning the \$500 million dollar country music business that is headquartered here, the city can easily boast of accomplishments greater than those of three of the five music centers discussed in your issue.

Surely even a pop magazine would recognize the following as activities of a major music center:

Recently-signed Nashville non-country acts on major labels presently include Jason & the Scorchers (EMI), Billy Chinnock (CBS), Deborah Allen (RCA), Tim Krekel & the Sluggers (Arista), Dave Olney (Rounder), Marshall Chapman (Rounder) and Tom DeLuca (Epic). Amy Grant (A&M/Word) just scored a Top 30 pop hit.

Our songwriters are responsible for recent cuts by the Pointer Sisters ("Dare Me"), Culture Club, Angela Bofill, Sheena Easton ("Almost Over You"), Melba Moore, Pat Benatar, John Cougar Mellencamp, Jeffrey Osborne, Rick Springfield ("Affair of the Heart"), Bob Seger ("Shame on the Moon"), Joe Cocker and other pop stars.

The Kenny Rogers contribution to the USA for Africa LP ("A Little More Love") is a Nashville song.

Music City has become the lone heir to pop music's venerable singer-songwriter troubadour tradition, with the likes of Neil Young, Jimmy Buffett, Dan Fogelberg, Nicolette Larson and Jonathan Edwards now basing their careers here; and Steve Forbert, John Hiatt, Wendy Waldman, Paul Davis, John Hall and others moving here outright.

Music City is represented on the jazz charts with *Stay Tuned*, a collaboration by Chet Atkins, George Benson, Larry Carlton, Mark Knopfler, Earl Klugh, members of Toto and other internationally-acclaimed instrumentalists.

The biggest-selling act on the national RCA roster is Alabama. During the last quarter Hank Williams Jr. outsold everyone else at Warner Bros. except Prince. Willie Nelson's well-known accomplishments at CBS do not need repeating here.

Our club scene boasts lively, talented lo-

cal bands with enthusiastic followers in techno-pop, neo-rockabilly, heavy metal and mainstream rock.

We have given the world the music of such greats at the Everly Brothers, Patsy Cline, Elvis Presley, George Jones, Brenda Lee, Bill Monroe, Kris Kristofferson, Roy Orbison, Hank Williams, Johnny Cash, Loretta Lynn, and Dolly Parton.

Despite repeated prejudice in major media capitals, despite New York's continued attempts to portray it as "hillbilly," and despite your present attempt to dismiss it, Nashville's music scene is world famous for its diversity, creativity and lasting vitality.

We insist that you correct your oversight/insult to our city and its musicians.

ROBERT K. OERMANN

The Tennessean

Gannett News Service

U.S.A. Today

KIP KIRBY

Nashville Bureau Chief

Billboard

RECORD's Music in America issue in no way purported to be definitive or comprehensive. What we attempted to do was to pick out five sites—north, south, east and west on the map—with lively music scenes. New York and Los Angeles were selected to represent major markets where music and business are inextricably linked, as is true of Nashville. From there we wanted to profile scenes where artists are developing distinctive voices in their own corner of the world, unencumbered by the mechanics of "the business." Hence, Minneapolis and Austin. As for New Orleans, it seems safe to say that the Crescent City has had a far greater impact on RECORD's interest in rock and black music than has Nashville. No slight intended, but space considerations simply prohibited a more thorough examination of our topic. We would advise, however, to check with Sam Phillips in Memphis before taking credit for having "given the world" the music of Elvis Presley, Roy Orbison and Johnny Cash. You may, however, take all the credit you can handle for Alabama. □

PURE PLANT

IT'S NICE TO SEE JOHN HUTCHINSON bring out the true qualities and genuine modesty of Robert Plant rather than the falsified debaucherous nature others have and continue to depict in him ("This Time I'm Going for It," August RECORD). From what I've read, Plant is not only devoted to his craft—music—but to his family as well. Now that's nice—and not bad for such a conceited debaucher of a rock star!

HARRIETTE HARRIS

Dover, NJ

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On Record

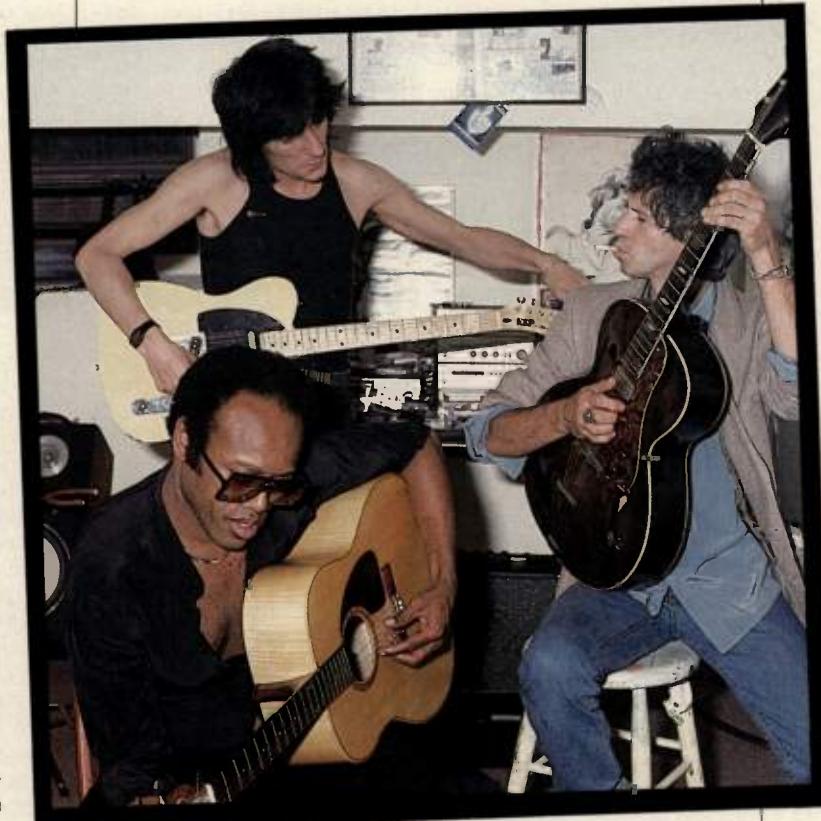
MUSICAL NOTES & PIECES

CHATTING

Bobby Womack and Ron Wood

To make good on a 21-year-old debt and repay the loan of his legendary vocal talents to their forthcoming LP, the Rolling Stones are throwing their considerable weight behind long-time friend Bobby Womack, in a publicity push designed to heighten the Soul Man's visibility. Like many of America's greatest roots artists, Womack enjoys a popularity in England—his masterful 1983 release, *The Poet II*, ranked #1 in *NME*'s year-end critics' poll—unmatched at home. Perhaps English audiences better understand the debt much of popular music owes to Bobby and his contemporaries: Sam Cooke, Jackie Wilson and James Brown among them. Ron Wood certainly does. He claims to own more Bobby Womack records than Womack himself. And although Wood wasn't a member when the Stones scored their first U.S. hit in 1964 with the Womack-penned "It's All Over Now," he and Bobby have a long-standing friendship of their own. As our conversation interweaves past and present, Bobby's new MCA release, *So Many Rivers*, plays in the background; a reminder that this man is neither an applicant for the "nightshift" nor a "soul survivor" on the nostalgia circuit, but a vital *contemporary* artist.

Womack: This is my promotion man. His name is Ronald Wood. (Laughter)



ROLLING STONES RON WOOD
AND KEITH RICHARDS GET IN TUNE WITH BOBBY WOMACK

Record: Ronald, can you tell me what the band's relationship is with Bobby?

Womack: They're tryin' to cross me over! You know what's funny? We'll be ridin' in a cab and if it's a white guy drivin' he'll say, 'That's got to be Ron Wood.' So Ronnie'll say, 'Yeah, and this is Bobby Womack!' And the cabbie'll say (unimpressed), 'Yeah . . . but Ronnie, what's goin' on?'

Wood: And when it's a *black* cab driver, the guy says, 'I ain't even gonna turn around. I know that's Womack's voice.' And Bobby'll say, 'Yeah, and this is

Ronnie Wood of the Rollin' Stones!' (Mimics the indifferent cabbie): 'That's what I said, Womack's voice.' (Laughter) We were together and this kid said, 'Isn't that R&B crossin' the road there?'

Record: Come on . . .

Wood: Yeah! (Shyly) Ronnie and Bobby. (Laughter)

Record: Where'd you guys meet?

Wood: In Detroit, when he came to a Faces show to meet Rod, and he thought I was Rod.

Womack: I swear to God, they looked so much alike!

Wood: Rod was so shy of Bob-

by that he kind of turned his back. So when Bobby met me he said, 'I like you 'cause you're what I hoped Rod would be like.' That's nothin' against Rod, it's just that he's so shy. He went through the same thing with David Ruffin when he met him.

Womack: Sometimes you're intimidated by people you have a lot of respect for.

Wood: Or you treat them like some kind of competition. I remember when I was with Jeff Beck, we did a show and Jeff turns up and sees B.B. King's on the bill, and he splits! But me, I'm the opposite. If B.B. King's on the bill, I'd love to go on and try to hold my own instead of runnin'.

Womack: He'd be right there.

Record: Do you feel you can stretch in that situation?

Wood: Oh yeah!

Womack: That's because he's a free spirit. He lets himself go. He don't have those handcuffs. I'll say, 'Woody, hit that note! You can hit that note!'

and he'll just go for it.

Wood: If Bobby's in the room I can get it! If he goes back to California, I don't stand a chance of gettin' it!

Record: It sounds like Paul Young's been reaching for a few of those Womack notes . . .

Wood: Paul holds Bobby at the top of his list. And rightfully so, 'cause Bobby's got the best voice around. I mean, they don't come much better. They met the other night at Mick's party and Paul nearly fell over.

Record: Do you have any idea why English audiences are so fanatic when it comes to R&B?

Wood: Well, it's been the same with English musical influence

On Record

right from the jazz days and the blues era. Everyone was crazy over the authentic blues artists when they came to England. Anyone that had 'Blind' in front of their name, or had a three-part name . . .

Record: John Lee Anybody.

Wood: Yeah! They used to command great respect, and they still do, the ones that are still going. I mean, Mick, as 'flash' as he is, was like a little kid next to Muddy Waters. Another great reference point is Sam Cooke. If I'd been out of short trousers when he came over . . . When did he play England?

Womack: I think the last time was with Little Richard. I think Rod caught him. Man, you were too young then.

Wood: I didn't let *them* know that! That was the first time I met Roddie—he was totally a Sam Cooke clone, or he tried to be. That's not a bad thing. He was going through a huge period of emulatin' and simulatin' everything that Bobby did, everything David Ruffin did. Just takin' a leaf out of their book, like I did with guitar players: Chuck Berry, Buddy Guy.

Record: Bobby, you too were a disciple of Cooke's sound, and of Archie Brownlee of the Five Blind Boys. At what point did your sound become your own?

Womack: Well, even when I sing now, a phrase or a passage of Sam's will come out of the clear blue, and I'll just do it. When I was playin' guitar I used to listen to Floyd Cramer and I got my style from the way he played. *Everybody* takes something from somebody.

Wood: Bobby had his influences. He also taught Wilson Pickett how to scream.

Record: And Brownlee taught Bobby how to scream. Bobby, you've done some duets with Jagger for the new Stones project. Does your participation signal a shift back to a rootsier R&B sound for the band?

Womack: I always thought the Stones were R&B. When the Beatles came out, they were the guys with the tuxedos. The Stones were the street people,

the bad boys, and they always respected R&B, soul music.

Record: The best new R&B I've heard in the last few years are your duets with Patti La-Belle on *The Poet II*. It sounds like you got each other "up."

Womack: When I sang with Patti, I just got off on singin' with her. She reminds me of when Aretha used to go at it vocally. I think she's "on." She's real fiery, 'cause she's got a lot of drive. She sounds like the old Aretha, in the Sixties.

Record: It looks like the "new" Aretha's crossing over . . .

Womack: I like the record Aretha's got out, but I don't hear that certain thing in her voice. She's gone through a lot. She lost her father recently and they were *real* close, so it's like goin' through the motions but the spirit's been sorta killed. It'll come back. And she has nothin' to prove to anybody, she's already done that.

Record: You guys seem more than willing—in fact, anxious—to own up to your influences. Hall & Oates are doing the same with David Ruffin and Eddie Kendricks. It's a refreshing trend. Has anybody heard

Prince own up to Little Richard or James Brown yet?

Womack: He's ownin' up. Even though he doesn't say it, everybody knows when he does James Brown. They see Little Richard in him, they see Sly.

Wood: I saw Little Richard on the TV in England and he said, 'Prince, I wish you all the best, but just remember: Don't get *too* flash, because everything you're doing now, I was doing before you were *born*!'

Womack: And it's very true.

Wood: But he's pleased for him, and so am I.

—John McAlley

WATCH OUT

The Weather Girls: Still Expanding

You can get old and tired, says Martha Wash of the Weather Girls, waiting for the world to recognize fat as a basic human condition—something like thin, only less so, or more so.

"We've about given up trying to convince people we're more than a novelty act," sighs a resigned Wash, half of the duo that has just released its second Columbia album, *Big Girls Don't Cry* (Izora Armstead is

the other half; that is, if you can call either Big Girl a half). "People are always going to think we're strange, so all we can do is give it all we've got and have a good time doing it. No recording artist can feed everybody's dream. We have a place and our audience is widening all the time."

Speaking of widening, the Weather Girls, formerly known as Two Tons of Fun (when they backed Sylvester several years ago), met in San Francisco. Their churches were on the same block and each could hear the other's gospel voice wafting through the open windows on Sunday mornings. Eventually, they started comparing notes and trading harmonies and were signed to Fantasy.

Two albums, *Living Proof* and *Backatcha*, established their credentials in dance clubs (the uninitiated might want to check out a greatest hits package recently released by Fantasy, titled *Megatonnage*) and brought them to the attention of producer Paul Jabara, who produced a sizzling take for the duo on a song rejected by both Diana Ross and Donna Summer: "It's Raining Men." That was in 1982, and the Girls have been riding "Men"'s success ever since: at one heady point their burgeoning notoriety land-



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On Record

ed them two consecutive Friday night appearances as Ted Koppen's featured guests on *Nightline*.

Having settled in New York last year, Wash and Armstead, anticipating some heavyweight action on the *Big Girls* LP and its hot single, "Well-A-Wiggy," are looking to storm stages the world over and maybe in the process do a little something for the slender egos of full-figured women everywhere.

And let it be said that big girls don't cry, but they do count their blessings. "We always give thanks to God for the things that have happened to us in this business," says Wash with a grin to match her physique. "However far we go, neither one of us will forget who we are, where we came from, or the people who helped us get there." Did I mention that they've got great big hearts, too?

—Mark Mehler

GREAT AMERICAN MUSIC HALLS

Boston's Channel

25 Necco Street
Boston, Massachusetts

There are trendier clubs, like the punky Spit or artsy Man Ray. There are glitzier clubs, like the sleek, high-tech Metro. But in its five-year existence, the Channel — a low and long, 1,500-capacity club in the southern part of the city — has carved itself an important niche in the Boston rock 'n' roll scene. No club books as diverse a schedule of acts (both local and national) and no club has as deep a commitment to what might be termed the broad universe of pop music.

Put it this way: In this segmented (DOR, AOR, heavy metal, new music, etc.) world in which we live and listen,

clubs often cater to narrow tastes. Or, for that matter, some rock clubs declare themselves a video disco, save money on booking bands, and screen an endless crawl of rock videos.

The Channel is not oblivious to video and in one area of the large facility you can indeed stare at a large video screen and drink yourself into a stupor. But the Channel's lifeblood is a wide variety of flesh-and-blood music, much of it quality music. During the prime season the



PHILIP PILASH

BLACK FLAG CHANGES THE CHANNEL

black-walled club is open six nights a week and hosts an occasional Sunday afternoon hardcore affair. The bands caught at the Channel over the years include the Jam, the Stranglers, Steel Pulse, W.A.S.P., Iggy

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On Record

Pop, Cameo, Richard Hell, Black Uhuru, New Order, Echo and the Bunnymen, Gang of Four, Jerry Lee Lewis, the P-Funk All-Stars, Linton Kweesi Johnson, General Public, Husker Du, Hoodoo Gurus, NRBQ, John Cale. If it's Halloween, you may well expect an appearance by those B-movie horror mongers, the Cramps. (If you're really lucky Lux Interior might lose his trousers during a

plunge into the crowd — the chaotic scene a couple of years back.)

The Channel is eager to be on the cutting edge (listen to booking agent Warren Scott talk about trying to land the Jesus and Mary Chain) and is open to off-the-wall projects — a John Waters lecture and a Divine set following screenings of Waters' movies; a set of industrial noise and cathartic anger from Ein-

sturzende Neubauten.

The crowd and the atmosphere — from mellow to supercharged — change nightly, adapting to the nature of the act on stage. Ganja wafts through the air during Burning Spear sets; bodies fly through the air when Black Flag flails away; beer is tossed everywhere when Southside Johnny shows up to once again shout for his soul.

—Jim Sullivan

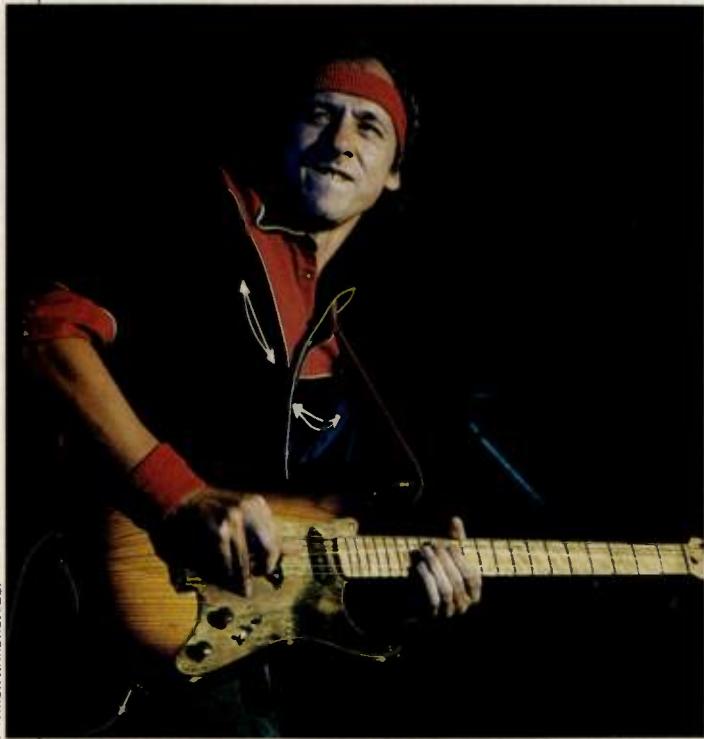
Hero" to the sated audience.

Prolonged readings of "Sultans of Swing" and "Romeo & Juliet" afforded the evening's solo bouts of spontaneity, albeit staged, as Knopfler improvised on a couple of his countless guitars. These lengthier songs were balanced in the set by more compact ditties, like the delightful existential coupling of "Why Worry" and "Walk of Life." Though the lion's share of the program was culled from the *Making Movies* album and the current chart-riding effort, the concert's pinnacle was a brooding "Private Investigations" that began with Knopfler eloquently picking a nylon six-string before erupting with a powerful electric coda. With his grainy vocal tone, the head Strait intoned "It's a mystery to me—the game commences, for the usual fees—plus expenses." In the case of Mark Knopfler, it's money for something.

—Jody Denberg

ON STAGE

A Smart Set from Dire Straits



PATRICK HARBRON/LGI

less Mark Knopfler. Over the course of five Dire Straits studio LPs and other assorted projects, the guitarist's guitar has proven that literate humans can flourish both creatively and financially in today's pop merry-go-round. But the Straits' bloated live package, *Alchemy*, suggested that stage lights might not be the proper illumination for this band's studied approach. Now chalk up another triumph for Dire Straits: The *Brothers In Arms* tour, like its vinyl namesake, is a smart packaging of the

instrumental and compositional strengths the group has accumulated since 1978.

One of rock's most extensive sojourns ever, the Straits' 220-date global trek is landing in both small theaters and gargantuan stadiums; on this night, 3,800 Austinites were fortunate enough to witness one of the more intimate shows, enhanced by crisp sound and brilliant symmetrical lighting techniques. The two-hour, 15-song performance commenced with the sinuous "Ride Across the River"—extended into a jazzy

jam reminiscent of late-period Traffic—and concluded humorously with roadies disassembling the stage while the seven-piece Dire Straits road-model (including two keyboardists and a sax man) wafted the conceptually appropriate "Going Home: Theme of the Local

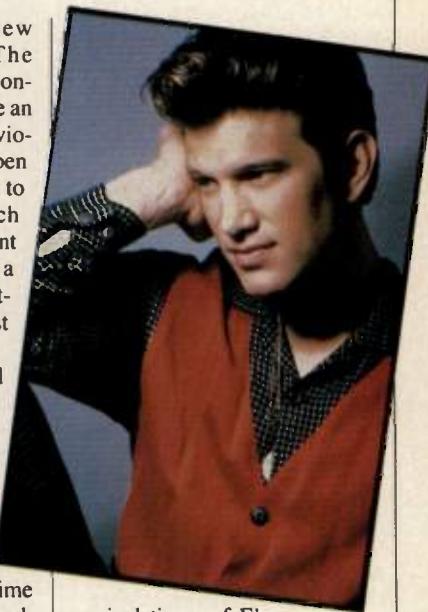
NEW LOOK

Chris Isaak's Now-stalgia

It was 11:52 p.m. at New York's Danceteria. The crowd around the bar at Congo Bill's upstairs had become an ugly scrum—a desperate, violent feeding frenzy. The "open bar" was scheduled to revert to cash at midnight, at which time prospect of refreshment would seem as attractive as a cool drink at Jonestown. Witness the species at its most savage.

