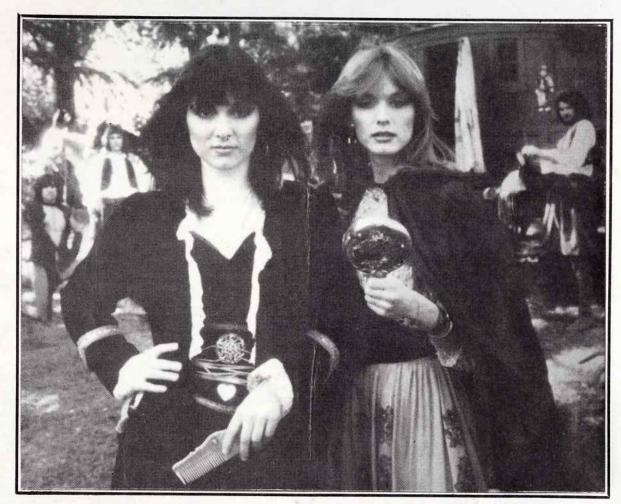
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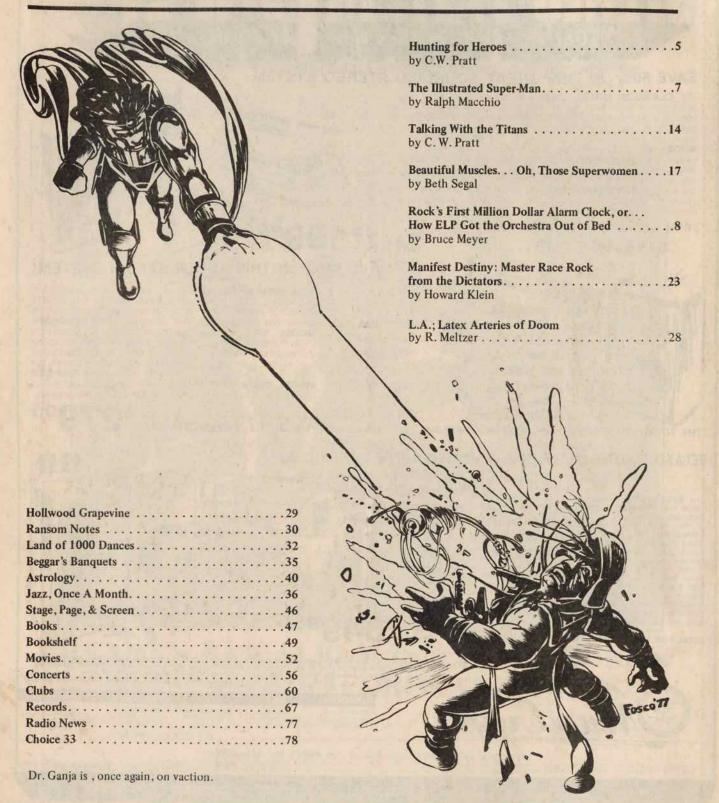


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CONTENTS



Triad June 1977

Letter From The Publisher

To All Who Are Concerned:

This is my final issue of TRIAD. TRIAD has grown from a small booklet to the magazine you see today. I wish to thank my parents, coworkers, supporters and all my readers who have aided in this growth.

During the course of my years at TRIAD I have met a great variety of people. I have been exposed to many opportunities and situations. A single thread of similarity was to be found in almost all these people, all these events. It was the same pattern that could be discerned from our daily newspaper headlines. People were and are, too often, unhappy—living their lives without purpose. Something was wrong. Something is wrong. Yet most are pretending not to know. Where are our great leaders? Who has the answers? What can be done? Who will do it?

So I thought about these questions and I wanted to do something. My desire found expression when I was introduced to FLIGHT and its founder, Peter N. Zarlenga. FLIGHT is a profit-making philosphical organization that rings true to the spirit that made America great; that echoes the songs of the spirit of humanity; that insists, by its existence, on human dignity which is the right of every man if he but claims it. Life today offers the greatest challenge in history. It is each man's choice to ignore and evade this challenge or to embrace and persevere with it. Throughout history progress has been marked by good men who chose to fight for what's right. When they were victorious the results were those glorious periods we know as the Renaissance and the Enlightenment. When no one bothered, the Dark Ages.

I have chosen to accept this challenge. I will direct my energies to the most noble endeavor that I have found. I will be working on "The Orator," a new monthly magazine that FLIGHT is publishing later this month. The purpose of "The Orator" is

"to speak the truth in harmony with beauty and move humanity to freedom."

Only brave men have ever dared to speak the truth. Greatness is never given; it is always earned. And a man is measured by how he accepts the challenge of life. I have made my decision; when you make yours I'd like to hear from you. You may write me c/o FLIGHT, P.O. Box 7392, Chicago, II., 60680.

Dambacin Publisher

P.S. "Make no little plans, for they have no magic to stir men's blood."

—David Burnham
(A great Chicagoan)

TRIAD Productions 7428 North Paulina Chicago 60626 (312)973-1277

Editor's Page



issue of TRIAD-and not just because my editor's page is slowly being scratched out at an even later hour before we go to press (The denizens of the TRIAD Man- jockey. Welcome home, R. sion are now thoroughly accustomed to this peculiarity-bets run hot and heavy

This issue marks the end of publisher Dan Bacin's association with the Chicago Comi-Con (What you say? magazine. For seven long years Dan has the magazine somewhat of a midwest in- menon.

the support and respect most editors tion. Hmm. work years to achieve. We all wish him luck in his new venture.

new ownership and will undergo some topnotch artist from Sauk Village important structual changes in the near (sounds like a polio retreat, doesn't itfuture, we will be taking what you might OK, OK, just kidding) who's been scriptcall a brief vaction next month. So don't ing and drawing his own superheroes go badgering your local record store man-since he was just a sprout. He's only 20 ager or supermarket bag-boy (or whoever now (and walking better than FDR ever else handles our darling little tabloid)-TRIAD is taking off the month of July- for one of the major comic publishers but you can expect some exciting new and we believe he's got the moxie it developments soon.

diately is our new West Coast corres-line time. Last but not least, our humble pondent, R. Meltzer, who will be writing thanks to art director merry Mark L.A., an aptly titled monthly column Hoedebecke for getting the issue in shape. emanating from the squalid depths of And as they say in the pulps, POW, sin city itself. "R," as his friends call BIFF and SHAZAM to all. him, opens this month with a celebra-

This is somewhat of a landmark tion of smog and smut, particularly fitting, I might add, for a survivor of Manhattan's Third Reich S&M bars and over a dozen years as a rock'n'roll word-

As for our cover story (aren't you glad you asked?): This issue's special as to whether my copy will arrive before comix section is the brainchild of our functionally literate arts editor, Chuck Pratt, who got the idea at last summer's Yes, dear, that's all he got). Since cosput an enormous amount of energy and turned superheroes have now invaded imagination-and no small amount of popular culture and rock music (as if street smarts-into the magazine, not only you hadn't noticed, Kiss has it's own giving TRIAD unusual longevity but also bratty little comic) it seemed time for developing an innovative format to make TRIAD to study this curious pheno-

We persuaded righteous Ralph Mac Having labored under the best and chio, an editor at Marvel Comics in New worst publishers, I can only say it has York, to script us an insider's look at the been a profitable and enlightening rela- business-and a business it is, with miltionship. Most publishers are renowned lions of comics published and procured for tantrums, eccentricities and visits to each month. Chuck, bless his hard little the fat farm-but Dan (with rare excep- heart, interviewed some of the human tions-we have argued over earthshaking personalities involved, and our own questions like whether Marshall Chapman bashful Beth Segal mused about the was a man or a woman) has offered me mighty women of the comix constella-

THE COVER: Our flashy frontal lobe and other inside illustrations are the Since the magazine will be under handiwork of fearless Frank Fosco, a did!) Frank's goal, naturally, is to work takes. Also, kudos to Larry Charet for One change you can enjoy imme-his invaluable illos assistance at dead-

Patrick Goldstein

Volume 5 Number 6 June 1977

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BY CHARLES W. PRATT

Call me a creature of habit, but every week for the past 16 years I've made the trek to my favorite newsstand to pick up my fix of fantasy. Call me an addict, because I'm hooked on comic books and the continuing saga of good vs. evil that they regularly present in words and color drawings. Every year I ask myself why I keep doing this, why I risk the ridicule of my necessity of using his or her powers to keep the earth intact. Peter friends, especially those who are reading Moby Dick for the fifth time. Yet every week it's the same journey to pick up the latest change into his Spider-Man costume. Heroes were rare in real life, adventures of Spider-Man, Batman, and the Avengers.

who slug it out with recognizable evil and come out on top, saving the world and all its innocent bystanders. Superheroes are appealing to me and the million other readers of comics because they remain so today. That's the reason for this special issue of they're right and they're mighty. Our vicarious link-up with TRIAD, celebrating superheroism. A superhero, in case you're Superman as he faces off against another of Lex Luthor's insidi- wondering, is a human (or humanoid) who possesses one or more ous plots provides an outlet for wholesome intellectual aggression senses, abilities, or powers that aren't standard mortal equipment. -as well as a sense of triumph against wrong. Not only that, Maybe he can fly; maybe he can change the solidity of his body; but the pictures are nice to look at.

slowed-down movie that can be analyzed frame-by-frame. De- supreme, nor is he above all the shocks that flesh is heir to. pending on how fast we sweep our eyes across the page, the Humanity is of any hero's essence, for without that no tragedy is action can be hurried or more deliberate. If there are blanks, well, possible, no true conflict. Without humanity a hero can have we fill them in ourselves.

I got hooked in 1961, when Stan Lee ushered in a comic umph over his enemies. book renaissance, creating a whole new universe of superheroes, good guys with a difference. The heroes-and heroines-springing and a little more heroic because of that. The fantasy aspect of from the Marvel Comics Group weren't just muscle: they had their adventures delights us, but the realistic dimension of all definite psychologies and lots of tragic flaws. Most of them their battles satisfies us, just as it does in other forms of literaweren't invulnerable, and many of them, like Spider-Man, were ture. In an age when heroes are in short supply-in politics, in actually feared and mistrusted by the society that they tried to music, even in the movies-we can find them in the comics, still help. The battle they waged, and still wage today, was between flexing their muscles against the bad guys. Usually they win. good and evil, but the dividing line wasn't so distinct. Spider-Man knew personal crisis. He had to worry about his aunt's heart

condition and about passing his final exams as well as the next invasion of earth from the creatures of the Negative Zone. That kind of existential dilemma appealed to me.

Marvel picked up on all the alienation of the '60s and distilled it into the concept of the antiheroic hero, a character who was torn between the desire to live a "normal" life and the Parker lost more than one girlfriend by having to run off and but in Spider-Man and other comic characters we were able to see I do it, I think, because I'm hunting for heroes, characters some remarkable realism along with the colorful fantasy.

Comic books became a modern mythology for me and many of my contemporaries. Despite occasional lapses in quality, maybe he can blast things with rays from his eyes; or maybe he Part of the appeal of comics lies in their form, sort of a just has a suit made out of flexible iron. Yet a superhero isn't no flaw, no suffering, no irony, no transcendence, no real tri-

Today's superheroes, even Superman, are a little less super



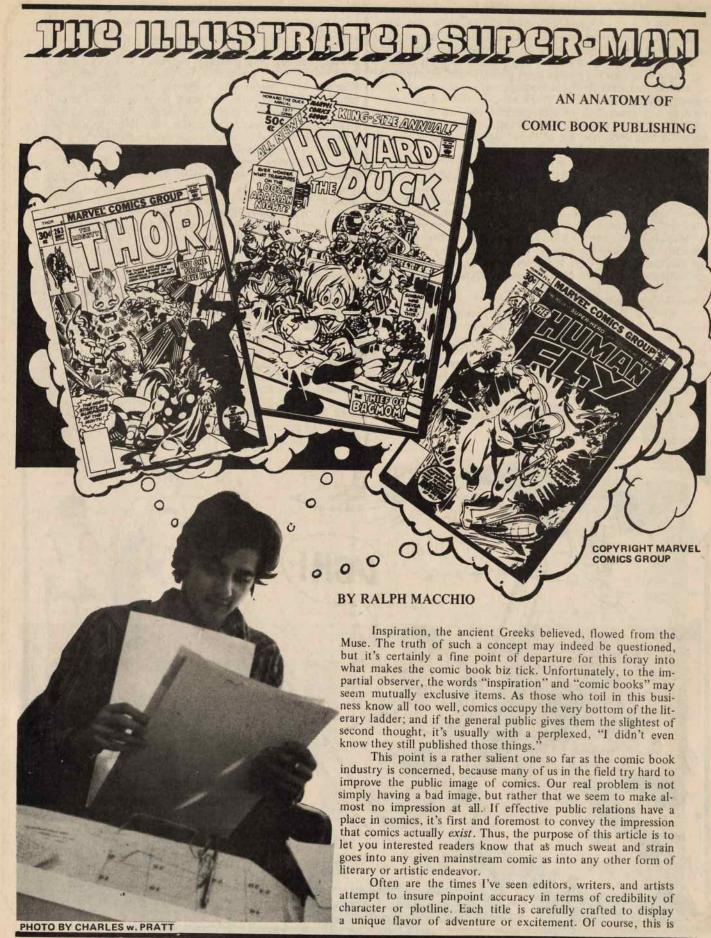
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not to say that every comic ever produced has been a sparkling gem. That view would be equally false. (Luckily, a really bad comic book won't endure long on the newsstands due to the heavy competition for rack space that tightens each day.) What's in each "frame," and generally measure out the progression of important is to view the graphic story medium as an equal partner in artistic and entertainment communication along with television, movies, plays, etc. If you'll concede that telling a story through a combination of still pictures and words does not prevent a piece of art being taken seriously, then you're halfway home. Armed with that bit of knowledge, let's take a look at the basics of the funny book business.

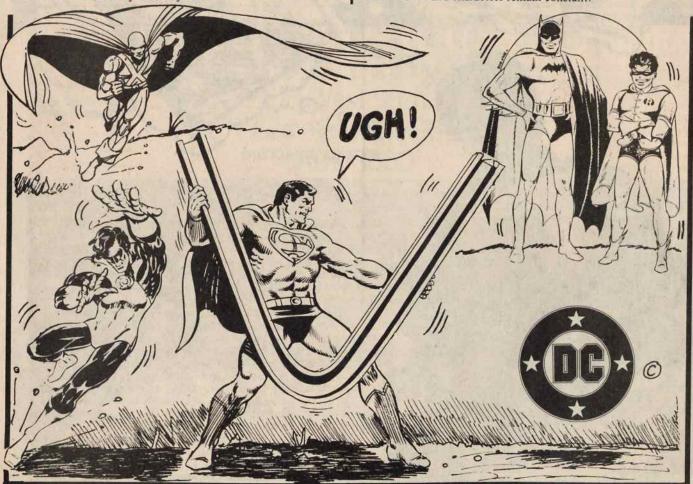
The germ of a story can come from virtually anywhere is as true in comics as in any other medium. A painting, a line of poetry, a few words in a song, even an offhanded comment may serve to trigger the creative spark. But the channels through which that idea must travel before it becomes the marketable item we call a comic book is what we're concerned with here. At Marvel Comics, where I work as an editor, the artist and writer generally collaborate on a story, though either may have come up with the initial concept. If the writer gets an idea, he generally contacts a Marvel editor, who will work with him to formulate a scenario which is commercially viable and doesn't violate the author's original concept.

After a conference (either short and smooth or long and type up a plot containing the bare bones of the story, really an outline of sorts, done for the benefit of the artist. Some writers, up to the artist. The Marvel method recognizes the artist's imlatitude to the necessary visual dynamics.

Specifically, it is the artist's job to pencil and pace the story as he sees fit, determining how many panels go on each page (unless given explicit orders by the writer), what angles to use narrative. At other companies, (at least until recently) the penciller has been relegated to secondary status because the writer described for him panel by panel what he should draw. The Marvel artist must not only be a good penciller, with an essential knowledge of anatomy, composition, and design; he must also be a topnotch storyteller, able to add visual substance to a writer's often bizarre imagination.

Artists vary considerably in the days and weeks spent drawing a normal 17-page comic. Some artists will only do rough layouts (and are paid accordingly) of figures and backgrounds, because their services are in demand on a number of titles. In this manner, five or six pages can be completed in a single eight-hour day. But for really detailed artwork, the artist will probably do no more than a single page in a day.

With the story in its pencilled stage, the writer gets the artwork back and actually begins to write the dialogue and captions that form the literary portion of the comic. Studying each panel, he writes the accompanying dialogue and explanatory captions for later transfer onto the artwork. The pencilled pages and typewritten script are then sent to the editor for checking and aprough, depending on various factors) the writer will go off and proval. Since comics are primarily a visual medium, writers are constantly warned to limit their copy, so as not to obscure the artwork. This is where the editor comes in, determining if there depending on their artist, will put together a massively detailed is too much wordage, and where and how to cut it. The editor plot which may even suggest how many panels to give a fight also insures that characters remain consistent from story to story, sequence or conversational scene. Others will simply give the and that continuity with previous plotline events is maintained. skimpiest outline possible, leaving much of the actual pacing (It isn't an easy job, and if the writer is highly protective of his work, considerable consternation on both parts can result from portant role in the creative process, and allows him sufficient the editing process.) The artwork is also carefully perused, to see that costumes and characters remain constant.



stage) is sent out to a designated inker, who inks over it so that it can be picked up by the special cameras at the printing plant. Inkers can do more than simply go over the pencilling. They sometimes embellish the work with a style of their own, adding shadows of enhancing facial features or characteristic backgrounds. Again, the amount of time taken per page varies depending upon the inker-two pages a day is considered adequate.

The inked artwork is then returned to the publisher's offices, and photostats are made of the art. The "stats," reduced in size, are sent out to a colorist, who adds his watercolors to the objects of the artist, keeping in mind that the range of colors which can be picked up in the comic book printing process is fairly limited.

Generally, during the same period that the photostats are being colored, the writer's script is being lettered on the original artwork. At the final proofreading the editor checks the script against the lettering on the artwork, insuring that the dialogue balloons are all going to the right people, the captions describing the action are correct, spelling and punctuation are in order. When the editor is satisfied, the lettered artwork and the colored photostats are sent to the printers, where printing plates are made to match up with the indications on the colored stats. The book is then engraved and handed over to distributors, who see that the comics reach the stands. And voila, another Marvel or D.C. or Charlton masterpiece is awaiting your assiduous approval.

Actually, a final step occurs after a Marvel book hits the stands. A few weeks after the printers receive the original artwork, they send the pages back to Marvel where they are divided up among the writer, penciller, and inker, each of whom takes several pages to keep in a personal collection, or sell.

Moving away from the mechanics of production, let's examine how a given title is considered to have "market potential" in this rough business. As with any business, popular trends are noticed, assessed, and pursued. A comics publisher may attempt to test the market with a new concept to determine if there's an audience. Often these experiments fail, but sometimes a company will hit upon something that simply clicks with the buying public and sells well. In that case, either the publisher has (knowingly or unknowingly) latched onto a trend already in full swing, or is about to open the market for one by creating a readymade audience. The saying goes that if one's good, two will be better; and that's as true of a comics product as anything else. About seven years ago, Marvel, at the urging of writer/editor Roy Thomas, put out a comic called Conan The Barbarian. Conan. a popular character in pulp fiction during the '20s, seemed appropriate for the crossover trip to the comics medium. The sword and sorcery title remained a fair seller for about ten monthly issues-and then something happened. A definite upward turn in sales occurred. Readers began to develop a taste for Robert E. Howard's barbaric world of Conan and clamored

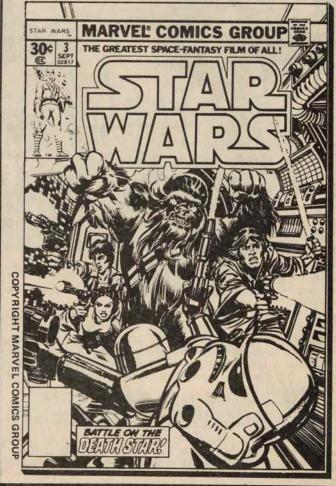


A SCENE FROM THE MOVIE "STAR WARS"

When the editing is completed, the artwork (in its pencilled | for more. Marvel soon published other comics of the same ilk, though none ever achieved Conan's sales success or fan notoriety. At National Periodical Publications (D.C.) a belated bevy of barbaric heroes appeared (Beowulf, Warlord), most of whom have also failed. The saturation of an audience market with a host of imitators not only will insure their ultimate demise, but will probably have a negative effect on the sales of the original.

Comics is a paradoxical medium today. On one hand, comics may be losing ground in the struggle for sales survival. Yet they are now exploding forth with new concepts, giving off a spark of vitality never before present. This isn't so odd when we realize one salient fact: magazines of all types are selling less than they used to. It's well known that competition for newsstand space, the closing down of many stores which displayed magazines, and other factors, have contributed to an overall decline in sales. This has hit comics hard because their distribution and display have always been haphazard at best. Yet more titles from the two major companies compete for the potential buyer's money than ever before. And each price increase brings a decline in readership. (Companies still make the same-or even less money on a 35-cent comic as they would on a comparable one at 12 cents, because the costs of material and labor have gone up so much.) The solution for comics has been to have more titles on the stands, though many have smaller print runs than in previous days and, consequently, a potentially smaller audience.

In the face of this dilemma, each of the main companies has embarked on ambitious odysseys to find new formats and packages in which to sell their product. National Products (DC) has introduced a full line of \$1.00 comics featuring 80 pages of new material, as well as several 60-cent titles featuring 34 pages of story. Marvel has expanded into the black-and-white magazine format, creating a series of titles selling anywhere from 75 cents to \$1.00, and displayed separately from regular comics. These mags contain articles and features along with comics stories.



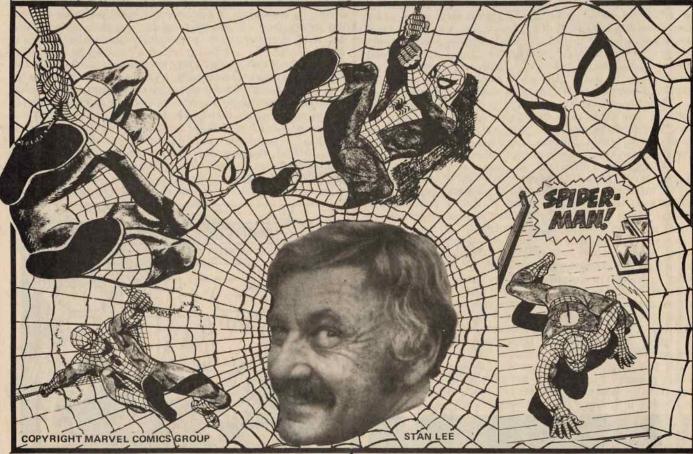
Marvel also has a new line of 52-page comics (at 50 cents) under the fact that there might be older, more aware readers who might the broad umbrella of Marvel Classics. These are adaptations of great works of literature. And Marvel is adapting currently popular movies into comics form, with articles pertaining to the film included. Recent examples are Island of Dr. Moreau, by H.G. Wells, The Deep, by Peter Benchley, and George Lucas' Star Wars. New formats must be found, and the search is underway-in earnest.

Those who put together the comics of the '40s knew their market-and they had a large one, in certain cases selling over a million copies of an individual title per month. But all good things must come to an end, and as the 1950s wore on, things changed and sales dropped.

Then came the purge. During the middle '50s, Dr. Frederick Wertham wrote a small bombshell of a book, Seduction of the Innocent, whose reverberations left a lasting impact on the comics industry. Wetham dealt with the ever popular pastime

appreciate something of substance in their stories. These questions found an answer in a revolutionary new title which helped reshape the industry: The Fantastic Four.

The fabulous F.F. had their stories of super-doings mixed with a subtle relevancy, a dash of devastating satire, and more than a smidgen of tongue-in-cheek. Almost immediately, the mail response poured in from college-age readers who picked up on the literary parallels and realistic dialogue. Soon after this success, Lee produced the most popular figure currently in comics: Spider-Man. Spidey (as he's affectionately known) was a new breed of comic character, with a recognizable personality, plus psychological phobias and numerous hang-ups. What's more, the world Spider-Man inhabited was the real world, with actual place names and landmarks adding an important sense of verisimilitude to enhance his appeal. It wasn't long before the early '60s saw the blossoming of other Marvel heroes, each of -violence, specifically that in the funny books. His work and whom had some facet of character, or some special problem



subsequent Senate hearings on the matter helped close shop for a number of comics outfits (like E.C.) and drove many an able and needed creator out of the field to seek safer publishing

The comics industry was forced to create a self-regulating agency to oversee and approve every comic that came out. This organization, which exists even today, is the Comics Code Authority, which issues rigid standards governing sex and violence. The Code's seal of approval lends an air of respectability to show wary parents that the comic book their child might purchase is free from harmful influences.

