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The Shakin' Street Gazette, Volume 3

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The Shakin' Street Gazette



'Where all the kidz wanna do is keep on Rockin''

Volume One, Number Three.

Teenage Music in the 70's : Part 3!!!

"Won't you let me walk you home from school
Won't you let me meet you at the pool
Maybe Friday, I can
Get tickets for the dance
And I'll take you

Won't you tell your dad get off my back
Tell him what we said 'bout "Paint It Black"
Rock 'n' roll is here to stay
Come inside, well, it's OK
And I'll shake you"

-Big Star
East/Memphis (BMI)

The most effective style (of the four mentioned last ish. Were you there?) in the new Teenage music has been to poke fun at the 60's and its music. Yeah, you sure were stupid then. At the time, you thought you were really 'cool,' but now, you think, Wow did I really wear that/ do that/ listen to that? But you're 'hip' now, right? And 10 years from now, you'll think you were an idiot again. Ah, human nature. It's the 'listen to that' aspect that the Wackers, the first and still the best T.M. band, preoccupy themselves with, on a 60's and 70's level.

The Wackers are American ex-patriates now residing in Montreal, Canada, where they'll play a high school dance one night and headline a concert the next. They're pop at its best: four brats weaned on the Beatles, Stones and the 60's, rockin' as if rock was just discovered and singing with a teenage enthusiasm that they never lost. Their music, at its best, just makes you happy to be alive, and ain't that what rock 'n' roll's all about?

Hot Wacks (Elektra) catches them at their strongest (cut before the departure of fifth Wacker, Michael Stull) and made No. 1 of my Top 10 list of 1972. "Wait

and See" is an excellent example of their more aggressive rockin' stance. With its parodic Stones-riff intro and Jagger-like vocals, it shows the Wackers for what they are: a tight competent group who shows their respect for their roots by not getting bogged down in the "seriousness" and "rock is art" crap that's destroyed half the Western rock music world.

When the Wackers do acoustic material, they don't get taken in by their own sincerity, thus becoming wimp. Remember when you were having a laugh-riot with your friends in the school library, and the librarian would threaten to kick you out if you didn't shut up and why don't you act like good boys blah blah blah, so you'd all comically fold your hands on the table and force your smiles down ... only to burst into gales of laughter again, because of the sheer ridiculousness of the situation? Well, when the Wackers start doing ballads, acoustic numbers, etc., it's done in a mild form of self-parody that recalls that memory (and when you're trying to suppress that laughter in the library with a perfectly straight face, even though it almost hurts to do so, what are you



At the loading dock: is this how the Wackers will go to work now that they've disbanded?

doing? Self-parody of the "good little boy" in you?) That's the Wackers. They're my little secret.

*Note: Just got word that the Wackers disbanded, although there is still a fourth and final album to be released, called *Wack and Roll*.

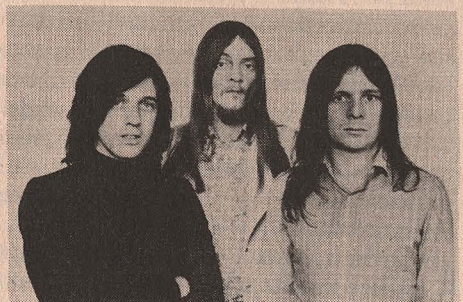
An incredibly hard album to find is *No. 1 Record* (Ardent Rec.) by a group called Big Star. The band is led by former-Boxtops Alex Chilton and while half the album doesn't quite make it, the half that does shows the band to be quite suppressed masters of pop/rock and Teenage music. No matter how I fight, the album always ends up on my turntable, and the vibrant rockers "Feel," "Don't Lie to Me" and beautiful ballads "Thirteen," "El Goodo" blast forth. These are rock 'n' roll ballads, "not whimperings from some Marin county sickbed," as one reviewer put it.