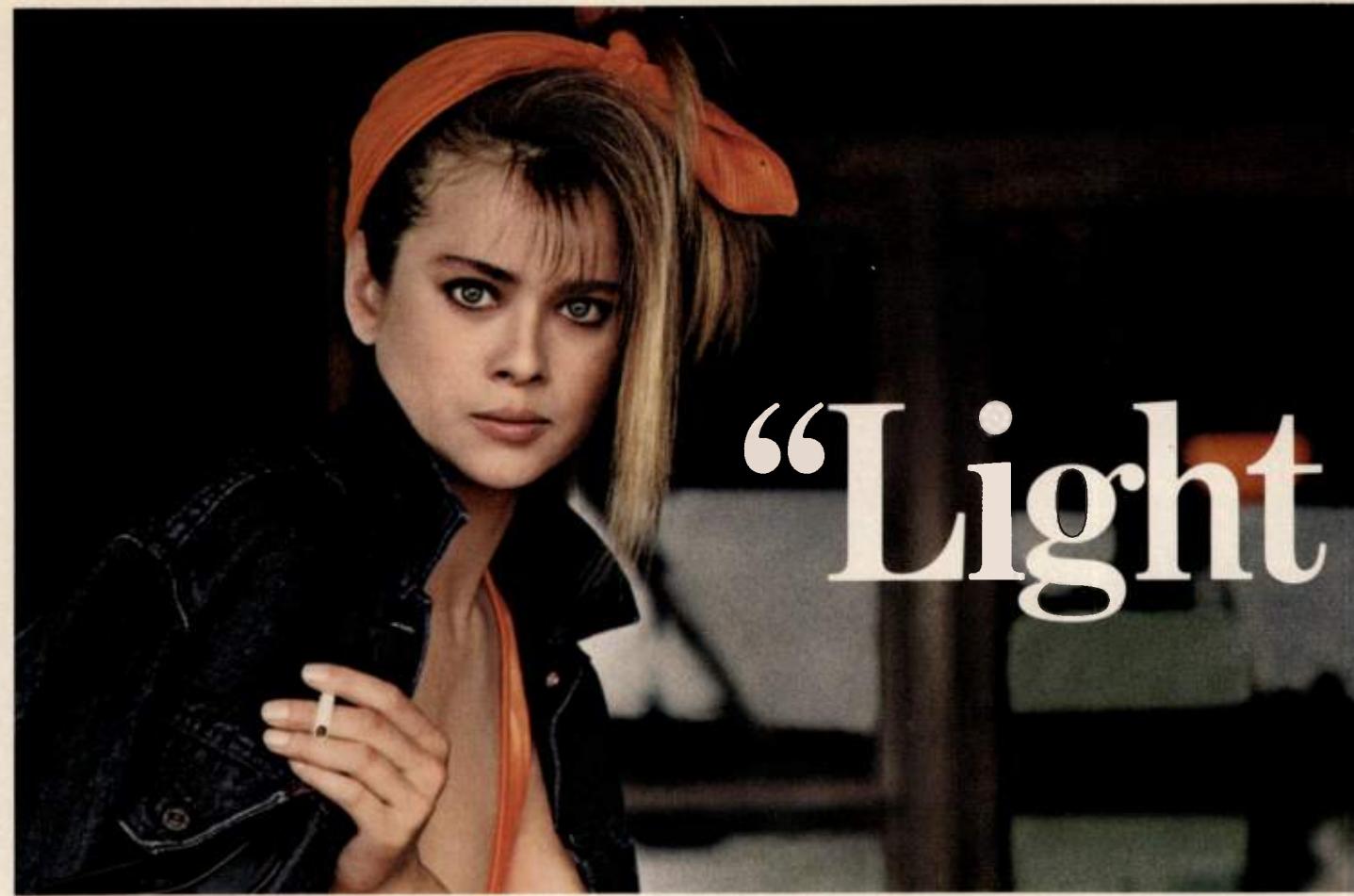
Similarly, patience would quickly wane for Chris Isaak, the retro-rocker to whose show Warner Brothers has lured the press with the promise of free firewater. Unfortunately he would time his arrival on stage late, at the precise time when one is torn between a cab home and actually paying for another Heineken.

All this was lost on the teetotaling Isaak, the Stockton, California, native whose sound and vision harken back to rock's less



RIC LOPEZ

cynical times of Elvis, Ricky Nelson and Gene Vincent. Isaak even looks like the young Elvis, as the cover photo on his debut album, *Silvertone*, attests—it's a direct imitation of a famous Presley



pose from the mid-'50s.

"I'm not inviting comparison, but I take full responsibility for all of it," Isaak will tell you, while omitting any explanation as to just why he's cutting his look so close to the King's. Which is a source of frustration after seeing Isaak and his three-piece backing unit in the neo-retro flesh.

Though rooted in traditional structures, Isaak's tunes nibble lightly at several influences for a relatively *au courant* form of now-stalgia. Songs like "Tears" and "Gone Ridin'" are uncommonly sensitive, not "guys" lyrics at all, built over minimal production courtesy Erik Jacobsen, who produced the classic Lovin' Spoonful hits. Isaak doesn't really need the zoot suits.

"It's not that I don't appreciate some of the music today," says the 28-year-old Isaak, "it's just that there wasn't too much of the new wave hitting Stockton. What we've got today are a lot of fads, whether it be reggae or scratch. I think people still listen to Elvis or Roy Orbison because they were great songwriters, not fads."

"I'm not getting into rockabilly because I can't write about picking up my baby in a pink

ica, kind of the way the Beach Boys were California or the Drifters were New York."

THUMBS UP

MTV's Inflation Blues

To Music Video Services, a firm hired by several record companies to monitor video airplay on MTV, for verifying what everyone in the record industry already knew: MTV's playlist is a crock. A recent TV Guide News Update item by reporter Howard Polskin says MVS monitored MTV continually for the week of June 26-July 3 and found "significant discrepancies" between actual airplay and MTV's stated rotation. One example cited was "Satisfaction Guaranteed" by the Firm: listed as being in "Power Rotation," which means it should have been played some 28 times during this monitoring period, MVS found the clip aired only five times. According to MVS, MTV inflated its airplay by a whopping (what a great term) 25.4 percent. In its defense, MTV stands by its playlist, claiming to have uncovered several blocks of time that MVS failed to monitor. ■

Cadillac. I never had a pink Cadillac. I can only write about what I know. I want to write songs that have a place in Amer-

Isaak says his family has always been very supportive, which probably contributed to the maturity and lack of alien-

ation in his music. He left Stockton four years ago for San Francisco where things moved quickly, and within a year he and Jacobsen were talking production deals. Warner Bros. wasn't far behind.

Maybe it moved too fast. On stage, the whole Alabama State Fair circa 1956 costumed shtick is off-putting. Adding oldies to the set—songs originally recorded by Marty Robbins, Bo Diddley, and Carl Perkins—hardly helped. The pensive Isaak has no sense of humor about it and the band, together only a couple of months, is uneasy. Despite some memorable guitar stirrings, the performance was strictly tentative.

Yet the possibilities remain intriguing. Isaak, if he's smart enough to stay away from video, could build a cult audience around his new-old-borrowed-blue melange. The response could turn the heavy introspection into something less detached, more spirited. There is something there, not unlike the curious impression made by Elvis Costello so many years ago when we had to buy our own beer. —**Jonathan Gross**

my Lucky."



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NEW ARTISTS

Zeitgeist: Just a Rock Group

Before anyone breathes another sentence about an "American renaissance" in pop music, let's get one thing straight: Austin's Zeitgeist is not part of any movement, just a rock group with two guys and two gals, two guitars and a rhythm section.

Sure, they record for Atlanta's DB Recs, and Zeitgeist does share an affinity for the airy instrumental cadences and artsy circumlocutions embraced by their Georgia brethren. But this Texas quartet's debut LP, *Translate Slowly*, owes a greater debt to, say, the Velvet Underground or the Mamas and the Papas than to the current crop of home-grown heroes. So what gives with the Zeitgeist moniker and its connotations?

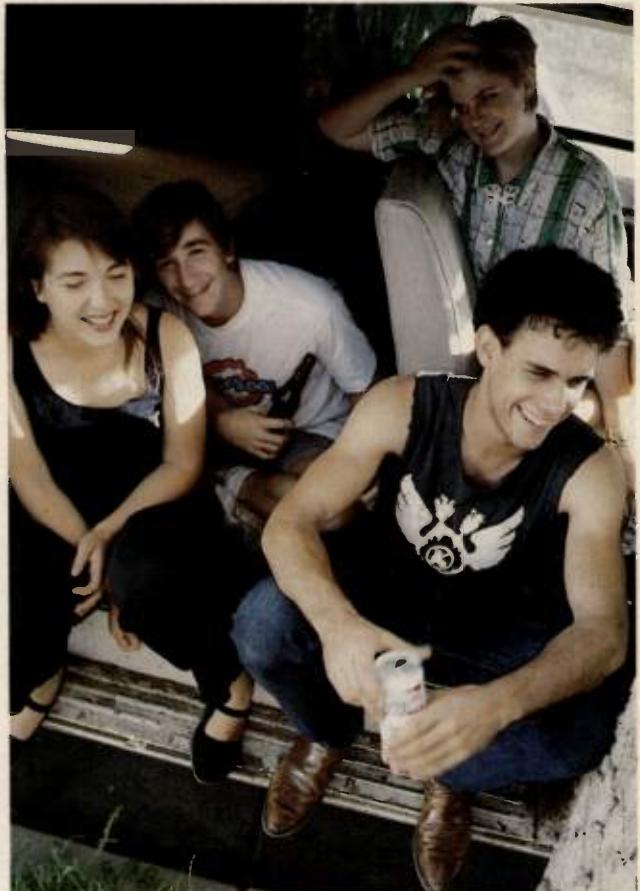
"Everybody thinks we're a synthesizer band when they hear the name," chuckles drummer Garrett Williams. "But in Memphis everybody thought we were going to be a thrash band, so we sped everything up!" John Croslin, one of the group's two songwriters and vocal-

ists, admits that "People are confused enough not to be able to classify us."

Croslin and Kim Longacre's often poetic, evocative lyrics may also mystify listeners who are used to linear song structures, though it would be hard to miss the visceral impact of the duo's tandem singing. Croslin's mumbled singspeak vocals contrast nicely with Longacre's classically-trained, soaring full-bodied approach, and while the two do harmonize at points, they favor singing together at opposite ends of the scale which leaves an interesting space for the distorted jingle-jangle of their guitars to fill.

The band's rough-hewn debut LP has already stirred interest from larger labels, most notably IRS Records. "They wanted us to re-record *Translate Slowly* and put it out on their label," Croslin says. "But we decided to keep it on DB because they were doing a good job and they should have the chance to do it." Now that's the American way.

—Jody Denberg

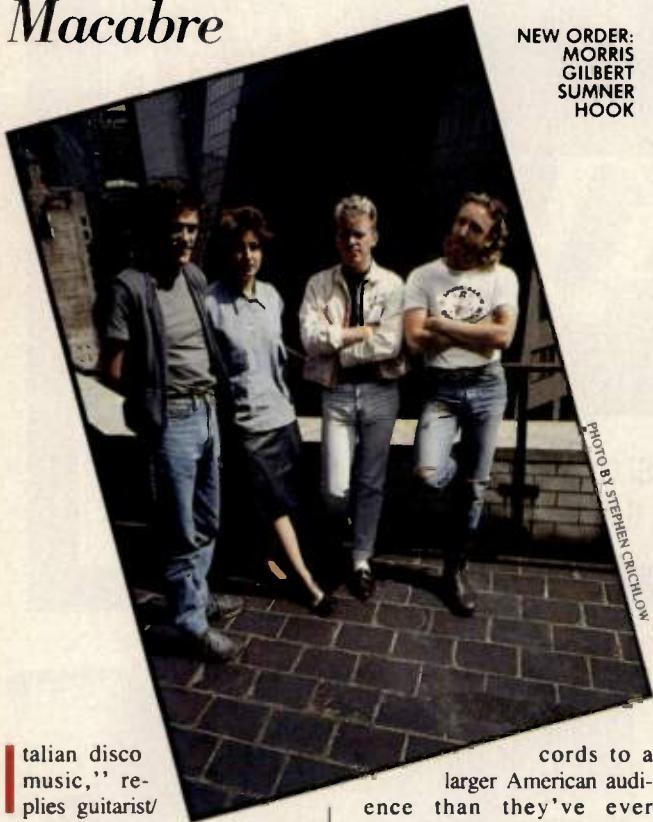


ZEITGEIST: LONGACRE, WILLIAMS, TOTH, CROSLIN

On Record

BRITISH BEAT

New Order's Dance Macabre



NEW ORDER:
MORRIS
GILBERT
SUMNER
HOOK

talian disco music," replies guitarist/vocalist Bernard Sumner in all seriousness when asked what sounds he'd explored before setting to work on *Low-life*, New Order's most recent LP. "It's not as highly produced as American stuff and it's more melodic."

The driving rhythms beneath New Order's eerie keyboard melodies have made dance-club faves of this Manchester, England quartet; still, the loopiness of Italo-disco is hardly the first quality you'd associate with their obsessive, melancholic grooves. But New Order—which formed as Warsaw in 1977, gleaned a cult as Joy Division in the late seventies, and took its present name after lead singer Ian Curtis hanged himself in 1980—has a knack for defining the world in its own terms, and going about things in its own way.

For example, the band's recent signing with Warner-distributed Qwest Records—a deal that should bring New Order's re-

cords to a larger American audience than they've ever reached—came about because Qwest "was willing to make the most compromises," says bassist Peter Hook. And as for the expectations of their die-hard following, "it sounds awful, but you should ignore your fans," says Sumner, "because what you do musically should be pure, everything you do should be honest and you should mean it. And if you're doing something for somebody else, you can only partially mean it."

New Order really meant it, apparently, at a recent show at New York's Felt Forum, where the band played an emotionally distant one-hour set that left one of their most devoted U.S. strongholds bitterly disappointed. Such uneasy relations come easily to New Order, however, and when the band returns to these shores for its next biennial tour, their unpredictability and orneriness will be two of the reasons why the halls will doubtless be packed again. —Anthony DeCurtis

TOP 50 ALBUMS

1	SONGS FROM THE BIG CHAIR Tears for Fears (<i>Mercury</i>)	26	VITAL SIGNS Survivor (<i>Scotti Bros.</i>)
2	NO JACKET REQUIRED Phil Collins (<i>Atlantic</i>)	27	EMERGENCY Kool & the Gang (<i>De-Lite</i>)
3	DREAM OF THE BLUE TURTLES Sting (<i>A&M</i>)	28	ST. ELMO'S FIRE Soundtrack (<i>Atlantic</i>)
4	RECKLESS Bryan Adams (<i>A&M</i>)	29	BEVERLY HILLS COP Soundtrack (<i>MCA</i>)
5	BROTHERS IN ARMS Dire Straits (<i>WB</i>)	30	VOICES CARRY 'til tuesday (<i>Epic</i>)
6	BORN IN THE USA Bruce Springsteen (<i>Columbia</i>)	31	YOUTH QUAKE Dead or Alive (<i>Epic</i>)
7	THEATER OF PAIN Motley Crue (<i>Elektra</i>)	32	FABLES OF RECONSTRUCTION R.E.M. (<i>I.R.S.</i>)
8	AROUND THE WORLD IN A DAY Prince and the Revolution (<i>WB</i>)	33	WHO'S ZOOMIN' WHO Aretha Franklin (<i>Arista</i>)
9	GREATEST HITS VOLS. I & II Billy Joel (<i>Columbia</i>)	34	CONTACT Pointer Sisters (<i>RCA</i>)
10	INVASION OF YOUR PRIVACY Ratt (<i>Atlantic</i>)	35	FLY ON THE WALL AC/DC (<i>Atlantic</i>)
11	33 1/3 Power Station (<i>Capitol/EMI</i>)	36	BACK TO THE FUTURE Soundtrack (<i>MCA</i>)
12	LIKE A VIRGIN Madonna (<i>Sire</i>)	37	THE NIGHT I FELL IN LOVE Luther Vandross (<i>Epic</i>)
13	LITTLE CREATURES Talking Heads (<i>Sire</i>)	38	SOME GREAT REWARD Depeche Mode (<i>Sire</i>)
14	WHITNEY HOUSTON Whitney Houston (<i>Arista</i>)	39	AIR SUPPLY Air Supply (<i>Arista</i>)
15	MAKE IT BIG Wham! (<i>Columbia</i>)	40	SHAKEN 'N' STIRRED Robert Plant (<i>Es Paranza</i>)
16	HEART Heart (<i>Capitol</i>)	41	PRIVATE DANCER Tina Turner (<i>Capitol</i>)
17	SECRET OF ASSOCIATION Paul Young (<i>Columbia</i>)	42	SUDDENLY Billy Ocean (<i>Arista</i>)
18	WORLD WIDE LIVE Scorpions (<i>Mercury</i>)	43	EMPIRE BURLESQUE Bob Dylan (<i>Columbia</i>)
19	DREAM INTO ACTION Howard Jones (<i>Elektra</i>)	44	BOYS AND GIRLS Bryan Ferry (<i>WB</i>)
20	BE YOURSELF TONIGHT Eurythmics (<i>RCA</i>)	45	CENTERFIELD John Fogerty (<i>WB</i>)
21	BOY IN THE BOX Corey Hart (<i>EMI-America</i>)	46	WIDE AWAKE IN AMERICA U2 (<i>Island</i>)
22	7 WISHES Night Ranger (<i>Camel/MCA</i>)	47	SINGLE LIFE Cameo (<i>All. Artists</i>)
23	SMOOTH OPERATOR Sade (<i>Columbia</i>)	48	MAVERICK George Thorogood (<i>EMI-America</i>)
24	FLASH Jeff Beck (<i>Epic</i>)	49	SOUTHERN ACCENTS Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers (<i>MCA</i>)
25	ROCK ME TONIGHT Freddie Jackson (<i>Capitol</i>)	50	LITTLE BAGGARIDUM UB40 (<i>A&M</i>)

Top 50 Album chart researched and compiled by Street Pulse Group

TOP 20 MUSIC VIDEO SALES

1 PRINCE AND THE REVOLUTION LIVE
Prince and the Revolution
Warner Home Video

2 TINA LIVE: THE PRIVATE DANCER TOUR
Tina Turner
Sony

3 RUSH: THROUGH THE CAMERA'S EYE
Rush
RCA/Columbia Home Video

4 WE ARE THE WORLD
USA for Africa
RCA/Columbia Home Video

5 MADONNA
Madonna
Warner Home Video

6 WHAM! THE VIDEO
Wham!
CBS-Fox Home Video

7 TINA TURNER: PRIVATE DANCER
Tina Turner
Sony

8 SADE: DIAMOND LIFE VIDEO
Sade
CBS-Fox Home Video

9 DOORS: DANCE ON FIRE
Doors
MCA Home Video

10 AIN'T THAT AMERICA
John Cougar Mellencamp
RCA-Columbia Home Video

11 LIONEL RICHIE: ALL NIGHT LONG
Lionel Richie
RCA-Columbia Home Video

12 U2: UNDER A BLOOD RED SKY
U2
MCA Home Video

13 KISS: ANIMALIZE
Kiss
RCA-Columbia Home Video

14 RATT: THE VIDEO
Ratt
RCA/Atlantic Home Video

15 BEACH BOYS: AN AMERICAN BAND
Beach Boys
Vestron Video

16 LIVE AT PERKINS PALACE
Phil Collins
Thorn-EMI Home Video

17 VISIONS OF DIANA
Diana Ross
RCA-Columbia Home Video

18 RICK SPRINGFIELD: BEAT OF THE LIVE DRUM
Rick Springfield
RCA-Columbia Home Video

19 THE FIXX: LIVE IN THE U.S.A.
The Fixx
MCA Home Video

20 ELTON JOHN'S NIGHTIME CONCERT
Elton John
Vestron Video

*Denotes new entry.

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



If you're a Jack Daniel's drinker, let us hear from you sometime.

THESE MEN KNOW EXACTLY what's happening inside every barrel in a Jack Daniel's warehouse.

In the heat of summer the whiskey is expanding into the charred inner wood of the barrel. Come Halloween, it's starting to cool. And inching its way back toward the center. Over the aging period, this gentle circulation of whiskey is going on constantly. Of course, it can't be perceived by the human eye. But after a sip of Jack Daniel's, we believe you'll recognize its importance.



CHARCOAL MELLOWED DROP BY DROP



Hear to eternity. This Panasonic with auto-reverse lets the music go on forever.

Now the end of the tape doesn't mean the end of the music. Because auto-reverse in this Platinum Series™ AM/FM stereo cassette recorder plays one side after another. Automatically. So your favorite music never has to stop at the end of the tape.

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For auto-reverse in a three-piece, listen to this great sounding Panasonic Platinum Plus. With features that rival your home system.

Pick up a Panasonic with auto-reverse. So the moment never has to end.



Panasonic Platinum Plus RX-20

Is Bruce Springsteen wittingly or unwittingly an agent for Ronald Reagan?

BY STANLEY MIESES

I was among the hundreds of thousands of people who had the experience of a lifetime this summer watching Bruce Springsteen in the flesh at the peak of his popularity. It was an amazing show. Now, all I want to know is, is Bruce Springsteen wittingly or unwittingly an agent for Ronald Reagan?