Public pressure lightened with the end of many of the more violent comics. National Periodicals spewed forth standard super-hero yarns while Marvel cranked out dozens of harmless. though entertaining monster and western stories. Then something happened. In early 1961, Stan Lee, the guiding light of Marvel Comics, decided to try a new approach, wondering if another

which served to differentiate them from each other as much as did their respective superpowers.

And it wasn't only in writing terms that Marvel distinguished itself from its competitors. The artwork was a major selling point, and in this area, the prospective buyer could see there was a difference without even having read the book. This was largely the doing of one man, whose influence in the field rivals that of Stan himself: Jack Kirby. Kriby had (and still has) a flair for visual storytelling that's unmatched by any other penciller in the field. Kirby was tremendously fast, which allowed him to do a great number of books, each brilliantly rendered.

A whole new type of reader was born. High school and college kids wrote their master's theses on the new Marvel Mythology. To be a reader of Stan Lee's little morality plays was considered the ultimate "in" among the cognoscenti. Marvel even had articles written about its new look in Esquire. Disc jockeys across the country began to plug Marvel on the air, and Stan Lee audience couldn't be reached through comics. Stan counted on found himself unable to keep up with the requests for college



appearances. Even Marvel's major competitor, DC, began to do certain strips copying the Marvel flair for character interaction and highly complex plots running over many issues. Young, highly talented people began to enter the field of comics and build their own additions to the highly structured Marvel Universe. And the Marvel fan found in the comics enough diversity in the story material to keep him coming back for more on a regular basis. Sales picked up dramatically, and it was obvious new life and luster had been added to a medium, which in 1961, seemed on its last creative legs.

Despite the image problems of the medium, comics is more than ever a highly rewarding field to enter. Of course, neither writer nor artist is given a totally free hand in the shaping of the kinds of stories they may do, and this is as it should be, because comics is, after all, a business. But there is sufficient creative latitude at both major companies to allow for even uncertain experimental concepts to be given a many-issue tryout to test the marketing appeal. Although superheroes are still the main diet of hungry comic buffs, there are also war, horror, and romance titles to whet the appetite of the aspiring writer who isn't par-

ticularly thrilled with super-doers. Breaking into comics isn't an easy affair; but then getting into what field is? There is intense competition from all sides. Comics is a small business in terms of employees. There are about 200 to 300 professional creators (artists, writers, etc.) at most and right now many thousands of young people are seeking entry. But it isn't hopeless at all. If you want to join the ranks, assemble your materials, including art portfolios, scripts, and story ideas, and have them analyzed by a professional. If you feel you really have something worth showing, then contact the company of if you're a beginner, try to learn from your mistakes. Use other be with us. sources of inspiration to fire your creative juices, not just comic books.

The young artist must first learn to draw (anatomy, perspective, foreshortening) before taking the plunge. And the beginning writer should learn his craft (sentence structure, grammar, syntax) before trying his hand at storytelling. Comics are on-thejob training to be sure, but adequate preparation will allow you to avoid many of the common pitfalls. And above all elsebe your own man. If there's a particular writer or artist you admire, don't blatantly imitate his style.

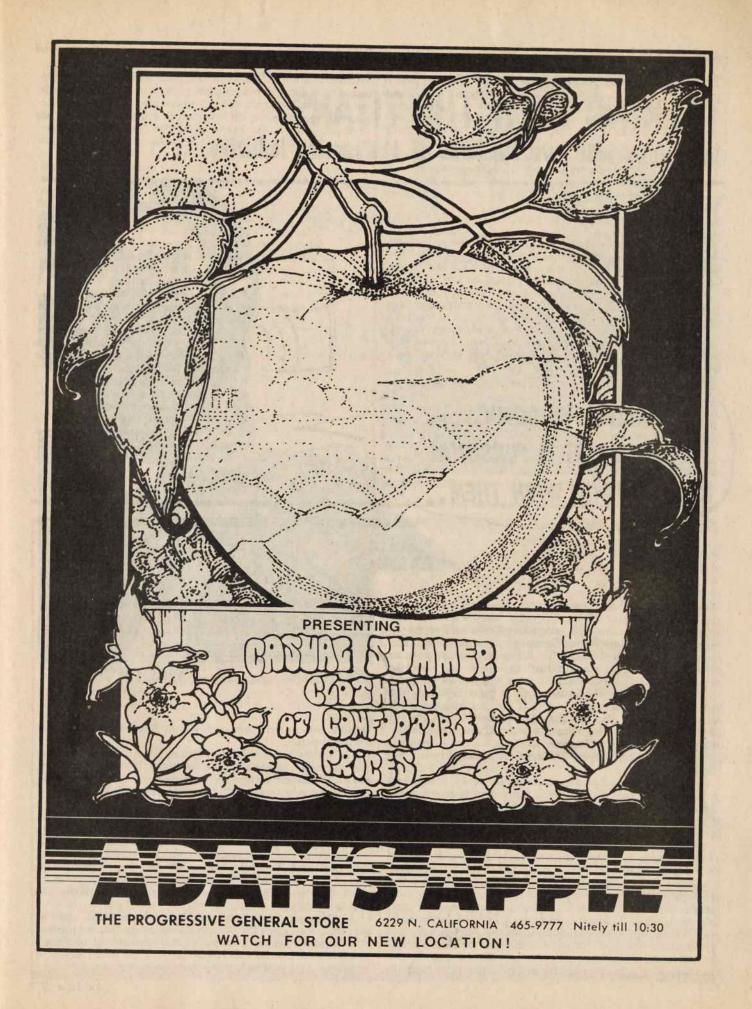
Some wise man once said that superhero comics are all about power, its uses and abuses. True. All of us wish at times that we could be stronger, faster, or smarter. Like the superheroes. Whether we admit it or not, we'd all like to be the center of attention and we all want control over our peers. In this universe of look-alikes and do-alikes, the superhero says to the reader, "By my power shall you know me. I exist. I am." We identify with these heroes, and experience their triumphs.

In a strange way, comic characters become like old friends. If you're a young adult and have been reading them steadily since your youth, a veritable stockpile of wonderful memories of these five-and-dime figures has accumulated in some corner of your mind. Since comic characters never truly die and rarely grow old, it's comforting to know that chances are you can find your favorite hero still up to his leotards battling evildoers wherever they appear. Oh sure it'll cost you a bit more these days to purchase your ticket to fantasy and adventure. But don't let that turn you off if the inclination arises to let your imagination feed on what helped sustain you in those early years. After all, what price does one place on a dream?

The world will always need heroes. People must have an image to aspire towards or a figure to emulate. We have our your choice and try to see someone. Don't be dissuaded by criti- own special brand of heroism in comics. It's distinctive, stimucism. I've seen the top professionals taken to task for a blunder; so lating, and unique. And in one form or another, it will always



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TALKING WITH THE TITANS

Interviews with two captains of the comics industry

BY CHARLES W. PRATT

I doubt if there's any desk at Marvel Comics or National Periodical Publications (D.C. Comics) with a sign that says "The Buck Stops Here." But if there were, Jenette Kahn and Archie Goodwin would have that distinctive placard on their cluttered working tables. Jenette is the vibrant new publisher of D.C., and Archie is a longtime editor at Marvel, second-in-command to Stan Lee, who spends most of his time these days on special products. Jenette was an honored guest at the successful Chicago Comic-Con last August, where our interview took place. I spoke with Archie in his office at Marvel, 575 Madison Ave., in New York a few weeks ago.

"I REALLY LOVE COMICS ... I HAVE ALMOST A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THEM ..

It may seem odd to many that a woman, and a very young one, occupies the top job in a company renowned for its male superheroes, but Jenette had demonstrated her skills on several other magazines before Warner Communications, the conglomerate owning D.C., pegged her for the prestigious position as publisher. Still, people find it hard to believe that she's the woman behind Superman. Just how much power does she have?

"Lots." Jenette doesn't even stop to think before answering. "In tandem with Sol Harrison, I run the business in its entirety. Sol takes care of production matters, things which I confess not to understand. But editorial matters, art, merchandising, new titles-all those kinds of things are my decisions. I consult with Sol on everything, of course, and I'm no tyrant. But

I do have power.

"I don't edit and proofread every title we do, though I do read lots of synopses. I try to see as many cover breakdowns as I can because they're extremely important. And because they're so important, we're paying more for covers today than we've ever done in the past."

When Jenette came to D.C. the business was faltering, dealt a series of harsh blows by the spunky exuberance of Marvel and by the general lassitude of the comics market. Despite the wealth of creative talent in the industry. D.C. found it hard to catch fire, and even its most popular superhero, Superman, was losing sales. An almost medieval system of paying artists and writers didn't help much either. So Jenette perked things up, giving artists more control over their work, paying them and their writers more, and trying out new projects. Examples of the new D.C. style include size Batman reissue. Jenette also lopped a few titles from the magazines. One of their first superpersons, in fact, was a woman-

JENETTE KAHN PHOTO BY CHARLES W. PRATT

D.C. list, and brought in some new ones. But she's more than just a business-person.

"I really love comics, and I know them. I read them all my life, and I find the industry an exciting one. It's my business, yes, but I have almost a personal relationship with it. I have ideas I feel can improve our line, and I'm doing my best to make them

"You ask if I'm offended by all the male superheroes. No, I'm not. But I do feel that there's a lot of room at D.C. for women superheroes and even women as ordinary mortals. I think it's important that our women have definite personalities, that they have character. Take Wonder Woman, Well, I thought she looked too sylph-like. She didn't look strong enough, and I think there is a way for her to be strong and yet feminine. She

'Most of our women looked like Barbie dolls, and that was offensive to me. Our women should be people, not plastic."

Jenette's company doesn't have a monopoly on female the spectacular Superman vs. Muhammad Ali comic and the over- characters, of course, and Marvel has long featured them in its Sue Richards of the Fantastic Four, the Invisible Girl. "At Marvel," says Archie Goodwin, "we don't just sit down and say that we should have a woman heroine-or a black hero, for that matter. Those characters just seem to develop. The general rise in feminism, I believe is having its effect on comics, and I think in ten years time we'll see a kind of more equal approach. As the world begins to change, comics, like any other medium, changes to reflect that. We just mirror what goes on in the world-in our fantasy context.

"THERE IS VIOLENCE IN OUR COMICS, BUT VERY LITTLE BLOOD AND FEW DEATHS ..."

"The whole basis for Marvel's success is creating a realistic fantasy world. The degree of realism that we use reinforces the fantasy and makes it more believable. We're going to keep on doing that.'

There are times, however, when it seems that Marvel overplays its hand, such as its use of the Nazi menace as a spawning ground for an unending supply of villains. Hitler and his henchmen are still popping up in numerous Marvel titles. Why?

"One reason," says Archie, "and it's the main one, is that the Nazis go hand in hand with our Captain America character. After all, his whole rationale is that he's a hero from the '40s brought back to life in our era. So he still needs to fight enemies from his own time. And the thing is, just when I feel that maybe ARCHIE GOODWIN we've overdone the Nazi thing, something happens in the real world. Today we're hearing about Nazi war criminals living in the U.S., and all kinds of books are being written about it. Besides that, the Nazis are the last acceptable mass villains. Use of the Nazis is just another way we mirror the real world. Don't look for us to do something about the Hanafi Muslims, though."

What do these titans of the industry see as the appeal of

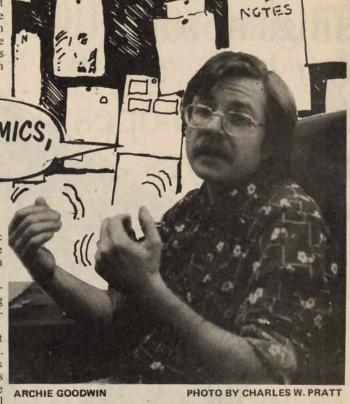
Jenette, an intelligent woman with a penchant for insightful epigrams, has a ready answer. "I see the comics as visualizations of people's fantasies. There's room for realism in them, but they're primarily fantasy. I don't know if there's any formula or proportion for the best mixture of the two, but a good comic writer will know. It's like an instinct. Comics are flight of fantasy, and that aspect of them should never go away. They're fun.'

Archie has a more complicated response. "Marvel has found a way to give the comics a new kind of sophistication, an added element of realism that doesn't detract from the essential fantasy. In addition we've created a kind of universe of our own. All of our characters interrelate in a way, and there are few separate to turn out perfect products every time. There are all kinds of

"A few years back, Marvel had the image of being the thinking man's comic, because of the popularity we enjoyed on college campuses. But today we have a problem with our audiences. About half of the readers of Marvel are 15 or younger, and the other half goes all the way up to college and beyond. Now, how do we write books that appeal to both segments? Some of our titles, obviously, are aimed at an older audience. Conan, for example. But a title like Spider-Man, far and away our most important one, is not the one college students write in about anymore. Older readers will pick up on Dr. Strange, Master of Kung Fu, Warlock, Deathlok, and Howard the Duck.

Archie's mention of Conan suggests the question of violence in comics. Conan is a barbarian in a vicious age, always battling other barbarians, always a soldier or mercenary in somebody's army, always gripping a sword in his hand-and frequently getting cut up. Indeed, the fight scene is crucial to any comic's

"There is violence in our comics," he says, "but very little



blood and few deaths ever in most of them. When one superhero fights a supervillain, they inflict very little physical damage on one another. That's part of the fantasy. Now there is violence in Conan, depicted more graphically than elsewhere. But it seems to be accepted as part of its pseudohistorical setting. If that kind of blood and thunder were in a title like Spider-Man we'd certainly get a lot of negative reaction."

Jenette and Archie are both biased, of course, but they see a healthy futre for comics. Jenette is excited about the Superman-Muhammad Ali title and by such new characters as Shade, the Changing Man. She also wants to turn out a soap opera comic book on the lines of Mary Hartman. She sees certain problems on the horizon, too. Chief among them is inflation, and right now she's using a special column, modeled after Stan Lee's Soapbox, to convince readers to shell out 35 cents for every regular D.C. title and as much as a dollar for bigger collections of all-new material.

"Comics," she notes, "is a hectic business, and it's difficult crazy deadlines, and the freelance nature of our production often causes snafus, but we're not a hack medium by any means, even though we've been called that. Today's writers and artists really care about the work they do and the product they turn out, and I have every intention of keeping quality high.'

Archie says Marvel will be doing much more experimentation during the next year, trying out new sizes and new packaging methods. He's looking forward to the Lee-Kirby Silver Surfer book to be published in soft and hardcovers by Simon & Schuster, and thinks if that's successful more such projects will be tried. He thinks the Kiss magazine will be popular, and also the new Godzilla title. "And if Star Wars does well-and our Star Lord magazine-there will be more science fiction from Marvel. There's definitely a market for it, if we can find the right way of

With people like Jenette and Archie, both educated, articulate, and enthusiastic, to guide the industry, comic books probably can look forward to a healthy future and new audiences. After all, we need all the heroes, and all the dreams, we can get.



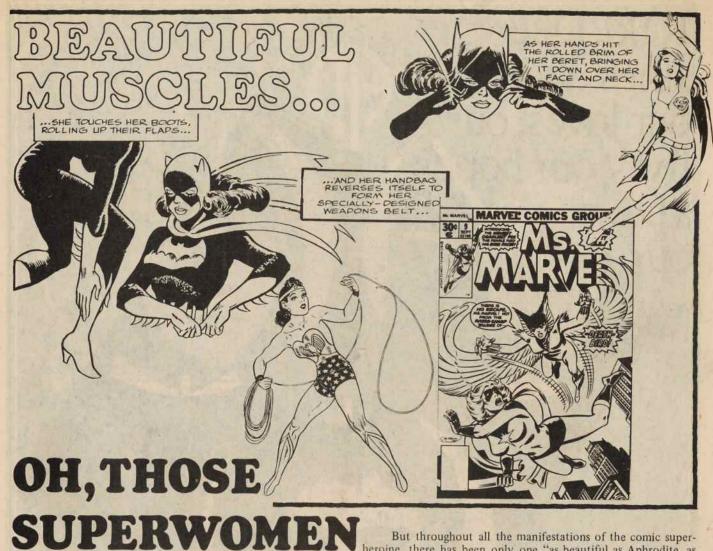
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BY BETH SEGAL

"When I used to come home after school, there was nothing to look at, Remember, there was no TV then. So I drew. Everyone I knew drew. We copied comic books. Which ones? Mainly I copied Sheena, Queen of the Jungle, she had great boobs. Or Wonder Woman. I used to love Wonder Woman." -Ralph Bakshi

Now that television is an integral part of everyone's lives, the little boys can come home to watch Charlie's Angels, The Bionic Woman, and a TV version of Wonder Woman. Progress? Hardly. The only difference is that these heroines are living dolls, walking/talking/breathing caricatures, rather than the impossible creatures who come from the fertile pens of high-minded comic artists. And based on popularity, it may well be Farrah Fawcett-Majors who becomes the most famous comic heroine of our time.

Between Sheena, who was published by Marvel in the '30s and '40s, and Farrah, there have been many superwomen come and gone. In the late '40s, D.C. sponsored two of the best: Lady Danger, who proved herself more than a dizzy debutante when it came to putting up her dukes in defense of law and order, and Dr. Pat, "a brilliant young physician dedicating her life to medicine" and foiling the plans of many a force of evil in the process.

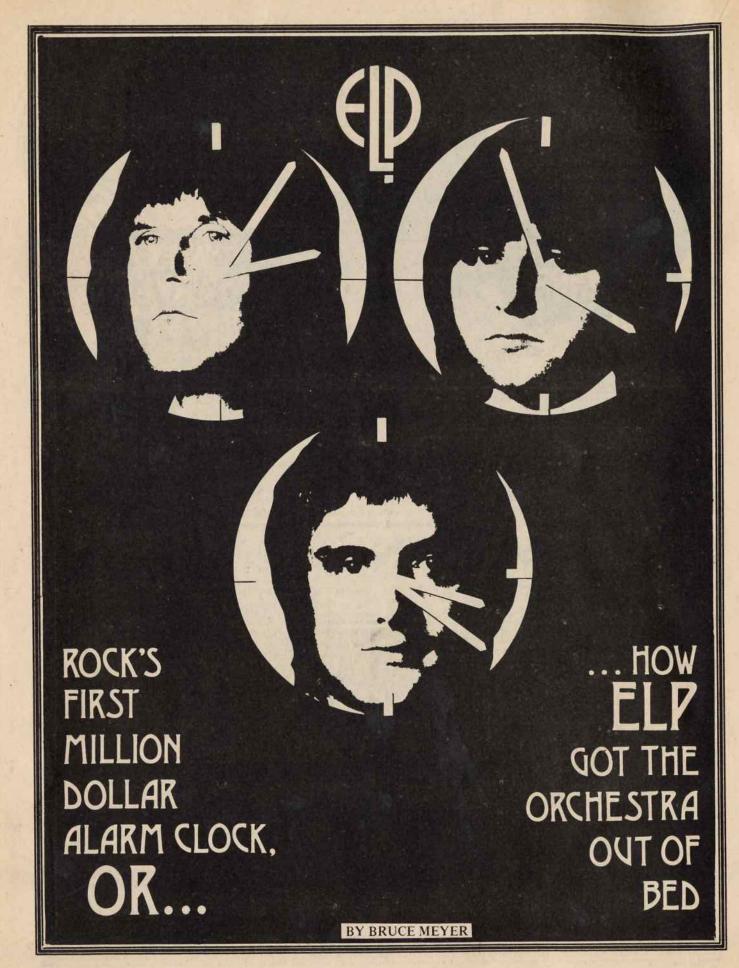
A more contemporary comic-feminist was Marvel's shortlived creation, Shanna the She-Devil, who was the self-appointed "Protector of the Ecological Balance of the Jungle." She was the archetype of the early '70s comic heroine, fond of saying such things as "You reckon without the speed and strength of a natural woman" as she beat up on big-game poachers who called her a "dumb broad.

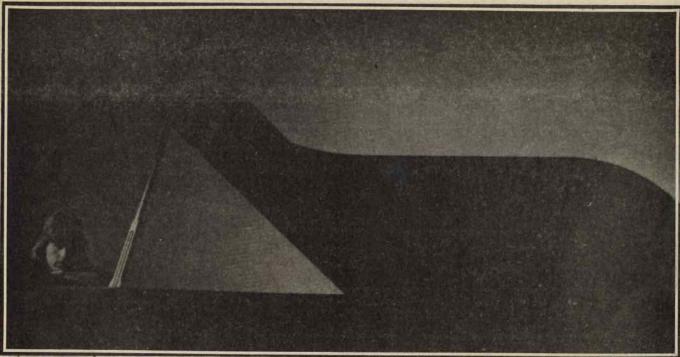
But throughout all the manifestations of the comic superheroine, there has been only one "as beautiful as Aphrodite, as wise as Athena, stronger than Hercules, swifter than Mercury' and as long-lived as Methuselah, in the quick birth-sudden death careers of comicfolk. Wonder Woman first appeared in 1941, the creation of child psychologist William Moulton Marston, who realized that little girls as well as boys need a superfigure to emulate. Under the name of Charles Marston, he created Wonder Woman, the magnificent Amazon who came to America, "the last citadel of democracy and of equal rights for women," to help

Although the struggle to survive through the years was often difficult, tedious and, in 1968, sidetracked for five miserable years as the sidekick of a mysterious old Oriental man named I Ching, she has survived to the present intact, wearing the same uniform she donned in 1941 and still fighting the forces of

But now she has more than a little help from sister superheroines like Ms. Marvel ("this female fights back") and the Nemedian Chronicle's own superwoman, "Red Sonja, She-Devil With a Sword," who are quickly spreading the word that a woman can hold her own in the superpantheon, striking as much terror in the hearts of bad guys as their male associates.

As to the tits and ass that every superwoman displays in her de rigueur formfitting supercostume, it's more a matter of the same sauce for geese and ganders than sexploitation. I mean, have you ever seen a superhero battling an adversary in a grey flannel suit or a T-shirt and jeans? Somehow, the Wondermen all seem to have the musculature of Arnold Schwartzenegger, with an equal propensity to show it off. And besides, it all proves without a doubt that the word Super is not always followed by the





MONTREAL-In the bowels of a sprawling complex of concert halls and theatres in the heart of the world's second most 125, a road company requiring a half-dozen buses and 11 semis intensely French city, the cream of North America's young classical musicians are running easily through some new material.

avante-garde as Copland, and much of it seems to lack melody, though for less accomplished musicians it would be difficult enough. But they are among the best and they know it and it shows, for they are at ease, despite the growing tension and excitement of participating in what can only be viewed as a musical

Fifty-six strong (57, with conductor and dirty old man Gregory Salmon), they are about to become the world's first rock'n'roll orchestra. In a matter of weeks, their instruments will be equipped with custom-built pickups and their music amplified by up to 74,000 watts, as they tour the United States with Emerson, Lake and Palmer.

to travel between one-night stands across the continent.

The story of this, the world's largest and most impressive The music is neither as powerful as Beethoven nor as backing band, goes back about three years, when ELP, collectively and individually, had burned itself out and withdrawn from the public eye to-literally-get its act together.

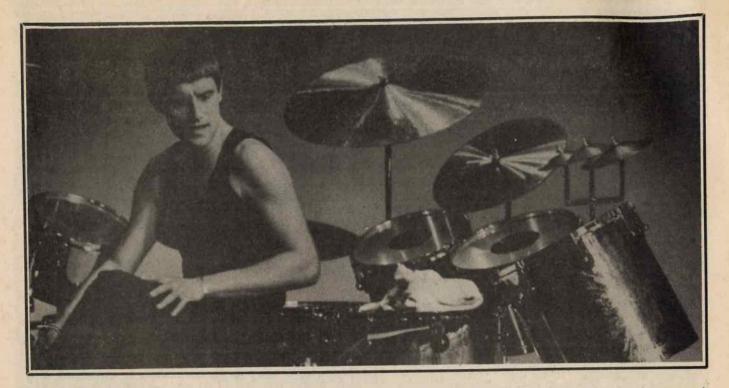
For a while, a few weeks or a few months, depending on who you ask, the band effectively ceased to exist. It was a time for pulling back and taking a look around and deciding what next for The Show That Never Ends.

ducer Greg Lake told about their "misssing" two-and-a-half years, and the origins of their new album, Works, Volume I.