Lastly, there's the bunch that handle the softer 60's feel, and are probably the hardest to digest at first listen. None of these people will come out and hit you at first so take your time with them. David Beaver, late from a group called Edgewood, has a fine album called *Combinations* on TMI (Steve Cropper's label). With most of the old band backing him up, songs like "Anthony Beechum," "I'm Gonna Show You" and "The Wizard of Menlo Park" are graced by Beaver's Moog, organ and pianowork and create a full, rich album of lush sounds and intriguing melodic rock. Blue (RSO/Atlantic) are a group whose material is not ballsy or overly original, but the album has an overall pop feel found again only in Curt Boetcher's *There's An Innocent Face* (produced by Gary Usher, veteran of 60's California pop, and produced the first two Wackers albums). In Boetcher's album, the

excellent production and arranging with subtle California pop teasers make it the best example of this style.

There's one problem with all of the groups discussed: teenagers don't listen to it. The reason why is most clearly evident, it lies in its availability. Most of these bands are on smaller independent labels (as was most of the authentic 50's rock 'n' roll...) and those on large 'major' labels are virtually ignored by the company and the record-buying audience. Since all the bands are singles oriented and release singles regularly, it's natural to think that teenagers (a singles-buying audience) would pick up on them, but the Kidz have got to hear them first, and the 1973 "rock" radio programmer will not put them on the playlist. Stalemate.

Those who are interested, after sampling a few of the bands discussed here, can keep track of the new Teenage music via this magazine and the excellent Greg Shaw, whose writing is printed



"If you think we're going to stand here while you insult us like in all your other captions, you're crazy." Blue taking an aggressive stance.

regularly in CREEM and on his own PHONOGRAPH RECORD magazine.

Although none of the music's members are virtuoso musicians, they don't have to be. Y'see, Teenage music is based on a feeling; a feeling you can't get from any other forms of music. It's young, enthusiastic, fresh, vibrant, it makes you feel... well, it just makes you feel. Period. In a way, it's hoped that this music doesn't get the popularity it deserves. Why? Because this jaded writer knows what money can do to rock 'n' roll music, through its musicians. And he would simply rather have thousandaires striving for millions than millionaires striving for nothing. Figure it out for yourself.

As for dissenting claims on the music, if it sounds old and imitative, it sounds that way to us old farts, the Kidz haven't heard the old stuff. Remember how your

parents laughed at you for liking the Beatles, Stones, Beach Boys, etc. You remember the feeling, trying to convince them the joys of your music, and they'd only answer with "How can you listen to that crap?". You know the feeling. You look down on this new Teenage music, and there's no excuse for you. If you dislike it, fine, but don't get in its way, because it'll shoot you down as easy as Townshend used to destroy his guitar. Rock 'n' roll belongs to the Kidz, we're just observers.

A very small incident ironically sums up this whole business: an 11 year old girl went to see Wings in concert and upon noticing the older couple seated next to her exchanging insulting comments about McCartney while he was performing, asked the couple why they were saying that McCartney has become so lame now. She wanted to know what McCartney had been in the older days. She didn't know! By god, the start of a new generation.

When she asked me that, I could've kissed her.

-Gary Sperrazza!

The End

"Ethan had a problem - he struggled with guitar

Trying to outdo the family tree

For him that wasn't easy, 'cause father was a star

And that's what they expected him to be

So don't give up, 'cause father's getting old

We need someone to carry on the name
Don't get discouraged, just practice when you're told