I know fans of Springsteen pay attention to his lyrics and I saw an entire section of a football stadium singing "Born in the U.S.A." word for word, with no fudging. But, considering the new scale and scope of Springsteen's audience, one can rightfully assume that a lot of people who have jumped on the "Born in the U.S.A." bandwagon do not share Bruce's musical/political history and only pick up the message provided by the forceful repetition of the song's hook. The grandstanders I sat with were largely tanked up on brew and pretty pissed off, and singing that anthem many of them looked like they would have liked to have had the opportunity to kick some anti-Vietnam War hippie protester's ass. Yeah, that song gave me gooseflesh all right, especially when the American flag was superimposed on Bruce's video image on the giant screens

flanking the stage. Did Bruce's stage management have the hubris to believe that they were invoking the image of his album cover? Whatever the original intentions of Bruce's carefully-wrought songs might have been, I get the feeling that the Boss himself has been affected by Rambo-mania, grafting on a persona that, like Rambo, stands in for the anger aroused by the exploitation of the guilt, the shame, and the power of America. (As a local corollary to this, the Meadowlands shows were seen as Bruce's New Jersey homecoming, the native son returning in triumph after having conquered most of the free world. In this case, Bruce-as-Rambo assuaged the guilt these people should have felt for living in a once-beautiful state that politics and industry have

turned into a toxic waste dump.) Even the album strikes me sometimes as having been, again, wittingly or unwittingly, arranged to balance themes that are so consciously American that whatever their specific lyrics say about America is lost behind the projection of the unfurled banner.

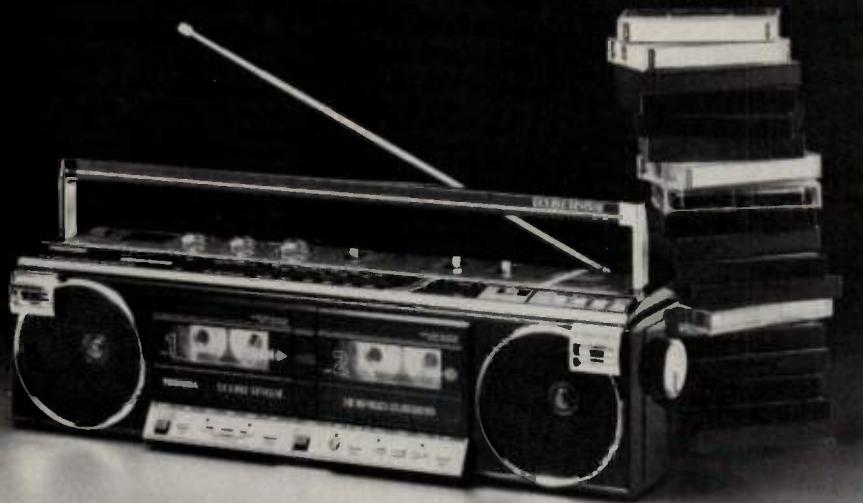
The whole issue of this divided perception of Springsteen for some reason has been ignored in the music press and in my reading only conservative columnist Norman Podhoretz addressed the politics behind Bruce's image when he wrote a column on behalf of long-standing Reaganites saying, "Will you listen to those lyrics? This guy's not with us."

If that's the case why won't Bruce come right out and say so and end the matter on



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the spot? Who is the Boss addressing? Didn't he promise to prove it all night?

RUTH AS RAMBO □ Perhaps I might not have strayed afield here had I not seen that Warner Music Video has also repositioned itself with their release of *The Dr. Ruth Video: Terrific Sex*. I have not seen this hour-long home video and probably won't because regular TV already provides me with animated cartoon characters invented to convey public service messages on sex education, V.D., etc., and the advice of an imp with a Freudian accent likewise seems like beating around the bush. Granted, Dr. Ruth is a friendly and helpful conveyance and she manages to handle delicate matters delicately but, alas, Dr. Ruth (and what she stands for) has been delivered into the hands of the marketers, who are delicate like a dumptruck. The headline of the trade ad announcing the video's release is enough to give it all away. "Take Your Pick: Terrific Pecs or Terrific Sex?" The "choice" is actually a marketing equation. Most self-improvement home video buyers would respond, "Why not both?"—thus filling the image of Dr. Ruth with the long, er, arm of Rambo. Why "Terrific Sex" as the title of the video? Perhaps the choice of "Terrific Sex" over just plain "Good Sex," which is what Dr. Ruth's TV show is called, is simply meant to entice her fans into thinking that the little shrink really has something up her sleeve this time. Or maybe Warner Music Video couldn't license that title, which makes me wonder who can stand up and say, "I have a patent on 'Good Sex.' "

EACH YOUR CHILDREN □ Discussing the content of rock lyrics has become a popular feature at seminars and conventions of the broadcasting, radio, and record industries, and the topic's regular inclusion on the agenda means that the sorry notion of record ratings is in the process of being legitimized. A Senate subcommittee is already on the case, under pressure from groups like the Parents Music Resource Center and the Moral Majority. As with the controversy over whether *Huckleberry Finn* is proper reading material for public school children, what a young mind absorbs listening to a Prince album is completely subjective, a judgment call, and every household in every town in this country has a different angle on the play. I wish concerned parents who go public with their standards would show more confidence that they raised their kids right and be guided by that belief in matters of their children's taste and discretion. And don't worry about me and my kids. Plus, this whole brouhaha over legislating "porn rock" has once again unearthed God's moles, the folks who keep finding new evidence of the devil disguised as a 33 1/3 RPM vinyl disc. I'd like to meet the kind of fanatic who plays rock 'n' roll records backwards trying to track down a hidden message to Satan—just so I could invite him over to clean my apartment. □

Gearing Up for Stereo TV

Stereo broadcasts are on the rise and the race is on to provide compatible sets.

BY MARTIN PORTER

Heard any good television lately?" It's the kind of come-on that should begin cropping up in singles bars across America in the coming year. That's because the Big Three networks are in the process of gearing up for the stereo age; NBC, CBS, ABC and their affiliates will soon be able to compete for the ears as well as the eyes of the masses.

To date, 110 TV broadcasters have "gone stereo" with the industry newsletter *Television Digest* speculating that 250 systems will be on the air in stereo by the end of '85.

The impetus for this trend is coming largely from NBC-TV, which is backing stereo whole hog. *Miami Vice* is already being telecast in stereo, joining nine other prime-time NBC shows, including *The Cosby Show*, *Family Ties*, and *Cheers*, in the dual-channel mode. The network began its stereo broadcasts last spring by transmitting the enhanced audio along with late night staples like *The Tonight Show* starring *Johnny Carson*, *Late Night with David Letterman*, and *Friday Night Videos*.

A recent stereo TV listening session proved that, even in this day and age of digital audio, there is much to be said in favor of the analog stereo TV sound. In fact, the impact of *Johnny Carson* coming through a

new Sony XBR 20-inch monitor receiver, a pair of shielded Boston Acoustic speakers, powered by Pioneer's SV-90 watt per channel audio/video amplifier, proved that whoever developed the new stereo TV specifications did their job right. The sound of Doc Severinsen's band breathed through this system; it had a solid and undistorted low end and glistened on the high frequencies. There was an uncomfortable shift when the show switched to mono during commercials, but even Johnny's jokes broadened with the addition of stereo audience response. In other words, this audio critic was impressed.

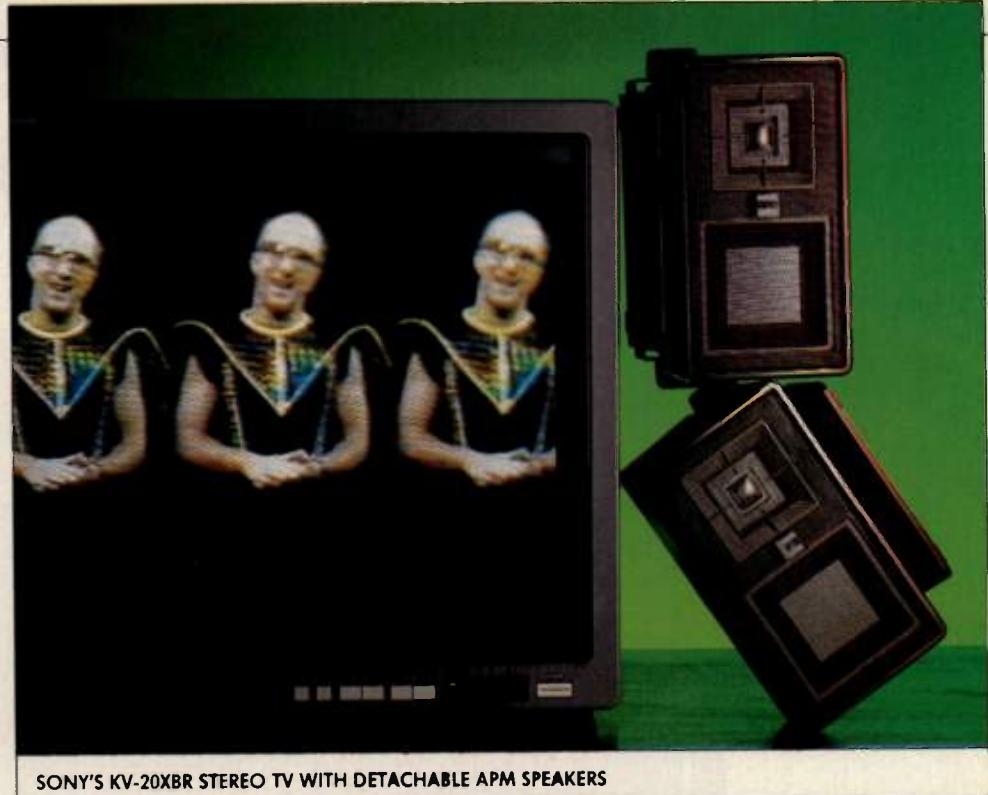
Neither of the other networks have made such a mad dash for the new technology as has NBC. Then again, neither CBS nor ABC have as much to gain on the consumer end since, remember, NBC is a subsidiary of the granddaddy of American communications, RCA, which happens to sell more color televisions than any other manufacturer.

However, there are equal stereo commitments from other television manufacturers, as well. Gerald M. McCarthy, president of

Zenith's sales company, calls stereo TV "the most exciting development in television since color." He also reports that television shoppers are buying stereo sets in markets where there isn't even stereo broadcasting yet, "because they understand the advantage of stereo."

In the meantime, more and more American households are being reached by stereo broadcast sound. NBC estimates that at least one-third of the market can now receive stereo TV broadcasts. However, none of this information has exactly led to a consumer rush for either stereo adaptors or new stereo sets. Old monophonic tubes aren't being trashed or dumped on the street with this week's garbage.

"The public is interested in stereo TV but I don't see many people buying unless local stations start promoting it," says Panasonic TV national product manager Jerry Surprise. He adds that the incompatibility of the current broadcast stereo TV standard with cable is another stumbling block. So far, cablers have refused to retrofit their plants to adapt to the Zenith/dbx standard that the



SONY'S KV-20XBR STEREO TV WITH DETACHABLE APM SPEAKERS

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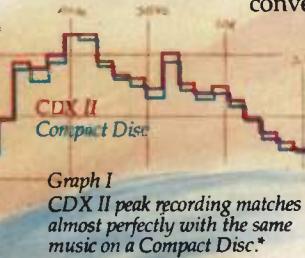
YOU'D BUY THIS AD.

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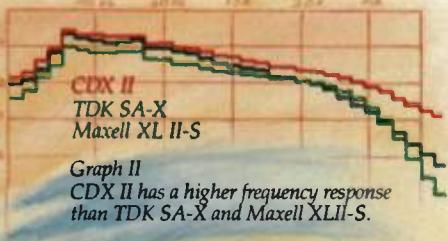
Without a doubt, the new Memorex® CDX II is in a very special class.

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- The CDX II outperforms leading high bias tapes hands down. Fact is, we compared (see Graph II) the CDX II to TDK SA-X and Maxell XLII-S. The result? When it comes to high energy recording, no one can match our levels. That's right. No one.



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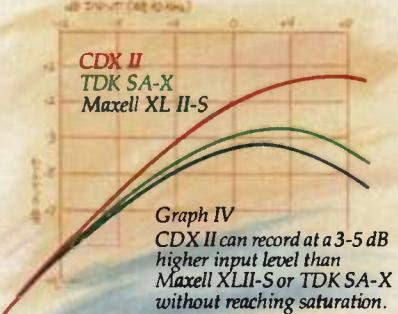
A bona fide breakthrough in metal chemistry. The development of a super alloy. One which lets us turn iron, the most magnetic material there is, into a super-small particle only 12 millionths of an inch long.

So, we spent two years designing our new five-screw cassette from the ground up. This precision-engineered system assures that the CDX II works as great as it sounds. In fact, we guarantee it for life.

It Unlimits Your Limitations.

The Memorex CDX II can record critically demanding music substantially better than the best conventional high

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Now you can record at higher levels to minimize hiss, and still capture the loud passages, the peaks, the crescendos—without distortion or loss of high notes. In fact, you can almost capture the fantastic imaging digital discs have become famous for. But you can do it on tape. And do it with ease. Loud and clear. All at the high bias setting.

Compare The CDX II. You'll Find There's No Comparison.

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And now that you've heard what we've had to say in this ad, there's no reason you shouldn't buy our tape.

And when you do, you'll wish you'd listened to us a long time ago.

*Comparison of CDX II performance versus Compact Disc containing high-energy electronic music. Data based on independent laboratory tests and examinations.

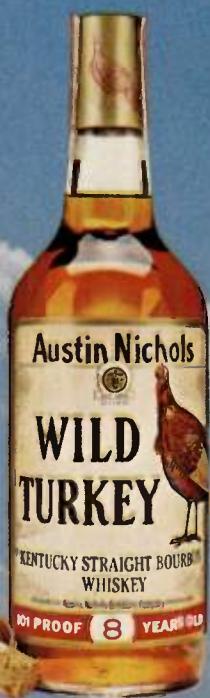
IS IT LIVE OR IS IT MEMOREX





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television industry selected.

However, those in the know maintain that it is just too early to tell how well stereo TV is going over. "Judging public reaction is still premature," says Dom Giofre, NBC corporate press manager. Meanwhile, the Electronics Industries Association, the television industry trade group, still has no hard numbers on stereo TV sales.

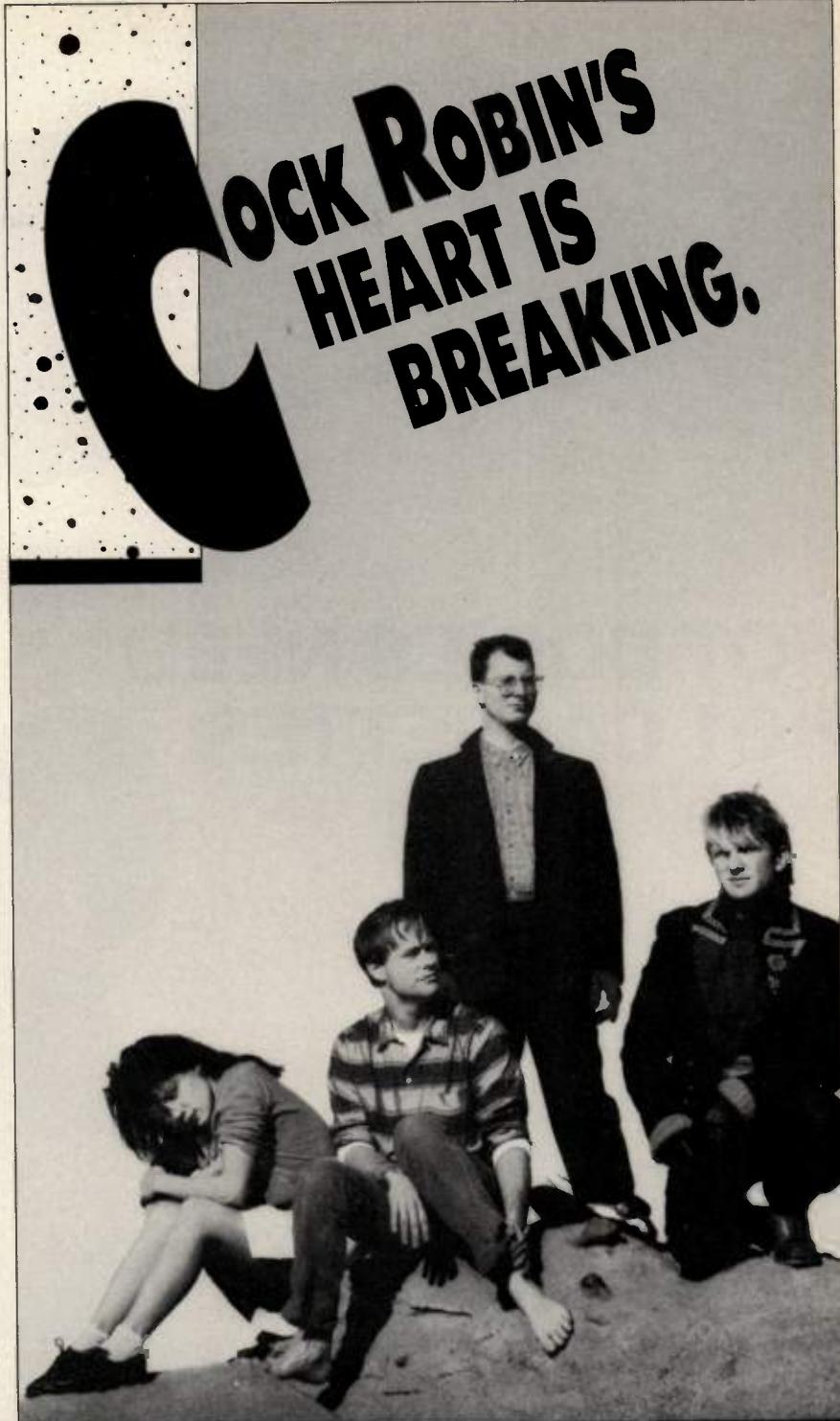
Regardless of how fast things are moving, there is little doubt that stereo TV will make a lasting impression on public listening habits. Stereo TV even puts audio oomph into sporting programs, which, judging from market studies in Japan where stereo TV has long been an established fact, gain more from dual-channel audio than any other programming, including music. It was hardly coincidental that NBC used last summer's Major League All-Star Game to publicize its stereo plunge.

How can you gear up for this new technology? Luckily you've got a choice. Sony, Zenith and Radio Shack have all released stereo TV adaptors that plug into multiplex jacks in the back of televisions or VCRs to enable existing sets to provide network stereo. In order to make this work you'll also have to bring your hi-fi amp and your stereo speakers into the act since, odds are, your old tube is severely lacking in these two crucial audio departments.

Frankly, though, I'm partial to starting from scratch—the new crop of stereo televisions have a lot more than just improved audio to offer. But beware—there's a bit of confusion in this department since some manufacturers are now touting "stereo ready" sets. This simply means that you have to add an adaptor to receive dual channel audio. Make sure you pick a "stereo" set instead, if stereo sound is what you're after.

The selection process doesn't end there, however. If any consumer electronics category suffers from selection overkill it is television. There are a multitude of screen sizes to choose from, everywhere from seven-inch to projection ten-foot screens. And then there are sets called monitors, sets called monitor/receivers and sets simply called sets to choose from. Most important, remember, when you're shopping for television sound you have to keep an eye out for standard specs like watts-per-channel that you once only eyeballed when shopping for a hi-fi.