Palmer: "I'd say there was about two full years of really concentrated work, independently and together, in the two and



Triad June 1977



a-half years we've been away. I mean, there's really a lot of preparation necessary when you're doing things for yourself as well bum, a stark blend of uncompromising "classical" music-notaas things for the band-it takes a lot more time, especially when bly Keith Emerson's lengthy "Piano Concerto No. 1," Carl Palyou're on your own. And then it takes a long time to actually mer's interpretation of a Bach invention and the band's performbring it together and construct it under the banner of the band." ance of Aaron Copland's "Fanfare For The Common Man"-with

Works is an album unique in rock history. It is a severe al-



elaborately orchestrated pop. In the two-disc collection, one album side is accorded to each member of the band for solo performance, with a fourth side featuring ELP together.

The original idea was for each member of the band to-do a solo album before getting back together for a new group LP. But ELP are at least as pragmatic in their approach to the music business as they are serious in their approach to the music itself; hence the one-for-all and all-for-one approach.

Lake: "We tried to avoid competing with each other-we music. wanted to do something individually, but we didn't want to compete inside of the band; that's stupid, you know. So, because of band would willingly take on a money-losing proposition, Lake having three people-it wouldn't work if you had seven or eight people in the band-it was an ideal concept, really.

turally, organically, really, for us. It wasn't something where we sat down and said, 'How we gonna do this, how we gonna do that?' It was a natural progression. In working out our solo of bed.' things, we had all of us used orchestras and choirs, and the group things used an orchestra, so it worked."

The decision was not, of course, strictly convenience.

"There was a great risk," says Palmer, "in releasing one solo album one month and another in another month, losing sales for the first one. The marketing isn't as good. So doing it this way showed more unity for ELP, even with the individual bits. We managed to keep the group, which is obviously the most precious thing we've got to move ourselves with the public.

"So the thing happened naturally-and even taking two years, it happened very quickly, because you can't suddenly come to a decision like that. It takes a long time.'

Just as the decisions that led to Works came naturally, the mammoth summer tour grew directly from the need to promote the album.

Lake (asked for his criticism of the album): "I suppose the only aspect that could have been better is that it could have been more commercially accessible. It's a hard thing to get played on

the air-a long piano concerto, a long piece like "Pirates" (13 minutes)-it's a hard thing to get played and therefore hard to get

"And this is where the importance of the tour is for us. It's a way of communicating to a lot of people without depending on radio stations with their time slotting and all the rest of it. This tour is important and we actually stand to lose a lot of money doing it, but it's the only way, really, of communicating our

Lest a journalist be skeptical of suggestions that any rock hastens to provide some statistics.

"It cost one million dollars, before the first date, to set it Palmer: "It's the kind of concept that had to happen na- up. We paid that. And then, it costs \$200,000 each week we're on the road.'

'And that," adds Palmer, "is just to get the orchestra out

"So," continues Lake, "in addition to making that \$200,-000, you've also got to pay back the original investment of a million dollars. That's the problem-it has to be done from the record revenues.

Palmer: "If we actually do capacity business every night, we still wouldn't make any money. Obviously, there's money to be made, but the money's purely from the records. So the tour's the last thing you can do from a promotional angle. But it's like a real grind-three months of it, one month for every year we've had off-so we're getting out there to pay our penance."

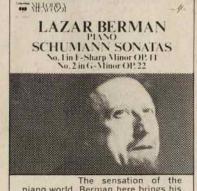
Getting back to the music, I suggest ELP is more than ever on the cutting edge between rock and classical...

"We're not on the cutting edge, man," says Lake with a laugh that sloshes the champagne onto the table, "we're in trouble. And listen-I think we're very brave."

"And," says Palmer quietly, "they don't give medals in the rock business for bravery.'

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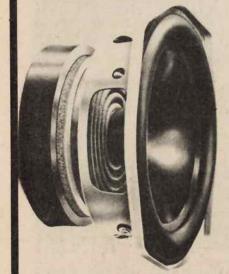
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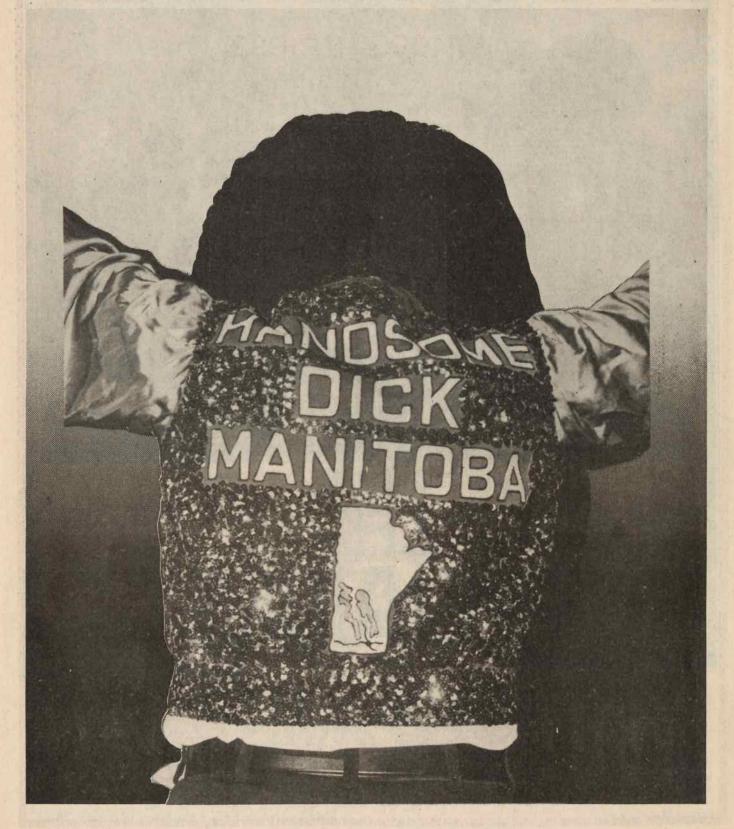
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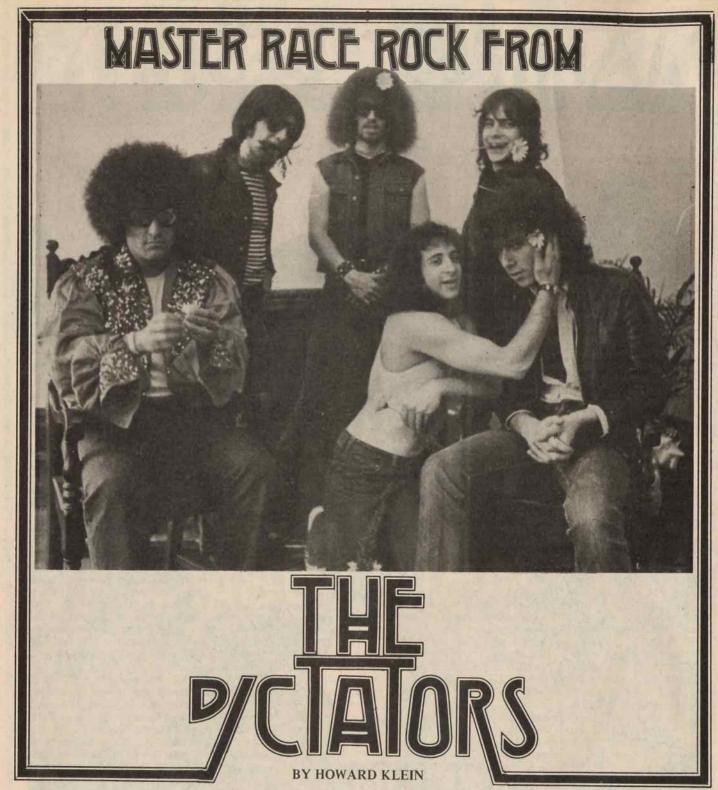
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MANIFEST DESTINY:





Sandy Pearlman has been manager/producer of the Blue Manifest Destiny, the new album by the Dictators, who are also these guys were the main beneficiaries of the Blue Oyster Cult stances-on the public airwaves. Great song. odyssey into stardom.

I put the cassette into my tape machine and my first re-Oyster Cult from the time they were a Long Island bar band. He action was, "What is this? A whole album of single hits?" I could and Murray Krugman, former CBS wunderkind, have guided hardly believe my ears. Manifest Destiny does not sound like the Cult through a life of ponderously heavy hard rock, often weighed down in metallic innovation, to a more recent state of aches," and "Sleeping With the TV On" each have the melodic accessibility and commercial success, success worthy of a band hooks necessary for strong commercial impact, fronting the kind with so much critical acclaim. When I heard the advance tapes of of amazing rock 'n' roll that separates the great from the nice. Then, finally, I heard "Disease." It almost relieved me to hear a managed and produced by Pearlman/Krugman, I realized that song that I knew would never be played-under any circum-

I had been a Dictators fan long before there was a CBGB's.



R. Meltzer had turned me on to them in 1974 and I had been to Kantner and John Chipolina stood transfixed, as if watching the their first shows at sleaze joints along Queens Boulevard and in Sheepshead Bay. When The Dictators Go Girl Crazy came out on Epic two-and-a-half years ago it instantly entered my list of alltime faves. This, more than any American album I had ever heard, was a record of teenage anthems. "Weekend," "(I Live may be great this or great that-and I think they are-but the For) Cars and Girls," "Master Race Rock" (which exalts teenagers, not Aryans), "Two Tub Man" and an unparalleled cover of they are in a class with Aerosmith, Black Sabbath and Kiss; al"California Sun"—this was rock 'n' roll at its most basic, at its though it is not hard to see how and why they will surpass these best, without all the decadent, boring, so-called sophistication; this was the rock than transforms a nurd into a member of the master race. Like the Ramones of 1977, the Dictators of 1975 were a group heavy on raw energy, good songs and "original" rock humor/wit. And in 1975 the Dictators played on about the same level as the Ramones were playing when they recorded their first album, which, from a technical point of view, might leave a little something to be desired. The tapes I heard of Manifest Destiny indicated either Pearlman/Krugman had hired some great studio musicians ala the Monkees, or that the Dictators had been practicing their butts off with a single-minded devotion to sold between seven and nine thousand copies? Well, it's a whole becoming infallible musicians.

A surprise stint in the San Francisco Bay Area—to blow have matured amazingly. They are first-rate musicians. Lead off a little steam after cutting the record—during the first 10 days guitarist Ross "the Boss" is headed for the Golden Fingers Hall of April gave me a chance to see for myself and what I saw . . Jesus, I don't want to exaggerate. There's no need to. But this is what it must've been like to be in a small club with the Stones just after they recorded The Rolling Stones but before the first American tour in '64. The Dictators' opening night at the Mabuhay Gardens, a San Francisco Filipino family-style restaurant that has turned into a CBGB's West, broke the box office record. The Ramones had sold the place out two months earlier, kind of N.Y. pioneers out West, but the 'Tators more than doubled their door! Seems impossible, but what was impossible was to breathe in the packed little club. It was as if people could thrive inhaling Ross the Boss' precise, clear notes instead of air.

The performance showed how far the 'Tators had come in the last couple of years. Underground and Establishment, the media more or less agreed that the Dictators were the best rock 'n'

Dictators and (second from right) R. Meltzer wave that was about to engulf the universe. It was apparent that if the definition of a punk-rock band had anything to do with playing instruments with less than technical proficiency, the Dictators do not qualify. The Ramones, Patti Smith, Television Dictators are great this, great that and great musicians. Musically monsters. I think Patti Smith and Lenny Kaye are the greatest thing since Haagan Daz-the bootleg Teenage Perversity is one of my ten favorite rock LPs of the '70s-and I'm a die-hard Ramones fan. But frankly, I understand why these guys ain't ever gonna be on the radio. The Dictators are the missing link of rock 'n' roll. You will hear them on the best FM stations and you will hear them on the worst AM stations. You will hear their songs on everyone's lips. Yes, indeed, all the world is going under the thunder of Manitoba.

How can anybody say that about a band whose first album new ballgame today. For one thing, the Dictators, as a band, of Fame. The dual-lead guitars with Scott "Top Ten" mark the heights of sophisticated rock, two words which I normally consider mutually exclusive. Adny Shernoff, who still writes the tunes, now does most of his musical workouts on keyboards, although every now and then he grabs an ax and jumps into stage center. Replacing Adny on bass is a Long Island boy, Mark "the Animal" Mendoza, a 20-year-old hard, hard rock bassist who's been doin' it since he was 15. Rounding out one of rock's most dynamic bottom sounds is Richie Teeter (Don't call him Dick Teeter), the only other non-Bronxoid, skinman/ vocalist. Teeter is more than just merely the final solution to the Dictators' longtime drummer problem; he's also a melodiously polished singer-perhaps the best singer-drummer since

And then there's Manitoba-Handsome Dick Manitoba, roll San Francisco had seen in many years. People like Paul handsomest man in rock 'n' roll. Where other Dictators idolize

Peter Criss, Brian Wilson or Pete Townsend, Manitoba's heroes are Muhammad Ali and the Valiant Brothers. Manitoba is a man of the people, the only genuine, non-candy-assed, non-cerebral, for real, peoples' rock 'n' roll star of the 1970s. This man does not hang out in a dressing room while the opening act is on; he's in the audience, getting drunk, charming the ladies, sparring with the gentleman, doing his famous spit trick or wrestling with the E-Factor, toughest roadie in rock 'n' roll. No snob is he. Manitoba is a revolutionary figure, with the potential to impart upon rock 'n' roll another dimension, the way Bobby Dylan, Mick Jagger and Jim Morrison have. "There is no precedent for Manitoba," Adny has said. "There was no one like him before him."

Beneath Manitoba's streetwise, toughie exterior lies the warmest, sincerest man in rock 'n' roll. He's funny; he's a clown, a clod, a lug, a punk, a braggart, a loud-mouthed asshole, but he's far and away one of the realest rock people I've ever run across. He may not have all the middle-class niceties and he may not view the universe in quite the same way as the artiste in Soho do, but HDM is no dummie and no elitist. There is no barrier-there never will be a barrier-between any audience of teenagers and the Dictators as long as Manitoba is onstage. (He also took singing lessons since the first album and although he's still no Richie Teeter, he can belt out a hard-driven, kick-ass rock skull-cruncher like none of these effete punkoids could ever hope to-on either side of the Atlantic.)

Before one of the shows in Berkeley, Top Ten was saying how he feels the band has changed over the past two years. "The last album was too much of an in-joke. The 7,000 people who bought it loved it and the critics loved it, but we intend to reach a much wider spectrum of people now. We're not an elitist band; Manifest Destiny is an album for kids. We made it; we love it; and we know everybody can love it."



HANDSOME DICK "MUSCATEL" MANITOBA

"You take sneakers to a concert, not a dictionary," added Shernoff, which is a pretty hot sentiment coming from a lyricist who has been dubbed "the smartest man in rock 'n'roll." "Every night should be Saturday night—that's the Dictators' message."
"Right on," intoned The Handsome One, looking up from

All in the Family. "Some of these bands think they're Ingmar Bergman or something; we like Clint Eastwood."

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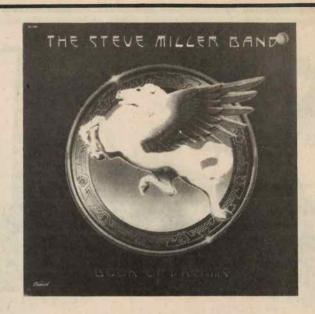
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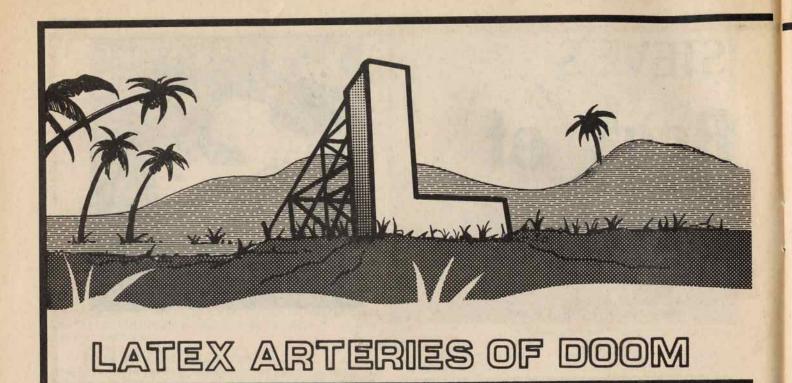
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Before I left New York Shitty for fabulous Loss Angelees I used to think it was only the real stoopid Southern Cal natives who were bothered by the smog. Like NY may not get all the smog publicity but the stuff it's got hasta be worse day in day out 365 days a year-hasta. Like there was this boatride I was in up the Hudson a couple summers back where you couldn't see both Jersey and Manhattan at the same time, y'hadda settle for one or t'other depending on which side of center the boat was at. I mean there's gonna be a time real soon when you won't be able to see your shoes. LA on the other hand you can see for goddam miles even on goddam worst of days but like the locals're so used to seein FOREVER they're pissed even when it's just a blurry forever, shit like

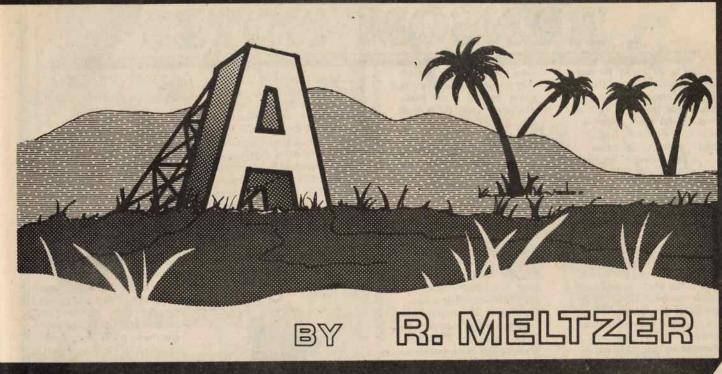
Used to figure it was just a matter of like if you're getting continuous doses of occasional forever (particularly with mountains and all that thrown in) from the time you're in fucking diapers it's bound to make an atmospheric perfectionist outa most anybody (particularly with the unrelenting sun baking such habits of expectation into your intravulnerable skull). Anyway I been livin out here a year and a half now and it really ain't took me that long to get attached

to the infinite sightlines myself. In an outsiderly sort of way tho like you're drivin around in your vehicle and little by little as the months pile up you get to notice how vastly different the view from, say, Santa Monica Blvd. at Sepulveda (looking west) is from for inst, Western at Melrose (looking south). Lotsa difference in the personalities of all the billions of possible combinations of location & direction and after a while you realize stuff like how similar your mood is (other things being more or less equal) each time you mange to happen upon any such given point on the map facing N, E, S, W. And what it all basically boils down to is GEOGRAPHICAL NOSTALGIA or some such cowpoop, v'know the surprise recall of the mystery & mood of longforgotten spot x in Ronkonkoma (NY) or spot y in Marquette (Mich.) that if you ever even thought about ya figgered ya'd never see em again, y'know like the surprise itself plus the amazement that things work with such archetypal whatever. Hot stuff and somehow L.A.'s got it.

So inevitably after you know the score in that regard what you got is really like this big-as-all-outdoors SCREEN on which you're catchin MOVIES OF EXTREME PERSONAL RELEVANCE every fuckin clear day of

the year and absolutely free (the best things in life are!) except of course for gas which is smogging up the atmos anyway so you really can't win. But so anyway a smoggy day is like bad TV reception on an old black & white: it really does suck. Interferes with your newly conditioned habits of emotionalgeographic association and blah blah blah. Once in a while it's cool tho like when it's as thick as Noo Yawk and you can't see those purple tree blossoms you're used to seein just two blocks away: desolation, isolation, CLAUSTRA-PHOBIA, etc., etc. Great when it rains too (tho longtim residents hate it) but that's another story...

Anyway it makes sense why So-Cal is where the motion pitcher action IS and why your basic NY cinematic genre is the UNDERGROUND FILM, I mean you're livin in S-C long enough you get this sense of the bigness of it all that ain't just a travelogue kinda big, somethin more basic like an appreciation of how the UNIVERSAL WHATSIS gets triggered by all those mere accidents of where your noot happens to be pointed where & when: place really helps you map out that dumber-than-dogshit whoosis called the human psyche.



Thing is, goin to movies in LA ain't really too different from goin anywhere else except maybe if you're seein something like Day of the Locust on Hollywood Blvd. (which is really just LA's Hick Central, I mean name me a major burg anywhere else or even a minor one that needs stoopid stars on the sidewalk to help itself make it thru the nite!) or you're at a drive-in with palm trees lined up on bot sides o' the screen: a non-infinite screen is a non-infinite screen, period. So I ain't really adopted any new attitudes towards the films themselves and like I still basically prefer the kind of crap I used to catch in NYC. namely cheap worthless 9th-rate porn. Y'know the 3-for-\$3 kind where you gotta look hard even to spot a title and y'almost never see credits. My favorite stuff except for monster flics and they don't hardly make them anymore except for garbage like It's Alive-pee-yew! Anyway, seen all the following in the sleazy thrill parlors of nowhere but the City of Lost Angels:

1—Hot Pistols—These 2 brothers rob a bank and hole up in a house populated by a pair of honeys. The meanie of the 2 rapes em both at knifepoint after finishing a fifth of sourmash in 15 mins, and when he's done raping em

he delivers the greatest line in the history of celluloid: "Now I'm gonna take a good healthy shir!" He also makes the sisses french each other to kingdom come and it's probably the finest picture of any sort ever made.

2-Vampire movie w/no name-These 2 broads are vampires and their beaus have em tied up till they can come up with a solution. A serum ("the first ever") gets developed but they don't know the gals' bloodtypes so they're gonna hafta shoot the remedy in their own veins first and then inoculate the bims using "their own needles" har har har. You figure for once there's gonna be some movie fugging where the guys don't pull out just to show you they're coming cause how else're they gonna get the anti-vamp fluid actually in em? No such luck altho after they come on the gammer's bellies the plastic fangs miraculous disappear.

3-The Erotic Boutique— Opens with this guy named Tony saying "Hi I'm Tony and I run the Erotic Boutique, the ladies come in here to buy my groovy threads and I get to fuck em all" in a Boston accent. Follows em into the dressing rms. & helps em on with their swimwear & then they suck his dingo.

4—Sex Wish—This Dennis Weaver lookalike is a private dick with a Groucho mustache & nose thing and he goes to Aspen to track down the infamous "Santa Claus Rapist." Slapstick that's much more palatable than pre-Annie Hall Woody Allen, everybody's constantly fucking & sucking in the snow. Most sex y'ever get in an ordinary comedy, something like 20-25 insertions or maybe 15 but it's still plenty; also the most casual y'ever see it, fug that person, fug that person, it's all easygoing as hell.

5-Rape film w/ piss-Real stern muh-fuh ties her up and she hasta weewee but he won't let her go to the pot, hasta do it right there and the whole screen's filled with her golden bush as she lets er rip. You can almost taste it

(mmm-mmm good!).

6-After the Ball-Same guy as took a shit in Hot Pistols plays a plumber this time. Tells this loveclammer whose pipes he's working on that "it looks like the framistat" while meanwhile she's opening his fly so he takes a coffee break that includes a lengthy dive for muff. He's pushing 40 & balding and he's completely different in every role (seen him half a dozen times), a real pro & probably the greatest actor since Bruce Dern for what it's worth (has a wart on his prong so you can't miss him).

RANSOM NOTES

For 32 hours, he was singing, clowning and delivering sentimental monologs on issues that he knew nothing about, and even when it was over, he still hadn't had enough applause.

The center of attention for a day-and-a-half could have been none other than Jerry Lewis, playing host and namesake for the 1st Annual Jerry Lewis Egomania Telethon, Lewis, who has long been known as a victim of the disease that strikes so many in his profession, had a star-studded array of show business personalities on hand around the clock to receive compliments phoned in by viewers. Answering the phones in Hollywood were Frank Sinatra, Bob Hope, Barbra Streisand, Telly Savalas, Chevy Chase, Paul Simon, Federico Fellini and Marlon Brando, along with others afflicted with the disease; while in Chicago, local Egomaniathon phonecalls were taken by Walter Jacobson and Roger Ebert.