And you can soon take over his fame

We hate to force it on you, it's for the family name

And someday you will thank us from the stage

I think you'd better hurry 'cause dad is looking grey

His energy is starting to fade away

Don't give up, it all depends on you

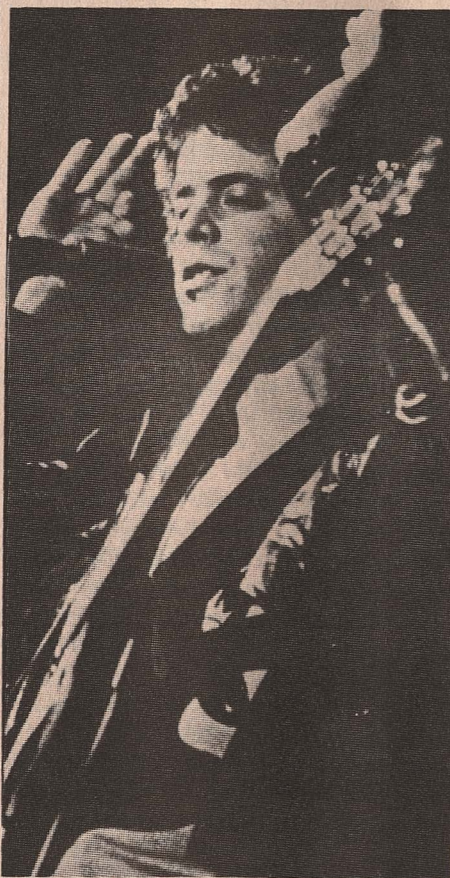
We need someone to carry on the name
Don't get discouraged, we know that you can play

And father's days are numbered, go practice right away."

-David Beaver
Brookfield Music,
Inc. (BMI)



Why do you think I acted like this during the 60's? If you had ulcers and hemorrhoids and lumbago of the earlobes, you'd act like this too. But that's OK cuz when I'm at the Aud with the Mothers and Taj Mahal Nov. 21, I'll be so nice and maybe I'll tell you why I like dental floss so much...



"Alright, you guys have been asking for it. Here's your goddam concept album." Dec. 8, UUAB presents Lou Reed's Berlin Show in the Century Theatre. If they wuz smart, they'd stage it in those abandoned train depots downtown behind the Aud. Now there'd be a show.

HAWKWIND'S SPACE RITUAL AND KOZMIK MUZAK

SPACE RITUAL-HAWKWIND (UA)

As you all know, the prime force, the 'essence' if you'll permit, of good rock has always been Energy. Rock Energy is created through two different methods. One is Energy through enthusiasm: an excitement and freshness created humanly through youthful, joyfully unrestrained vocals and fresh pop arrangements, things like the Beach Boys, Wackers, Big Star, early Hollies, Blue Ash, early Stories, Stealer's Wheel, etc. The second method is Energy through electricity: raw electric rock power which, in its throbbing pulse and relentless, continuous drive forces you to react, groups like the Stooges, Black Sabbath, Dust, Groundhogs, early Grand Funk, Pink Fairies, etc. The electricity that seeps into your system can be absorbed and channeled, which supercedes your initial reaction to it. The fact that voltage enters your system is much more important than whether you belch, tap your feet or sit frozen, mesmerized by the sound itself.

Embracing this electrical umbilical cord are Hawkwind, innovatively neanderthal, obscurely familiar and radically redundant. All in a positive sense, you understand.

Hawkwind have been together four years and *Space Ritual* makes their fourth album. Noted as a people's (read 'hippie') band, they've attracted a wide following in England through their concerts (many of them free) and two singles, "Silver Machine" (No. 3 in England; not on any album) and "Urban Guerilla" (a new release; not on any album). The first three albums, *Hawkwind*, *In Search of Space* and *Do Re Mi Fa So La Ti Do*, while not always following a storyline as often as they'd have us believe, were conceptual in their initial inspiration, dealing with space themes, cosmic battles and intergalactic voyages.

The line-up of Hawkwind fluctuates as often as Marvel Comic's *Avengers*, but the basic five are: Dave Brock (guitar), Lemmy (bass), Simon King (a truly inhuman drummer), Nik Turner (sax) and Del Dettmar (synthesizer). Playing a crucially important role in the presentation is DikMik, whose audio generator creates a range of sounds from subsonic to ultrasonic frequencies; it is DikMik who helps one to feel the music



so much more kinesthetically. Icing on the cake are Stacia, whose extraordinary costumes and seductive dancing serve to cement those urges the music stimulates and Bob Calvert, a poet and narrator whose worthiness in the band is questionable.