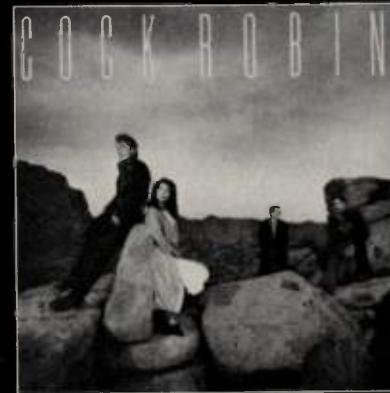
For instance, Sony has introduced a 20-inch remote control stereo monitor/receiver, the KV2074R (approx. \$780), which comes with two two-way speakers attached to the side, and packs a three-watt-RMS-per-channel amplifier. If these specs don't exactly thrill your ears you'll be able to plug the unit into your trusty hi-fi, via front-mounted jacks. For those without a handy hi-fi, the unit supplies its own stereo headphone jack and stereo balance controls with separate bass and treble dials. When the set senses a stereo signal it automatically shifts into the stereo mode, and if you prefer supplying your own video sound, the set [cont on 57]



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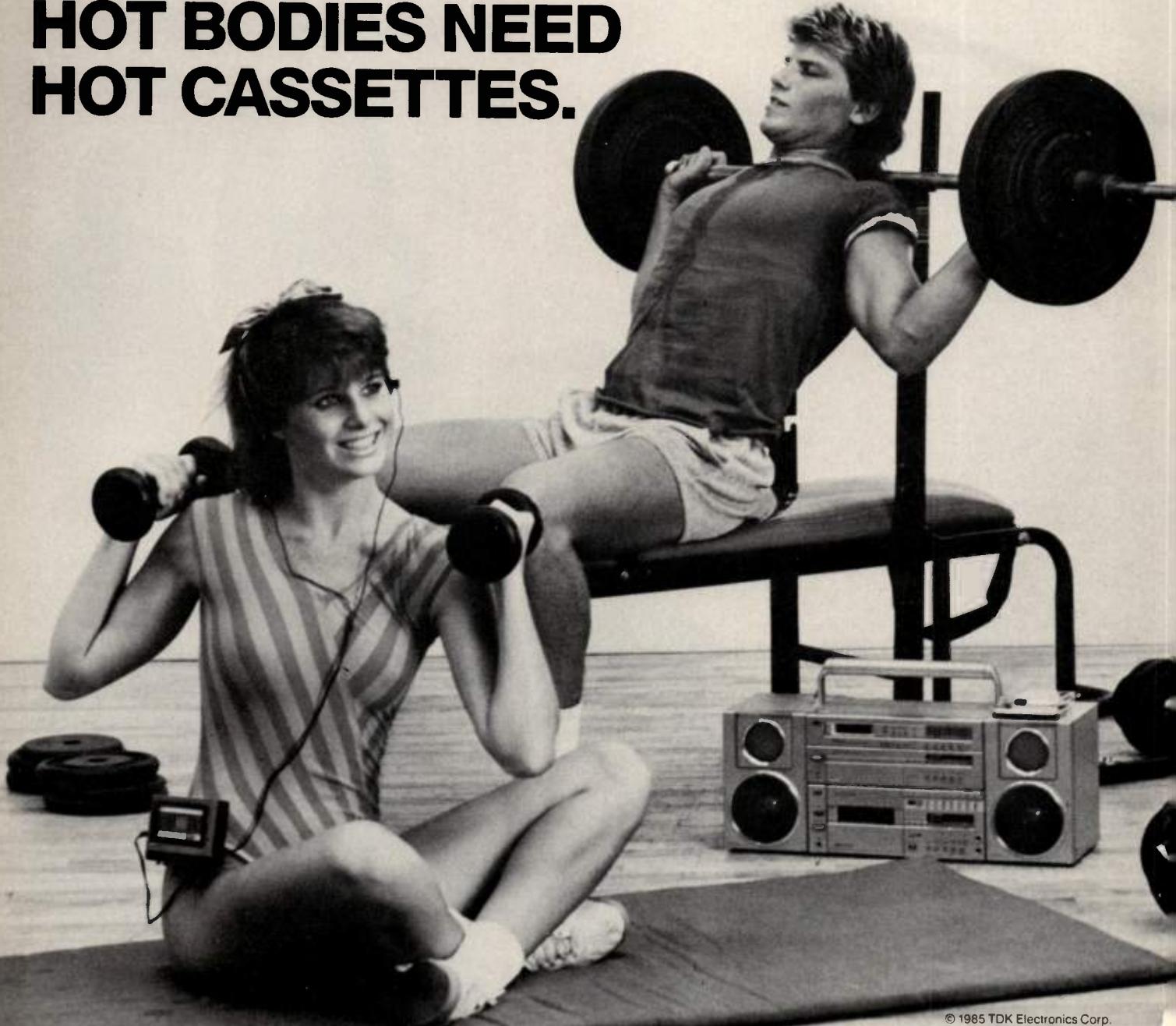
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*Checking in with the flipside of
Duran Duran's solo coin*

ARCADIA

“SIMON?” THE LADY publicist whispers. “Simon? Are you awake?” □ Curled around a pillow on the studio couch at the Power Station recording studio, Simon LeBon stirs in his sleep. He mutters something that sounds like “Mmmph,” then falls still. Three floors below on a sun-baked Manhattan sidewalk, an army of girls too young to fall in love patiently maintain a vigil. Giggling and wiggling. Fiddling with Instamatics and gazing up at the windows. □ “Simon?” LeBon’s eyes open. He sits up. “Had the strangest dream,” he says, rubbing the circulation into his arms. The way he explains it, he was in a huge, tropical paradise of a room, wall-to-wall with people with no clothes on. Strangers mostly, he recalls. All giving one another back massages “like we’d do before making a video.”

BY DAN HEDGES

*No matter how hard they've tried,
no matter how tight the musicianship, once
you get past the hype, clothes, eyeliner
and lavish videos, Duran Duran still haven't
gotten the respect they're sure they deserve.*

Wow! Club Med-meets-*Caligula*. Enough to make even James Bond blush. But LeBon looks troubled. Seems his girlfriend turned up in the dream—a nice, romantic touch, no?

Maybe. Because when LeBon stopped massaging and leaned down in the dream to kiss his girlfriend's ear, the girlfriend turned out to be . . . well . . . somebody else.

"She had the same hair," he says, pondering what it could mean.

Better leave it to Freud.

"Yeah," LeBon says, chin in hand. A modern man, he shrugs off the prehistoric notion of the dream as Bad Omen, and stares at a long-stemmed red rose lying on the coffee table. A couple of pastel love notes lie alongside, all hearts and kisses and grammar school scrawl.

Earlier, one of the girls waiting outside composed herself long enough to present them to Duran Duran's frontman as he arrived to finish mixing the first Arcadia album.

The other girls held back. As one cheerfully explained to anyone who asked, "We're saving ourselves for Nick Rhodes."

LeBon, Rhodes and Roger Taylor's Arcadia is the flip side of Duran Duran's solo coin—one minted this past spring when bandmates John and Andy Taylor joined vocalist Robert Palmer and Chic drummer Tony Thompson in what was billed as a one-time project, the Power Station.

Lest the girls in the street fear all this extra-Duran activity hints at some internal battle of the bands, LeBon stresses that Arcadia is no attempt at one-upsmanship, no copycat bid to cash in.

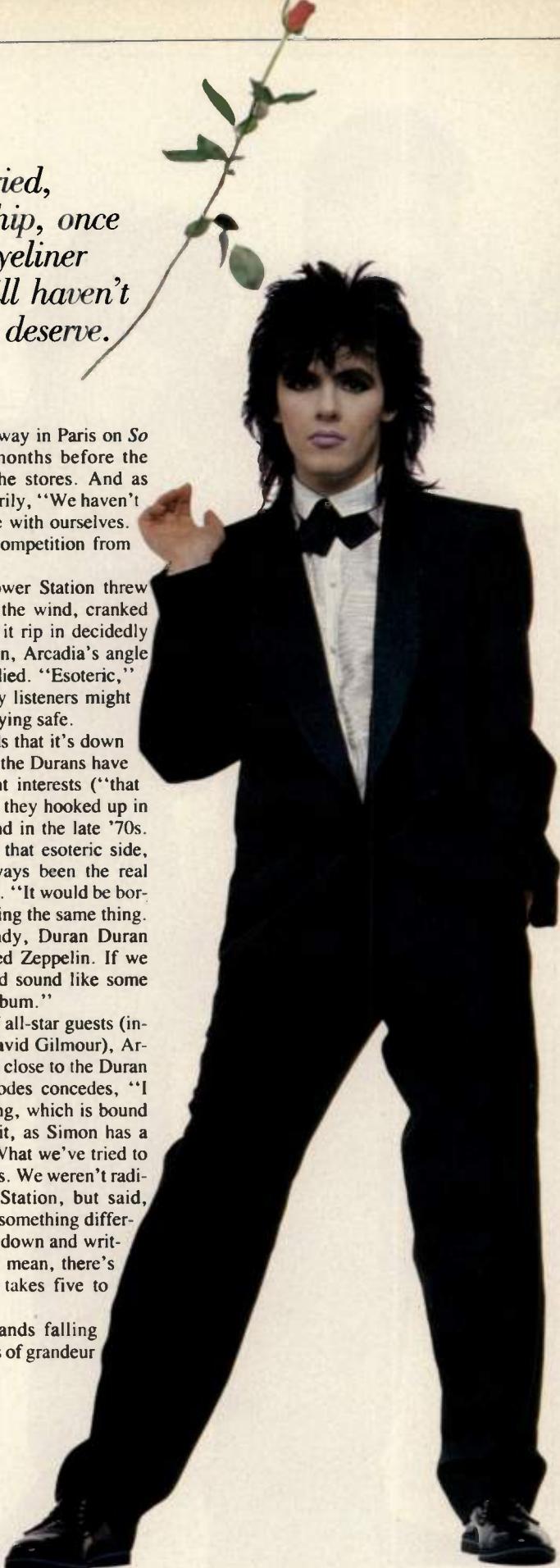
They were slaving away in Paris on *So Red the Rose* for months before the Power Station hit the stores. And as Roger Taylor notes drily, "We haven't done this to compete with ourselves. We've got enough competition from other bands."

But where the Power Station threw pose and caution to the wind, cranked up the amps and let it rip in decidedly un-Duran-like fashion, Arcadia's angle is more careful. Studied. "Esoteric," says LeBon. Grumpy listeners might say the trio's just playing safe.

Roger Taylor holds that it's down to personalities, that the Durans have always had divergent interests ("that friction") ever since they hooked up in Birmingham, England in the late '70s. "Nick's always had that esoteric side, whereas Andy's always been the real rocker," Taylor says. "It would be boring if we were all doing the same thing. If we were like Andy, Duran Duran would sound like Led Zeppelin. If we were like Nick, we'd sound like some obscure Brian Eno album."

Aided by a cast of all-star guests (including Sting and David Gilmour), Arcadia have still stuck close to the Duran sound. As Nick Rhodes concedes, "I have a style of writing, which is bound to emanate through it, as Simon has a certain vocal style. What we've tried to do is stretch ourselves. We weren't radical like the Power Station, but said, 'Okay let's try to do something different instead of sitting down and writing a Duran song.' I mean, there's only three of us. It takes five to make one of those."

The era of big bands falling prey to solo delusions of grandeur





The era of big bands falling prey to solo delusions of grandeur, usually resulting in vinyl fluff barely suited for the bargain bins, is long gone. These days there's no room for self-indulgence.

(usually resulting in vinyl fluff barely suited for the bargain bins) is long gone. These days, there's no room for self-indulgence. And great art? Sorry. We're talking sales, the music of the cash registers—things the hit factory called Duran Duran angelically claim to give no heed to when recording time rolls around.

"The only time we actually sat down and said, 'Okay, we've got to write a hit single,' was for a reason," Rhodes recalls. "The record company contract was running out and we had to fulfill it. We had to do one more single, didn't want

to release anything else off the newest album, so we said, 'Okay, we'll write a hit.' That happened once, and we wrote a dreadful song called 'My Own Way,' which was only released in England because we managed to put the embargo on it for America. Everybody hated it. Biggest mistake of our career. Ever. We'll never do that again. But I think that with a lot of Duran's singles, although they've sounded commercial and acceptable to a lot of people, we've gotten away with things most pop groups can't. 'The Union of the Snake' isn't exactly 'She Loves You.'"

During a recent *Entertainment Tonight* segment on Arcadia the host seemed convinced that, with this moonlighting stuff splitting the five into two autonomous factions, Duran Duran were now past tense. LeBon rolls his eyes: this is becoming an old routine. "Did they use my bit about Robert Palmer being a wanker?" he asks drearily. Palmer's bail-out on the eve of the

Power Station tour had nothing to do with him, yet he's plainly peeved. "He's a total wanker, dumping John and Andy in the shit like that. But no, it's not the end. Duran Duran is our bread and butter. It would be stupid to think of it any other way."

It seems like Duran Duran has been a chart fixture since time immemorial. But barely four years ago their first Stateside gigs saw them dying a slow death in, as Rhodes recalls, "dingy little clubs holding two hundred people. Couldn't sell records, nobody wanted to play us on the radio, and they wouldn't show our videos."

Presumably, it was wet-behind-the-ears optimism (coupled with relentless management) that kept the dream from going stale until "Hungry Like The Wolf" firmly entrenched them in the public eye—though as LeBon has found, "it's incredible how naive those dreams turn out to be. A pop star is, like, adulation when you want it, lots of money, lots of birds who don't give you diseases, and that society jet-set lifestyle. Very attractive when you're living in Birmingham on twenty-six quid a week."

From up here in the cheap seats, it doesn't seem like it's turned out so different (even if capsized racing yachts and near-drowning weren't part of LeBon's rock star fantasy). By his standards, though, the dream-come-true is "very different. It didn't include hard work, being on the road for months on end a long way from home. But it's actually more fun. If it was like the dream it would be boring. Not being able to

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'We haven't done this to compete with ourselves. We've got enough competition from other bands.'

turn it off—that's the problem."

Nobody's handing out crying hankies at the door. But as Roger Taylor agrees, in the years since they started out at the Rum Runner club, fame has proven not to be all it's cracked up to be. "We'd get ten pounds a week, didn't have apartments, but we *seemed* very happy. Now . . . we're all millionaires, got everything we've ever wanted, but sometimes we don't seem as happy as we were."

Trouble in paradise? Just growing pains, thanks—aggravated by one niggling thorn in the golden crown: no matter how hard they've tried, no matter how tight the musicianship once you steer past the hype, the clothes, Nick Rhodes' choice of eyeliner and the lavish videos (a form LeBon now cites as "boring"), Duran Duran still haven't gotten the respect they're sure they deserve.

If you talk to John and Andy Taylor during their more expansive and/or inebriated moments, they'll swear that the screams are fading, and the screamers growing older. LeBon doesn't buy it. "The original fans have grown older," he says. "But when I look out the window, their replacements are there."

Resigned? Slightly. At times, he admits, all that rampant teenmania has unwittingly helped "destroy a lot of band confidence. You look out there and think, 'Is it true? Are they just here to throw things at us? Are they just here because we take good photographs?'" He shrugs. "But then you listen to your music and think, 'Well, let's make a good record.' And you do."

Still, it must be tough sustaining a shred of human dignity—let alone artistic integrity—when you're half-deafened by pubescent screeching, knee-deep in strawberry-scented love notes and stuffed animals. "They're really not such a bad audience to play in front of," LeBon says. "And artistic integrity in pop groups is a very overplayed thing. *Everybody* does things; you manipulate your audience. Elvis used to wobble his willy. Bono goes out and acts all . . . *noble*. Both are manipulation. Artistic integrity is more useful when you're writing a song than when you're actually performing it. On stage, you

want to get through to people, get hold of them in whatever way you can." He smiles sincerely. "Besides, I've gotten quite addicted to the screaming. It's part of the show."

The five can't do much about it except grin, bear it, and hire extra accountants to keep track of the royalty checks—though as Nick Rhodes points out, "We're still very young. I'm only twenty-three now. I don't think we should start making 'older' music yet. Don't even want to make older music, to be quite honest. Middle of the road like all those groups churn out, album after album. Every Supertramp song sounds the same to me. I don't ever want to do that."

The followup to *Seven and the Ragged Tiger* should have been in the shops by now; the 1985/86 world tour should have been half over. The offshoot projects threw the scheduling askew, however. It'll be months before Duran re-enters the studio, though they're already curious to see how these side capers will effect their shared perspective. At last count, for example, John and Andy Taylor—buoyed by the Power Station's rock 'n' raunch success—were hoping to crank up the gas in similar fashion with Duran Duran.

"Everytime I speak to them, they want to do something different," Rhodes says. "Andy really likes the powerful guitar stuff, but says he's gotten a lot of that out of his system with the Power Station. He wants the next Duran album to be really radical—though I don't know what he means. Basically, we get into a room together with five different ideas of what an album is going to sound like. Somehow those five ideas grow towards each other and mesh."

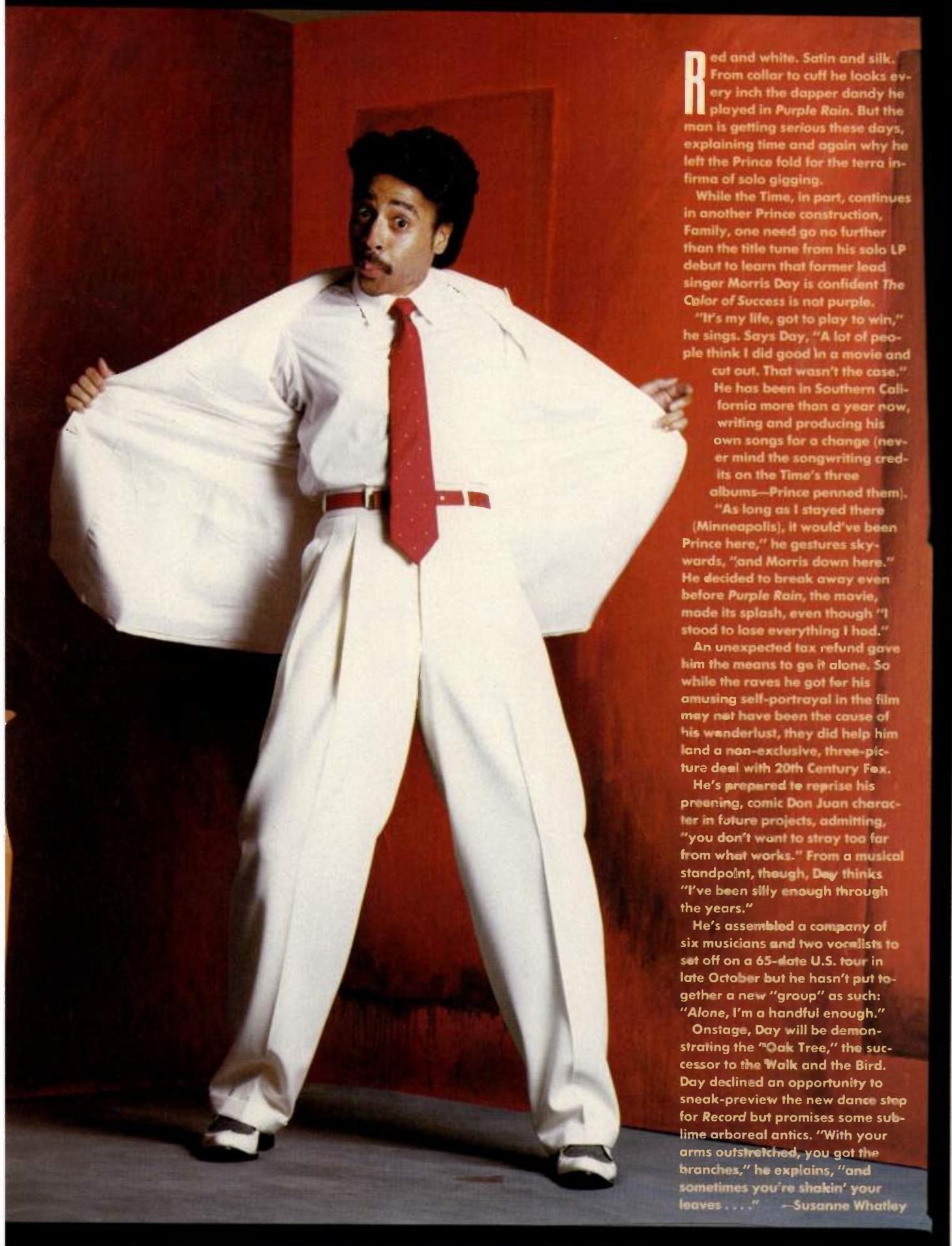
For now, Arcadia and the Power Station plan to run their courses. "We want to work these projects through properly," LeBon says, glancing toward the window as a thin chorus of shrieks rises from the street. "It would be a waste of time, effort and money if we didn't. Duran Duran's at the point now where we can afford to say, 'We're going to do it *our way*.' "

A modern man, Simon LeBon looks at his red rose and his teeny love notes, then pauses half a beat as if warding off the Evil Eye. "No," he says emphatically, "we're not going to be stuck on the treadmill." □

ONE SHOT

Morris Day





Red and white. Satin and silk. From collar to cuff he looks every inch the dapper dandy he played in *Purple Rain*. But the man is getting serious these days, explaining time and again why he left the Prince fold for the terra firma of solo gigging.

While the *Time*, in part, continues in another Prince construction, *Family*, one need go no further than the title tune from his solo LP debut to learn that former lead singer Morris Day is confident *The Color of Success* is not purple.

"It's my life, got to play to win," he sings. Says Day, "A lot of people think I did good in a movie and cut out. That wasn't the case."

He has been in Southern California more than a year now, writing and producing his own songs for a change (never mind the songwriting credits on the *Time's* three albums—Prince penned them).

"As long as I stayed there (Minneapolis), it would've been Prince here," he gestures skywards, "and Morris down here." He decided to break away even before *Purple Rain*, the movie, made its splash, even though "I stood to lose everything I had."

An unexpected tax refund gave him the means to go it alone. So while the raves he got for his amusing self-portrayal in the film may not have been the cause of his wanderlust, they did help him land a non-exclusive, three-picture deal with 20th Century Fox.

He's prepared to reprise his preening, comic *Don Juan* character in future projects, admitting, "you don't want to stray too far from what works." From a musical standpoint, though, Day thinks "I've been silly enough through the years."

He's assembled a company of six musicians and two vocalists to set off on a 65-date U.S. tour in late October but he hasn't put together a new "group" as such: "Alone, I'm a handful enough."

Onstage, Day will be demonstrating the "Oak Tree," the successor to the Walk and the Bird. Day declined an opportunity to sneak-preview the new dance step for *Record* but promises some sublime arboreal antics. "With your arms outstretched, you got the branches," he explains, "and sometimes you're shakin' your leaves . . ." —Susanne Whatley

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THE RECORD REVIEW

BY
ANTHONY
DECURTIS

One from the Heartland



"LIFE SWEEPS AWAY THE dreams that we have planned," sings John Cougar Mellencamp on *Scarecrow*, but this powerful, ambitious LP is ultimately about people, ideals and relationships that fight life's sweep and proudly endure. Like Bruce Springsteen, Tom Petty, and John Fogerty, Mellencamp has taken one weave of the American tapestry—in this case, the farming communities and small towns of the Midwest—as the theme for his album, and as a means of exploring the national jitters underlying the new jingoism abroad and self-serving self-reliance on the domestic front. As on 1983's *Uh-huh*—Mellencamp's breakthrough to seriousness—it's still the simple man, baby, who pays the bills, but *Scarecrow* takes greater care to acknowledge the dignity those men and women achieve through the suffering they undergo.

Scarecrow finds its focus quickly in the opening track, "Rain on the Scarecrow," which evokes Dylan's harrowing "Ballad of Hollis Brown" and details the plight of America's farmers—a problem Mellencamp addressed in more than song with the Farm Aid benefit he helped organize. An ominous, insistent guitar intro sets the stage for Mellencamp's intent vocal and grim,



On *Scarecrow*, John Mellencamp celebrates small-town life and family ties. John is seen here kicking back at his Uncle Joe's Rok-Sey Arena skating rink in hometown Seymour, Indiana.