A second staff of lesserknown narcissists took contribution pledges phoned in by the audience. And, every hour on the hour, Egomania poster-child Tatum O'Neal skipped on stage to announce the latest figures. in herself a persuasive argument for why the audience should help Jerry reach his fund-raising goal. But probably the most moving moment in the program occurred when psychiatrist Dr. David Reuben addressed the camera, delivering an impassioned plea for the money that is so vital in saving those stars stricken with "EM." Said Reuben: "More than once you've heard Jerry say that show business is a crazy business and that you'd have to be crazy to be in this business. And though when Jerry says it he's patting himself on the back, the fact is, show people are sick, and analysis costs alot of money. These people need psychiatrists, trained personnel who can

keep them away from mirrors, people who are not going to tell them that everything they do is great. No, there's no cure yet, but that's why we need your help. Send in your dollars—fight Egomania."

Reuben's speech was proven to have been successful when the last hours' pledges were computed. Outdoing Jerry's egomaniacal expectations, the Jerry Lewis Egomaniathon raised a total of \$26 million, far more than was ever raised by his earlier Muscular Dystrophy Telethon. Lewis, who no longer supports the fight against Muscular Dystrophy, is rumored to have said that the only reason he ever did support it was because "I liked seeing my face on posters."

President Carter, in an unprecedented move to untangle what he termed "the bureaucratic mess in Washington," dissolved the office of the Presidency Wednesday. Though hailed for the budget-cutting measure in some circles, Carter critics assailed the ex-president for adding "one more to the ranks of the unemployed"....Ray Davies and the Kinks are at work on a concept album about laziness. No songs have been written yet....Liv Ullman is flying to New York to play the part of a lonely, coffee-brewing widow in Mrs. Olson, a shattering stage adaptation of several Hills Brothers commercials....Steve McQueen, who ever since his marriage to Ali McGraw has kept her under military guard, has just become a proud father again. Sources close to the family knew nothing about Ms. McGraw's pregnancy, but a spokesman at the Daytona Beach Speedway revealed that McQueen was present and on the track at the time of delivery, McQueen, long an exponent of natural childbirth, is said to have helped his wife by means of "the Lemans method"

....Elsewhere on the reproductive scene. Julie Christie tells that "after making it with Warren Beatty, it just seemed the next logical step to go all the way with a machine," which she does in the current sci-fi thriller, The Demon Seed. The picture concerns Ms. Christie's passionate affair with a sophisticated computer, and the consequences that befall her when it discovers that she has been practicing autoeroticism with a pocket calculator. 0



"I met a man,
Bojangles, and he'd dance for
you," wrote Jerry Jeff
Walker, and the story he told
about a chance encounter in
a jail cell with a brokendown wino who still knew
how to trip the light fantastic
went on to become a country
music classic. Ten years later
and on the verge of
superstardom, Walker is still

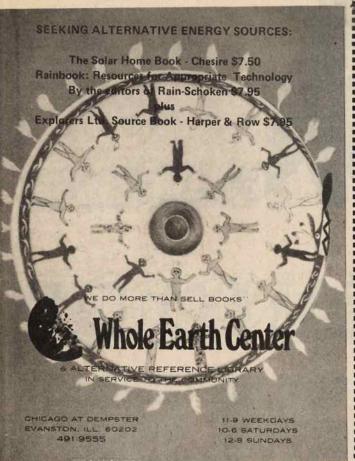
BY SCOTT FIVELSON

trying to find the words to top the popular "Mr Bojangles." "I just don't know what's the matter. Maybe my pen's busted," said Walker in a recent one-column Rolling Stone interview. But a possibly more accurate opinion has issued from other quarters. Quotes Walker's manager: "You don't meet a whole lot of colorful characters ridin' in the back of a limousine."

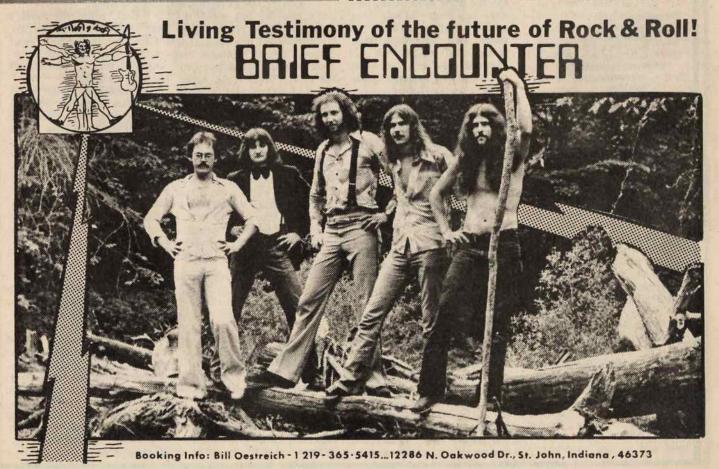
In an obvious attempt to remedy this situation and to get back to his incarcerated roots, Jerry Jeff returned to jail last week in search of hit song material. Explained Walker:"I tried writin' 'bout criminal types from the outside, but none a those songs were any good. Like I wrote one: 'I met a man, Gary Gilmore, and he'd blow your head off.' It had a melody just as perky as a baby heifer, but my manager told me, 'Jerry, it ain't no Bojangles."

Walker said that he never imagined it would be as difficult as it was to get back behind bars.
Complained the singer: "I tried jaywalkin' in Tuscaloosa, drunk and disorderly in Fort Worth, and indecent exposure in Tuscon. I don't know what's happenin' to law and order in this country. It was just like I weren't famous—I mean, I couldn't get arrested."

It was not until Walker pleaded guilty to the rape and sodomy charges on which L.A. authorities were holding director Roman Polanski that he finally achieved his goal and was relocated to Leavenworth prison. Walker is reported to be busy writing songs about his fellow inmates and hopes to have an album's worth of material by the end of the year; he does not, however, expect to be able to cut and release an album until he himself is released-a date which. with parole, could be sometime in the 1990s.









Here comes the the sun There goes the night And like a silent gun Ob out goes the streetlight But no love is lost Between black and white We got rock and roll music No sign of a streetfight.' Garland Jeffries

The ratings:

**** Masterpiece **** Superior, get it
*** Solid, hear it

** Weak, occasionally interesting

The new technology encourages a dichotomy between the instinctive intensity of rave-up rock and the meticulous craftsmanship of the modern progressive rock. This is putting more and more pressure on the rock and rollers to choose one direction or the

At the beginning of the commercial rock music expansion boom signaled by the British invasion, the Beatles and the Stones were releasing three and four albums a year. Working mostly live in the studiospending two weeks at most on an entire album-necessitated the welcome sacrifice of perfection for essential rock and roll communication: urgent emotion expressed with raw

Just refer to Rolling Stones Now or The Beatles Second Album and you can't miss the excited spontaneity and the collective high energy; appealing and fascinating new Moondance that some sector of as if this music existed but for music that's as heartless as his audience has been disapa flash and had to be captured Southside's is heartfelt. on the spot.

Stones went on to dabble with Ghostwriter more progressive directions and (A&M) by the time they found this to dirty up their sound.

out one album a year, sponta- not pushy. neity has to be faked or aban-doned altogether, to be resteen the same love, fear, dis-Veeden Fleece. Dull producplaced by meticulously congust, and awe of the city. But tion, pedestrian playing and

structed music.
Today the progressives who depend on technique and wit have the tools to make music as clever and dense as they can dream up. They also have a freedom from expressing making, energetic emotions that the

Meanwhile, the ravers, re- **** visionists or historians by now, try desperately to get across their raw power in one monolithic hunk, through a medium designed to dissect it.

This month's records insides. The Jukes and Edmunds touch with it at will. celebrate classic gut-to-gut communication: 10cc and Supertramp, progressives, make terpieces Astral Weeks and Jukes put it across.

The Beatles and the GARLAND JEFFRIES

With the urban recording hit in a lifetime. not to their liking, they scene spewing out plenty of couldn't truly "get back" be- uninspired punk rock and slick- been a little thin on magic, the cause new recording tech- ly professional pop rock, it is brilliant production and overall nology had made their old Jeffries' special synthesis that craftsmanship evident in the armethods obsolete. To this day makes this record such a gem. rangments (unique horn charts) the Stones go to great lengths. His mix of hard rock, reggae, has been a wonder. and R&B hits on a lot of neigh-But with 24 tracks, al- borhoods, but never leaves the ingly more accessible with its bums taking two to six months city. He lays his cool on lean, basic soul groove, yields its to record, and groups putting sinewy music that's tough but fewer treasures even more

larger than life, Garland, down rolling, but not enough to in lower Manhattan, projects keep this from being Van's his poetic streetwise realism least inspired record. without resorting to myth- **1/2

Springsteen would've earlier rockers didn't have or been a Jet; Jefferies, of course, a Shark.

VAN MORRISON A Period of Transition (Warner Bros.)

pointed with every one of his releases since; even though each and every one of them contained more magic moments than most rock artists

Even when the music's

Transition; while seemslowly than Van's last-the where Bruce's view from across stock horn lines sink this one. the river makes the city look Side two gets some momentum

SOUTHSIDE JOHNNY AND THE ASBURY JUKES This Time It's For Real (Epic)

Anybody doing something this hip for R&B music is alright by me. If you've ever liked rhythm and blues and Van's magic is of such a sweet soul music you can't clude bands working both rare order, that he can't get in help but groove on the new-R&B that Miami Steve Van He set such a high stan- Zandt writes, and the spirit dard with his early classic mas- with which Southside and the

the Coasters, Drifters and Five sive ELP nonsense. Satins, and dedicates the album to Leiber and Stoller.

up considerably and Southside beside the point, that only is singing with an assurance limeys and anglophiles (like that only a year on the road me) will probably bother. can bring.

PHELGES

Unfortunately, this newfound precision is somewhat DAVE EDMUNDS masked by a dreadfully muddy Get It recording that a lot of garage (Swan Song) 4-tracks could beat.

But there isn't much that completely different. can get in the way of such uplifting music played by a bunch liked a new record since 1961. of crazies who love playing it. The only reason he covers Se-

"magic" Malach's tenor sax second British band cover of quote from "Up on the Roof."

Deceptive Bends (Mercury)

love as if it were as important do it for the rush, it's a mission as a cabassa overdub. But his with Edmunds. ruthlessly laissez-faire attitude masks a style that's dead seri- gence throughout this '50s ous. Along with Graham timewarp. His recreation of the Gouldman (a favorite since he rockabilly ambience reaches wrote "For Your Love" and past authenticity for homage size 10cc (5?) have pursued slap echo and overwhelming a highly evolved style intricate trashy reverb. enough to allow them to spend a few albums just refining it. spired choices (especially Rich-

the best, and he pays his re- keep a fan's attention for a lot spects by featuring cameos by longer than any quasi-progres-

1000 DANCES

But their wit is so dry. their expertise so complete, The band has tightened and their emotions so totally

And now for something

This guy probably hasn't Extra half-star for Bobby gers "Get Out of Denver" (the that tune this month!) is cause it's such a hip Berry cop.

Edmunds is into rockabilly and the Sun sound the are into Aretha and Ray Eric Stewart sings about Charles. But where the Jukes

Still, he rocks with a ven-"Bus Stop"), the newly half- with the buried drums, vocal

All the covers are in--Musically there's enough ard Rogers' "Where or When"), fascinating playing and atten- and the originals sound even

Miami only cops from tion to detail displayed here to more classic than the classics.

Edmunds and his collaborator Nick Lowe are crusaders for a nearly extinct sensibility. If you could dig flashing on Buddy Holly, Carl Perkins, the Everlys, Hank Williams and Chuck Berry while listening to an album of new music: Get It.

LITTLE FEAT Time Loves a Hero (Warner Bros.)

Is Lowell George becoming the Orson Welles of rock?

Once slender, he's never looked more rotund than at the recent Riviera shows. Once prolific, he contributes but one and a half songs to this album, and less singing and slide guitar than ever before.

Whether Lowell's withway Miami Steve and the Jukes drawal is voluntary or not, the democratization smacks suspiciously of Creedence's Mardi Gras, the record where the lesser talents in the rhythm section prevailed on the brilliant and domineering John Fogerty to give them an equal shot at writing, singing simpleminded lyrics and deliver and producing. In the name of equal rights, Fogerty agreed, ness that neatly negates any The resulting album was their meaning the words intrinsically weakest and led to their break- contain. Which is probably bet-

This disc is not quite that bad, for Payne and Barrere are no slouches, but their writing

and playing, while occasionally brilliant is wildly erratic. As singers, they're just bland suggestions of George.

Largely through the efforts of producer Ted "Doobies" Templemen, this has a more highly polished surface sheen than recent Feat Productions.

Unfortunately, when the shine wears off there is less inspiration underneath than we've come to expect.

SUPERTRAMP Even in the Quietest Moments

These guys have a few praiseworthy traits rare among English progressive bands. First they know what to leave out. and it gives their arrangements a classy spaciousness. They also value superior engineering, and their well-mixed records often sound better than they really are as a result.

On the debit side, they manage to take featherweight. them with a pretentious heaviter, anyway.



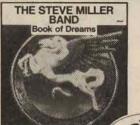
June Specials:

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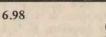


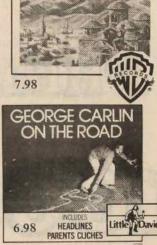


SMUN GONG

A sensational rocker, Bad Company's long-awaited 4th Swan Song album has all the dynamism that makes Bad Co. the hottest band around.







LITTLE FEAT Time Loves a Hero Includes Hi Roller Old Folks Boogie New Delhi Freight Train

George Carlin gets more and more outrageous with every album. The new material on his latest LP includes "Death and Dying." 'Rules, Rules, Rules," and 'Parents' Cliches and Children's Secret An-

Best of luck and continued success to Dan Bacin. from your friends at Bogarts and Turning Poynt.

Turning Poynt Berwyn

Bogarts Oak Park Village



I suppose I should confess right at the start-before you start thinking, shit, there ain't no food ol' Rat don't know nothing about-that I got a little help with this month's column. I've done pretty good by myself till now, but when el editor stuck me to ribs this month I got kind of shaky, because, well . . .

See, the only book I ever read until the end of grammar school was this story about a pig and a spider who were the best of pals . . . actually I didn't read the book myself, never was much for reading. I had a sixth grade teacher who was dead set that we'd all know one book before he passed us on to adult illiteracy, and so every afternoon he'd read us a couple of pages of that pig and spider story, "Charlotte's Web' by name. It was a pretty disgusting book about a pig eating garbage and giving advice on the good life to the spider and so on. Anyway, by the end of the year, we'd heard the book cover to cover 32 times and I was so sick of it that I swore I'd never look favorably on pork or spider again. But all things must pass in this material world and last week, like I said, I found myself called upon to search Chicago for the

perfect slab of ribs. My aforementioned guide was a longtime pal from the old neighborhood. Hodge was said to have been baptized with barbeque sauce and for awhile I know he had a pig in his basement. No one ever had the guts to ask him why. but it made some terrible noises at night. Anyway, what better person to point out the porcine pleasures of the city of hog butchers?

We started out small on rib tips so that I could build up some endurance for the challenge of the big slab. Hodge chose Maupin and Sons as a good pick-up point. Maupins, he explained, is a classic example of your neighborhood pit. please. To be fair, it's a pretty good

It looks like your average diner, a few stools at a short bar, a couple of booths, a sluggish Seven-Up clock, except that it has several layers of ancient grease over everthing. The greasier the better, Hodge said.

Maupins serves the time-tried and true original rib tip plate, a mess of short ribs, a bunch of french fries, a paper cup of cole slaw and two pieces of Holsum bread, cut in half diagonally, all for \$2.95. Its gotta be Holsum to be authentic, said Hodge. He judged the whole thing as pretty good. The ribs were soaked in a thick medium to hot sauce, the fries were just greasy enough to taste through the barbeque sauce, the cole slaw ... we're not here for the cole slaw, Hodge reminded me. 'Nough

You can either check out Maupin and Sons at 619 Custer or look around your own territory for something similar. If you can't find nothing near to a neighborhood barbeque around, move immediately. You're living in a godforsaken cultural wasteland.

A couple more visits to Maupins, and Hodge judged me ready for the big time. So we polished our boots and rolled up our T-shirt sleeves and headed for Talbotts. You can see the restaurant at 7301 Western Ave. from blocks away because of the bigger-than-life-size steer planted on the roof of the building. Talbotts ain't messing around.

Inside, it's sort of suburban rancho, no grease on these wagon wheel chandeliers. The place could cramp your style if you let it, and the prices really could: it's \$6.50 for a regular dose and \$7.50 for the full slab. But it's a challenge every rib-eater has got to face, said Hodge, and so we did.

No cole slaw and Holsum here. it's french bread and a salad bar, if you

salad bar, replete with a dynamo garlic dressing and suburbia's favorite garnishes, garbonzo beans and bacos. But the whole time, I kept my eye on a big picture window behind which rows and rows of ribs sat basking in the heat, waiting to meet their match.

It was an awesome sight-the rib slab outstretched its plate on all four sides. "Courage" Hodge said, and the meal was on. I remember parts of it. The sauce was incredibly tangy and sharp and the meat was lean and perfectly cooked. The fries were adequate, but got lost in the shuffle of bones and sauce. When I regained total consciousness, the waitress was handing me a moist towel in one of those metal-paper packages and Hodge was shaking my hand. I'd finished the entire slab. "I'm real proud of you kid," he said, as we ambled into the pig-pink sunset.

Since then I've gotten enough confidence in my rib connoisseurship to check out a few more places on my own. The best of them is Harry and the Bear on 2150 N. Halsted. H and the B feature rib tips as their house specialand on Mondays and Thursdays it's a house special special-the price drops from \$3.25 to \$2.50.

The ribs are plentiful and you get a choice of hot or mild sauce. The hot sauce is a real pleasant combination of very spicy and a little sweet. The fries get an OK by me, and finally, I found a better than nothing cole slaw. H and the B make it without mayo or salad dressing and its a far finer tasting thing for it.

For price and quality, Harry and the Bear is a rib licking deal. By the way and for your info, the bear is the hairy one standing on a shelf on the wall and Harry is the bald one that's standing behind the bar.

Next month: Delis

JAZZ, ONCE A MONTH

June bugs me. A sticky bit of business, this month that calendarically opens the summer but refuses to fall into steady line beneath its hazy banner. There's a great deal of latitude between

right in the middle, is the perfect example of indecision: balmy, lukewarm, and dull as a surfboard competition in Nebraska. Or, as one of my earliest music tutors would have put it, a disparaging sneer distorting the outlines of his hard smile: "Vanilla. Bloody rotten vanilla."

May's springy gusts and the torrid,

turgid air of July; and June, caught

So much for this month's dosage of climatic complaint, none of which would be worth a tinker's dam if it weren't concidentally reflected in the music scene as well. June marks the start of the summer slowdown among purveyors of vinyl the hemisphere throughout, based on the shady principle that when it's hot and the general populace (that's me and you, chum) are out on the beaches and at the resorts, on vacation or wishing for same, no one buys anything. The exceptions, of course, are the seasonal items: suntan lotion, ice cream, beach balls, gasoline, silly putty, movies, Alderman Chris Cohen t-shirts, pinking shears, Alderman Chris Cohen, crinnolated stationery, felt-tip pens, gold-breasted macaws, aluminum siding, punk rock albums. . . I'm sure you can see the pattern. Jazz, as it turns out, is not considered seasonal.

All of this goes to point up at least one reason this month's crop is filled with double albums of two sortsreissue twofers (new sets from Verve, Fantasy-Prestige-Milestone, Savoy and Emarcy); and double-disc encaptures of live performances (Phil Woods and Toshiko-Tabackin Big Band on RCA, Herbie Hancock and Dexter Gordon on Columbia). The ruling philosophy apparently boils down to plumping up the chickens before the famine: buy up those twofers, chil'lun, because next month they' won't be no more.

When they weren't throwing together two-record sets, however, the labels managed to come up with their share of winners and losers for the month. Columbia, for instance, finally finished producing its largest jazz release in a year, most of it quite excellent; on the other hand, Arista let loose with a new Brecker Bros. album, yet another burp in their long line of musical flatulence. ECM scored on two of their three new ones; Warner Brothers presented us with a new David Newman album, a fine testament to the further obliteration of whatever reputation he might have had. The small Muse label from New York continues to feed the racks with another five albums. But the BY ADELE SWINS-TERNER

best news is from the small but rapidly growing Inner City label, which has released new albums from the Steeple-Chase, Classic Jazz and, starting this month, Enja catalogs (Enja is a fine German company with collector's item discs ranging from Cecil Taylor to Terumasa Hino).

One other note, this about the grievously disappointing results to last month's contest. Not one right answer! (Admittedly, the turnout was small, but not one right? Really. . .) So it's time for Adele to ante up, I suppose. In addition to last month's unclaimed Wildflowers (N.Y. Loft Sessions) disc, I'm adding a copy of this month's toprated lp, Steve Kuhn's Motility on ECM. And all you need do is drop a card with the name of Steve Kuhn's first employer (a hardly unknown gent) to me care of TRIAD. You may not be sure, but it doesn't hurt to try. I mean, when one can't give a record away, what's a girl to do?

THE SUMMER KNOWS

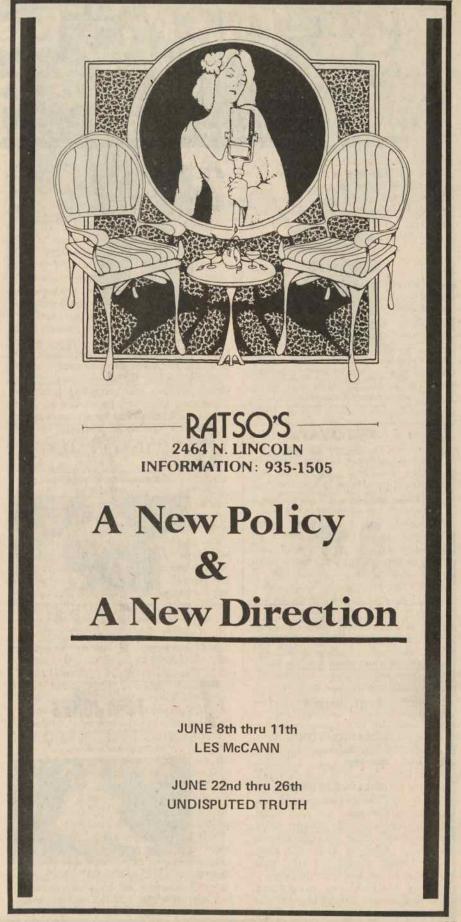
"Motility," says my lexicon, is "the exhibition or capability of movement.' Motility, says I, is the clearest exhibition yet of pianist Steve Kuhn's remarkable capability to ebb and flow with the restless currents of his own inner music. Kuhn has been around since the 1960s, has spent time in Europe, and was playing bar mitzvahs and weddings in New York until two years ago, when ECM began to document his heavily romantic, surreptitiously brainy music. With Motility, his third ECM album, Kuhn appears with the group he has been touring with, and the grace with which their movements interact will make you blush with envy, dears. Steve Slagle's commanding sax work provides clearly luminescent solo interludes as a contrast to Kuhn's own, mysterious piano depths. On bass is the sublimely talented Harvie Swartz, who has been lauded in this column before, and the quartet is completed by drummer Michael Smith, whose pinging, ponging cymbal rapping holds the rhythm in a state of animated suspension. Side one is reflective, side two is a more lively occurrence centering on the title track and the lovely "Deep Tango" by Kuhn. All in all. Motility is easily the moving experience its name implies. And quite a good deal more, to boot. 6.6 (Richter)

Similarly, the title of Dexter Gordon's much-ballyhooed double album on Columbia very well sums up the whole picture. Recorded last winter at the Village Vanguard, the first stop on Dexter's first U.S. tour in a decade, many fans felt the occasion was really a homecoming for the long tall saxist, who has been busily refreshing his reputation as the world's top bebop tenorman in his adopted Denmark. For his stay in New York, the similarly-acclaimed Woody Shaw band was tapped as his accompaniment, and the choice couldn't have been more fortuitous. The resulting week of concertizing heard some of the most outrageous modern bebop in recent memory, and the proof is in the waxing-on Homecoming (Columbia), a well-stretched collection of eight tunes that range from "Round Midnight" to the classic blues "Gingerbread Boy." Shaw and company (including drummer Louis Hayes, a guileless powerhouse) learned their bebop from pioneers like Dexter, drinking the fount of his recorded wisdom, and the team-up was an unqualified success. And Dexter's deep, virile tenor tone and rousedly swinging ideas top it off. This is some of his best playing on record, which is some of the best playing on file.