Hawkwind is space muzak, oscillated heartbeats; an energy level that seeps into your body as well as into your ears. At first, they were regarded as a poor man's Pink Floyd, but Hawkwind has surpassed any physical impact Pink Floyd has foisted on us with a swipe of Brock's guitar. Comparing Hawkwind to Pink Floyd is like comparing Fellini to Walt Disney. Pink Floyd gives the impression of being elitist in their conservatism; even their free-form playing was highly structured. Pink Floyd programs their electricity so as to almost expect a certain reaction from their audience; but they know when to stop whereas Hawkwind doesn't. Pink Floyd is far from being an approximated risk which is one way of talking about Hawkwind.

These solar beings are pulsating, raw, blood-red energy. Hawkwind are the ultimate heavy metal urgists with cosmic



Hawkwind laying down the basic tracks to "Sonic Attack."

frills transmitted through oscillators and synthesizers. As there is a sense of morbidity and an attempt at escapism in their themes (lyrics); there is this same morbidity evident in the seemingly redundant sound they throw at us.

Even the packaging for *Space Ritual* has a cold, inhuman quality about it. A six part cover that folds out to the size of six album jackets (one up on Blue Cheer's *Outside/Inside*) is covered with mid-60's acid-rockfreakism photography, cosmic fantasy drawings and a nude Stacia (a space goddess indeed) with *Andromeda Strain* computer printout type for related phrases over the pictures.

Space Ritual, recorded live in England, is a musical representation of a story so ambiguous that it forces the listener to do all the work in interpreting it. As a double album of heavy attacking rock and formless experimentation (a minor part), it implies a conflict between their two styles. But it is the heavy metal aspect that dominates and it's Hawkwind's mastery of it that makes them so special.

Space Ritual is helped along by fantasy writer Michael Moorcock who contributed themes, passages and poetry. Calvert's readings sound a bit ridiculous in context with the energy of the music, but supply quiet breaks from which Hawkwind's dramatic song openings can blast off of (some of the material is from older albums).

"Lord of Light" comes across as the most melodic of their heavier material. A fine bass line and solid drumming set the groundwork for a plea by Brock, keeping an attempt at consistent vocalization rather than the spontaneous tokenistic grunts that usually accompany Hawkwind's music. "Space is Deep" is a space chant creating images of surviving Earthlings reflecting on their planet, long since dead. "Orgone Accumulator" is a return to the Earth in the form of a cosmic boogie, a plutonian Canned Heat, possibly Disneyland's Pluto. "Brainstorm," taken from *DoReMi*, is our personal favorite, possibly creating a new energy level in its own right. Dave Brock sets up a slicing guitar riff as the band plays their bodies out, giving the song the full treatment it deserves. The flip of the "Silver Machine" single, "7 X 7" is given a desperate feel as Brock casts his



Here's Hawkwind, passing the time trying to figure out our review, while waiting for the next bus to the Sun: "But we're gonna get there at night so we won't burn up."

attacking view of Earth onto the audience, who, at this point, must be so intoxicated by the unreality of the whole *Space Ritual* that it passes unnoticed. The many other tunes are a furthering of the basic electric theme set down previously.

Surprisingly, *Space Ritual* is recorded well; Hawkwind, during the mixing, miked the drums and bass upfront to add the physical impact lacking in home seclusion, that is, versus a concert setting. That's why Hawkwind, in some of their incredibly long passages, can sustain interest because of drive, you really feel the music.

Lemmy deserves special mention as he is the best power bassist around; he brings Hawkwind back to the ground which defies their basic policy of ascension. Lemmy's bass-chording is so rich and full that it, at times, functions as a rhythm guitar when Dave Brock goes through cosmic-menstruation. Drummer Simon King must have a stand-in ... or the drums play themselves; to sustain such energy and tightness throughout this double album is indeed astounding. Dettmar and Dik Mik, while enhancing the special effects and giving Hawkwind a distinctive style, fall short of their potential at times in light of other's accomplishments on the synthesizer. For example, M. Frog (alias Jean Yves Labat, who accompanied Todd Rundgren on his



Above: American vs. British reaction to *Space Ritual*: "But can you dance to it?" We guess so, as evidence by the 'love and peace' generation (below) spreading their movement on a 'brother' (bottom, left center) at a Nov. 1973 Hawkwind concert.