HARVEY WANG

folkloric imagery, delineating a wasted land:

Scarecrow on a wooden cross, blackbird in the barn / Four hundred empty acres that used to be my farm

I grew up like my daddy did, my grandpa cleared this land / When I was five I walked the fence while grandpa held my hand

Rain on the scarecrow, blood on the plow / This land fed a nation, this land made me proud

And son I'm just sorry there's no legacy for you now / Rain on the scarecrow, blood on the plow.

The spirit-chilling visual force of this tune, which Mellencamp wrote with long-standing collaborator George Green, turns out to be

quite consciously intended. "'Scarecrow' is probably one of the more cinematic songs that we did on the record, as far as really trying to create a picture, a moving picture, especially," says Don Gehman, Mellencamp's co-producer since the 1982 multi-platinum *American Fool* LP. "The arrangement was brought in pretty much as it stands on the record, and the idea we were trying to get across was something very stark, very rural." Gehman describes his studio work with Mellencamp as the attempt to create "sonic pictures" of the songwriter's ideas, and Mellencamp's own conversation about his record is littered with references to films.

"You ever see that movie *Hud*?" Mellencamp asks, in trying to describe his growth from the cynical, if endearing, chip-on-the-should-

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if smoking isn't a pleasure,
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der buffoon who once titled an album, *Nothin' Matters, And What if It Did* to the committed, socially engaged grown-up of *Scarecrow* and *Uh-huh*. "The old man is talking to Hud about his principles—Hud has just taken his brother's son out and got him drunk. The old man's talking to Hud, and he says, 'You know, you have a way of being nice and cordial and—I'm trying to paraphrase this so it makes sense—it makes you seem glamorous to younger people. But slowly and surely, this nation changes by the men that we admire, and men like you, who are unprincipled, are not fit to live with."

To make himself "fit to live with" and more than a glamorous rube rock star fit to be idolized by people who don't know any better, Mellencamp has made "generations changing hands" a virtual obsession on *Scarecrow*. This concern informs "Rain on the Scarecrow"; the self-conscious nostalgia of "Grandma's Theme," sung by Mellencamp's own grandmother; the gentle, rootsy boosterism of "Small Town"; the stalking social dislocation of "The Face of the Nation"; and the guitar-powered, though heavy-handed political allegory of "Justice and Independence '85."

Its strongest expression, however, is "Minutes to Memories," the other tune on *Scarecrow* co-written by George Green. A lonely, lyrical guitar figure sets the song's mood, as Mellencamp unwinds the tale of a young man's meeting on a Greyhound bus with a seventy-seven-year-old former steel worker. The old man conveys his life's wisdom in the workaday poetry of the song's surging chorus: "Days turn to minutes, and minutes to memories/Life sweeps away the dreams that we have planned/You are young and you are the future/So suck it up and tough it out, and be the best you can." The story assumes an added, moving resonance when its last verse makes clear that the "young man" on the bus ride is now himself a parent, remembering the old man's unheeded advice ("I do things my way and I pay a high price," he wearily admits) and passing it along to his own son. The point of the song—and of the entire album, really—is that the process of looking out for the people who come after you is itself a kind of sentimental wisdom; the affection in the exchange is remembered from generation to generation even when the good advice, however heartbreakingly, is ignored. Each person matures into a simultaneous recognition of loss and connection.

Scarecrow was recorded in a new studio Mellencamp built in Belmont, Indiana, a short distance from his home in Bloomington. Although Gehman unironically states that "John's got a terrific eye for decor," he goes on to say that "the concept for the whole studio was definitely simplicity . . . The shack that we put together for the *Uh-huh* record was such a shack. It was about as sloppy as you could do anything. I mean, it was clean, but it was definitely making a record in a construction site. We wanted to take all the elements that we had gotten sonically out of that environment and make them look good. Also, the control room that we had for the *Uh-huh* record was a kitchen, and it was less than ideal to listen in, as to whether you were getting the real thing out the door."

Before going in to record *Scarecrow*, Mellencamp gave his band a list of ninety-five classic rock songs to learn, according to Gehman, the idea being "to learn all these devices from the past, and then use them in a new way with John's arrangements." With that groundwork laid, the band then worked up the new songs Mellencamp had written, and he taped the instrumental arrangements refined in rehearsal and played them for Gehman, singing the vocals as his co-producer listened and absorbed. Gehman continues, "Then he'll say, 'I want this to be like an Animals record. And I've also got these ideas, I think we oughta have percussion in these sections that's really featured, and maybe in this breakdown over here, the drums have gotta sound absolutely monstrous. And I want the overall record to have this kind of a tone, like maybe it was a modern-day Dylan record.'"

In this sense, the cross-generational message of *Scarecrow*'s lyrics gets reinforced in its music, which is an upscale take on sixties grunge rockers like the Stones, the Animals and even the Troggs (who are hilariously quoted in the album's closing rouser, "R.O.C.K. in the U.S.A."), with some folkish earnestness thrown in for good measure.

The insistent sixties ambience of *Scarecrow* reflects something more than a sound, however. "I was really, really, *really* gung-ho in the sixties," Mellencamp recalls. "I really thought the war was gonna end, we were gonna change the world. You know, I was seventeen

years old and I bought the whole thing hook, line and sinker. And then what a thing to turn twenty-one and realize, huh, this is a bunch of commercial *junk*, life is commercial *junk*, this whole *world* is run on commercial *junk*, you know, suped-up expense accounts and all that kind of stuff. And I was really disillusioned throughout my entire twenties. I said things in the press like, 'Ideals are for teenagers.' It sounds fucked, but at that point in time that's what I thought. I thought, man, there's no *place* for ideals in this *world*, you know, ideals'll turn around and bite off your face. Then I got a little bit older and, about a year or two ago, I started thinkin', yeah, John, you can go ahead and just hate everything forever if you want to, but you're not a very happy person because of it. You gotta start tryin', and reevaluate your outlook on everything. I know this is a strong statement, but I really did, like, hate everything."

As Mellencamp's hatred, which encompassed himself as well as "everything," softened into a generous social vision, he also opened up the personal dimension in his writing. As a tender balance to the larger, public issues it explores, *Scarecrow* takes a giving view of two estranged lovers holding onto what they can in the hit single "Lonely Ol' Night," the vagaries of personal contentment in "Between a Laugh and a Tear" (where Mellencamp is backed on vocals by Rickie Lee Jones), and the sturdy hopes of a likeable loser in the rocking "Rumbleseat." "I know there's a balance, I see it when I swing past," Mellencamp and Jones croon affectingly on "Between a Laugh and a Tear," and the distance he's traveled since the "hang on to sixteen for as long as you can" ethic of "Jack and Diane" is nowhere clearer.

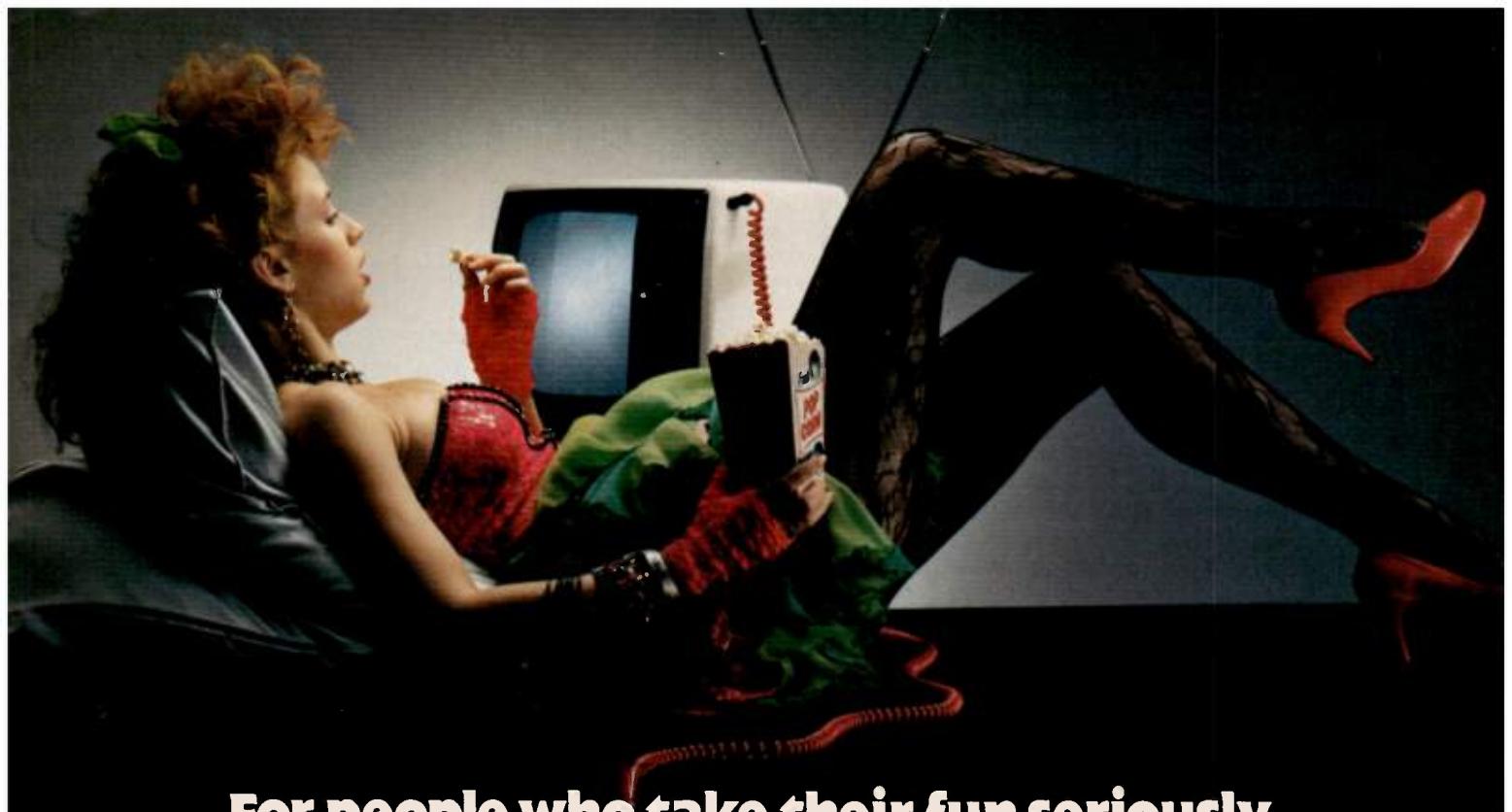
"I realized that there were people out there who were really listening to what I was saying," Mellencamp states. "At first I didn't want that responsibility, and it was, like, 'Hey, you're making a mistake.' But there was not really any way I could run away from it. So, like the old man said to Hud . . .

"I had a song called 'Jack and Diane' once," he goes on, "and I had a real silly line, it said, 'Oh, yeah, life goes on, long after the thrill of livin' is gone.' And I was *amazed* at how many letters . . . and people just walked up to me, and said, you know, my dad just died, or my grandfather just died, or I'm sick, or I'm real depressed and that line really made a difference to me. And when I *wrote* that line, it was like, *phht*, that was kinda cute. That was like all of the commitment that I had put into the thing. But this record, it was a little different story. Look, what it boils down to is I can't *believe* a lot of the songs I used to write. But, it was like, well, if I'm gonna live with these things, I'm gonna have to at least try to write stuff on this record that I can live with, as opposed to hiding from two years later."

This willingness to stretch and test himself is finally most impressive in Mellencamp because of the effort it required to defeat the powerful forces within him—and within the culture at large—encouraging him to remain a dismissible American fool from the boondocks. Instead, with *Scarecrow*, he sounds a warning from the heartland—as serious, broad-minded, compassionate and enduring as the people whose lives he's given voice to, and taken so totally to heart. □



HARVEY WANG



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RACK
SYSTEMS



ILLUSTRATION BY JEAN TUTTLE

BY MARTIN PORTER

YOU CAN TRACE THE STIR over rack systems to the '60s preoccupation with audio high-tech. Back then it was more important to break the code to the latest Jimmy Page lick than to break into a high-security computer bank. Back then your stereo system was both your escape—it built a wall of sound around your bedroom—and your salvation.

That system often required a rack to hold the various pieces. A rack was the way the pros stacked their gear in the recording studio. A rack was how sound companies rolled their amps onto the stage for the Really Big Show. Let's not mince words here—a rack was compact and cool.

Unfortunately, it took a tape-measure mentality to collect an assortment of gear that fit on the same set of casters. There was always this great deal on a ten-inch reel-to-reel that never quite fit your rack but nevertheless made its way into your collection.

Collection is the right word for it, since any audio system those days was a hodgepodge of shapes and sizes. It was usually as much a visual mess as your underwear drawer. A tangle of speaker wire

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and connectors sprouted from the back. But that was all part of attempting to "get in the rack."

Nostalgia aside, the rack has persevered while many '60s acts never made it past Watergate. For, besides the high-tech music-biz hype, the rack also serves a function. It lets you stack your system away in the corner, maybe occasionally roll it to another side of the room, or at least away from the wall to change cables.

The rack is still with us and as to be expected in this day and age of high-tech, they've been sculpted, matched and preened with finesse. The manufacturers benefit because, with a rack, they get to sell you the whole system instead of just a few parts. And consumers benefit from components that complement each other both in appearance and connections, and sometimes even boast remote control.

\$1000 AND UNDER

You may have a hard time assembling different brand components together for under \$1000. Here lies a first advantage of the "rack."

Look at it like an astute businessman. If you're going to sell \$1000 worth of gear you can surely afford to offer a better deal than if you're only getting \$250 of the sale. Maybe you can afford to throw in a cartridge or, better yet, an entire turntable. The fact that the equipment looks nice stacked in a row and sometimes even gives you record



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MANUFACTURERS NOW REALIZE THAT MESSY WIRES DON'T ENDEAR A RACK TO ITS OWNER.



SHERWOOD'S SS-1020 SYSTEM STACKS NEATLY IN A WOOD-FINISHED RACK WITH CASSETTE AND RECORD STORAGE SPACE TO BOOT. APPROXIMATE PRICE OF THE SYSTEM: \$1000.

and tape storage space to boot is a bonus.

Sherwood recently saw the light, having released its first set of single-brand rack systems last summer. Its \$1000 SS-1020 system comes with a powerful 110-watt-per-channel amplifier with seven-segment LED power meters and separate AM/FM stereo tuner with 12 station presets. The system's cassette machine is equipped with both Dolby B and C and its own set of LED meters. Stacked on top of the audio pile is a semiautomatic, direct-drive turntable with its own magnetic cartridge, and to the side of a pair of four-way speakers that stand a proud 30 inches high. All of this comes on a wood-finished rack with cassette and record storage.

Part of the promise of racking 'em up is simplified system operation. What good is buying a rackful of gear from one company unless you get a bit of convenience for your money. Had enough dial jockeying? Try spraying commands at the blinking lights from clear across the room.

Remote control is an added bonus of Sanyo's \$1000 rack System 960. There's plenty of power here with a 100-watt-per-channel amplifier, separate tuner and belt-driven linear tracking turntable, as well as a dual transport cassette machine. A ten-band graphic equalizer is also a standard touch, offering a purple-haze of blinking LEDs. The system is paired with its own set of three-way loudspeakers and the remote control will zap any of the pieces into action from anywhere in the room. By the way—if you come across some extra cash an optional Compact Disc player slides neatly into the audio stack at any time.

Making the rack connection is also easier than ever before with manufacturers now realizing that messy wires don't endear a rack to its owner. As a result, some rack systems are now being designed with built-in connectors that piece the components neatly into the furniture itself, one on top of the

other, thus eliminating wiring hassles and mess.

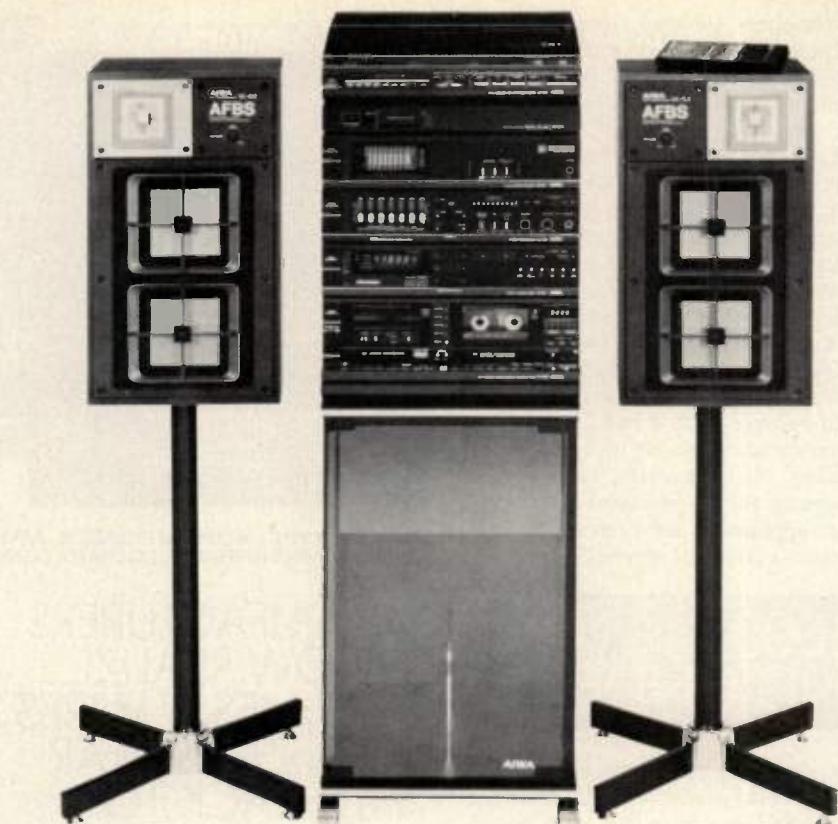
The Akai M-20WR, for example, is comprised of four fully-loaded components, including a high-speed-dubbing double cassette deck, programmable linear tracking turntable, video-capable 45-watt-per-channel amplifier, and a stereo tuner with 16-station presets. It also offers a three-way speaker system with flat diaphragm woofers—all for a list price of \$830. Most component connections are simplified with dockable (as opposed to wired) connectors.

Moreover, this combination gives another clue to the promise of "rack 'n' roll." The HX-M50W dual cassette deck comes with a so-called "synchro recording" feature which sends the cassette capstan spinning just as the turntable's needle sets down in the record groove. The cassette machine also features continuous play, music search and Dolby B noise reduction.

\$2000

Synchronicity had a life in music long before the Police turned the term into a hit. And if any company has taken advantage of the concept it is Aiwa America, which has developed a synchronized rack network for its series of audio/video rack components.

The Aiwa V-1200CD is a good example of how such a system stacks up. This \$2000 ensemble includes a preamplifier



AIWA'S V-1200CD AND SX-E12 SPEAKERS. PRICE TAG, COMPLETE, IS \$2000.

with seven-band graphic equalizer, matched to a 75-watt-per-channel amplifier with its own seven-band spectrum analyzer display. The system also incorporates an AM/FM tuner with 12 pre-

sets and built-in clock and timer/sleep functions.

Add to these components an 18-track programmable Compact Disc player, a seven-selection programmable linear turntable and an audio cassette deck that

serves the distinction of being the Svengali of Stereo. It offers an auto-reverse stacking feature that lets you play back or dub up to fifteen selections on five different cassettes.