6.4 (Richter)

Yet another double-album from another established genius-surely that will be the consensus opinion of the Count Basie reissue Sixteen Men Swinging on the Verve twofer series. How could it not be? Basie's bands, probably more than anyone else's, possessed a sure, relaxed sense of swing that was the big band's closest thing to "cool"; in fact, you could say that the Basie band led to the Birth of the Cool, but that's another story altogether. This particular tale concerns the Basie ensembles of 1953 and 1954, 26 tunes with the likes of Thad Jones, Joe Newman, Ernie Wilkins, Frank Foster, Benny Powell and Frank Wess, all of them impregnated with the unmistakable Basie touch, light, understated swing. Oh, I have my favorites—"Two Franks," "Eventide," "Down For The Count" and of course the title tune but there's really nothing here that could displease anyone with an ounce of class. Even if you've never been a fan of the big bands, you're bound to sing a song of Bassie, and the spare, lissome, spectacularly subtle shadings of Sixteen Men Swinging is a devilish place to start. 6.3 (Richter)

Just as Road Time, recorded live in Japan by the Toshiko Akiyoshi-Lew Tabackin Big Band, is a heavenly place to delve into the modern big bands that have descended from the realm of Basie. Actually, of course, Toshiko's sensitized writing, versatile arrangemental use of tonal colors and mulitilingual piano vocabulary owe a great deal more to Duke Ellington than Count Basie; but her band nonetheless swings their Nippon-American pants off. Toshiko is the Japanese lady pianist who is the logical successor to Marian McPartland's claim as jazz's first lady. And the band led by herself her husband, main solist and reedman Lew Tabackin, has become a minor cause celebre in recent years, revitalizing the modern big band scene from their West Coast perch at about the point where



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Easterners Thad Jones and Mel Lewis left off. Road Time (RCA) isn't really their best effort. But the fact of its live recording adds a special excitement that helps outweigh the often too lengthy performances. Trumpeter Bobby Shew and trombonist Bill Reichenback are standouts, but the entire reed section is what makes this band the splash it has become. Dive in; the water's great. 6.2 (Richter)

SUMMER SO-SO'S

Linc Chamberland has finally emerged from the sea of obscurity, literally dripping with fresh musicality, and it comes at an especially welcome juncture. Chamberland is a semi-legendary guitarist and his first Muse album A Place Within will easily find a place among the disheartened guitar worshippers, who are wavering somewhere between Pat Metheny and (ugh!) Al Dimeola in their choice of a new savior. Chamberland just might fit the cross. With Dave Liebman on saxes, Dr. Lyn Christie the bassist, and Bob Leonard on drums, Chamberland has constructed a whirlwind of progressive, possessive, reflexive and sternly pensive musical energy. His guitar lines seem related more to the pianistic panoply of a Joe Zawinul or Cecil Taylor, involuted, calmly complex, a formidable and compelling body of musical thought. The only problem is that Chamberland and Liebman tend to get a bit out of hand; the disciplined control that's needed for such free flying is sometimes wanting. It all casts only a few moments' shadows, however, on this premier effort by Linc Chamberland. He might just be the guitarist of the future, 6.0 (Richter) A saxophonist for the present is Pee

Wee Ellis; perhaps too much for the present, as defined by the giggling snigglewheeze of the disco sound. What's his album Home In The Country (Savoy) doing this high on the list, then? Well, for one thing, it's making yours truly give an occasional second glance at the whole disco monstrosity. Ellis' tunes and rhythms are simple-minded enough, but his own startling sax work is the first key that something else is up here. That and the smarter-than-average structures of tunes like "Big Daddy" and "Pistachio." In fact, the whole thing comes off with enough real music, and enough of a good impression despite its source material, than one is left wondering whether it hasn't been a cleverly constructed sendup of the disco scene, calculated to make an extra few bucks in the process. Tempting, that analysis, whether or not it's correct. Then again, perhaps the whole thing is as overblown as my reasoning. Whatever, Home In The Country may not be a permanent resting place, but it's a nice little stopover in the land of a thousand dances. 5.7 (Richter)

Herbie Hancock's little stopoverat the Newport Jazz Festival last summer-is the subject for documentation in yet another double-album, mysteriously

Triad June 1977



Stands Outs Propitiously? Vitally Stamp Out Professionalism? Paper, Scissors, Stone? Who knows? What I do know is that the concert, which was a Hancock retrospective, reassembled three groups: Herbie's Maiden Voyage band, his early-1970s sextet, and the funky goulash he's been stewing in ever since. Also, that the concert was a success for the first partfeaturing Freddie Hubbard, Ron Carter, Wayne Shorter and Tony Williams-a qualified success for the second part, and dismal embarrassment for the third. How do I know all that about a concert I never even attended? Because it's all here, and in just that order. The entire first record, starring Williams and Shorter, is a brilliant exposition of what Hancock could still do if he had the mind (and taste). Side three muddles amiably through a performance by a band that wasn't always coherent when they played together every day, much less every five years. Side four, with the exquisite Wah Wah Watson in the role of Hancock's plugged-in Svengali, stinks. So what you have is one tremendous Ip in the guise of a mediocre double-album. Some say that's the price you pay for genius. I say that it's the price you pay for misplaced ego. But don't quote me. 5.4 (Richter)

The constant joy in Hancock's groups of late has been reedman Bennie Maupin, and so his Slow Traffic To The Right (Mercury) is even less something to write home about than it would have been. It could have been so sure a project. It could have been the chance for him to expound upon his musical contributions in the face of Hancock's lustless pandering (the worst kind, certainly). It could have been a chance to make up for the fledgling inconsistencies of his last solo disc. Instead, it turns out to be the chance for producer Pat Gleeson to mold a sad sack of Bennie's tunes into halfhearted, soft-headed string-laden versions of the good Lord alone knows what. Oh, there's plenty of fine solo work from Bennie, and some crisp trumpet invention from Eddie Henderson. But don't expect miracles from a few well-placed notes. Slow Traffic To The Right is about as energy-efficient as a Cadillac semi, but

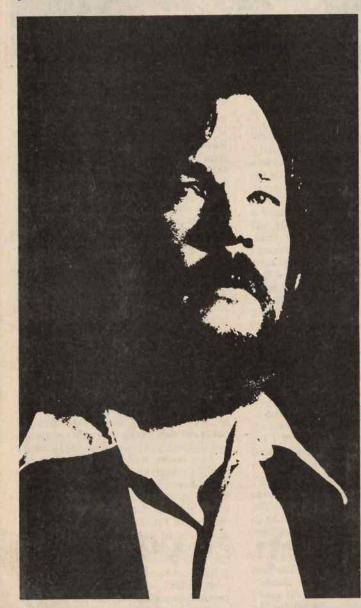
modern music, this one's an ill-disguised exit. 5.2 (Richter)

SUMMER NO-NO'S

Talk about disappointments. After leading us on with such a fine reissue program, including a superb double-set of Charlie Parker's important seminal work for the label, Savoy comes around with this lame attempt to peddle a few more loose ends. It's the Charlie Parker Encores, and despite the fancy footwork of the liner notes to explain why this belated set of unused takes is finally on the racks, it just doesn't stack up. Next to the originals, of course, these could be a bit more valuable, since it would provide the opportunity to compare takes and learn how each tune progressed. But this way it only comes off as a rather suspect attempt to cash in on the craze with a storehouse full of unused material. The sessions, of course, are legendary and rightly so, with Bird, Miles Davis, Argonne Thornton, John Lewis, Max Roach, Bud Powell. But the circumstances of their current presentation are substantially less noble. It's second-rate time for Savoy, so don't say you weren't properly, and succinctly, admonished. 5.0 (Richter)

As you can well imagine, it does my heart a constant disservice to have to come down hard on any of the few sisters who are trying to prove the jazz idiom is more than a man's world. But in the case of Patrice Rushen, what's a poor jazz critic to do? Young, zesty and full of good ideas, this distaff pianist is onto her third album now, and they just keep getting curiouser and curiouser. The incredible lack of focus that informed her previous record has somehow been even expanded on this, the aptly-named Shout It Out (Prestige). Like the stains in those TV commercials for the laundry aid Shout, one hopes that this music might be obliterated by the mere act of vocal protest. Let us hope so. In the meantime, rush right down and latch onto this latest example of the Kama Sutra put to abstract instrumentalisma hundred variations on what can easily become the same tired old theme. After all, it might be just your cup of tea. But you'd be a bloody fool to admit it now, wouldn't you? 4.5 (Richter)

77530roen



GRANE WYLIE

THE CELESTIAL SCENE

June, 1977 is going to be the kind of month we've all been raiting for.

Jupiter's favorable influences are abundantly reinforced by other planetary and stellar bodies. The overall outlook for human affairs is extraordinarily favorable.

June offers a special attraction for night people. Mars and Venus will be very close to each other, seeming to be a large double star. The two planets will be morning stars; rising about 2:30 a.m. (daylight savings time), becoming clearly visible around 3 a.m. They will remain observable until a few minutes before sunrise. This too enhances human affairs. The Mars-Venus conjunction is especially favorable for romantic matters, but also benefits all human activities.

WORLD AND NATIONAL FORECAST

In regard to the energy crisis June's news is both good and bad. The bad news is that soon-to-be-discovered facts relating to the world's oil reserves will resolve the question of how accurate the CIA's controversial report on the amount of readily available petroleum might be. Unfortunately the CIA's conclusions are much closer to being correct than those in a similar survey sponsored by the United Nations. Naturally, some quantities of petroleum have not yet been discovered. However, the cost of pumping them out of the ground and converting them to gasoline will render the majority of them useless. Eventually we could find a way to overcome the problems that prevent the use of these petroleum sources, but the time needed exceeds the number of years it will take to exhaust our present supplies.

The CIA's dire predictions of a worldwide gasoline shortage in the early or mid 1980s, and of a society unable to maintain the same standard of living we currently enjoy, are fundamentally correct.

The good news is that the bad news doesn't matter. Energy sources exist in abundant quantity. Known substitutes for oil-derived energy have received a great deal of publicity in recent months, so it requires little predictive ability to enumerate them. Besides these, however, unpublicized alternatives to petroleum will prove to be far more satisfactory than any currently available ones.

Devices will soon render our present systems of locomotion as obsolete as Phyllis Schaffley's politics. (They'll be a lot cleaner too). The machines in question will not use any of today's fuels.

These radically different machines already exist. The only thing preventing immediate use is that they present a very real threat to the nation's economy if they are introduced into our society too quickly. Industry must be allowed to adjust itself to these products of technological evolution. Any other course of action would create a terrible economic crisis. Its effects would be far more catastrophic than all the energy problems combined.

The transition will be made with only a small amount of difficulty. At the end of the affair (seven years from now) the world will have an almost unlimited quantity of some new form of energy at its command.

Interestingly enough, the celestial conditions that explain the energy situation also tell an interesting story regarding the CIA. Apparently the organization is in the process of becoming a more beneficial influence in our society. A significant number of their future activities will be unrelated to espionage as we think of it.

Something else in the cosmic winds will be of special interest to those who enjoy rock music. June will see visible beginnings of a whole new trend in this art form. Its consequence will be a major innovation in the styles and forms used to reach the listening audience.

Naturally, there will also be some big changes among the rock performers and big-name bands. Roger Daltry will totally change his image: one of the best moves he's ever made. Daltry will produce several new albums in the near future, with a strong likelihood that they will be extremely successful.

The really big thing in Roger's career will be another Rock Extravaganza. In all probability it will be a bigger box-office smash than *Tommy*.

Uriah Heep will be reorganized before too many days pass. It looks as though a return to the Wizard image is unavoidable. Making this change and adding a few new things here and there will cause the reorganized Uriah Heep's popularity to skyrocket.

A former member of Deep Purple will produce a major work in the field of Symphonic Rock. The composition will be vaguely similar to Jon Lord's "Gemini Suite" but will employ a larger orchestra. This bizarre but magnificent symphony may employ the classic sonata allegro form. Hector Berlioz updated perhaps?

Tensions may mount in international relations during the mid-month period. This could produce some difficult situations in Africa and the nations bordering on the Mediterranean Sea. More American mercenaries and additional regular military forces from the Arab world may be sent to Zaire, but the war there is not likely to last much longer.

The real threat to peace emanates from Uganda. Another serious diplomatic incident involving Idi Amin is a virtual certainty. The crisis in Northern Ireland will escalate in middle and late June. For a brief period (at least) that nation may see a total breakdown of civil order.

Looking at the more positive side of things, the United States and other major nations will find ample opportunity to adopt a wide variety of international agreements that will ultimately make the world a better place for everyone.

FORECAST FOR THE 12 SIGNS

ARIES

Early June places special emphasis on romantic matters. Circumstance allows affairs of this nature to progress into the next phase, but there is a strong tendency to push hard where romance is concerned. It's better to let the other person take the initiative in cementing relations. Keep your temper under control between June 4 and 8. This will allow you to recognize threats to the well-being of others and yourself. Older people and authority figures may be responsible for expected changes in your social activities after June 14. Don't fight it. Circumstances are using them to keep you from disaster. Pay special attention to the underlying meaning behind the words and actions of others. Despite these few problems, June will be predominately favorable.

TAURUS

The first four days of June will bring adversity in matters relating to your home life and personal activities. You can reverse this trend by erasing misconceptions and avoiding arguments with those who are short tempered. After June 5 the picture shifts to a more favorable light. Expect changes for the better after this date. A change of residence may be necessary in the near future, but have no fear. The new circumstances related to your living conditions will be better by far. Your personal finances are also due for a boost soon after this date.

There's a significant chance you'll be able to make concrete plans for the vacation you've been in need of after June 12.

GEMIN

Geminis are cautioned not to take themselves or others too seriously in in June's early days. This allows you to keep your head together during an overwhelmingly favorable period that starts on June 1. Thus you will be able to take full advantage of all the Zodiac has in store for you.

Special emphasis is placed on romance, public contacts, and professional and financial matters. These and other areas of your life will soon undergo major changes for the better. This trend is further enhanced if you will avoid accepting anything on faith. Key words in this matter are, "Get it in writing."

Friends and associates may take you on unexpected adventures in the second half of June. During this period you'll reap

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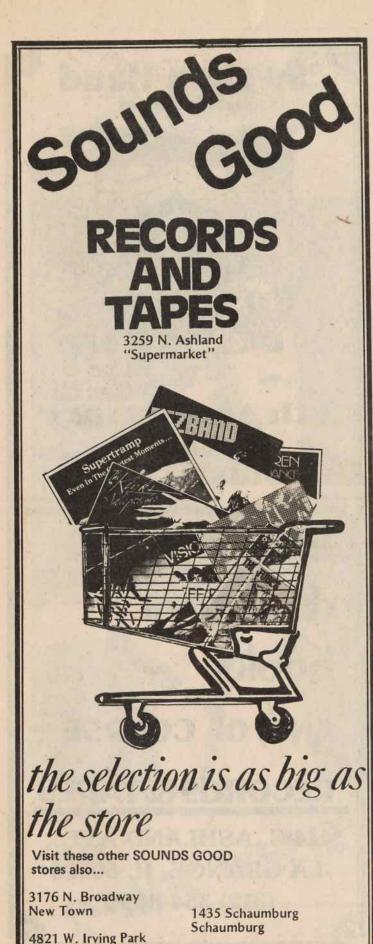
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CANCER

Special emphasis is placed on working conditions. Your financial situation also is spotlighted. You'll be better off if you renovate or repair items that show signs of wear or an encroaching breakdown. Cancer natives are especially vulnerable to difficulties with refrigerating or cooling devices. It's wisest to minimize your use of any mechanism that fits this description.

Early June may find you mediating in the quarrels of others. Despite the fundamental inadvisability of doing so, June provides an exception to this and other rules.

Cancer may also expect special recognition from professional superiors. After June 15 Cancer may have to cope with nervousness. Elminating stimulants from the diet minimizes the trend.

LEO

May's adversity departs on the first day of June. You'll find your disposition changing for the better as fears and worries depart. A change in professional status is distinctly possible. Leo might be well advised to take steps to fulfill this trend.

After June 14 you may find friends and associates in an extremely tense frame of mind. The underlying cause of this is that they have seen or experienced things that have severely shaken basic philosophical or religious beliefs.

June is a favorable time in which to purchase clothing or furniture.

VIRGO

The first few days of June may be a little disconcerting. However, the scene soon changes as a favorable trend finds you. Adversity and delays soon depart, bringing you into a happy period. You'll get the chance to dispel unfavorable rumors and rectify situations that have kep you in a quandary. After June 4 special good fortune finds you. The vast majority of your efforts will meet with success. Joint projects are favored.

Romantic associations are enhanced after June 15. These matters can be further assisted if you are willing to take the initiative. Activities with a Pisces individual are favored. Expect a favorable reception from those whom you wish to ask an important question.

LIBRA

The state of your affairs is in good shape this month. The exception to the rule might find you between June 14 and 21.

Early June favors all phases of personal life and brings important changes in almost everything. Even though you may find it difficult to adjust to new conditions, you'll discover they are very much for the better.

Communication and conversations are accented after June 15. Be especially attentive to verbal or written warnings between June 14 and 21. This thwarts a serious threat to your physical well-being

Expect contact with those who have been long absent.

SCORPIO

June proceeds with only minor obstacles as you enter a new and more rewarding phase of your existence. Now is the time to put your very special talents to constructive use. Disruptive influences fade as June enters its opening period. Naturally you'll have to deal with petty jealousies on the part of those who resent your popularity—some things never change. Even so, you'll discover major projects or plans will work out just as you hoped they would.

Professional activities may place heavy demands on your time after June 14. Circumstances may require you to devote time to unpleasant tasks between June 14 and 21. Even so, the second half of June is predominantly favorable. Rejoice in its coming, It's the time you've been waiting for.

SAGGITARIUS

A substantial quantity of good fortune is in store for you this month. Be willing to update your image and things will be even better. This could very well include public acclaim or an elevation in professional status. New articles for the home may also be in store. The period between June 7 and 11 is threatening to photographic equipment and articles made of glass or plastic. Social activities should be planned in a way that excludes this period. Bitter disappointment could be the result of ignoring this warning.

After June 12 you may find the opportunity to do some traveling. It will be advisable to follow through on this and other opportunities that find you.

CAPRICORN

Petty aggravations continue to fade away. It's best not to let yourself lose sight of things that are more important than small irritations and small minds. A severely disruptive trend directed at your working conditions fades with much greateer rapidity; by June 15 it will disappear. Expect a raise in pay or elevation in job status. If it hasn't manifested itself by June 15, ask for it.

You may also find your home environment becoming more pleasant this month. Capricorn's friends and associates may be liable to injury. You can do a good deed by warning them against obvious danger. Deal with personal problems in the last six days of the month. Be prepared to accept good fortune all month long.

AQUARIUS

One of the most adverse periods of your life makes its final bow on the stage of life. This indeed was a tale told by an idiot. Nevertheless you have faced the challenge bravely. One last crisis must be dealt with between June 14 and 20; then your fortunes change. June should be spent preparing yourself for the happier times that will soon find you. After June 21 you'll see adversity swept away. Long before that, the fact that your personal circumstance is due to change for the better will become obvious. Special emphasis seems to be placed on education, romance and finances. This trend is favorable and lasts throughout June. As a matter of fact it extends well beyond June.

PISCES

Pisces must be alert against deceptive practices in personal and business matters. June is definitely not the time to makes promises you may have difficulty fulfilling. Early June brings threats to your romantic situation. However, an abundance of good influences in your life may make the threats to your happiness unimportant.

Early June offers the opportunity for travel and allows you to capitalize on your artistic ability. This period will also bring professional advancement or recognition.

Romantic problems will depart after June 14. Misunderstandings can be cleared up after this date. This period will bring you one bit of good news after another. Expect good fortune after this date.

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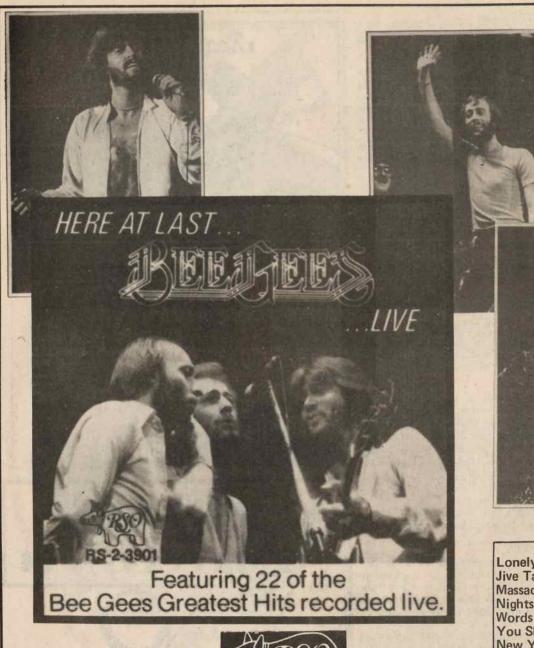
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STOPPOSE SCIENT BY CHARLES W. PRATT

On the boards: The Wiz closes here on the 11th after a very successful and profitable engagement. . . The Organic Theatre Company heads out for a West Coast tour in October, performing Ray Bradbury's The Wonderful Ice Cream Suit and Kurt Vonnegut's The Sirens of Titan in repertory . . . Leonard (Mr. Spock) Nimoy takes over the lead in New York's Equus, replacing Tony Perkins. . . Lily Tomlin's one-person show has taken the Big Apple by storm, and her tenure has been extended well into this month. . .Brother Tom Smothers opens at Drury Lane East June 21, in Woody Allen's Play It Again, Sam. . . David Mamet will write the screenplay for his Sexual Perversion in Chicago.

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DC Comics, under the inspiration of publisher Jenette Kahn, has gathered together four Denny O'Neil Batman stories, blown them up to giant-size, tacked on a jazzy cover by Neal Adams, and is retailing the "collectors' edition" for two bucks. In the comic book novel of 76 pages, the Batman takes on his intriguing new enemy. Ra's Al Ghul.

The state of

On the future front, a Taplinger series called "Writers of the 21st Century" will examine science fiction authors and their works. The first two titles, published this month, examine Isaac Asimov and Arthur C. Clarke. Robert E. Heinlein is on tap for July, and other subjects include Philip K. Dick, Ursula K. LeGuin, Brian Aldiss, H.P. Lovecraft and Ray Bradbury.

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Logan's Run continues. Author William F. Nolan will write sequel Logan's World for Bantam, for which he will receive a \$50,000 advance, and will do teleplays for a CBS TV series. The network has a 60-minute pilot on tap. In addition, Marvel comics is continuing their Logan series beyond the film. . . In other TV news, Patrick "Secret Agent" McGoohan returns to the tube in Rafferty, a CBS series about an internist in a big city hospital. . CBS has plucked The Tony Randall Show from the jaws of ABC.

U.S. readers, say statistics collected by the trade journal Publishers Weekly, spent \$4.6 billion on books last year. And 73 percent of all books sold in 1976 were paperbacks. . Speaking of whichfew paperbacks get second chances to sell themselves, but Ballantine decided to go for broke with a new merchandising campaign for William Goldman's The Princess Bride. The book, a satire of the beautiful princess-Prince Charming fairy tale, was given a dramatic new gate-folded cover with a map inside. That, plus a healthy advertising budget, gave the book its new lease on shelflife. . . Ballantine's huge trade paperback, The Sword of Shannara by Terry Brooks now has 155,000 copies in print. . . The first 100,000 copies of Richard "J.L. Seagull" Bach's Illusions (Delacorte) have sold out, and 50,000 more are on the way. . . Mark "The Bird" Fidrych will tell his story. No Big Deal, to Lippincott for June 27 publication. . . Henry Regnery Co. of Chicago, publishers of Bob Greene, have changed their name to Contemporary Books. . . Alex Haley is serious about his \$5 million suit against Doubleday...

Δ

Filmania: Sylvester Stallone is willing to make Rocky II, but only after he stars in F.I.S.T. and Hell's Kitchen, based on his novel. . A sequel is in the works for The Late Show with Art Car-

ney and Lily Tomlin. It'll be called *The Late, Late Show.* . And there's every chance of a sequel to 20th Century-Fox's *Star Wars*, with a screenplay by Alan Dean Foster. . .Karen Black will star in *Dry Hustle*, the screen version of Sarah Kernochan's novel. Ms. Kernochan wrote the screenplay and will direct. . . Marlon Brando has completed his 12 days of work on *Superman*, still filming in London. Marlon passed go and collected \$4.2 million, some of which he'll spend on a series of TV documentaries about the American Indian. . Jack Nicholson may direct the film musical *Sgt. Pepper*,



SARAH KERNOCHAN, AUTHOR OF "DRY HUSTLE."

produced by Robert Stigwood... Convoy, based on the CB song, stars Ali McGraw, Kris Kristofferson and Mort Sahl, and will be directed by blood-and-guts Sam Peckinpah... James Clavell's Tai-Pan will become a film, with screenplay by Carl Foreman... A movie version of Tom Robbins' Even Cowgirls Get the Blues is in the works. script by Stephen Geller (Slaughterhouse Five). Author Robbins has just finished his third novel, Woodpecker Rising.