Who asked him?

"I love it! It's so strong! It knocked me out when I first heard it and it's still growing on me! It's basically got three qualities - a strong, heavy beat, a constant beat and lots of things about stars and planets in it - stuff that Americans like!"

-Mick Box of Uriah Heep talking about a cut on Heep's new album, *Sweet Freedom*

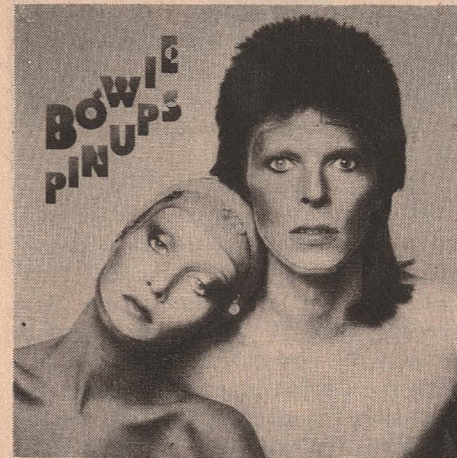
spring tour) and Eno (late of Roxy Music) funneled their respective group's sound and acted as a coating while still shining in their own right; if there is a purpose in Hawkwind's synthesizer effects other than to accent the chaotic feel that Hawkwind preoccupies themselves with, it's generally lost.

Hawkwind's saga is what you want it to be. The more you get involved with them, the more you believe - it becomes elaborate. If they are as dumb as they look, their stupidity is probably instinctive. If they're doing this on purpose, if it all does make sense in some elevated fashion, they're definitely poking fun at us. Seemingly paradoxical is the fact that Hawkwind make Pink Floyd sound like the DeFranco Family and most heavy metal bands like Black Sabbath sound like classical composers.

As for *Space Ritual*, it's doomed to become a lost masterpiece. But if they're consistent with their philosophy, they won't care if no one buys it, right? Hawkwind have adhered to a simple formula: rather than help the audience to accept an image, they create their own and dare you to accept it. It's worked in England (as has David Bowie) but in America, the general audience is not tuned into experimentation; look at the charts. What amazes us is how rock Energy via pop, which is formula-based, is not accepted and rock Energy via electricity isn't accepted either. American kids don't like formulas and they don't like experimentation. What's left? Groups like Hawkwind, the definitive heavy metal masters of the 70's, left out because of no exposure. *Space Ritual* isn't for everybody, obviously, but it's hoped that those who crave this kind of Energy blast will find it themselves: we've done all we can.

-Michael Sajecki/Gary Sperrazza

Long Players



David Bowie

PINUPS
DAVID BOWIE (RCA)

Here it is, the ultimate in punkoid wimpasilic adulation, Bowie's Top 12 for the years 1964-67. All are classics of the English punk scene and Bowie redoes them ingeniously if not slightly mockingly. Now that he's a "star" he wants his public to see exactly what these songs have done to and for him.

The Spiders are intact except for the absence of drummer Woody Woodmancy, ably replaced by Aynsley Dunbar of Mayall and Zappa fame. Pianist Mike Garson, whose celestial tinklings greatly helped *Alladdin Sane*, plays a more important role here and Mick Ronson lurches out with more pseudo-Beck licks.

"I Wish You Would" and "Shapes of Things," the Yardbirds opuses, are given new light by Bowie, the former with strong punk guitar overlaid with soaring synthesizer and the latter by Bowie's British-y phrasing. "See Emily Play" by Pink Floyd sounds like it could have been from Bowie's *Man Who Sold The World* period and explodes into an interpolation of "Also Sprach Zarathustra." The Who's "I Can't Explain" bursts open with a strong sax intro but then plods on sounding like the original with somebody dragging their finger on the turntable.