Rack assembly is simplified by offering built-in connectors to eliminate snake-pit-like wiring. With this daisy-chained hookup you can control every component with the standard remote control. Even the speakers are packed with a nifty treat: the two-way Acoustic Feedback System speakers use an embedded microphone next to each speaker diaphragm to match the loudspeaker perform-

[cont. on 57]



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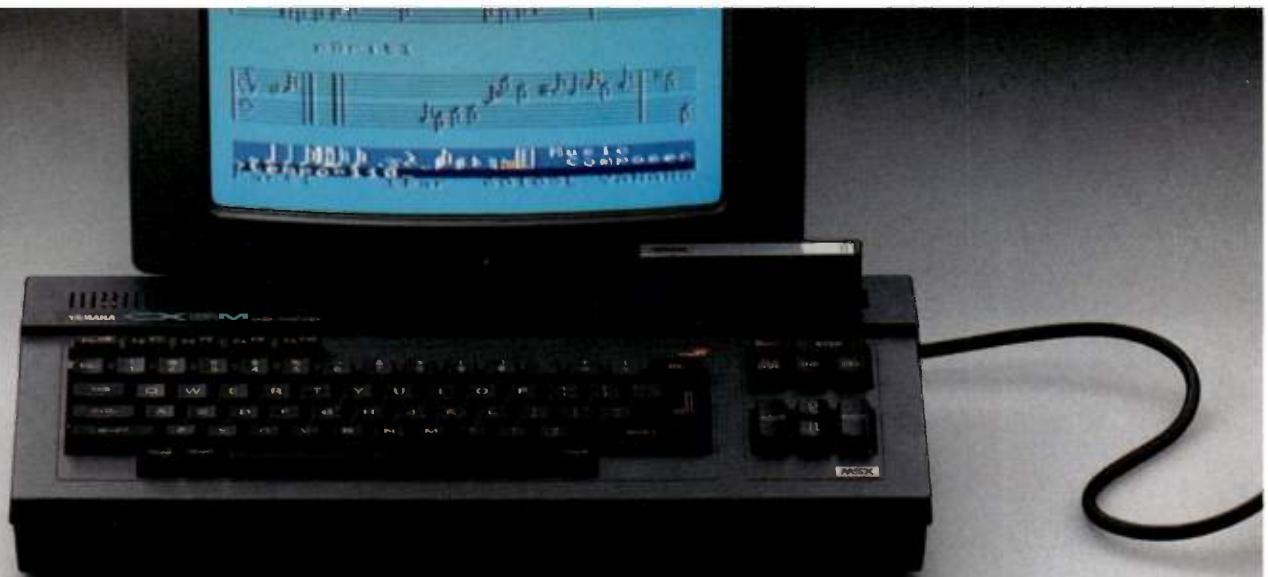
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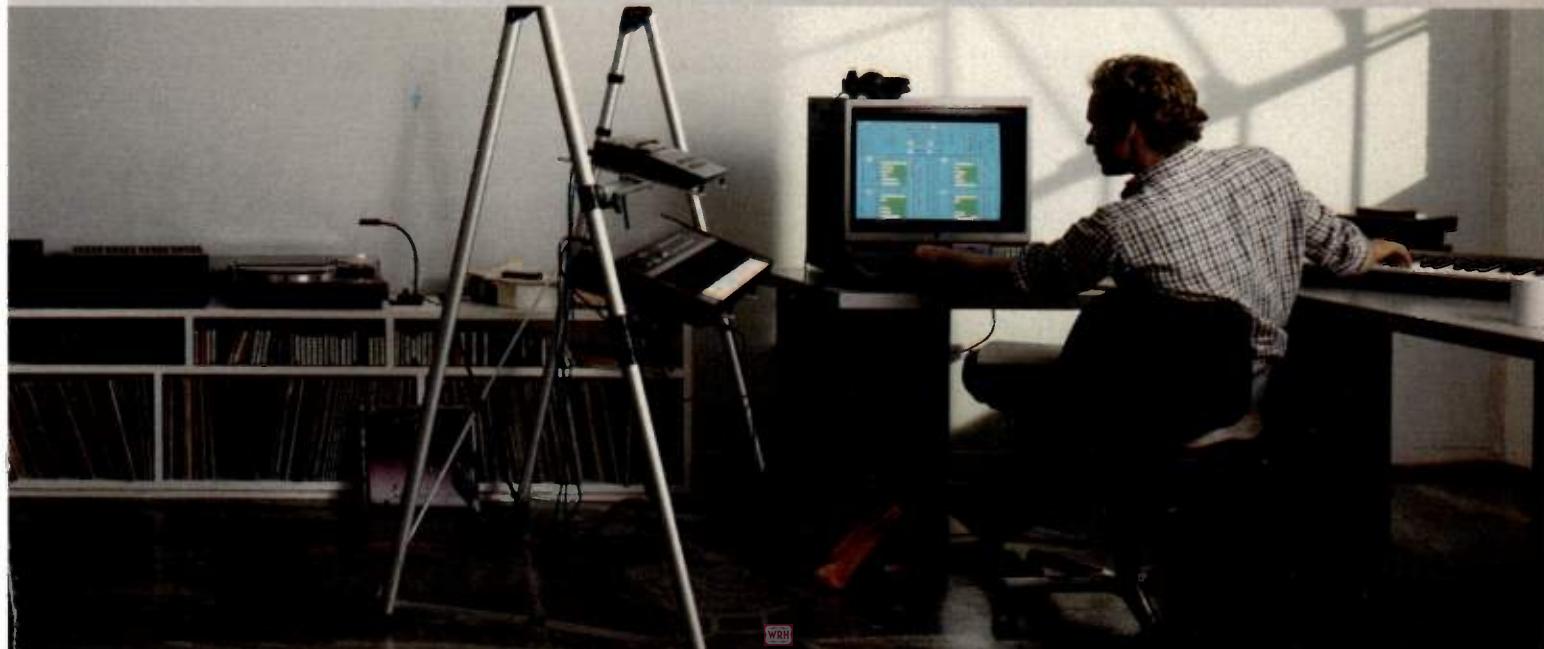
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NANCY
WILSON
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AGAIN



STEVE RAPPORT / LGI

For a while, it looked as if Heart was going to end up as another group filed under "What ever happened to?" Although the band churned out four platinum albums—*Dreamboat Annie*, *Little Queen*, *Dog and Butterfly* and *Bebe Le Strange*—between 1976 and 1980, their career stalled after the self-produced *Private Audition* in 1982. Keith Olsson produced *Passionworks* the following year, but that, too, was a commercial disaster. After that, silence. □ Heart, of course, hadn't given up, but the band members realized that a lot was riding on their next move. Recalls singer Ann Wilson: "We just

B Y J. D. C O N S I D I N E

had this kind of, not foreboding, but a sense that if we didn't have an album that was very, very . . . " She pauses, searching for the most diplomatic phrasing. "We had two albums that didn't do real well.

They did well critically, but not commercially. We've always liked having both"—she laughs at the obviousness of what she's said—"like most people do. So we felt if we didn't have an album that we were all really proud of, we wouldn't be very happy as a band.

"And as it turned out, we did."

No kidding. *Heart*, the group's new album, has ascended to the Top Ten and may turn out to be its most successful yet. Already, it has scored with "What About Love?," *Heart*'s first Top 10 single since "Magic Man" climbed to Number Nine almost a decade ago. To the industry, it seems like comeback magic, but Ron Nevison, who produced the LP, sees it more as a fresh start.

"There was a lot of new energy," he says from London, where he is working on the next Ozzy Osbourne album. "They had a new record label—I don't think, even if we made the same album, that Epic would have been as enthusiastic about it, having had them for a long time—there's new management, a new producer. That was all very exciting from the beginning. It was all new: 'Okay, we're going to go out and *do* this.' That contributed a lot to it."

"Yeah, there was a very up feeling about it," agrees Wilson. "There was a lot of power

IN THE ARENA CIRCUIT HEART TRAVELED, THE WILSONS SEEMED AN ALMOST FREAKISH EXCEPTION TO THE MALE HEGEMONY

involved. Everybody had a real strong feeling about the project, like it was going to be a make-or-break-type thing."

Which it was, and that's why Nevison's first priority was getting the right combination of songs together. "I was a little disappointed initially with a lot of their songs," he explains, "but we worked together for a couple of months before we actually recorded. In that time, other songs were written, songs were co-written by different people. We got Ann and Nancy to write with Holly Knight, which was a very fruitful partnership, I thought. Ann and Nancy had a lot of ideas which I don't think they finished off; they never really reached their potential.

"From the time I got involved, in late November, to the time we recorded, in the middle of January, there weren't that many songs that were the same. We did most of the pre-production in November and December, up in Seattle at Nancy's house, in her basement, which is small. We took a break over Christmas, then we came back; we went up there after Christmas, and then in early January they came down to L.A. We went to S.I.R.—a bigger situation—and really banged 'em out, and whittled them down some more. So there was quite

a lot done in front. I like to be prepared before I go out."

"It was really great working with Ron," says Wilson. "He's an intense person, and expects a lot of discipline. He really pushed us a lot. Everybody needed pushing, and he did it."

"He would expect a lot from me as a singer. For instance, he showed me the merit of not totally opening up, screaming my guts out every single second, but having the ability to be a little controlled. Use the power when it meant something, rather than all the time. Which was a really good lesson to learn, because it's much easier just to flail away than to have self control."

It's easy to hear the fruits of that coaching, from the dramatic bursts of anger that ignite "If Looks Could Kill" to the confident control that slams home the chorus to "What About Love?" It's



BOB LEAF

NANCY WILSON: ADDING A NEW DIMENSION TO THE SISTER ACT

no surprise to learn that as far as Nevison was concerned, Wilson's voice was one of the main attractions of working with Heart.

"I think Ann Wilson is one of the great female rock 'n' roll singers," he said. "As far as levels go, I think she's worthy of having the vocals right up in your face."

But there's more to Heart than just Ann Wilson's voice, and getting that across was important. So Nevison decided to have Nancy Wilson—known to most fans as the sister who plays guitar—perform the vocals on one number. "I did that by giving her the song 'These Dreams,' which Bernie Taupin wrote," he said, "which I think is a lovely song."

"I love that one, too," agrees Ann Wilson. "I think it's really quite abstract, the way it's orchestrated. I mean, it's all keyboards

and drum machine, pretty much, and background vocals, but just the kind of chords that he uses, it's real sort of ethereal sounding, real mysterious sounding."

In fact, Wilson is so effusive it's hard not to wonder if any sibling rivalry came into play while working out the songs. "Actually, I did try and buy it off of her," she laughs. "I said, like, I'll give you 'Nothin' At All' for 'These Dreams.' She wouldn't hear of it."

In all, though, the elder Wilson is proud of what her little sister did with the song. "She worked really closely with Nevison on it," she says, "and she has a different style from mine. She's got a much lighter touch, a kind of darker, sweeter-sounding voice. She kept as much air in her voice as she could, to go along with how the keyboards sound."

The Wilson's sister act was largely responsible for the notoriety that greeted Heart when the band burst out of the Pacific Northwest in 1976. It wasn't as if women were unknown in rock, but in the arena-rock circuit Heart traveled, the Wilsons seem an almost freakish exception to the male hegemony. In fact, the two were at first dismissed as having virtually slept their way to prominence, since Ann's man was then-lead guitarist Roger Fisher, while Nancy took up with soundman Mike Fisher.

But after the brothers Fisher split during the *Bebe Le Strange* sessions and Heart was able to carry on as before, the Wilsons began to be seen in a different light. It wasn't simply that the band was deluged by mail from female fans who wrote that seeing Heart gave them the courage to take up rock on their own; to a certain extent, the success of acts ranging from Pat Benatar to Girlschool would have been unimaginable without the rock audience's first having taken Heart. No wonder the Wilsons are the only rockers to have appeared on the cover of *Ms.*

These days, though, such issues are old hat for Heart. As Wilson puts it, "It's not so much of a novelty for the world to look at us and think it's weird because we have two girls in the band. Or that we're wonderful because we have two girls in the band. It's not that much of a novelty anymore."

"What's novel is that we're good. Just because there are more and more women doesn't mean that they're necessarily all good. And as soon as all these women who are coming into bands now have some experience, and can proudly stand next to some of the men in this business, then I'd say that we've really gotten somewhere."

To that extent, Wilson takes it as something of a compliment when she's compared to Robert Plant. "I was always very flattered when people would say that," she says. "That's never been a hurtful thing to me at all. I've never denied sounding like him, because there are times when I do. But I never tried to pinch his style off him or anything. I think they made the comparisons so much because we used to do that song, 'Rock and Roll,' in our set, and I sang it in the same key that he did."

She laughs. "It did sound like him."

"I met him one time when we were playing in England," she recalls, "and he came and watched the show from the side of the stage. Afterward, he came back and talked with us, and said, 'God, did I do it in that key?'"

For all that, Wilson's secret ambition has been to sing R&B. "I mean real R&B," she stresses. "Because I think I could probably sing the hell out of it if I ever got the chance, y'know? But for some reason, different producers have always said, 'You try and do that, and you'll get laughed out of the industry.'

The sentiment implicit, but never stated, in her bemused tone of voice is clearly, "I have passed this way before." Heart's been getting laughed out of the business almost from day one, but they're still here, quite possibly bigger than ever. So when Ann Wilson is told she'll get big yucks all around for trying to sing rhythm and blues, all she can do is shrug.

"Well," she says matter-of-factly, "I don't think I will." And the drama continues. □

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MODERN DRUMMER MAGAZINE

FRIPP

*The 21st
Century
Schizoid Man
Sounds Off*

HE BEGAN, BY HIS OWN admission, tone deaf and with "no sense of rhythm." He is a spit-shined, manicured man whose "best subjects at school were always English literature and English language." He is guitarist Robert Fripp, and would seem more at home beating the pants off an Oxford dean at Trivial Pursuit than laying down the febrile, ostinato runs that are his sonic signature. There's always been a bit of Mr. Chips lurking behind the man who brought us "21st Century Schizoid

Man," "Starless and Bible Black," "Lark's Tongues in Aspic" and other rock anomalies. □ In fact, Fripp the pundit seems to have taken the driver's seat these days. Fripp the blistering axemaster, whose brain-child King Crimson played mix 'n' match, shake 'n' stir with jazz noodlings, Romantic Classicism, pan-ethnic snippets, and a liberal dose of snarling, unshaven metal guitar from 1969-1974, seems somewhat overshadowed. "What am I actually doing at the moment?" Fripp asks. "Teaching guitar

DEBORAH FEINGOLD

BY MARK DERY



in West Virginia at the American School for Continuous Education, at Claymont, near Charlestown." The Society is an educational charity of which Fripp was elected President after a retreat in the woodland nook during the last three months of '84.

Initially finagled into giving the odd guitar seminar, Fripp has committed himself wholeheartedly. "I've had five seminars so far, 91 students. They come for five-and-a-half or six-and-a-half days; we live and work together intensively on what is called guitarcraft." The course incorporates manual exercises formulated by a 13-year-old Fripp, who even then realized that plectrum players, unlike classical violinists or cellists, had no real methodology to guide their first, fumbling steps. "Relaxation, attention and sensitivity" are also stressed, qualities that Fripp has described else-

scuttled King Crimson for the mothballed Ironsides it had become ("When King Crimson finished in '74," Fripp once noted in a *New York Times* interview, "it was the last possible moment for anything to have stopped."), reappears in a digitally souped-up incarnation. "One or two vocal lines are slightly different," Fripp remarks, adding that the digital remix "... is infinitely better . . . not so much hiss; it's remarkable how much our expectations of equipment have changed."

God Save The King also resurrects earlier LPs, stripping and refinishing doodads from *Under Heavy Manners/God Save The Queen*—Fripp's 1980 amalgam of beat-crazy rave-ups and lighter-than-air lead loops—and a later disc, *The League of Gentlemen* (1981), which married the unlikely bedfellows of slam-dunk skinhead thrash and Fripp's own brand of oh-so-cybernetic dentist's drill soloing.

"I've taken the material which I thought was worth keeping and changed it quite substantially," Fripp points out, "the mixing is vastly different, (and) I added a guitar solo to 'God Save The Queen'

(the 'Zero of Signified' in formerlife.)" While re-releasing a record for the sake of some knob-twiddling and a little overdubbed fretwork may seem like much ado about nothing, this is no meat-and-potatoes playing. "God Save The King" is 13 minutes and eleven seconds of guitar pyrotechnics so scorching the man must've been wearing a welder's mask and playing with an asbestos pick. Gutsy, gritty, this is music with canines, the kind of soloing that raises hackles and makes Dobermanns howl.

A slightly truncated version (6:40) of the same song pops up on *Network*, the third in this series, a 12" mini-LP that pits Fripp's lyrical, mellifluous side *mano a mano* against his gnarly, warts-and-all side. Eno lends sighing synth on "North Star," Peter Gabriel guest vocals on the Ice Age ballad "Here Comes The Flood" (both culled from *Exposure*) and head Head David Byrne contributes knock-kneed, hopped-up vocals to "Under Heavy Manners" (excerpted from *God Save The Queen*). Fripp gives this sampler his stamp of approval, calling it, "music that I can personally listen to at any time of day or night." By his own assessment, the material "stands up remarkably well, doesn't sound dated to me."

Other pots on Fripp's many burners include "The Noise" and "Three of a Perfect Pair," concert videos recorded, respectively, in Frejus, France (1982) and Tokyo, Japan (1984) with the reincarnated Crimson—Adrian Belew (guitar/vocals), Tony Levin (bass/Chapman Stick), Bill Bruford (Kit drums/Electronic percussion), and, of course, Fripp. Fripp judges the French gig "quite a good show" but admits he "wasn't awfully happy" with the Japanese concert, which lacked the Crimson kineticism that separates the 21st Century [cont. on 56]

A close candidate for rock's Most Likely To Be Misunderstood slot, Fripp is seen by many as a tin woodsman with a microtonal heart.

where as the "three disciplines: of the hands, the head, and the heart." In cahoots with fellow instructor Bob Gerber, Fripp lectures on "systematics of performance," with forays into yogic theory and visual perception exercises.

Participants have averaged in number from 16-21 per course, and ensemble classes alternate with one-on-one daily instruction from Fripp. Graduates are logged in a "League of Crafty Guitarists" Directory which networks them within a geographical grid to aid and abet future collaborations. An added guitarcraft attraction is Fripp's revised standard tuning for the guitar, intended to replace the extant E-A-D-G-B-E tuning. "It's better for beginners, better for advanced players, better for single lines, better for chords, it's better," asserts Fripp. "It wasn't a brighter idea from Robert"—it presented itself while I was sweating in the sauna of the Aqua Health Spa on Thompson and Bleeker." Asked to reveal the revolutionary tuning, Fripp flashes a vulpine grin, pauses for an imaginary drumroll, and coyly announces that he'll go public all in good time. Fretboard neophytes who can't wait may want to pack their gig bags and mosey southward, first dropping a line to Robert Fripp/Guitarcraft Seminars, c/o A.S.C.E., Route 1, Box 279, Charlestown, W. Va., 25414, (304) 725-4437.

Although Fripp the academician has stolen the spotlight, Fripp the fretboard banshee is still close at hand in the wings—or more appropriately, in the orchestra pit. Recent vinyl ventures include what a Jem Records release (with tongue tucked firmly in cheek) calls "specially remixed and strategically repackaged" versions of material originally cut for Britain's Polydor and since gone out of print.

Exposure, first released in 1979 after Fripp





DEBORAH FELINGOLD

*Professional
quality sound
and pictures
in a compact
package*

BY ALAN HECHT

Is it enough to say I was wrong? Do I have to crawl across the floor to beg forgiveness? Okay, I'll say it straight out: 8-millimeter video is the real thing.

Upon the introduction of Kodak's 8-millimeter system I appeared in these pages with a rather severe appraisal of the whole idea ("A Fly in the Ointment," May '84 RECORD). Essentially, my take on it was that 8-millimeter offered no significant advantages, and a few notable disadvantages, over Beta and VHS formats, and ultimately wasn't worth the price of admission.

Then Sony went to work. Again I ask: Is it enough to say I was wrong?

You see in video the name Sony is like Rockefeller or Kennedy. It carries a certain weight uncommon to its opponents, and the corporation's every move demands close scrutiny. Now our good friends in the land of the rising sun have entered the 8-millimeter video field—with gusto.

Not that Sony's basic technology is all that different from Kodak's: both capture images on 1/4-inch tape (the same size as audio tape) rather than half-inch VHS or Beta format tape, significantly reducing the size of the tape package itself. Blanks (there are as yet no pre-recorded 8-millimeter titles) range in price from \$5 to \$7 and are

available in 30-, 60-, 90- and 120-minute configurations; recording time can be doubled in EP (extended play) mode.

But Sony's version of 8-millimeter is superior to Kodak's in its simplicity of design, picture quality (Sony makes its own special recording heads) and state-of-the-art CCD camera element. In addition, the Sony system permits audio recording in four different forms: mono, stereo, AFM stereo (audio frequency modulation)—which is the same as Beta and VHS hi-fi—and digital or Pulse Code Modulation (PCM) audio.

It's the digital audio feature that makes the Sony system so intriguing. Just as the new combo laserdisc/CD players (see September RECORD) may benefit more from their audio component than their video component, 8-millimeter may also pull a backdoor move into our homes. Here's why: Though Sony's new EV-S700U home 8-millimeter deck (\$1500) has all the traditional components of a VCR (i.e., tuner/timer, two- or four-hour recording mode, slow motion, still frame, etc.), it can also double as an *audio-only* record deck for dig-

ital sound. In addition to copying PCM digital stereo sound onto 8-millimeter home movies, the EV-S700U also records digital sound off the air (in other words, the unit is stereo ready). Thus you can tape CD recordings broadcast in stereo on this deck and a four-hour video tape becomes capable of 24 hours of digital audio recording.

Okay, this is an incredible audio recording machine, but that's not really its function—or is it? It's also a convenient, high quality video recording device for home movies. Sony offers two model camcorders. One, the Video 8 CCD-V8 (\$1695), is about the size of a super 8 film camera, weighs approximately five pounds (including battery and tape), has a 6:1 zoom lens and built-in VCR playback capabilities, including freeze frame and visible search. The Video 8 has an electronic viewfinder for through-the-lens playback and an RF adaptor for playing tapes back on a television set.

Sony's Mini 8 camcorder (CCD-M8U, \$900), however, is a different breed of animal, the Instamatic of 8-millimeter video. This two-pound, aim-and-shoot bundle can



SONY'S VIDEO 8 CAMERA AND HOME DECK (LEFT) AND MINI-8 CAMCORDER AND PORTABLE DECK

PHOTO BY STEVEN MARK NEEDHAM

*In video the name
Sony is like
Rockefeller or
Kennedy...
it carries a certain
weight. Sony's entry
into the 8-millimeter
market lends the
format a legitimacy
it sorely needed.*

be tucked into an attache case, overnight bag or purse with little worry. It's really that simple—in fact, it even looks clunky like the original Instamatics. But don't expect too much in the way of sophistication. The unit has only three focus settings (near, medium, and far, as on disc cameras) and its optical viewfinder lacks instant playback capabilities. While the Mini 8 requires no set-up, TV playback requires the purchase of either the companion portable recorder/player EV-C8U (\$900) or the EV-S700U.

The results of my hands-on test of this equipment were astonishing. I flew from New York to Oakland to film A&M recording artist Amy Grant in concert, and took the 8-millimeter camera on the plane. To the amazement of all those around me, I called for action as soon as we were airborne.

Next came the concert test. Could this miniature video unit capture a rock concert under extreme low light conditions? The answer was a resounding yes. Sony has provided the Video 8 with three iris settings for light adjustment, including back light (for when the sun or a strong lighting source is behind a subject) and high light (for strong light from a front source, such as a spotlight). The high light setting proved perfect in this concert situation.

The camcorder is also a charged coupled

device (CCD), the latest in camera technology. A CCD can film under very low light conditions and still produce an improved picture resolution (over 300 lines), while also eliminating the burning, or lags, that result from pointing a camera at extreme light sources. That's right—all of us lames who let the camera leisurely pan across a spotlight or a lamp need no longer wonder if we're destroying the camera lens. Batteries proved reliable, providing approximately 50 to 60 minutes of power.