ORIGINS OF MARVEL COMICS SON OF ORIGINS BRING ON THE BAD GUYS! by Stan Lee (Simon & Schuster, \$6.95)

We all owe a tremendous debt to Stan Lee, writer and publisher of lowbrow literature, the man who inventedmore or less-the modern comic book superhero. Some 15 years ago, Lee (I suspect) was desperate to keep himself from outgrowing the pulpy and colorful world of comies, so he conjured up for Marvel Comics heroes with human dimensions, heroes who had troubles and emotions and could even change. All this was a clever method of hooking literate high school and college students on an art form usually outgrown around puberty. It meant financial success for writer Lee, and changed the face of comics publishing-even for Marvel Comics' chief rival, D.C.

Elsewhere in this issue you can read details and philosophy about Spider-Man and all the rest, so I'll spare you that and talk mainly about this interesting trilogy of trade paperbacks (also available in hardcover at \$10.95 per). Ever the showman—and always eager to turn a profit—Stan came up with the idea of reprinting the origins of Marvel's superheroes in a durable format. Not a bad idea, really, since many of Marvel's readers may have started late in the game and weren't

completely familiar with the histories of their favorite costumed characters. As for the more serious reader, well, he or she may have simply tossed those debut issues away years ago before they were worth any money—and people do reread comics.

Stan assembled the pages from old Marvel comics (in living color), added brief introductions in his own "pulsating prose," full of alliteration and mock-Shakespearean dialect, and created instant artifacts of popular culture. Even if you're not a comics follower or fanatic, these books will provide you a glimpse into the American mindstyle, adolescent and otherwise.

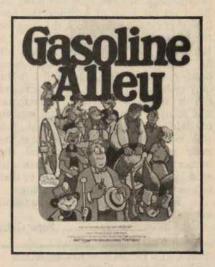
Origins presents the stories of Marvel's earliest stars, such heroes and teams as Spider-Man, the Fantastic Four, Thor, Hulk and Dr. Strange. Peter Parker, bitten by a radioactive spider, acquired spiderpowers in proportion to his size, then became Spider-Man. The FF got their powers (stretchability, invisibility, brute strength, and the ability to become a human bonfire) from cosmic rays. And so on. Son of Origins continues the saga of the good guys, spotlighting such secondgeneration Marvelites as the mutant X-Men, Iron Man, Daredevil and the Silver Surfer, sky-rider of the spaceways. (Daredevil, aka lawyer Matt Murdock, is blind, but radioactivity boosted all his other senses to their apex.)

But the latest volume, Bring On the Bad Guys, is the most interesting, for it details the genesis of some of Marvel's most intriguing characters, the villains. After all, if there were no malevolent menaces, as Stan would say, then the heroes would have nothing to do but pump iron.

Such Marvel criminals as the brilliant but horribly disfigured Dr. Doom, the kooky but deadly Green Goblin and the hell-spawned Mephisto are often more appealing than the good guys they fight. Marvel villains, to a man (or beast), have complex personalities, tragic flaws, and even rigid codes of honor. The bad guys are always beaten, of course, but eventually they return to battle again, gloriously resurrected from the debris of defeat.

Marvel has so many characters, so many classifications of heroes, that Mr. Lee will be at this for a long time. (The books have also sold well, particularly at Christmas.) Right now he's at work on a volume about female superheroes, outrageously titled Bring On The Broads! How's that for spunk?

Patty Stubbs



GASOLINE ALLEY by Dick Moores (Flare Books, \$3.95)

Open a Chicago *Tribune* to the comics pages and spread them before you. Now just look, without reading the strips. You see dark, carefully crafted story strips like *The Phantom* or *Gil Thorp*, or *Beetle Bailey*. If I wanted to, I could talk about "The Decline of The Story Comic Strip"—how *Broom-Hilda* has muscled out *Flash Gordon* and *Prince Valiant*—and in general waste the reader's time. What I will do is draw attention to two strips that circumvent that story-versus-gag battle rather deftly.

The first one, at the top of the second column, you all know. It's the one with all the copy and the xeroxed panels: Gary Trudeau's *Doonesbury*. Sure, there's a gag of some sort nearly every day, but remember when Joanie finally got her man, folks? There are interesting story lines going on as well.

But wait; look down in the right hand corner. There's a strip that exists largely without puns or gags, where the artist works in three dimensions and includes details, and yet if you read it (yes, you have my permission now) it goes off into a long, long flight of fantasy and near-absurdity. The name of the game is Gasoline Alley. Yes, that's right, ol' Gasoline Alley.

And now there's a collection out in book form, with an introduction by Nat Hentoff. And most people who pick up the new *Doonesbury* book or an older *Pogo* book will pass it by. It is not hip to read *Gasoline Alley*.

Buy the book. Read it. Moores is a master cartoonist and storyteller, and the stories he tells are strange and funny,

and even at times exciting. It is no coincidence that Gasoline Alley is Gary Trudeau's favorite comic strip.

Of course, you won't find biting references to current public figures and events. Dick Moores does not have his finger on the pulse of America, and perhaps that's the reason it took this long for the book to come out. But a pulse is a fast thing, very momentary. Moores has his finger on something slower, more basic-human nature. Walt Wallet is the only realistic old man in the comics, and Phyllis Wallet is the only sympathetic and accurate portrait of an older woman (outside of Joanie Caucus) that you will find here, on TV, or anywhere in the mass media. The weirdness and the humor of the strip never degenerate into mere gags, but leave a glow akin to that of hearing a great Bill Cosby monolog.

Buy the book, and see if you fall in love with it. I did.

Peter Gillis

THE GREAT COMIC BOOK HEROES Compiled by Jules Feiffer (Dial Press, \$6.95)

It's unfortunate that Jules Feiffer has dropped out of the limelight that was so largely his during the late '50s and '60s. As Gary Trudeau has provided political commentary for much of this decade, Jules Feiffer provided iconoclas-

P. A. SOUND CLASSES

To Bill Robinette:

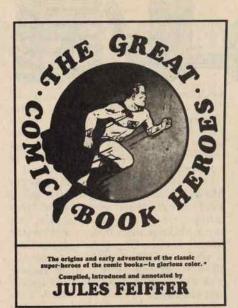
Having attended 6 weeks of sound classes, I feel that the knowledge learned has helped a great deal in mixing live performances at Ratso's. Because of the nature of the club, the influx of musicians with varying needs is a constant challenge. Knowing how a system is built and works has eliminated many problems that occur with each performance. Amplification, placement of monitors and mikes was extremely helpful and has given me new ideas and techniques to improve the sound. Consequently the audience and the musicians are much happier. I basically work with jazz of funk-type musicians: Stanley Turrentine Norman Connors Esther Phillips Oscar Borwn Jr. Lonnie Liston Smith Freddie Hubbard

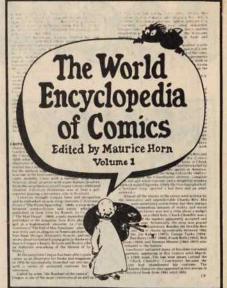
Johnny Guitar Watson Worked the Jazz Oasis at Milwaukee's ummerfest; traveled with the Brecker Bros.; and worked a concert in Pontiac Mich, with the Brecker Bros.

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tic social commentary while functioning as a cartooning conscience for the society that spawned the Viet Nam war, discovered that analysis can be fun, and resisted ever so passively and totally the struggle of blacks and women for equality.

It is perhaps fitting, then, that Feiffer turns his critical eye to his first -love, the comics. His interested-bystander-turned-knowledgeable-insider history of the gestation, birth, and formative years of the comic book carries his unmistakable brand of wry commentary on the social phenomenon so often maligned. For many of us who hoarded our dimes until the new titles hit the newsstands on Wednesdays, Feiffer offers a fond if somewhat biting explanation of why we were waiting; why the comic book had (and still has) such appeal for so many people.

Although The Great Comic Book Heroes covers only the Golden Age of comics and although Feiffer originally wrote this book some 12 years ago, his careful selection and discussion of the classic heroes and their writers and artists covers the full range of comic book material available today, with the possible exception of Spider-Man. Origin buffs will appreciate that Feiffer has included reprints of origin or selected early stories for 13 of the most famous heroes whose particular exploits helped shape the comics industry.

If you ever had the urge to duck into a nearby phone booth or utter a magic word that could help you see through walls, check out The Great Comic Book Heroes. You still won't be able to leap tall buildings but, with

Feiffer's help, you won't sit around being depressed by it.

Larry Green

THE WORLD ENCYCLOPEDIA OF COMICS edited by Maurice Horn (Chelsea House, \$30 and \$42.50)

No special section on comic books would be complete without mentioning this massive reference work, available in either a 1- (\$30) or two-volume (\$42.50) set. One of these days it may be available to us in a less expensive paperback version, but it's still worth the money if you're crazy about the comics and their creators. The World Encyclopedia was published almost a year ago, but even now I haven't been able to read everything in it. It's a marvelous compendium of information.

Editor Maurice Horn and 14 international contributors have united to present a fairly comprehensive data bank about such characters as Betty Boop (39 lines), the Blackhawks (88 lines), and Superman (109 lines) and such writers and artists as Stan Lee and Jim Steranko. The book has some 1,200 entries, 700 black and white illustrations, and 64 color pages of covers and strips.

Comprehensive as it is, there are still some surprising gaps. For example, not a word about Captain Marvel-and no entry for Marvel Comics, either.

But the weight of its scholarship far exceeds the omissions, and a single readthrough of the Encyclopedia will give any interested reader a solid education in the stuff that dreams are made of.

Patty Stubbs



A BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER by Joan Didion (Simon & Schuster, \$8.95)

In her previous novels (Run River and Play It As It Lays) and even in her excellent essay collection (Slouching Towards Bethlehem) Joan Didion has written evocatively about the way things and people fall apart. A Book of Common Prayer is another novel examining the flux of the universe; in this case the insular universe of one Charlotte Bogart Douglas, a singular woman without direction or apparent destiny in a world of petty anarchy and crumbling institutions.

Mostly, Charlotte remembers. She remembers her California childhood, her grandmother's burnt biscuits, the death of her parents. She remembers her first marriage to Warren Bogart, an eccentric, rambling, drunkard professor and sadist. (Warren doesn't think divorce dissolved their relationship, and he is right.) She remembers highlights of her present marriage to Leonard Douglas, hotshot lawyer who defends rich and poor leftwingers and revolutionaries. And she remembers her daughter Marin, laughing little girl who used to get all dressed up for Easter.

But now those memories are in jeopardy. Marin, so the FBI tells Charlotte, put a bomb in the TransAmerica building, highjacked a plane to Utah, then blew it up. Somewhere along the line the laughing girl turned into a revolutionary. And Charlotte never knew. For most of the novel. Charlotte searches for a way back to those memories, away from the truth. In a way she succeeds, fleeing San Francisco for the more quixotic climate of a penny-ante banana republic named Boca Grande.

Charlotte's story (tragedy) is told, cryptically and with a kind of desolate eloquence, by Grace Strasser-Mendana, financial power behind the musical-chair thrones of Boca Grande. Grace, dying of pancreatic cancer, becomes fascinated by Charlotte's quest, drawn into her own search for the roots of this eccentric norteamericana.

This is a fascinating novel, and I don't know why, a common experience with Didion's fiction. Her characters build substance gradually as her spare yet

elegant prose invests them with layer after layer of doubt, sexuality, emotion and black humor. Plot is episodic, written in epigrams. The novel gathers its force, builds up like a volcano, an earthquake or a Boca Grande revolution. Its power remains after the last word, visions that haunt for days.

Patty Stubbs

FLOATING WORLDS by Cecelia Holland (Pocket Books, \$1.95)

Through the years, science fiction has travelled over a googol of miles to an almost infinite number of brave new worlds and civilizations. By nature, and almost by definition, the medium tends to epic proportions. Its writers have created more wonders and horrors, spawned more wars and killed off more creatures than the rest of the body of literary workers combined. Thus, when a science fiction novel is termed an epic, it has got to be an EPIC of no mean scope. Such a book is Floating Worlds.

Floating Worlds covers one interplanetary war, four planetary revolutions, and countless vendettas and insurrections. In a way, the book is a s/f Gone With the Wind, combining social intrigue with political forces, peopling the novel with a multitudinous cast of characters, adding love and death of noble and disgraceful sorts, including a particularly distressing love triangle and setting the whole tour de force against a vast multiplanet struggle for control of trade routes and rights in the galaxy.

The book's heroine, Paula Mendoza, does more than justice as a ruthless femme fatale in the Scarlett O'Hara tradition. She creates a scandal and mayhem in her pursuit of the man, or, in this case, the Styth she loves. Tall, dark, and handsome, with long black claws at the ends of his fingers. Saba is one of the planet Styth's chief commanders. Paula meets him as a member of the Earthish Committee for the Revolution.

The rest, as they say, is history. As the only Earthish member to speak Styth, and through her love tryst with Saba, Paula becomes a major political force and pawn in the action as she struggles to maintain control over her destiny and the Earth's. Like Scarlett, Paula never lets love get too much in the way of her goal. The two share the rationale that men (of all planets) are a breed apart from women. They are sly, brutal unfaithful characters on the whole, and must be dealt with in well-weighed portions of charm and treachery.

But unlike the antebellum heroine, Paula's realm of operations demands more than a dimpled cheek and a vow to never be hungry again. She must match wits with rival factions on Styth, with the fascist Sunlight League of Mars and with the mercenary treachery of her fellow committee members, whose only loyalties are to their individual goals.

In the midst of all this multifarious strife, Holland somehow manages to maintain her characters' uniqueness. Saba, Paula and the mysterious Tanuojin, Saba's closest advisor and comrade who is master of some almost godlike powers, play out an internal struggle for love and power, as dramatic as the outside action. Holland has a rare talent for fiction and science fiction, and she uses it well and unsparingly. No literary artillery is forgotten or ignored in the novel. It has it all-fantasy, violence, love, birth, death, sex, tragedy, victory, pathos and bathos. It is, in short, an epic of an epic genre.

Beth Segal



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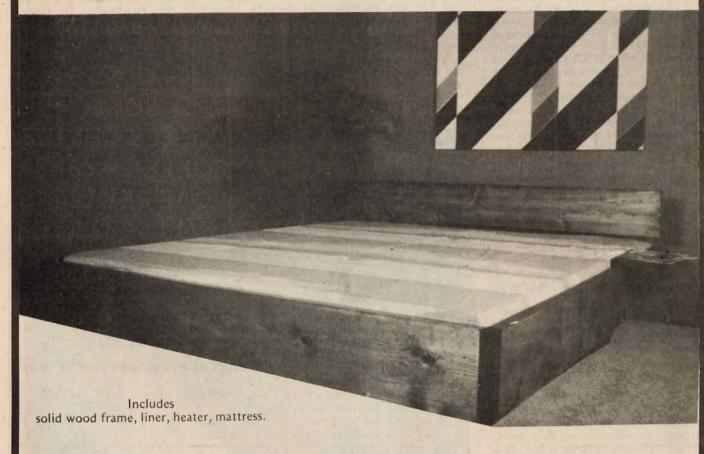
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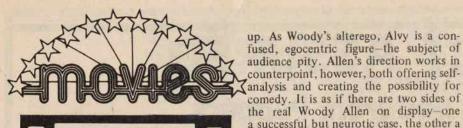
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ANNIE HALL written by Woody Allen and Marshall Brickman directed by Woody Allen a United Artists release

You can tell a lot about a comedy film from the way an audience responds to it. The difference between a Mel Brooks film and one by Woody Allen lies in the kind of laughter their films elicit.

Brooks, never noted for the subtle or cerebral approach to film making, makes the raucous belly laugh his stock in trade. Bodily functions other than thinking are most often exploited for laughter in his films, and audiences are not often required to exercise much wit or intelligence. Woody Allen, on the other hand, builds his comedy around the problems of urban existence and the techniques with which a neurotic character confronts those difficulties. Such is the case in his latest film, Annie Hall, touted as a semi-autobiographical statement. Allen, playing a comic named Alvy Singer, calls for a more thoughtful responsean appreciation of (primarily verbal) wit. Audiences at screenings of Annie Hall have been so eager to comply that many lines of dialog are obscured by waves of laughter. Annie Hall thus passes the test for comedies-the proper response emerges from a sufficient number of spectators.

That need not have been the case, for mystery has shrouded this Woody Allen project for months. Rumors flew about in the wake of his recent straight role in The Front. Some speculated that the new film would be more serious than comical. Allen himself refused to say anything other than that it would be a comedy. Yet both sides were correct, for Annie Hall is far and away the most "serious" film Allen has yet made, owing as much to Bergman's "crisis in life" films as to the tradition of film comedy.

Yet it would be a grave mistake to confuse Woody Allen's humorous comments on a broken love affair with any real kind of philosophy. Although one of the recurring targets for Allen's comic barbs is the psychoanalyst, it is also clear that this film is a result of a considerable amount of self-analysis, whether a shrink was involved in the process or not. Curiously, the fruits of that analysis does not find its way into the character of Alvy Singer. Rather, Alvy cannot understand that his actions lead directly to the break-

up. As Woody's alterego, Alvy is a confused, egocentric figure-the subject of audience pity. Allen's direction works in ounterpoint, however, both offering selfanalysis and creating the possibility for comedy. It is as if there are two sides of the real Woody Allen on display—one

quite astute observer.

Despite that Woody Allen's role as director plays a much more vital role in this film than in previous works, one can't ignore the fact that the film stylistically is fairly crude and inconsistent. Many scenes are played directly to the camera. Certainly, this device has enjoyed great success in film comedies of the past: call to mind those moments in which Woody's Hero, Groucho Marx, used to step out of character and deliver asides to the camera. Unfortunately, Allen employs this device repeatedly in Annie Hall, and while the material presented in this fashion is top-notch, the effectiveness of direct address is greatly reduced by repetition. Use of the direct address is in no way dictated by, or closely related to, the surrounding material, most of which is recorded by a simply static camera set-up. Alternation between these

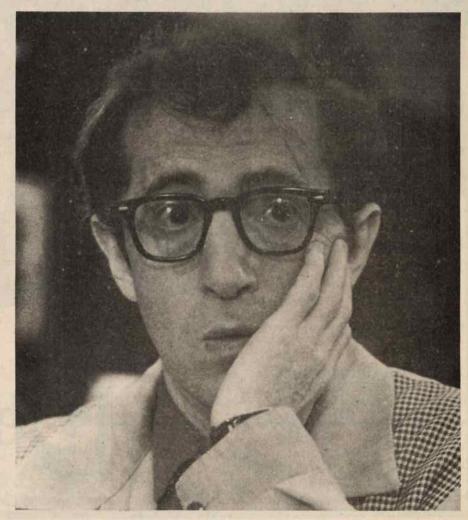
techniques is often jarring, and it oc-

casionally mars the comic effect.

Allen has not let this fact bother him in the past; in Bananas, for instance, he employs a virtually complete catalog of visual styles. In that film, however, the clash of techniques merely enhanced the general anarchy of the comic plot.

The point here does not intend to deny the entertaining qualities of the film. Rather, Annie Hall, even if it is Allen's most accomplished work as director and even though it may incorporate elements of seriousness which far surpass any seen in his earlier films, is simply not the "masterpiece" that some would have it be. It marks a major accom-plishment for Woody Allen as a filmmaker with more lessons to learn, but in its attempt to show both serious and comic aspects of the "modern relationship," Annie Hall shows little of the unbridled vitality of Bananas. It owes as much to the performance of Diane Keaton (Annie) as to Allen's, and offers a lot of laughs, some food for thought, and a new supply of Woody Allen flavored chestnuts. After seeing it, you'll never be able to think of chicken, eggs or lobsters in the same way again.

Bill Crowley



"Robert Altman's '3 Women' is a mountain of a movie and its peak is Shelley Duvall. Beautiful and profound...a stunning film-to see, to be enveloped by, and to remember. Gene Shalit - NBC-TV

"Robert Altman's 3 Women' confirms his status as one of the most original, provocative, and adventurous of contemporary filmmakers.." Judith Crist - Saturday Review

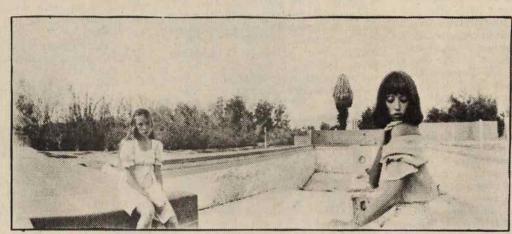
"'3 Women' has an originality and beauty of form that moves you beyond the force of its insight." Jack Kroll - Newsweek



Sissy Spacek

Shelley Duvall

Janice Rule



Twentieth Century-Fox presents

3 Pomen

writer/producer/director Robert Altman music Gerald Busby murals Bodhi Wind filmed in Panavision color Deluxe

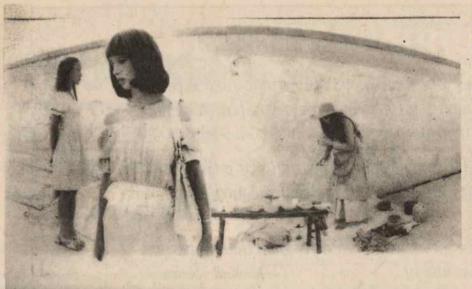
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BY JEAN PAGLUISO FOR THE FILM "3 WOMEN"

3 Women Written and directed by Robert Altman Lion's Gate Films production distributed by 20th Century Fox

At some point or another, all of us have had dreams that unfolded themselves as movies. We later think the dream would make a great movie, forgetting that many significant occurrences in the dream have meanings to which only dreamer is privy. When a film director/producer like Robert Altman has such nocturnal experience, a film based on the dream is no idle fancy. According to the story on his latest film, 3 Women, Altman had just such an experience recently, upon the occasion of the hospitalization of his wife. A hard day and the presence of his young son in his bed one night supposedly inspired Altman's subconscious to create the original treatment for a film which deals with three young women and their attitudes towards sex, men, maturity and motherhood. The film which emerged marks a clear shift in Altman's concerns, a turning away from the overly broad social comment of Nashville to a more deeply personal expression.

In that sense, 3 Women bears many similarities to the European art film. On the surface, the film might appear to be a slight reworking of Bergman's Persona, a film in which the characters of Liv Ullman and Bibi Anderson merge at film's end. Certainly, in this film, Altman shows little concern for telling a story with a transparently clear plot, much as the so-called European film-artists do.

And it can't be denied that at the close of Altman's film, more than one identity transference has occurred. That

alone would throw 3 Women into the realm of the art film—a territory Altman explored in Images, the story of a schizophrenic wife, in which fantasy and reality shared the same level of credibility. But even with the film's surface similarities with the art film, there is much more going on here.

On one level, the film deals with the hysterical collapse of three exceptional female personalities: the initially timid and naive Pinky Rose (played by Sissy Spacek in a superb encore to her performance in Carrie), the eager-to-be-fashionable but unsuccessful Millie (played by Shelley Duvall, perhaps best remembered as the Nashville groupie, LA Joan) and the mysterious pregnant artist Willie Hart (somnambulantly executed by Janice Rule). But in another way, the film presents these three American women, all conspicuously maladjusted, as manifestations of the same mentality. During the course of the film, all undergo at least one transition or development along the line from young girl to grandmother.