Also included are near-forgotten gems like the Mojo's "Everything's Alright" (Aynsley Bunbar is an ex-Mojo), Them's "Here Comes the Night" and the Mersey's "Sorrow" (released as a single). Closing

side two is, appropriately enough, the Kinks "Where Have All the Good Times Gone." Here Ronson imitates the Davies Brothers combined guitar sound and Bowie treats the vocals much like Ray's foppish intonation. Bowie even printed the words to it on the inner sleeve as if to emphasize the concept of the album.

With this set of illusionary neo-punkers, is Bowie really showing his admiration or is this an act of self-indulgent egotistic parody? At this point, any deviation from what he has done wouldn't hurt his career any and this album is certainly a deviation. The new saluting the old. What more could we ask for to paint an accurate picture of the current trend in pop music?

-Andy Cutler



Rick Springfield

COMIC BOOK HEROES
RICK SPRINGFIELD (Columbia)

Jesus, what a surprise this is!! Just when I begin to feel depressed about the whole state of popular music depicted mainly by the current rancid condition of radio, the prime breaker of new talent, along comes this breath of fresh air from Australia who has the energy, power and talent to shake most of the pop music world right off its feet and this is just his second album!

Having previously thought of Mr. Springfield as just another in a long line of David Cassidy pube-hearthrob cash-ins, his first Capitol album and single along with his current stint on a Saturday



Hmmmm ... How would you like to spend New Year's Eve with this little number? ... No, not her, you ninny. We speak of the young lad at top right. The Billion Dollar Babies Holiday Tour will be in Buffalo Dec. 31, making it a very special Alice Cooper New Years Eve Party and for around \$6, you're all invited, nice guy that Alice is. The back-off band is Z.Z. Topp and the whole thing is brought to you by Festival East. More next ish.

morning Kidz show served only to cement this image. Maybe it was a label change to Columbia, maybe he's been saving this stuff for now, maybe he's getting laid regularly, whatever it was that inspired him to produce such a magnificent album as *Comic Book Heroes*; if the same young audience that has followed him to now picks up on Springfield's newest, we're gonna have kidz dancing in the streets again!

Needless to say, Rick Springfield has written all 11 tunes on *Heroes* and has tied them together around a comic book-like theme exposing fantasies, creating images and satisfying with a great collection of pop tunes, at times, resembling the pop approach of Andy Bown. Del Newman helped with his great orchestral arranging (he did that fine job on Pete Frampton's *Wind of Change*) and Rick has a set four-piece band of his own with himself (guitars), Mike Moran (keyboards), Dave Wintour (bass) and Terry Cox (drums).

After a short piece introducing the album concept, Side one opens with a piano-dominated honkytonk rocker. "Weep No More" serves as an excellent vehicle for Springfield's light but



Nov. 28 Festival East presents the Pointer Sisters and Martin Mull (Martin Mull???) at Kleinhans. Tickets are \$6, \$5, \$4 at all Festival ticket outlets. OK, everybody?

emotional voice to give this number the degree of involvement needed to carry it through with commitment. An intense "Why Are You Waiting" and an airy "Believe In Me" lead to Side one's closer, a pure knockout called "Misty Water Woman." Del Newman's violin-stabs contrast well with the delicate piano opening, Springfield's voice comes in softly and rises with the music to a thunderous peak, followed by a highly infectious chorus that you'll find yourself humming in no time.

Wouldn't it be nice if a popstar took all the best points of the Yes/Genesis school of 'rock,' cleaning and simplifying them to a point where it would appeal to a younger, less fanatical audience? It may be possible that Springfield is flashing his influences on Side two. "The Liar" and "Bad Boy" are thickly polished up-tempo ballads where Springfield even *sounds* like Pete Gabriel (of Genesis), especially in his pronunciation of 'rock and roll' (and *Foxtrot* followers know exactly of what I speak). "The Photograph" is out of the Left Banke-baroque style of pop and in "Born Out of Time," Rick exhibits a sense of movie star theatrics similar to Bowie. The showstopper of *Heroes* is Side two's closer, "Do You Love Your Children." A sense of tense expectation ices its' first few minutes and the whole thing bursts into a cutting Yes-type riff underscoring an extended chorus where 'the children' join Rick in singing the album to a close.