Upon return, I had a leading New York production house judge the picture quality of my concert video. Both the original print and "bump up" (a duplication of the production to one-inch video) drew raves from the video engineers. The picture quality was outstanding—in fact, it was well within broadcast standards! The only drawback was a certain amount of dropout on the original Sony tape, a problem which Sony acknowledges, but one that's apparent only to the most trained eyes.

As for the Mini 8, its picture and sound quality are also outstanding—but then it is the same camera and sound technology used in Sony's more sophisticated 8-millimeter model. The only difference between the two is that the Mini 8 cannot do zooming, manual focusing or iris adjustments that make the EV-700U's recordings more polished.

Great. So now you've got this incredible recording but you have to give the camcorder back. So you take it home to show your pals, slap it in the VHS and whoa! It's no go—it's not compatible. It's 8-millimeter, remember? There's the rub.

At least that was my first thought. And who needs yet another system amidst all the current confusion about VHS and Beta? But Sony's achievements in design, picture and audio quality forced me to re-evaluate the importance of compatibility. First, what about CDs? Totally incompatible with all other audio equipment . . . and totally successful, simply because superior technology, coupled with the CDs' "cool factor," have carried the day. So let it be with 8-millimeter.

Second, 8-millimeter is simply the best home movie machine available. And compatibility is not an issue for home movie aficionados; portability and simplicity are more important, and 8-millimeter has both these qualities in spades. Besides, home re-

cordings can be dubbed to VHS or (even better) edited onto VHS for a more polished production. Or the 8-millimeter recordings can simply be played back on the camcorder or a home deck (which has the added value of doubling as a digital audio recorder). Certainly the size of the 8-millimeter tape makes it a more convenient collectible than VHS or Beta. One VHS tape occupies an amount of space roughly equal to seven 8-millimeter tapes.

Third, 8-millimeter is aimed at first time video buyers—that is, those buying their first system and looking for state of the art, i.e., a system that can record off the air (up to four hours of recording time now with five hours in the near future); create home movies with extraordinary ease; and act as a digital audio recorder. And, as mentioned previously, it's only a matter of time before pre-recorded software hits the market.

Finally, perhaps 8-millimeter is the answer to the VHS versus Beta dilemma. Kodak, as it turns out, may well have been on the right track, seeing as how standardization of 8-millimeter is about the only thing all of the major video manufacturers have agreed upon in the past 10 years.

Also, it's important to emphasize that Sony's entry into the 8-millimeter market lends the format a legitimacy it sorely needed. Sony, remember, invented the one-inch videotape that is now the standard for broadcast television. Sony also invented 3/4-inch tape that is the standard for industrial production. And, apropos of this discussion, Sony also invented 1/2-inch tape which gave birth to home video.

Consider the implications of 8-millimeter video. It may well lead to the development of combination TV and VCR units the likes of which us mere mortals could hardly imagine. What changes will be wrought in our viewing habits with the advent of a combination 8-millimeter VCR and Sony Watchman, no bigger than a pocket calculator and weighing, say, two pounds?

Wary consumers should be advised that video 8 is here to stay: Canon and Sanyo have already introduced 8-millimeter, with Pioneer and other manufacturers—and lower prices—to follow by Christmas. While there's no reason to dump your VHS or Beta units and libraries yet, video 8 represents a fairly low-cost investment in the future. The bang for the buck is quite incredible. □

Frapp

[cont. from 52] Schizoid men from the boys.

Borrowing from a seemingly inexhaustible font of creative juice, Frapp is also slated to hook up again with the vocal group the Roches for a "Roche, Roche, Frapp and Roche" serving of Christmas songs.

Production chores entail overseeing an album of the piano pieces of Gurdjieff and Thomas De Hartmann by New York pianist Elan Sicroff.

Additionally, Frapp sat in on ex-Japan lead singer David Sylvian's recent solo LP, *The Holy Blood of Saints and Sheep*, an acid test for the new tuning he now uses exclu-

is quick to add, however, that "because a particular piece of music characterizes the spirit of its time doesn't mean it doesn't stand up; it can still be valid today . . . furniture from the 1920s, for example, is stylized, but some of it reflects its time and still has a quality which persists through time. The problem is if there isn't that quality present." And what is this quintessential quality? Frapp ponders a minute; the sound of gears grinding and cogs turning is almost audible. "It's where the ordinary punter walks into the club, there's a band playing, and he *knows* something is going on. It will have a certain specific vocabulary, the sound of particular forms of organization,

but the quality will be eternal. Whether Orlando Gibbons excites you, Japanese Koto classics make you foam at the mouth, Hendrix bites your bippy or the Sex Pistols had you on your feet gobbing, whatever it is, you know you're alive for that moment."

It is precisely this evanescent, effervescent quality that Frapp has been pursuing throughout his career, a dangling carrot he is fond of referring to as "the capacity to re-experience one's innocence." In his article "Creativity: Finding The Source," he wistfully imagined it as "the kind of thing that

keeps a musician working in poor conditions for years in the hope that whatever magic turned a routine gig into a memorable event might one day return." And in these pages a year ago, Frapp spoke longingly of a significant brush with the same cathartic spark in that "remarkable year" of 1969, when King Crimson was steamrolling all preconceptions of what was pop, razing the icons and salting the ploughed rubble: "After that, it was a question of: magic has just flown by, how does one find conditions in which magic flies by? I'd experienced it—I knew it was real. So where had it gone, how could one entice it back? That's been the process from then till now."

"Now" finds a certain "small, intelligent, highly mobile unit" (Frapp's eponym) at a crossroads of sorts, his solo discography spruced up and refueled, his band idling in the driveway. "King Crimson is a way of doing things," he muses, "I think the band in 1981—certainly in the second half of the year—was the best performing rock band in the world. After that, it ceased to be a group as much as a collection of individuals." Whither now? "I have no idea. We're all in

touch. I have no specific plans—you don't plan King Crimson."

The '85 model is a Frapp in flux. "I view myself as . . . somehow undefined. What I set out to do with intention was to find a way of combining the European tonal harmonic tradition with the Afro-American experience—what would Hendrix sound like playing the Bartok String Quartets? *Larks' Tongues in Aspic*, '21st Century Schizoid Man' were all part of this. Then after about 1977, it all changed; everyone became more aware of so-called ethnic musics. The extent of forms of organization that were available to the practicing musician extended. If your work happens to be in the marketplace, in the field of popular culture, then an archaic vocabulary is of little use. You speak to people in the language which is current. And that's where I've seen my work go."

A close contender for rock's Most Likely To Be Misunderstood slot, Frapp is seen by many as a tin woodsman with a microtonal heart, a professorial presence noted for blasts of bombast, a well-heeled, dapper demeanor, and a thin-lipped insistence on linguistic exactitude.

In some senses, he is a "Schizoid Man" of his own making, confessing that "I see Robert Frapp as a creature that I inhabit." He can toss off poignant tearjerkers like "Mary" (*Exposure*) and on the same record, ear-blistering headbangers like "Disengage." He is a man of heavy mannerisms and much metaphor, at once serious and profoundly silly. The founding father of progressive rock, he cut the die for punk; his toxic, caustic guitar calisthenics on Eno's "Baby's on Fire" (*Here Come The Warm Jets*) remain prototypical. His sinuous, ethereal Frippertronics have graced mainstream tracks by the likes of Daryl Hall, Blondie, Bowie and Andy Summers as well as underground efforts by Eno, Centipede and other artists. He can be archly ascetic, claiming that his momentous discovery of recent memory was the unearthing of "a very, very academic Hungarian music textbook," the name of which "I'm not going to tell you." At the same time, for all his finger-wagging pedantry, Frapp pursues his lone alchemy ". . . just so life is right, that's all; when you hit a note and it's right, you don't need any more. You're there with the note." He is, like the narrative voice in "Under Heavy Manners," "resplendent in divergence," at the least. Trapping the mercuric Frapp in a definition that will stick, even one of his own making, is like trying to drive a thumbtack through a blob of quicksilver:

Q: In your article, "Creativity: Finding The Source," you painted Hendrix and Charlie Parker as part of a metaphorical priesthood. Do you consider yourself a clergyman in that same sense?

A: More of a monk.

Q: In what sense?

A: That's the answer. □



sively. His rustiness with it, he laughingly recalls, resulted in "flurries of bum notes" in spots, but he found Sylvian's record "beautiful music," and "was very pleased to have the opportunity to play on it."

And as if that weren't enough, Frapp has donated his talents to the worthy cause of a fund-raiser to bail out the ailing Childrens' School in Claymont, near the guitarcraft center. English songstress/actress Toyah has been recruited to read Frank Stockton's "The Lady or The Tiger" and to co-compose the backing music with Frapp. Likewise, durable crony Brian Eno has agreed to read a Stockton story, and add his two cents to the accompanying soundtrack. Frapp comments enthusiastically: "Eno and I work together well; the old chemistry is still there . . . fire!"

Taking a critical gander at his recent output, Frapp singles out the E.G. remixes of his solo catalogue for critique. "It's interesting to see how much of it stands up today. Not all of it . . . some of it's a little dated; so-called art rock from the early 70s . . . sounds very, very weary now and completely out of place." About-facing, he

Stacked

[cont. from 42]ance with the amp signal.

But don't misunderstand—despite its high-tech edge today's rack must snuggle comfortably into even the softest environments. As a result, many new rack systems are now being housed in cabinetry that can compete with your favorite credenza.

Marantz has created a designer wood-grain cabinet for its latest rack endeavor, the X500 Series, which can top \$2100 when it's loaded to the brim with capacitors. The basic system is built around a 100-watt-per-channel amplifier that accommodates virtually every audio and video input need. Though the system is delivered with strictly audio in mind, its full-function remote can switch selections for future TV monitor and VCR add-ons.

Other standard components include a five-band graphic equalizer, 16 preset AM/FM tuner, linear tracking turntable with P-mount cartridge, and 24-track programmable Compact Disc player. Add to this an automatic reverse cassette deck with both Dolby B and C noise reduction as well as a pair of three-way speakers (with 15" woofers) that identically match the depth and cabinetry of the rack furniture itself.

\$3500

Alas, the rack may be the child of the '60s but it is truly a citizen of the '80s. Just as today's recording studio is now producing the latest MTV videos back-to-back with LP sessions, the home entertainment rack has been bitten by the video bug as well.

Some of today's racks have grown to enormous proportions thanks to the addition of TV monitors, VCRs, and occasionally videodisc machines. However, the

DESPITE ITS HIGH-TECH EDGE, TODAY'S RACK MUST SNUGGLE COMFORTABLY INTO EVEN THE SOFTEST ENVIRONMENTS.

more equipment the more difficult it usually is to make the components work together. That is, unless you check out what a "super rack system" like the Technics AV500 can deliver.

The system's wireless remote control incorporates 66 different functions with its own LCD readout. The LCDs read out the systems' selected source, TV channel number and volume level. It even lets you operate two components long distance at the same time.

The video components in the system are a Technics first, including a pre-amp tuner with a built-in stereo TV decoder, a VHS Hi-Fi VCR, and a 26-inch monitor receiver with three sets of audio/video inputs and 125 channel cable-compatible tuner. This combo alone can provide a roomful of tunes in addition to the images.

On the audio end of things, the rack is built around a preamp tuner with 16-station programmability. The same box has an automatic simulcast switch and also produces a surround effect when the rack is connected to a second pair of speakers.

Its pedestal cabinet is further packed with a 100-watt-per-channel-amplifier, auto-reverse cassette deck, automatic lin-

ear tracking turntable, and three-way magnetically-shielded speakers with 12" woofers. There's still plenty of storage space for LPs and videotapes. And of course, there's room for more equipment—in case you get an itch for a Compact Disc player and graphic equalizer.

And what happens when you run out of rack room? Like the recording engineer, you'll just have to buy another. □

Listening Room

[cont. from 23] has three sets of direct inputs for VCR and videodisc.

No matter how flexible your current television may be it can expand and change just so far. And it was to adapt to new technologies like stereo TV that Pioneer Video introduced the SD-25A (approx. \$1200), subtitled "the expandable TV" last year. From computer graphics to broadcast stereo TV sound, Pioneer offers a range of special TV modules that slip directly into the 25-inch screen's chassis to adapt it for anything new. Rear panel terminals are also provided for connecting the internal amp to a pair of external speakers, in which case the built-in speakers are automatically switched off. A total of four line level outputs permit a variety of connections; one pair can feed your hi-fi, another pair even lets you adjust the hi-fi's volume by remote control, and a third mono feed powers a power-hungry subwoofer to put some rumble into your set's sound. One of the available modules, the SD-X7 tuner, lets you sample 139 cable channels with a seek-tuning scan system, and even lets you program your twelve favorite stations.

However, the new, big sound of network television demands a bigger picture than ever before. That's why many new projection sets are now being customized for stereo monitor performance. RCA's Model PLR600, for instance, is a 45-inch rear projection remote control set that'll decode network stereo broadcast signals while it supplies more than sufficient stereo audio outputs to your hi-fi components. Its internal audio goods are fully compatible with RCA's new line of audio components, thus letting the same remote control operate everything from your TV dial to your Compact Disc player's program selection. The onboard amplifier provides ten watts-per-channel with less than one percent distortion into eight ohms, while the built-in speakers are a twin pair of two-way units with six-inch woofers and two-inch tweeters. The set even shaves the hiss from your audio signal with dynamic noise reduction and you can take control of your TV sound with separate bass and treble controls and loudness button circuitry.

It's a lot to choose from. But once you get a taste of the tunes that even soap operas can now offer, you might soon start listening to your TV instead of the radio. □



TECHNICS' AV500 "SUPER SYSTEM" TAKES THE PAIN OUT OF THE AUDIO-VIDEO CONNECTION. FULLY-LOADED, A SUPER SYSTEM CAN RUN \$3500 AND UP.



The behind-the-scenes story of Stewart Copeland's adventure video, "The Rhythmatist," is an adventure in itself. The blond rocker was making a Grand Tour of Africa before filming started and tried to travel through Zaire without a visa. The local soldiers nabbed him, cuffed him, and slapped him into the local pokey. Copeland made the best of the situation by talking—what else?—music with his guards, who cheerfully showed him local fanzines and tuned in their favorite sounds on the radio: a home-grown type of pop called Lingala. "I got addicted to it," says Copeland. Released early the next morning, the drummer apparently came away with fond memories of Lingala, because it forms the basis for the soundtrack LP of "The Rhythmatist". Since then, Copeland's kept up the excitement, writing songs for a thirteen-part cartoon series based on the Droids and Ewoks characters of "Star Wars" fame.

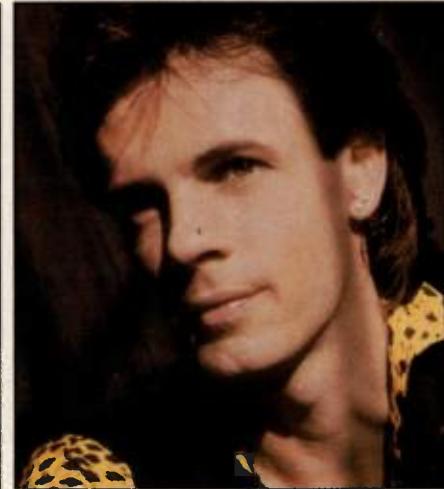
BOOKS

Considered by many as the dean of American rock journalism, Dave Marsh's outlook on the pop life does not always agree with the mainstream, but always makes for intriguing reading. The cream of some fifteen

years' worth of Marsh's articles, critiques and essays has been assembled in *Fortunate Son*. Priced at \$9.95, it's published by Random House... "Twenty Years of Lipstick, Handcuffs, and Chemicals" is the subtitle of Chet Flippo's new book on Mick Jagger and Co. *On the Road With the Rolling Stones* is a collection of tour vignettes, comic interludes and rumination on *What It All Means* for those of us still trying to figure it out (Doubleday/Dolphin, \$6.95)... From his marathon run of hits with the Commodores through his current incarnation as one of this country's most successful singer-composers, **Lionel Ritchie's** knack for tapping the public's heartline is phenomenal. David Nathan's *Lionel Ritchie: An Illustrated Biography* charts the artist's rise during more than a decade of hits (McGraw-Hill, \$9.95)... The metaphor of phoenix rising from the ashes more than applies to **Tina Turner**. From her Nutbush origins to her recent rebirth as a major chart force is chronicled in words and photos in Ron Wynn's *Tina: The Tina Turner Story*. At \$9.95, it's from Collier Books... David Lee Roth appears to have taken the Big Walk at last and gone off to solo stardom, but the collective name of **Van Halen** is still enough to make a concert promoter's eyes shine. J.D. Considine's *Van Halen!* casts an eye over years of epic Van Halenization for Quill Books. Cover price is \$9.95... Readers whose taste in music runs beyond the mainstream will be interested in *Recombinant Do Re Mi*. Penned by Bill Bergman and Richard Horn, it's an overview of that sonic grab bag called Alternative Music: Repetitive Minimalism, Avant Garde, New Music, Hardcore Punk, Performance Art, and represented by names ranging from the **Eurythmics**, **Brian Eno**, and **Talking Heads** to **Steve Reich**, **Laurie Anderson**, **Philip Glass**, and **Meredith Monk**. The \$7.95 book is published by Quill.

MISCELLANIA

When New York's #1 rock radio station, WNEW-FM, recently asked fans to list their top seven tunes of all time, 10,000 postcards flooded their beleaguered mailroom. The Beatles scored 33 times, the Stones 31,



After claiming all along that it was simply a means of paying bills, Rick Springfield put his afternoon soap opera stardom into mothballs to concentrate on his first passion—music. Though his earlier recordings and tours were met with the kind of teen screaming that usually accompanied David Cassidy concerts, he finally seems to be gaining respect from the rock world at large. However, the actor in him still lurks in there somewhere. To the chagrin of RCA Records, the music has once again gone back to the burners. Springfield is currently plowing through film scripts with an eye towards following up last year's *Hard to Hold*.

Bruce Springsteen 25, the Kinks 18, and the Police 13. And FM rock radio champs Led Zeppelin? They copped 31 places, including the #1 spot for the second year in a row, for the song that refuses to die: "Stairway to Heaven" ... **Cyndi Lauper**'s back in business again following her successful operation for abdominal illness. Cyndi's physician has also treated **Captain Lou Alabano**. Lauper says, "The good thing about this doctor is that she gave me complete creative control" ... Hordes of **Yes** fans recently gathered at the Cherry Hill Hyatt, just outside Philadelphia, for a two-day rock convention called Yescon '85. Encouraged by rare video screenings, special guests and contests, a host of busy band members past and present (including ace drummer **Bill Bruford** and new band guitarist **Trevor Rabin**) found time to phone in their best

SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING: Quitting Smoking Now Greatly Reduces Serious Risks to Your Health.

wishes to fans. Calling from a London recording studio, **Steve Howe** (ex-Yes guitarist of Asia and now of GTR) proved devoted beyond the call of duty. He gamely fielded questions for almost an hour, then laid the phone down, grabbed an acoustic guitar and treated the fans, four thousand miles away, to an impromptu trans-Atlantic recital ... Those who found the temperature rising in their local movie theater when **Stephanie Mills** sang the title song of last summer's *European Vacation* know only half the story. While the tune "Bit by Bit" was being recorded at an LA studio by producer Harold Faltermeyer, the control board suddenly caught fire. Those assembled had to flee to another studio through clouds of acrid smoke from the burning circuitry. As Mills quips, "Guess Harold wasn't joking when he said my vocals were hot" ... Traveling through Nepal recently, **Billy Squier** got wind of an oracle living nearby—a little girl believed by the locals to be the incarnation of the Hindu god Vishnu. Tended by nannies, she lives in a special palace and usually can be consulted only by the King of Nepal—who stands in the palace courtyard several times a year to get the tiny wonder's opinions on important state matters. It is said that the little girl comes to the window and Nepal's wise men determine the answer to the king's question by interpreting her yawns, nods, smiles and frowns. Squier couldn't resist ducking into the holy courtyard for a peek. Did she unlock the Meaning of Existence or any Secrets of the Universe for the rocker? "Well," Squier says, "I think she wants me to call my next album *Shrug*" ... Despite all the media attention focused on 300-city mega-tours and multi-platinum albums these last years, some of the biggest bucks in the music business are being raked in, not by the artists or their record labels, but by the manufacturers of the musical gear these artists use. The annual trade shows and conventions—once nothing more than a few makeshift booths staffed by guys in baggy suits—have become epic multi-media extravaganzas, generating zillions of dollars in business and attracting some of the biggest names in rock as special guests. At the National Association of Musical Instrument Manufacturers' big deal in New Orleans recently, the famous and

nearly-so were tripping over each other in the aisles. Seymour Duncan (maker of guitar pickups) organized a concert, and Fostex (recording equipment) and Schecter guitars ushered a formidable roster of musicians to the stage for some informal jamming, including **Edward Van Halen**, the Who's **John Entwistle**, Queen's **Brian May**, Quiet Riot's **Carlos Sarzo**, **Ted Nugent** and drummer **Tommy Price** from Billy Idol's band ... Although that \$50 million raised for Ethiopia this summer by the Live Aid bash is no small chunk of change, both AT&T and the mammoth event's organizers admit the total would have been much higher had the special toll-free "800" num-

ber worked properly. Seems 1,000 lines had been set up to handle calls but the dizzying number that poured in (200,000 per hour) swamped the phone giant's facilities—to the point that only 700,000 of an estimated 2,500,000 callers actually got through. However, those who did, pledged a gratifying average of \$31, prompting a request to AT&T to extend the number through the following day in hopes that the lost callers would try again. Many did, and in such numbers that the lines were re-opened a week later, operated by Telecommunications of America (a phone marketing firm) on Live Aid's behalf. As this goes to press, 1-800-LIVE AID continues to generate a heartwarming response. ■

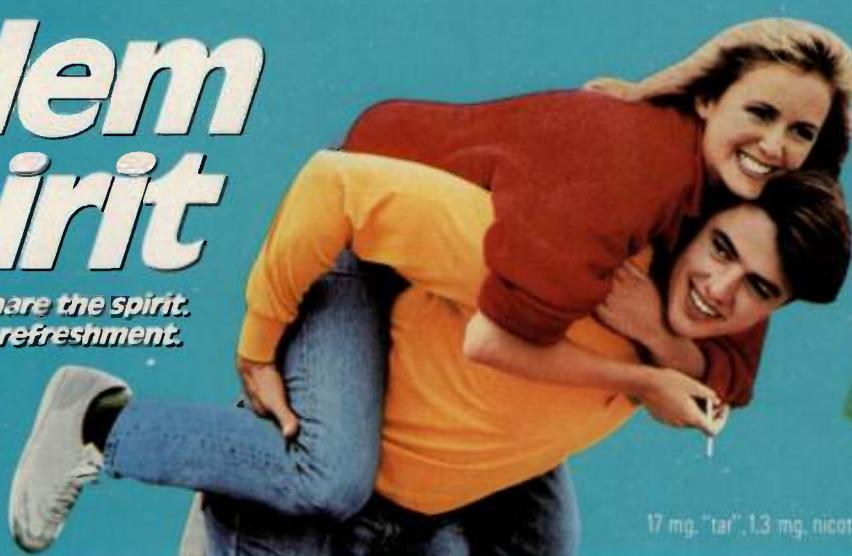


Fuzzy

Rumor has it that NRBQ's war on the Cabbage Patch Kids is drawing to a close. Too bad, since their notoriety has become such that, during a Vancouver gig, Navy Shore Patrol members waded in to collar several sailors who were out past curfew and refusing to leave. Also in a nautical vein, the band blindfolded little Patricia Suzanne while performing aboard the cruise ship Port Welcome and, with birth certificate and all, made her walk the plank into Baltimore Bay. While driving through the Pacific Northwest, several band members realized they'd be nearing Mount St. Helens. Hiring a helicopter, they flew over the volcano and dropped their last CPK into the gaping crater. One wonders why NRBQ would abandon such a good shick. A few days after they played LA, Johnny Carson blew up one of the hapless dolls in full view of millions on *The Tonight Show*. (Shown: Terry Adams of NRBQ with tarred and feathered Cabbage Patch Doll.)