There is no room in Altman's film for the kind of apple-pie-and-mon mentality that renders ludicrous most American comments on this subject. In fact, the tone of 3 Women runs directly counter to such cliched expressions. Far from being a paean to motherhood, 3 Women is filled with a dread that normally pervades only dreams. There are no winners in the game the film creates; there are no wholly sympathetic characters, only losers and pitiable people. When this is combined with the film's heavy subject matter, it's a surprise that the film isn't unbearable and painful to watch. On the contrary, Altman's jaundiced eye renders the mistakes and malaprops of the characters more humorous than we have any right to

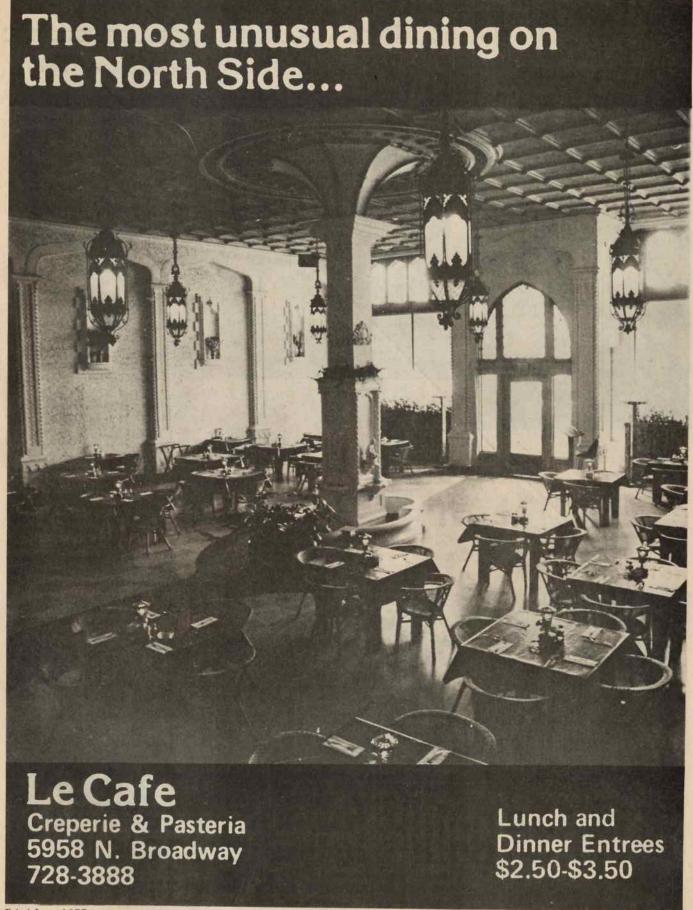
single who tries too hard to make her world over into something out of a women's magazine. She sets a table impeccably, yet she serves Boones Farm "wine" for a fancy dinner. She wears bright skirts, but she never steps into her snappy little Pinto without closing her hem into the door for all pedestrians to see. Or take the saloon owner/lech (Robert Fortier), who is quite proud of being famous: He knows Hugh O'Brian. Remember Hugh? That's excatly the point. Edgar is a very little man. As are the rest of the characters in the film.

For example, take Millie, the young

Altman invites his audience to laugh at these minor figures, yet these minor characters, these outsiders, have enormous influences on each others' lives. Many critics have scorned Altman's films on the grounds that the director shows no sympathy for his characters and that he in fact trades on the cheap shot of mockery. When confronted with a film like 3 Women, these arguments lose much of their force, because the superior laughter of the audience serves to keep the somber and overly "significant" aspects of Altman's dream in balance. The human values may not be present on the screen, but the viewer can hardly help invoking those values within his or her self as the film unfolds. In this critic's analysis, Altman's strongest feature is his continual respect for the audience and his willingness to let them bring their own thoughts to his films.

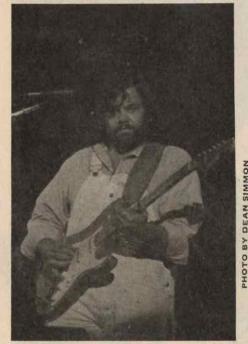
The kind of thought 3 Women encourages is similar to dream thought: the plot offers little chance to sit back and figure things out linearly. The visual textures of the film support this; with many shots heavily filtered or shot through mirrors, water and viscous fluids. The color spectrum within which the film operates more closely approximates dream than any kind of reality. As a result, this film approaches a unity of story and visual quality that exceeds even the most successful previous attempts Altman has made. While the absence of a clearly defined story line will prove intensely infuriating or even boring to many viewers, Altman himself recently admitted that this is a film to be experienced rather than observed. Whether one places great importance on the filmmaker's comments on his own work or not, 3 Women definately ranks as Altman's greatest work to date.

Bill Crowley



-CONCERTS

Concert photos by Dean Simmon



LITTLE FEAT Riviera Theatre

Little Feat's performance at the Riviera Theatre is clear proof that, although democracy may be a great way to run a country, it's no way to run a rock'n 'roll band. At least not Little Feat.

Over the past seven or eight years Little Feat has developed a small but exceedingly loyal cult of followers. There's only one reason why Little Feat is what it is, and that's Lowell George. Lowell started the band and for most of its life he wrote, sang and produced nearly everything they did. He was the spirit and the soul of the band.

And the problem with their performance here (as with their latest album especially) was that though Lowell was here in body, he didn't seem to be here in spirit.

I don't want to give the impression that the other members of the band are all schmoes. Each one is a first-class musician. The tightest off-time rhythm section since the Band consists of Richie Hayward, Sam Clayton and Kenny Gradney. Bill Payne is so good that he plays keyboards on half the albums recorded in California. And Paul Barrere has technical polish to spare. But as good as these guys are, they occasionally need someone to rein them in. Payne got lost in his synthesizer more than once, and Gradney's bass solo went on a bit too long.



In the midst of this Lowell stood with a sort of grandfatherly demeanor and a laissez-faire attitude. He didn't seem to be in the best of health at the Riviera. He's put on a lot of weight and he moved slowly and purposefully all night. He took only a few solos and sang less than half the songs. He even left the stage entirely during the long instrumental jam, "Day at the Dog Races." But both his voice and guitar were in excellent shape when he used them.

Little Feat got to most of its old favorites during the 90-minute set. "Skin It Back," "Dixie Chicken," "Rock and Roll Doctor" and the finale "Tripe Face Boogie" were mixed in equal proportions with newer material. The show was well-paced, the sound was good, the audience

knew what they wanted, and for the most part they got it. Behind Lowell Little Feat is almost perfect; without him they can still play tremendous but uncentered music.

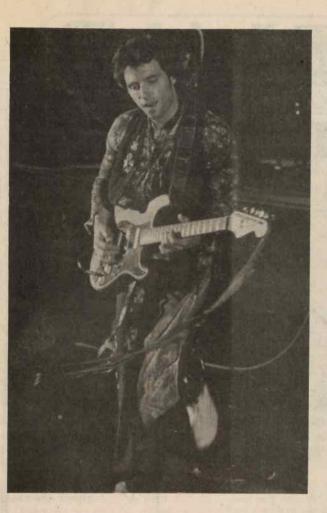
There could be a couple of reasons for this. Perhaps Lowell just doesn't have the energy to take all the responsibility for the band anymore. Or perhaps he's had to spread it around to keep his band together. Or maybe it just seems fair this way.

Whatever the price, I'm glad Little Feat is still around. If it's not the eccentric marvel it once was, it's still one of the tightest and most intelligent bands around.

Michael McDonnell



BACK-FLIP: COURTESY NILS LOFGREN





DICKIE BETTS/ NILS LOFGREN/ .38 SPECIAL Uptown Theatre

When Duane Allman passed, Greg married Cher and the Allmans broke up, many people expected Greg's solo career to carry on the Southern tradition.

Well, forget it. Leave Greg with Cher and pay attention to an exceptional guitarist: Richard Betts. Yes, he was there at the Fillmore recording. Dickie Betts was the highlight of most post-Duane happenings. His last visit to Chicago was a two hour Auditorium affair that proved his abilities acoustically and electrically.

Their Uptown visit was more of the same though the emphasis was on the new material. While the new lp is slow and uneventful, the live music is greatly enhanced. Betts's slide work is quite soothing, making his Gibson sing soft and low as well as high and hard.

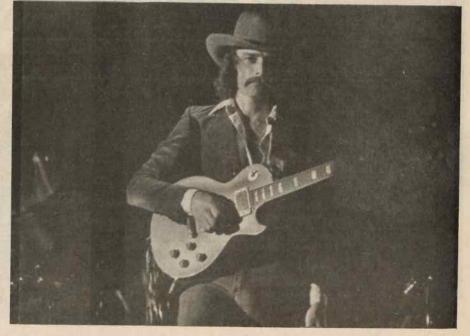
But what makes Betts' act hard to beat is the built-in jam. With the amazing Danny Kolob challenging him on every song, we hear the best of both and sometimes more.

I sure wish Nils Lofgren would get his sound together. His last two visits to Chicago have been disastrous and disappointing. This time his brilliance shone through only on a couple of his leads, especially "Back it Up." During the remainder of the 45-minute set, fading vocals and feedback were the story. The trampoline worked, though.

.38 Special opened the overly-long three-bill evening. Get their lp, memorize

their lyrics, licks and laughs and then come back. For a new group with unfamiliar material, this Southern band showed no concern for teasing and earning an audience. You can't just play your tunes, boys, you gotta work!

Mark Guncheon





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to tears-welling soul...and the classics...
"Can't Stop Loving You"..."Busted"...
"Gerogia On My Mind"...like he wrote
them just yesterday...adding stage directions for the congregation to stamp their
feet and clap their hands...

It is hard to understand how Stevie
Wonder could pack and enclosed space
short of the Grand Canyon and Ray
Charles could play to a half-empty Auditorium, when Wonder is a carbon-copy,
electronicized and slightly sanitized Ray
Charles. That's not a criticism of Wonder;
he has learned well and made good use of
the tools of popular music.

But there is a Truth to Ray Charles that does not surface in the packaged pop-soul today.

The show had few weak spots. The Raylettes, Charles' five-girl backup vocal crew, sang a syrupy "Feelings" that must have been intended as comic relief. Charles had to doodle on the piano for a few minutes at one point while the band searched for the charts to one of the swing numbers.

But when they got it together...

Tony Bennett may smile and dance through "How Long Has This Been Going On?" as if he had just kissed a girl with braces, but when Ray Charles wrenches out the lyric you think he must have just returned from a week in a Riviera hotel room with Catherine Deneuve.

He's real, that Ray Charles.
R. Bruce Dold



Phone (219) 769-1656

COMMANDER CODY **B.** Ginnings

Good news for sinners and boogiewoogie slickers. Commander Cody, aka George Frayne, is back in the saddle again. This time he heads up an almost all-new band of musical desperadoes, including two lady vocalists, Nicolette Larsen and Charra Penny, who do pretty things with harmonies and add some feminine mystique to the on-stage line-

The new CC band proved they could rock their own boogie on the opening instrumental, a flashy tight-packed Southern swing number that showed off the talent of Buffalo Bruce Barlow, Cody's Mr. Bassman of many years' standing, and the hot-fingered picking of steel-guitarist Bobby Blue Black, also from the old group. It also proved the rest of the band to be as adept at picking and grinning as the legendary Lost Planet Airmen, the ratpack of musicians who backed CC on his first sallies into the ozone. But when the good commander took the stage with the ladies, everybody sunk back to just enjoy the ride. Now Cody doesn't heft as much

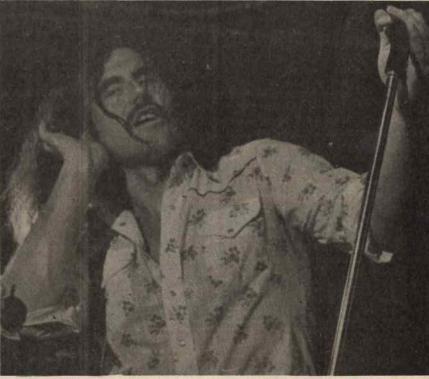


PHOTO BY DEAN SIMMON



weight around as, say, Charlie Daniels, but he's not an unsizable man, and when he starts dashing around the stage from the front mike to the piano and back ing over a thing and belting out song after song all the while, it's an awesome sight to behold: something like a charmed bull in a china shop, dancing the night

He started out the evening slow with a few cuts from the new band's debut album. From what was heard that night, the new material is harder-core country-western and lacks luster in comparison to the Commander's original rock/swing/boogie concept.

When the obligatory plug for the new record was done, the band turned back the clock and the good old hits started rolling, Cody started swinging, and it was back to the ozone once again. High spots of the night were a fullharmony version of the classic swing tune "Beat Me Daddy Eight to the Bar," a sirened "Riot in Cell Block No. 9" and a no-holds-barred "Hot Rod Lincoln."

It's the same manic show that the commander cultivated in his earlier days, and is still having a hell of a lot of fun doing. The years may pass and the band personnel may change, but at heart and onstage the commander remains constant. He's still the No. 1 boogie woogie good old boy from Dixie.

Ray Bewlay



THE BABYS Ivanhoe

When that new kid or band comes to town preceded only by that spanking new first lp, the promotion people have their work cut out for them. Posters suddenly pop up in windows of every major record store. Buttons, T-shirts, and belt buckles adorn the hulk of retailers who try to sell you that album. Then, openingnight, so it won't also be closing night, the Uptown, Riviera, Aragon, Ratso's..., and in the case of the Babys, the Ivanhoe, becomes what can only be thought of as main headquarters for the group's fan club. Posters again paper the walls, buttons are stuck everywhere, and that loud noise from the bar is from the promotional party that makes the evening no longer a concert. It is now an event.

The Babys' event was highlighted only by the promotional T-shirts. These fine quality garments outdid any aspect of their musical output. While the shirt featured a nice polyester, stretchable material with a bright "Babys" emblazoned on the front, the stage act stretched into a lengthy production highlighted by dull guitar work, useless keyboard efforts and a mediocre vocalist.

Some had called the Babys a demented, punky version of the Bay City Rollers. I prefer to call them nothing at

Mark Guncheon

FLORA PURIM/AIRTO Ivanhoe

Her music resides in the swaying hip. It rotates freely on a rhythmic axis. Percussion-propelled, she can soar on crystal glissandi.

Flora Purim sang about love and freedom Sunday night at the new Ivanhoe. Her honeyed voice flew above a seven-man band led by Airto, the superb percussionist. The band moved adelante, straight ahead, building each number to feverish intensity before landing grace-

Flora and Airto come from Brazil. Their trilingual material has the intuitive, free subtleties of jazz but burns with a Latin rock intensity.

Sunday's second show began without fanfare. Airto and company ambled onto the stage with the house lights up. They tuned and launched into a typically driving piece. Then Airto sang acapella, accompanying himself with hand per-

His toys and weapons were arranged on a table under an open umbrella. Sometimes he played tandem drums with Ricky Lawson, the band's 21-year-old drummer. At other times he stepped out in front of the band, shaking something and grimacing rubber-faced.

Flora then stepped to the stage. She shared the microphone with Airto, introducing songs and chatting about how they were written. "500 Miles High" came in a letter from Chick Corea, she explained. She sang that song and "You're Everything" from the 1973 Return to Forever album, Light As A Feather, on which she appeared.

She mostly performed songs from

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her two most recent solo albums; she did the title cut and "Some Time Ago" from Open Your Eyes You Can Fly, released last year. She also sang "Nothing Will Be As It Was. . . Tomorrow" from the recently released album of the same name, and "Corre Nina."

Two of the musicians from the Nothing album appeared with Flora: Hugo Fattoruso, keyboards, and Raul De Souza, trombone.

Her honeyed voice can enfold a note or take off like the free birds she sings about. She also sings backing vocals in South American scat and can break off a curlicue shriek capable of making one's hair stand up.

She used two microphones. One had the standard amount of reverb and the other was wired into a delay unit which also lowered the note.

The band also reached back for "Tombo in 7/4", a tune from Airto's 1973 solo album, Fingers. Fattoruso played on that record. The infectious rhythm, seeming to slip in every other

bar, gave the band a chance to stretch out. All eight musicians picked up some percussion and traded solos. Flora explained that the rhythms came from the street carnival of Rio, her home town.

The 570-seat Ivanhoe theater was much less than full Sunday night. Perhaps this contributed to the performers' informal feeling. They laughed and joked onstage, smiling and nodding during instrumental passages.

Flora is not a small woman. When she's not singing on stage, she sways seductively, perhaps smacking the agogo (tuned cowbells), smiling at the soloist,

This smiling and sharing music, this tantalizing move-your body music; the free and self-confessed happy music invaded the listener's head and heart simultaneously. Its masculine and feminine elements create a delightful sexual tension: it resides in the swaying hip.

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DOLLY PARTON Ivanhoe

She looked pretty much as expected: the famous frothy concoction of cotton candy hair, painted doll face with frankly false eyelashes, five-inch glittery spike heels, long fire-engine red fingernails. Except for the word "Dolly" spangled in rhinestones across her ample bust, her voluminous black chiffon top and slacks were almost the type of outfit a suburban matron would pick up at Lane Bryant for a cocktail party. However, this was the stage of the Ivanhoe Theatre, and the elaborately coiffed figure was country star Dolly Parton.

I was probably the most apathetic member of the audience at the start of the show. Being an admirer of European rock, I'd always looked down on country music as bargain basement entertainment. So I had come to snicker at the busty blonde country singer whose very name implied insipid sweetness. Instead, to my surprise, I became a Dolly Parton fan.

The first couple of songs in her set confirmed the rumors that Dolly is trying to cross over from traditional country to country rock. These numbers were energetically performed but certainly not the stuff of which legends are made. Then Dolly swung into a song obviously familiar to most of the audience, "Jolene." As she sang, the image of the glamour-

pleading with beautiful Jolene not to take her man: "You can get any man, but I'll never love again." Dolly has a gift for reaching out with her voice, her eyes and her gestures to draw the listener into her music. It was no use resisting; I was under her spell.

Through the power of Dolly's singing, I was transported to the porch of her Tennesee mountain home and saw the little girl too poor to buy a new coat whose loving mama made her one out of scraps and called it a "Coat of Many Colors." I followed Dolly's ill-fated love affairs with the intensity of a soap opera buff. She sounded like a coquettish gospel singer as she chided herself for "Holding onto You." Dolly's eternal optimism showed through the pain and sadness of her songs.

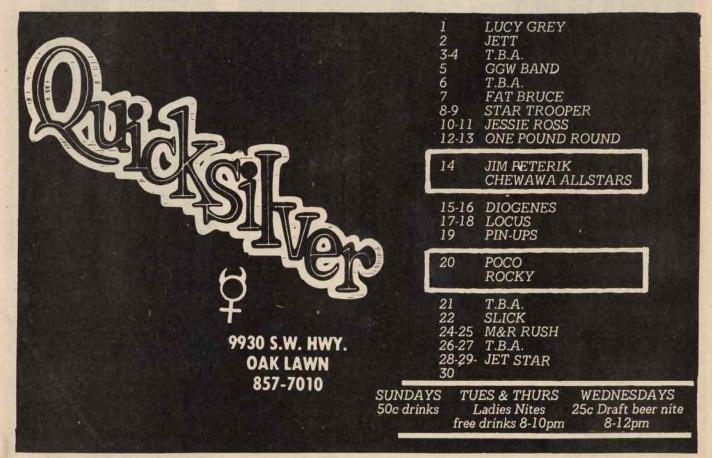
The emotional peak of the evening came during "Little Andy," in which Dolly told the story of a homeless ragamuffin child and a puppy. Accompanying herself on the dulcimer, Dolly begged plaintively in a childish singsong, "Ain't you got no gingerbread, ain't you got no

ous blonde superstar faded and was candy, ain't you got an extra bed for replaced by a mousy little housewife, me'n'little Andy?" Only sentimental slobs could fall for this mush, I thought, sobbing into my cocktail napkin.

> I didn't get a chance to laugh at her. She beat me to it, poking fun at herself with an effervescent cheerfulness that made it impossible not to laugh along. Dolly recalled the real-life confrontation that had inspired "Jolene:" "She snatched the wig off my head and 'bout beat me to death with it." She turned to the band when introducing her guitar solo and said, "Sorry boys, but I've got a real hot lick I'm just dyin' to show the folks." strummed a few chords, "Well, maybe more like lukewarm." She tried out a new tune and at the end suggested, as if it had just occurred to her, that we pretend to put the 45 on the record player and turn the speed up to 78. She then gave an accelerated chipmonk-voiced version of the song, a kind of self-parody. Corny, right? But it worked. The audience adored her.

At the end of the show, the MC asked Dolly how she had developed her inimitable style. She replied simply, "I sing from the heart." And it was obvious, even to a devout rock'n'roller, that Dolly's heart is bigger than her bosom.

Christine Harmon





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VAN MORRISON A Period of Transition (Warner Brothers)



Van is back. And he sounds surprisingly familiar for such a long "period of transition."

In the last three years Van has recorded and shelved a couple of albums. This is not common practice for your average pop star, but perhaps Van knew what he was doing. I'm sure lots of artists create things they'd just as soon bury. It's not clear whether the title indicates that Van is still in a period of transition or that it's over. But whatever the case, we have about 30 minutes of new Van Morrison music. Not a lot, but it's pretty good.

The album is coproduced by Dr. John, who plays all the keyboards. Nevertheless, the sound is all Van Morrison. And the sound is the important aspect of this album. There's a strong rhythm and blues feel to it. Lyrics are played down; usually only a few phrases are repeated many times. The variation and development come from Van's phrasing and delivery. It's very much in the mode defined by St. Dominic's Preview and Hard Nose the Highway. But much more accessible.

"You Gotta Make It Through the World" sounds like a reworking of the Mose Allison tune "If You Live" (listen to the Butterfield Band version). The title sums up the whole lyric, but the insistence of the beat brings home the message. As with most of the songs, Van and the boys

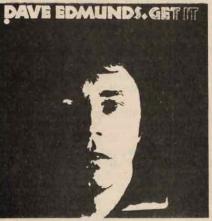
find a nice groove, the horns come in for a few licks and then they all go around again.

Of course Van can be counted on for some uncalculated weirdness. "The Eternal Kansas City" begins with an acapella female chorus singing, "Excuse me, do you know the way to Kansas City?" eight times. Then, with a dramatic drum shot Van picks up the refrain. It's one of the best moments on the album.

There's nothing here like the miniature masterpieces on Moondance or Tupelo Honey. These tunes are looser and more relaxed. Nothing monumental, but it's good to have Van back on the boards.

Mike McDonnell

DAVE EDMUNDS Get It (Swan Song)



How long has it been since you've been able to take an album to a party, put it on the turntable, then dance to *every* song? ANd not discodancing either, but the old ultra-violent boogie of the days when rock was hard, fast, and fun? Maybe it's been years, but fear no more. Dave Edmunds, the reclusive Welsh studio wizard, has put together a terrific collection of fast-paced, melodic "oldies" with a twang of country. Just the kind of music to give rock a good name again.

Edmunds spends most of his time holed up in his studio, emerging only infrequently with a single ("I Hear You Knockin"") or an album (Subtle as a Flying Mallet) capable of grabbing your fancy and then propelling you back to the '50s, in spirit at least. Like Phil Spector, whom he occasionally outdoes, Edmunds is a devotee of the "wall of sound," building music up layer by layer into a formidable, serviceable structure. As usual, he handles most of the guitar, percussion, bass and keyboards himself—and all the vocals.

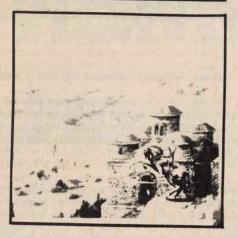
Get It moves with a free spirit, one kinetic song jumping into another with hardly a clinker in the bunch. Bob Seger's "Get Out of Denver" opens up with Chuck Berry guitar riffs, moves into Bill Haley & the Comets vocals, then just plain moves out. It's a perfect microcosm of the whole album, chock full of musical references to Berry, Buddy Holly,

Hank Williams, Elvis, and Gene Vincent. (The title tune, in fact, was done by Vincent, and Edmunds tries his own version of Williams' "Hey Good Lookin"—without much success.) Even the new songs written by Edmunds and Nick Lowe, alone or in collaboration, are steeped in the country-rock of the 50s. "Here Comes the Weekend," with its outrageous Everly Brothers imitation, and the subtler, even lyrical "Little Darlin" are the best of these. "Worn Out Suits, New Pockets," with more than a trace of Gram Parsons, is straightforward country, followed with a lush, saccharine version of Rodgers and Hart's "Where or When."

Edmunds is a conservationist of rock and roll, saving what he considers the endangered species of the past, fattening them up, then letting them loose again to multiply. We owe him a debt, for he's keeping precious variety in the musical environment.

Chuck Pratt

LITTLE FEAT Time Loves A Hero (Warner Brothers)



There used to be more to the music than the music. Little Feat had soul, a true-blue white soul that preyed on subjects that other people only hallucinated about. Chairman Mao making calls around town, sailing shoes powered by cocaine and finger-licking dixie chickens dancing down the street peopled their albums, courtesy mostly of the double-visioned talent of genius-composer-musician and ex-Mother of Invention Lowell

But time has done its work and from the sounds of the new album, it seems for sure that the reins of power are changing hands in Featland. The trend to democratize responsibility that has been on its way for the past two albums is continuing. So what we have on Time Loves A Hero are Paul Barrere, the group's lead guitarist and Bill Payne, keyboardist, taking up a lot of the composing burden. The result is far from George's original concept of Little Feat, and is getting more distant all the time. Their sounds are good, as good as any other West Coast band now practicing, but for Little Feat, it almost sounds too good, too polished, too perfectly manicured. It's like having to settle for Lincoln Ave. when you wanted Stony Island.