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IN SQUARE CIRCLE

Stevie Wonder
Tamla

YEARS AGO LARRY SCHILLER produced a film about Dennis Hopper called *An American Dreamer* and was criticized for "missing a whole mystical side" of his subject. Such is the danger in assessing Stevie Wonder's first studio album in five years, *In Square Circle*. First impressions produce responses like, "Why does this record seem so insubstantial?" But *In Square Circle* is deeper than it initially seems, not because the lyrics are any less precious than Wonder's more starry-eyed musings have been, but because the man's such a great singer. It's precisely his astounding vocal choices that lift some of the seemingly mundane songs here onto higher ground.

The big disappointment of this record, though, is "It's Wrong (Apartheid)," whose message boils down to the oft-repeated, "It's wrong/Apartheid is wrong." Well, we know that. When more and more musicians are engaging the real world in their music, it's regrettable that Stevie Wonder's effort should have such a dull edge.

—David McGee

OLD WAYS

Neil Young
Geffen

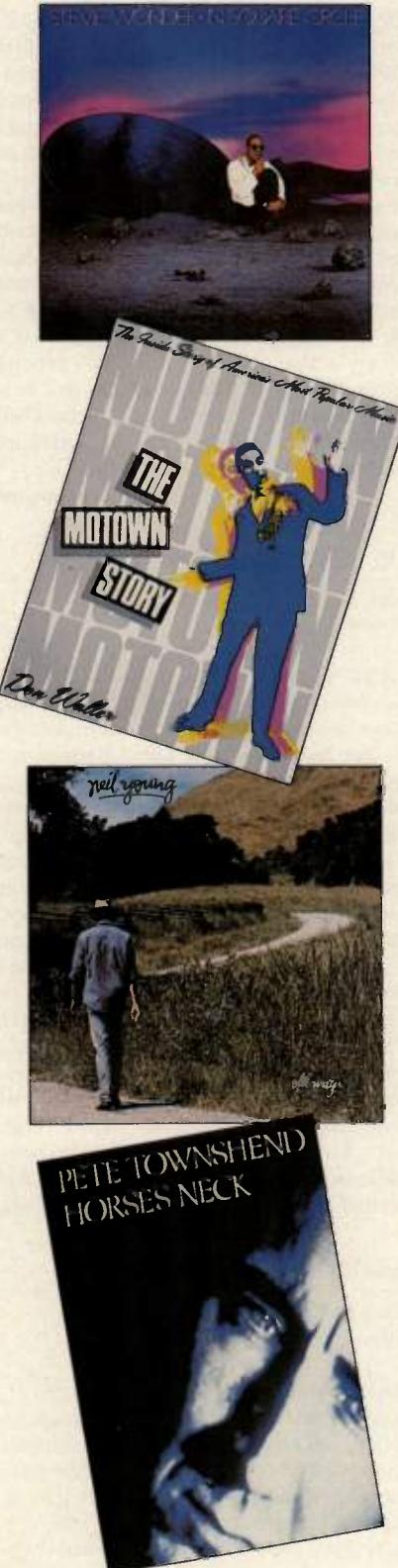
OLD WAYS WAS THE LP GEFFEN RECORDS refused to accept from Neil Young a couple of years back, prompting a law suit and inspiring Young's rockabilly period piece, *Everybody's Rockin'*. Waylon Jennings joins Young on five of the (substantially reworked) album's ten songs (and Willie Nelson sits in on the somewhat righteous "Are There Any More Real Cowboys?"), including some fairly straight country fare and the utterly inexplicable "Misfits." The album's title track is classic Neil Young, with Jennings harmonizing on the irony-laced line "It's hard to teach a dinosaur a new trick." In short, Neil is as Young as ever; he's just chosen to shift into the adult's playground—for the time being, at least.

—David Gans

COLOR OF SUCCESS

Morris Day
Warner

MORRIS DAY LEAVES THE MYSTERIOUS to Prince. On his solo debut, Day plays to win, promotes his new dance, "The Oak



Tree," ("Morris," someone asks, "why are you having that tree cut down?") and he guesses he's just a character, a victim of society, scared of love. At first, this nasal soul card's six cuts don't sound like much more than ideas for songs. After a few plays, though, all of them snap into place as subtle but solid groove foundations. Not the sweaty stumps of recent Time, but, as Day says, maybe just "a bit of grandiosity" on his part. From Prince protege to funk comedian—George Clinton's yuppie Minneapolis nephew—Morris Day takes care of his new, suave business here and the customers should start streaming in. —Jim Hunter

CONTACT

The Pointer Sisters
RCA

THE 1984 SMASH LP, *BREAK OUT*, was producer Richard Perry's grudging admission that he couldn't keep the Pointer Sisters a pop girl group forever. Their individual and collective attributes suddenly sprang out: Ruth as the voice of experience; Anita as a devastatingly alluring woman too down-to-earth to be fatal; June as the girl who can't control herself and shouldn't—and all of them as a grandly talented and exciting group. *Contact* conveys the group persona intermittently—in "Dare Me," "Hey You," and a beautiful ballad, "Freedom." Elsewhere, especially on "Twist My Arm" and "Pound, Pound, Pound," the Pointers' powerful vocals are intermeshed with pile-driving rhythm tracks in innovative and interesting ways. But even though *Contact* will doubtless sound better over time, it's unlikely to get more personal—and *Break Out* has already made clear that the Sisters' talents don't have to be used as abstractly as they are here. —Brian Chin

THE BEATLES LIVE: READY STEADY GO!

20 min./Sony Video 45/\$16.95

FINALLY, THE BEATLES LIVE, UNEDITED, with no ponderous narration interrupting their performances. Just John, Paul, George and Ringo, circa 1964, in a 20-minute set (nearly the length of a Beatles concert in those days) playing and singing like the World's Greatest Rock 'n' Roll Band. Culled from Dave Clark's *Ready Steady Go!* archives, the quartet mixes in some rousing cover tunes with original material, demonstrating a virtual blood connection between Lennon and McCartney's sensibility and that of the writers whose songs were part of

their repertoire. On the other hand, there's no need to go analyzing this tape for critical enlightenment—enjoy it for the great rock 'n' roll it is, and the Beatles for the brilliant group they were. More, please. —D.M.

ELVIS AND GLADYS

By Elaine Dundy

MacMillan/320 pp./\$18.95

AUTHOR ELAINE DUNDY'S SOUTHERN background inflects her exploration of the bond between Elvis and his mother: she infers rather than declares, and lets the tougher questions resonate suggestively by avoiding easy resolutions. The probing intelligence of her inquiry makes up for the occasional softness of her music criticism, and she's always on the lookout for the character traits revealed in the familiar quotes and the broader implications of newly discovered incidents. Colonel Parker's psychological hold on Elvis reaches a crescendo of significance in Dundy's interpretation of the film *Jailhouse Rock*, for which the Colonel served as technical adviser: are the twin bassett hounds in the movie meant to taunt Elvis, a surviving twin, son of an inmate, client of an ex-dog catcher, who was forced to sing "Hound Dog" to a bassett on *The Steve Allen Show*? Dundy doesn't gloss over Elvis' faults, but her sympathetic approach is best summed up in one concise quote: "Elvis got it honest. Gladys had rhythm." —Tim Riley

THE HEAT

Nona Hendryx

RCA

THE HEAT COULD EASILY BECOME
Nona Hendryx's first blaze of post-Labelle commercial glory. She's assisted on production and mix here by two boardmen who have hit their creative strides with "pop" performers: Arthur Baker and Bernard Edwards. The two men surround her with the modified rock/hiphop flash and sparkle they have previously given big-selling radio monsters like The Power Station and Hall and Oates. The result is to push Hendryx in a couple of positive directions: first, into a higher vocal register and, second, toward a more animated vocal style that enables her to put the oomph into her songs in a way she's been able to do only rarely in the past. "I Need a Love" and "A Girl Like That" stand out as satisfying statements, but even "If Looks Could Kill" and "Revolutionary Dance" are hotter and more substantial than much of what she's done in her solo career. *The Heat* is definitely on, and you won't want to get out of the kitchen. —B.C.

HORSE'S NECK

Pete Townshend

Houghton Mifflin/134 pgs./\$12.95

AS AN AUTHOR PETE TOWNSHEND IS not quite in league with say, Raymond Carver or John Cheever, but to my knowledge neither of them has ever whipped themselves into such an on-stage windmill-frenzy as to bleed for their audience. Score one for PT. His first book is a good, two-hour read, a mildly introspective, somewhat autobiographical dance through the good and hard times of a very public persona. Thirteen short fictions written over the last decade hazily detail a child's maturation to the boozing, lusty life of a "star" — a lifestyle the author slams. Townshend seems to brag in a couple stories that he's lucky to have survived a sordid, debauched era. As a whole it's a book about hanging on, transformation and, oddly, horses.

—Jon Bowermaster

THE ROSE OF ENGLAND

Nick Lowe

Columbia

LAST YEAR'S *NICK LOWE AND HIS Cowboy Outfit* was good-natured, witty and buoyant—this year's *The Rose of England* is all that and more, with Lowe flashing not only his trademark charm and vocal chops, but a sense of introspection as well. Lowe kicks off the LP with his late-'70s classic, "I Knew the Bride (When She Used to Rock and Roll)," produced here by Huey Lewis and restyled as an R&B-flavored rouser. Other highlights (all produced by Lowe and Colin Fairley) include John Hiatt's "She Don't Love Nobody"; the pretty, folksy title track; the kinetic, Buddy Hollyish "Hope to God"; and Elvis Costello's brooding "Indoor Fireworks," which reveals a melancholy, semi-bitter side of Lowe that's seldom surfaced before. With *Rose*, Lowe proves that he's able to grow, while keeping both his sense of humor and his soul intact. —Karen Schlosberg

SPORTIN' LIFE

Mink DeVille

Polydor

LIKE MANY OF THE ORIGINAL SOUL singers he emulates, Willy DeVille keeps on keeping on, regardless of fashion or fortune. A shortsighted modern world and some inferior records may have kept him from achieving deserved American stardom; still, this exceptional, atmospheric vocalist and songwriter continues to write and record fine new oldies that effortlessly transport you

back to that sweet-sounding era before the Beatles. From the tender misery of "Something Beautiful Dying" to the braggadocio of "Italian Shoes," with a detour to the bar-room rockabilly of "Little By Little," he keeps the musical faith with emotive, smoky singing, appropriate production, and backing by a sharp, sympathetic band. Forget the pre-fab fundamentalism of Huey Lewis and the News—Mink DeVille gets as close to the real thing as anyone. —Ira Robbins

COSI FAN TUTTI FRUTTI

Squeeze

A&M

IT'D BE NICE TO SAY "WELCOME back, guys," as if some old, dear friends had moved back to the neighborhood, but the re-formed Squeeze has returned with an album that's surprisingly lifeless. In this case, high-gloss means high-dross. Actually, regarded as a progression from last year's *Difford and Tilbrook*, this LP doesn't come as a complete sonic curveball. But here the elongated, silky tunes are pumped full of instrumental embellishments, gloppy production touches—and, sad to say, a lot of hot air—softening the feistiness and wit that once distinguished Squeeze's music. Not to say the record is a washout: Meaty melodies, punny wordplay, and those lush vocal harmonies surface here and there. But remember when Squeeze albums didn't make you have to hunt for those treasures? —Duncan Strauss

SOUNDS OF MOTOWN: READY STEADY GO!

50 min./Sony Video/\$29.95

A MOTORTOWN REVUE, AS SEEN ON *Ready Steady Go!* in 1965. The only real disappointment is Little Stevie Wonder, whose solo turns on "I Call It Pretty Music But The Old People Call It The Blues" and "Kiss Me Baby" are perfunctory and inconsequential. Otherwise, this show gives it up, in its own odd way. For example, Diana Ross and the Supremes are fantastic—Diana with that great Nubian profile and those glistening lips puttin' the hurt on "Baby Love" . . . and then, *coitus interruptus!* Just as she's getting to the juicy part, they cut to Smokey Robinson! And he's great too—the Miracles' "Oo Baby Baby" may well be the high point of this release—but it's like soup starter here. David Ruffin is working out mightily on "My Girl" when the spotlight moves elsewhere. Dusty Springfield (the show's hostess) and Martha Reeves get together for an inspired duet on "Wishin' and Hopin'" and you want more of both. Still, the whole works out to be greater than the

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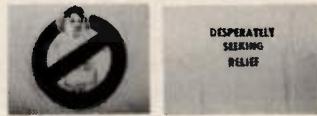
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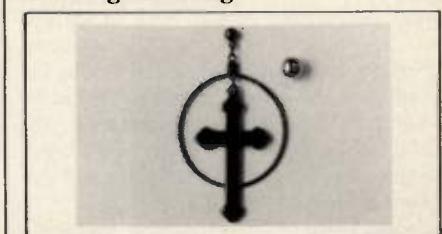
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SIDE TRACKS

BY GREG TATE

Cool Tunes, Dance Cuts and the Singles Life

What I got up for you this month, folks, is divas. Take your pick—CHAKA, ARETHA, NONA, CRISSIE, 9.9. I hear you out there now: nine point whatzis? The group is 9.9 and if one friend's prediction proves correct, they're going to be the Supremes of the eighties. And even if it proves wrong, they got a kicking little single out making a run for the money. It's called "All of Me for All of You" and it grooves me to no end. Can't say what it'll do for you, but if you go for production values that sheen like polished chrome and buoyant black female vocal harmonies, you may get some spiritual reward out of listening to the mug, too.

Providing less return on your entertainment dollar is CHAKA KHAN's theme for the Run-D.M.C./Sheila E. vehicle, *Krush Groove*, soon to be hiphopping its way to your local theatres. One can only hope the movie isn't as much a sucky Hollywood homogenization of the beatbox as this chump piece of vinyl. Chaka sounds cool, mind you, but the rapping and techno-bop rip-offs her warbling is saddled down with here are laughable. Lemme tell ya, coming from a movie with Run-D.M.C. and the Fat Boys in it, this isn't such a good omen. After all, *Krush Groove* was supposed to be the rap movie that was gonna tell it like it is. Given this advance warning, I'll believe that when I see it.

In any event, while we're waiting we can coast down the "Freeway of Love" with Queen of Soul ARETHA FRANKLIN, riding a big pink cadillac on the comeback trail with a hit produced by Narada Michael Walden that everybody claims reminds them of the Aretha of yore but actually reminds me of Marvin Gaye's early seventies dance smashes. There's no denying on the other hand that you can hear Ms. Aretha strut more of her straight-up gospel chops here than we have heard elsewhere of late. If for no other other reason than fitting irony, maybe there's something to be said for a disciple of Sri Chinmoy being the one to bring Lady Soul back to the church vibe we all know and love so well from her sixties Muscle Shoals records (make what you will of the fact that those records proved how deep Alabama white boys could get into the blues).

Speaking of country though, you gotta check NONA HENDRYX's new one "If Looks Could Kill (D.O.A.)" because this tearjerker would make an ideal vehicle for Dol-

ly Parton to crack the black dance market. I know that's quite a perverse thought, but I couldn't resist it, given how melodramatic Hendryx renders this sappy little ode to romance and mesmerism.

Maybe even more bizarre is CRISSIE HYNDE's sit-in with UB40, which turns out to be a cover version of "I Got You Babe." Somehow I got real problems seeing Hynde and 40's Brian Campbell as the Sonny and Cher of the eighties, but the reggae backbeat isn't a bad touch—though on the other hand, what'd you expect, zydeco or even polka, already, c'mon.

While it looks like all the divas are charting new ground, all the men-folk are covering old tracks, meaning timidly venturing forth into remake territory. Take MICK JAGGER and DAVID BOWIE's version of Martha Reeves and the Vandellas' "Dancing in the Streets"—please. Actually this meeting of titan posseurs makes up in attitude what it lacks in supple vocal grace and, who knows, just may even inspire a few anti-apartheid demonstrations out there somewhere. I'm not making any bets on that, however. Somewhat more marginal is MAURICE WHITE's cover of Ben E. King's classic, "Stand By Me," which, unfortunately, just kinda stands there while you be waiting for something to happen. Somewhat jumpier is HALL AND OATES confab with Temptations EDDIE KENDRICKS and DAVID RUFFIN on "The Way You Do the Things You Do"/"My Girl." Now you could say Eddie and David did these both better the first time, but why be a party pooper, I say. There's some gusto here, and more than enough magic to bring back a few Motown memories, so what the hell if you can't improve on perfection? And ain't no denying this version smokes the Live Aid rehash.

Have you ever known me to say anything nice about POWER STATION? Have you ever known me to say anything about Power Station at all? No matter, because I'm going on record now as saying I think their reprise of T-Rex's "Bang A Gong (Get It On)" is a hot little roadsong number. Funny thing about almost every tune PS has out is that when I heard them on the LP I hated 'em to no end, but everytime I hear one of 'em on the radio I go nuts. Either they've figured out the magic formula for making records blast out the box like nobody before them, or radio just sounds so bad now that even high-powered mediocrity sound like genius to me very ears. □

sum of its parts, because the music and the performances—even snippets of performances—more than carry the day. —D.M.

LITTLE BAGGARIDDIM

UB40

A&M

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOUR hoped-for breakthrough album doesn't break through? In the case of UB 40—whose fine *Geffery Morgan* failed to ignite mass interest in the masses last year—you throw subtlety out the door and make the ultimate crass commercial move: cover a '60's pop classic with help from a superstar pal. Not surprisingly, "I Got You Babe" sounds a tad too calculated and wooden—despite the virtue of Chrissie Hynde's presence, it lacks the kitschy, melodramatic zest of Sonny and Cher's original. The best tracks on this budget-priced hit-plus-filler EP—the insinuating ballad "Don't Break My Heart" and the angry unemployment protest "One in Ten"—speak far better for this band of British riddim masters. But if *Little Baggariddim* does finally break UB40 into the U.S. Top 40, who could really complain?

—David Browne

FULL FORCE

Full Force

Columbia

LIKE CHOIR BOYS GONE FUNKY, Full Force weaves—within some of the most chilled-out b-boy grooves—harmonies that go down smooth as cream. This from the same Brooklyn combo that helped start the Roxanne rage and, later, hooked up Lisa Lisa and Cult Jam's percolating "I Wonder If I Take You Home," which they answer here in the fleshier "Girl, If I Take You Home." Known best for their pleasure-seeking themes transmitted by way of the electric boogaloo, Full Force wouldn't immediately come to mind if you were looking for the inspirational or uplifting. But check "The Man Upstairs," a calming song about God; "Dream Believer," featuring a snippet of a Martin Luther King, Jr. speech cast against a slow-burning "Set It Off" cop; and "United," which uses U.T.F.O., the Real Roxanne, Lisa Lisa and Cult Jam to whip up a rush of frenetic energy that's an invitation to yell "Good Gawd" like Godfather Soul. The primo beat-ballad, "Stay," yearning and sweet, also surprises. Lou George's voice is the sound of joy, and the backing track is reminiscent of Earth, Wind and Fire at their elemental best. And for familiar Full Force fare, there's "Alice, I Want You for Myself" and "Unselfish Lover." May the Full Force be with you.

—Havelock Nelson

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All with one remarkable receiver.

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expand monaural sound into a spectacular stereo-like effect.

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* Stereo TV sound when available. ** 70 watts per channel. * Roberts 70Wts 300Hz with 0.003% THD. † Stereo. † VCR sound. †† Cable TV sound. © 1989 Technics International, Inc.



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