The sound is still funky, but it's a brassy techno-funk-much of that courtesy of the mighty but out of place Tower of Power horn section-not the roughed-up funk and soul of days gone by. The skills are still there; in fact, they're better and more dominant than ever before. Except on vocals, where the lack of Lowell George's authoritative twang is sorely missed.

Like no other Little Feat release before, this is a musician's album, featuring long instrumental breaks and a six-plus-minute "Day At the Dog Races" by Barrere without a voice on it. The album covers that Neon Park, Feat's house artist(s), used to do for the band were full of layer-cake ladies on swings and other confectioned beauties, with gremlins and gargoyles leering out of corners. They were nasty masterpieces of sly perversity, another treat in the Little Feat experience.

For this album, they've done a barren city landscape with a statue of a soldier on a rearing horse, the hero frozen for time immemorial. Time loves a hero, but usually, and in this case, when his heroic act is complete. The band will go on to new exploits, but if time bears out the status quo, the epic feats are over.

Darlene Capote

THE BEACH BOYS Love You (Warner Brothers)



Out of the bathrobe and into the recording studio. The Beach Boys/ Love You is really the work of an apparently rehabilitated Brian Wilson, who moves again with the same puckish grace of the good old days, cracking out waves of short (mostly two minutes) and likeable tunes. Despite all we've heard and feared about his loss of mind and talentseemingly demonstrated in his recent gruesome apperance on Saturday Night-Brian is in fine form and definitely in control of this particular disc. His colleagues even used one side of the record sleeve for a rather maudlin dedication to him for "sharing yourself and your music with us and all those who love you as well."

Brian, as always, is no poet when it comes to words, but his music is most eloquent. Of the 14 songs here (he wrote 11, co-wrote the rest), there are the expected clunkers, usually the lyrics just can't be ignored or drowned out. "Solar System" is an embarrassing, sophmoric conceit of love as space exploration, and "Love Is a Woman" is the same disaster that almost made me turn off the tube when Brian serenaded the Not Ready for Prime Time Players with it. "Roller Skating Child" though, is a song on which all elements are in synch, just as most of the stuff in Pet Sounds and the classic song "Good Vibrations." Even "Johnny Carson," a paean to the late night video star, succeeds beyond its puerile lyrics, because of a Dr. John type vocal and a tough, bluesy beat. If we

didn't know better, we might even think Brian was poking fun of Carson ("the network makes him break his neck"), but we hesitate to ascribe any cirtical depth here.

We've never asked Brian or the Beach Boys to be Kierkegaards, of course, and they've seldom taken the path of pretentiousness. Their best music-including, I think, this album-inspired by the peculiar ambience of adolescence in California (yes, after 15 years), has always entertained us by being nothing more, or less, than the soundtrack for an endless summer. We catch their melodies blowing around us as we spin down the highways of June, July and August, windows open to the sun and wind, the radio turned on loud. This album, crammed with transitorized songs, is very much like summer radio without the commercials, and it was probably designed that way. The Beach Boys/Love You is a great collection of music, enough to make convertibles fashionable again. Very good vibrations.

Chuck Pratt

FOREIGNER Foreigner (Atlantic)



Another first album and already some people compare it to the multi-million seller Boston. Foreigner is the group and the LP. While it is bound to turn gold before the summer, the underlying thought in such a comparison isn't justified.

It is a good album, don't get me wrong. This solid sextet has come up with a good single, side one cut one natch, and a few other songs that capture the essentials of any and every rock'n'roll band. But in accomplishing that goal, they've left most of their uniqueness in the practice

Boston was new and different for rock. It came at a time when rock needed a good shot in its weary arm. What we have in Foreigner is not bad junk or something to OD on. Basically, they sound like any other successful group of the mid-'70s. They sound like a Kansas/Boston superjam doing nothing but their own material.

Ian MacDonald first brought attention to the new group. Formerly of early/best King Crimson as writer with Pete Sinfield and keyboardist of the regal group, MacDonald now seems to be staying away from the composing. He collaborates on one song only, "Long Long Way From Home," assisting a Roy Wood effect on horns. Musically, it's one of the

Lyrically, the 10 songs revolve around love and that eternal wait for the return of the hurt girlfriend. "Starrider" escapes this pattern, only to crumble into silly cosmic thoughts.

The star of the LP is Mick Jones. Former guitarist with Spooky Tooth and Leslie West's band, he is credited with the LP's musical direction. Meanwhile, Lou Gramm handles the vocals with a voice that doesn't rely on the high-pitched screams of Boston's Brad Delp. Al Greenwood and MacDonald share the keys. Jones' guitarwork is good, though the live show will prove just how good it is. The mix stumbles at points but is saved by a stunning, slashing guitar.

Mark Guncheon

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LAKE & HARLEM DOWNTOWN OAK PARK MALL SOUTHSIDE JOHNNY & THE ASBURY JUKES This Time It's For Real (Epic)



Sometimes it's just not fair that a record can't include a film of the artist(s) performing. You're stuck with the front and back covers and maybe an innersleeve story to enhance the package's total effect. You end up with a studio-produced effort that may or may not be "real." Reality in this case connotes a sense of trueness or honesty for that performer.

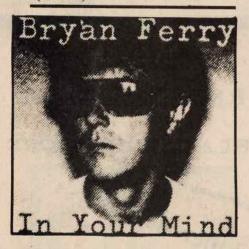
Example. If you've never seen Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes, then This Time It's For Real may not hit you in the right way, i.e., from the gut. The raw power behind the solid singing and punching of Mr. Southside is Miami Steve. His "wall of sound" effects, comparable to Phil Spector's work with the Ronnettes, the Shirelles and others, add that special totality to Southside's second LP. His band live is "wholesome" in the quantitative sense. On record, the band features 10 regulars including Johnny as well as four or five fill-ins. But Miami Steve took the vocals that oh-so-daring extra step; adding the Coasters, the Five Satins and the Drifters. As a result, the normally R&B-flavored product of the New Jersey-ite is sounding more and more like a Detroit/Philadelphia soul band hot off the streets.

The title track is the killer here, with the sweet lyrics that love ballads have been missing for awhile. While Southside's voice still has some of the harshness and rawness that detracted from his last visit to town, it's his heart that you're hearing.

Bruce Springsteen adds his lyrical sense to a couple of the tracks while Miami Steve takes care of writing most of the others. For the most part, though, it is the amazing production, the sound that will capture you. The effects on "When You Dance" are unique and creative. It's that newness from New Jersey again; that excitement continues to spread from the East Coast.

Mark Guncheon

BRYAN FERRY In Your Mind (Atlantic)



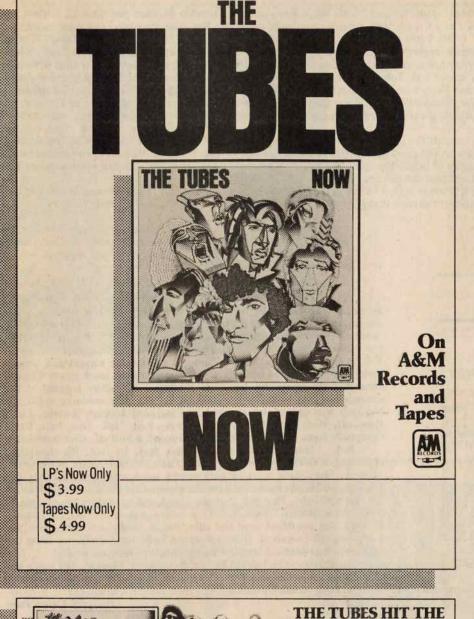
For all intents and purposes, Bryan Ferry hasn't had a solo album in two years. Let's Stick Together released last year only in the United States, was a bits-and-pieces compilation that included British singles, reinterpretations of Roxy tunes and the tracks that were released on the Extended Play that never made it to the States. Interesting as exotica, but useless as an indicator of which way the Ferry fancy was going.

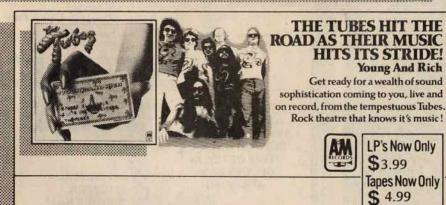
But finally, we have evidence of what's been going on in Ferry's head since 1974's Another Time, Another Place. In Your Mind is devastating proof of Ferry's ability to stand alone as a musical and creative entity without the safety of Roxy, or the surety of re-arranged versions of standard rock classics as in his earlier albums.

In Your Mind features all-Ferry compositions (with one cut, "Rock of Ages," co-written by Chris Thomas) as pop as his material for Roxy ever was, but deepened and intensified. A lot of the enrichment can be credited to the passing of time and Ferry's improvement as a vocalist and songwriter, but as much is owed to his increasing independence from the specter of Roxy. As the possibility of the group's reorganization becomes slimmer, his solo vision solidifies.

In Your Mind features strong lyrics and—this time around—equally strong music to back it up. The supporting cast led by lightening guitar-







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ist Chris Spedding ("He always plays best when he plays with ME," Ferry recently remarked), drummer Paul Thompson and bassist John Wetton hold up some of Ferry's work with a much more solid base than the Roxy personnel could often provide.

Songs like "All Night Operator" ("Am I just a number to you/A handful of empty sighs/All night operator/Reader between the lies") done in elegant indulgent despair, replete with blue-note saxophones by Chris Mercer and Mel Collins, and "Tokyo Joe" ("Walking tall down the Danger Zone/She hokey-cokey till the cows come home/Big shot-from-the-hip-neon cool/Say when you been around, what's left to do?/Don't know? Ask Tokyo Joe") done up flamboyant and fierce, with a sly tongue-in-cheek wink at all the world's femme fatales, bookend Ferry's multitudinous talents and flaunt all shades of the calculating crooner's spectrum.

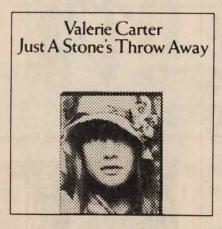
Ferry spent countless hours in the studio with co-producer Steve Nye, balancing blatancies and nuances to achieve the perfect effect, and the work shows. The album is a studio masterpiece, at once more complex but less obtuse than anything Ferry has

With Roxy, the hard thrust was towards the cerebral. The band made a cult of elitist rock'n'roll to a point where, at times, the music seemed to take a second place to the mind games. It was all well and good while it lasted. That sort of movement is necessary every so often to keep the channels of possibility open. But now that he's on his own, Ferry is trying to relate to a broaderbase audience without compromising his artistic sensibilities.

There's no doubt that his music will never appeal to the great grey masses of Frampton lovers and Boston fanatics; but his work is becoming more and more accessible to anyone that gives the music a fair chance and an open ear.

Beth Segal

VALERIE CARTER Just a Stone's Throw Away (Columbia)



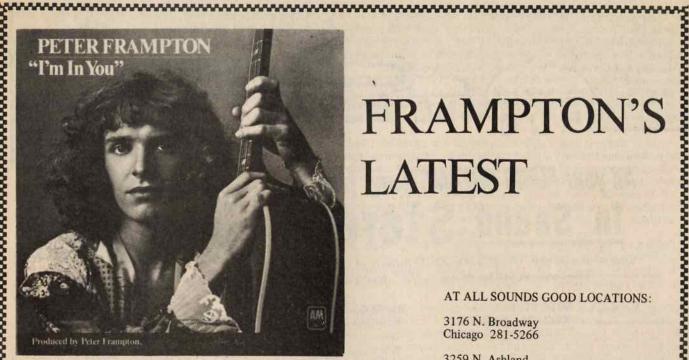
Today's record buyers are apt to beware of any artist who boasts an all-star cast of studio help on her debut album. Does this mean that the singer is so good that talent is willing to serve her, or that she simply needs all the help she can get from her friends? And is it worth spending the money to find out? Thus my skepticism when I placed a copy of Valerie Carter's Just a Stone's Throw Away on the turntable. I remembered her unfortunate opening of Jackson Browne's most recent Chicago concert with something less than fondness, and when I gazed at the album's long list of stellar credits, I figured the disc would be a downer. Valerie's friends and fellow musicians included Jackson Browne, Linda Ronstadt, Herb Pedersen, Lowell George, John Hall, Tom Jans, David Campbell, John Sebastian, William Paine and a host of other luminaries.

But. . .surprise! The record isn't bad. In fact, it's downright appealing, and I'd say that Ms. Carter has a definite future in the world of rock. She's done a lot of background vocal work for James Taylor. Browne, and Little Feat, but here she proves that she's got enough talent for the spotlight. Her voice, strong, fluid and expressive, is capable of many tonal shades. "Ooh, Child" is sultry and sexy; "So, So Happy" is adult and confident; and the title tune is tough and sassy, with just a touch of the mystical. (Carter deserves kudos for simply including this overlooked masterpiece by the apparently retired Barbara Keith.)

Valerie does have her problems, chiefly an interpretive uncertainty. She has yet to find her musical identity, the voice and style that will become her personality on stage and vinyl. On some tunes she is remindful of Minnie Ripperton, on others of Linda Ronstadt. I'm sure she'll get it all together next time out, fulfilling this pleasant promise.

Chuck Pratt





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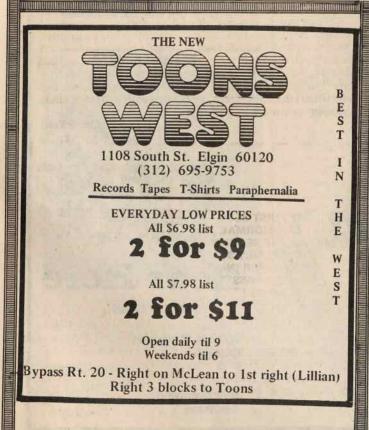
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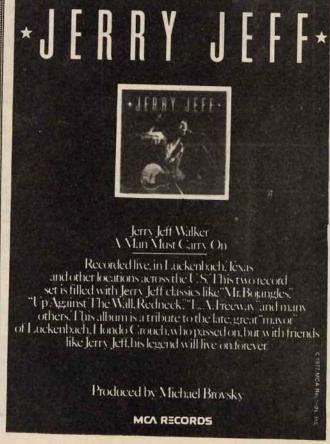
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604 Dempster Evanston WALTER EGAN Fundamental Roll (Columbia)



No doubt Lindsay Buckingham proudly passed out cigars while Stevie Nicks expelled a satisfied sigh when the last mix was completed on Fundamental Roll. It's questionable, though, whether a star was actually born, or rather, manufactured in a Fleetwood Mac mold. Their theory must have been: Millions of people like Fleetwood Mac and Rumours, Walter Egan sounds like Fleetwood Mac; ergo millions will like Walter Egan. Fallacious logic, however, because the chemistry of Fleetwood Mac is nowhere to be heard, leaving Egan to sound like a second-rate imitation.

It's not that Nicks and Buckingham didn't have the best of intentions when they produced, sang and played on Fundamental Roll. The time-honored tradition of an established star launching a protege into the business is a good one, for who is more attuned to recognize talented musicians than other talented musicians? Yet with all the advantages of the Macs' tutelage, Egan fails to produce a superior first album. I'd settle for a promising one, but the only real excellence heard on his album emanates from, you guessed it, Buckingham and Nicks.

Nicks' highly touted sensual vocals are relegated to the background, where she sounds merely tuneful. Buckingham's penchant for good-time, spritely pop with alluring hooks (as in "Go Your Own Way") is reduced

to a pleasant but unmemorable sound. Still, there are moments when their talent shines through it all, and it makes the album

Much of the problem can be traced to Egan's lyrics. His concerns are of the high school type—"Surfin' and Drivin'," parties ("Where's the Party"), unrequited love ("Lucky in Love," "Tunnel of Love," "Waitin'"). The shallowness of his philosophy surfaces most blatantly in "I'd Rather Have Fun" ("I'm so tired of hearing about the shouting and the shooting/When it's all said and done/I think I'd rather have fun.") Not exactly lyrics to stir the emotions or provoke thought. One has only to compare it with Nicks' beautiful "Landslide" ("I've been 'fraid of changin'/cause I've built my life around you/But time made you bolder/Even children get older/And I'm getting older too.") to see the little value in Egan's compacency.

To his credit, Egan has a strong, warm voice that seems equally at home with a ballad or a harder rocking song. But his biggest challenge lies in the future. The day he cuts the umbilical cord and ventures out with no more than a little help from his friends will be the day when his talent will either make him or break him. Due to the excessive publicity surrounding his debut, thanks to his famous mentors, he will not have the chance to mature privately. Expectations were sky-high, with Egan being touted as the next superstar. At this point, he is just the next Walter Egan. Whether this will become a name we'll want to hear more of, or another pop hype turned obscurity, remains to be seen.

Mindy Goldenberg

KRAFTWERK Trans Europe Express (Capitol)



Kraftwerk is another German electronic group that has been around for quite some time, although this is only its fourth American release. This time around, Ralf Hutter and Florian Schneider, founders, have added two electronic percussion men to their duo, and the only major change this has brought about is that the group is now a quartet. The music is basically the same as on Autobahn, only a little slower.

Kraftwerk seems to gravitate toward attempts at creating electronic tone poems out of keyboard-synthesizer-spawned car and train sounds, but frankly this can quickly get boring. Besides, if you want to hear a car or train, you don't have to go out and buy a \$6.98 album to do it. As for the tone poem aspects, many of the Romantic Impressionist composers do this much better—take a listen to Smetana's The Moldau, or even Dvorak's New World Symphony.

The biggest problem with Kraftwerk's music is its sparseness. For an electronic group, either the technology is hopelessly dated or the group is using very little of its capability. The music here harks back to the beginnings of synthesizer technology when electronic keyboards could reproduce only one note at a time without overtones or resonances, let alone chords. Extended compositions simply don't work when they're based on the repetition of phrases as simple as those used here.

The other problem Kraftwerk has is in the lyrics. On Autobahn, the title cut made use of lyrics for the first time. They had a semi-hit with this piece, the lyrics of which consisted of the continuous repetition of the phrase: "We're riding, riding on the Autobahn," in German. On this album, the lyrics are in English, and the result is what often happens when foreigh-language operas are translated—frequent inanity, interspersed with stilted, preachy fables.

All in all, this album boils down to music that was extremely interesting and innovative about five years ago. If Kraftwerk would give up its simplistic musical cliches and concentrate on evolving with its technology and genre, they would be capable of putting out somer eally extraordinary work. But this album seems to be the same old story of a group achieving success with a certain formula, and consequently repeating that formula. And repeating it... And repeating it...

Robin Cook

JOHN CALE Guts (Island)



It wasn't the Stones that brought fear and trembling to rock and roll. It wasn't the Doors, wasn't Lynnard Skynnard, wasn't Jimi, wasn't Iggy.... it was John Cale, and Guts proves it beond any doubt. Guts is a collection from the prodigious output of solo recordings that he has issued in the last eight years. It's an anthology of primal anarchy, rock and rolling chaos.

Cale's beginnings were as pretentious as they come. An early classical prodigy, he was playing his own compositions over the BBC by the time he was eight. A few years in the world changed that regimen, and at next appearance, he was wailing away on an electric viola, teamed up with Lou Reed, another classically-trained youth who had given it all up for rock roll. Their band played New York for several years, garnering a tiny but fierce following under such monikers as the Falling Spikes and the Warlocks, until 1965, when fate met fame in the guise of Andy Warhol.

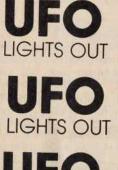
A name change and a first record, the legendary banana album, made the Velvet Underground the darlings of the New York radical chic. No station in the country would touch the album, but everyone had a copy. It was the album that changed lives: millions of kids got their first hint of the outside world from that album that taught them about mean-street thrills and the philosophy of Sacher-Masoch.

The album was mostly Lou's compositions, but with Cale's vision. And over ten years later, it still stands as one of the greatest art-rock documents ever produced. Lou went on to transmogrify the image of the New York rock and roll animal, but Cale turned to take up another quest, whose trail he's still following.

Guts is not the greatest hits of Cale. The album totally ignores the softer, lyrical side of his work. It concentrates instead on the hard-driving high energy works from Helen of Troy, Fear, and happily, two cuts from the out-of-print masterpiece Slow Dazzle, and the never-before-released "Mary Lou."

The album is a cataclysm of energy. The first side rises from the pounding rhythm of "Guts" through the horns and echoes and mutters of "Helen of Troy" to peak at "Leaving It Up To You" with its muddled bass, snarling synthesizer and shrieking vocals. It's less music than a primal force; rock without the roll. Just blow after blow of multilayered many-dimensioned sound, at once more esoteric and more visceral than anything come before or anything promised in the future.

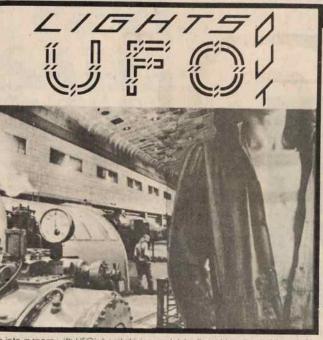
The second side continues with "Gun"'s heavier than metal guitar barrage, the synocopated funk delight of "Dirtyass Rock 'n' Roll," and finally "Heartbreak Hotel." It's a different version than the one on the ACNE (Ayers, Cale, Nico, Eno) album and could be the finest interpretation possible of the Presley tune.



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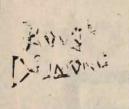
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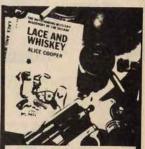
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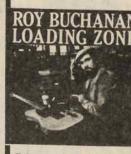
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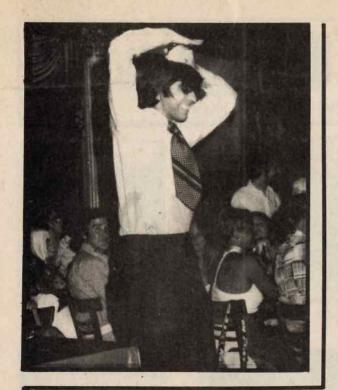


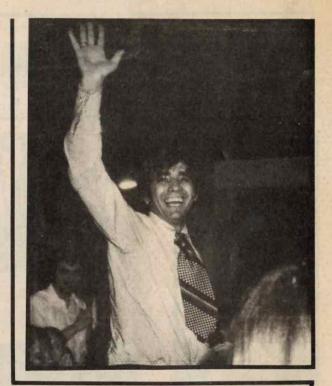
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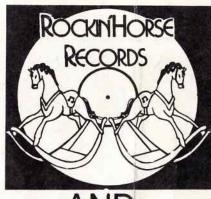


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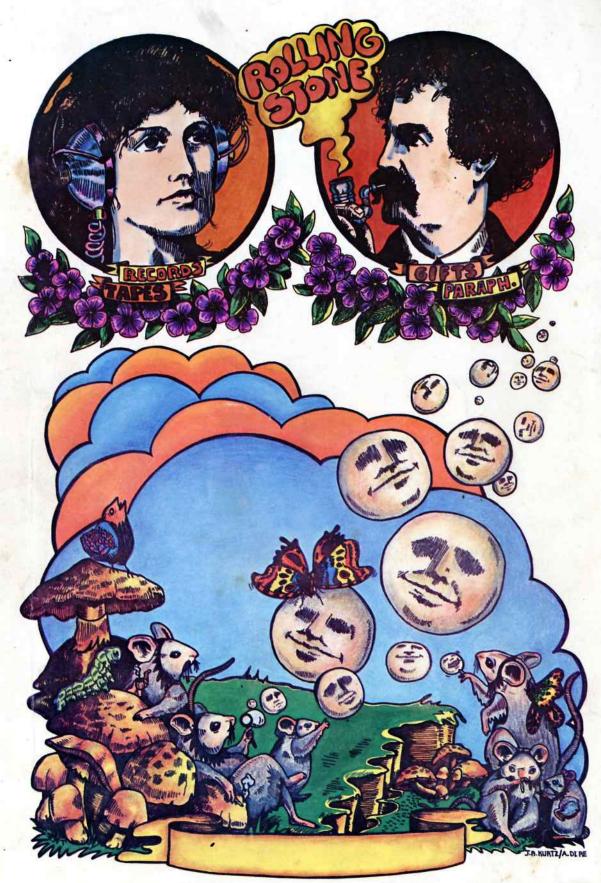


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