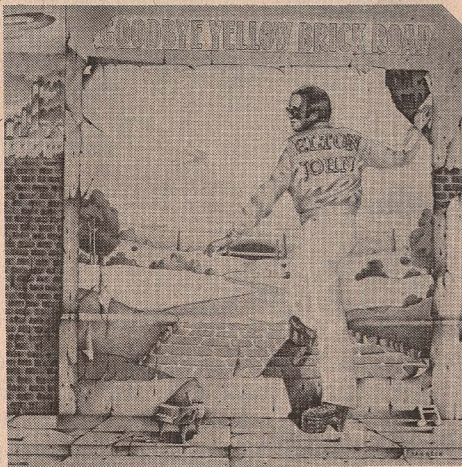
Rick still has some more of the proverbial 'dues to pay' in that at times he does not exhibit the self-confidence he should have. This refers to the only criticism I have on the songs: Although Rick's guitarwork shines when playing with his band, it weakens when solo time

comes. He becomes self-conscious, not wanting to strike out, yet not content to play the standard slide/runs typifying most pop song solos. That strength will surely come as he gains more experience and his material is so good that the wait won't be long. I wonder if he realizes how many new fans he's going to get with this album? Live American appearances (and I'm convinced his live show must be great) would help immensely.

What separates *Comic Book Heroes* from the mainstream of other albums is its vinylization (well, it ain't crystal, honey) of all the good things about pop music. It has power, drive, infectious harmonies, striking choruses and a freshness that makes this album *breathe* with vitality. It's the type of album you like on *first* listen.

All evidence shows *Comic Book Heroes* to be an album directed toward a younger audience, the Kidz. He is to be commended for his purpose, if this is it. Let's hope he doesn't start complaining in interviews that he "doesn't get enough respect" and he "wants to appeal to an older audience." There's no need for this kind of crap from a talent like Springfield. He'll never have to compromise: let the oldsters come to him. In this magazine, he has all the respect he could want.

-Gary Sperrazza!



Elton John

GOODBYE YELLOW BRICK ROAD
ELTON JOHN (MCA)

Over the past few years since Elton John established himself as a major force in contemporary music, his work has been sliding downhill fast. It seems that 40% of his recent material is devoted to pre-sweetened odes to whatever turns lyricist Bernie Taupin on and 40% to

artificial tries at rock and roll. The remaining 20% is brilliant, as brilliant as only Elton can be but this brilliance is so limited it hardly seems practical to buy the album. Such is the case of his latest release, *Yellow Brick Road*, a two-record set which could have been a killer of a single album and his best to boot, had it not been beefed up with unnecessary filler cuts. Some gems sparkle through the gloom but they are pushed into the background by the overabundance of waste.

'Jamaican Jerk-Off' is one of the worst; musically competent but Elton's pompous treatment of the lyrics demean and insult reggae as a musical form. 'Funeral for a Friend/ Love Lies Bleeding', an 11 minute, two-parter is perhaps the best cut. The first part is a Walter Carlos-inspired synthesizer excursion, the second part is a lament of a lost love. The title cut is a curious blend of Elton, Gilbert O'Sullivan and the Carpenters, a country boy's refusal to be swept under the glittery carpet of the Big City. At first, 'Your Sister Can't Twist' seems to be in the synthetic vein of 'Crocodile Rock' but on closer listen proves to be a time trip back to the days of weekend garage bands belting out 'Louie Louie' and the like. Here Elton has a great Farfisa organ solo, accompanied by a surf-type 'ooo-eee-ooo-ooo' chorus.

"Social Disease" ranks up there with the Kinks "Alcohol" for best boozier song awards. Leroy Gomez adds a gutsy sax solo to this get-up-and-guzzle-fall-down-drunk ditty. Elton and Bernie take on the guises of salty dogs in "Sweet Painted Lady" directed at waterfront hookers. Del Newman's orchestration, including the old world sound of the accordion is predominant here and adds to the feel of the song.

Also included is the AM rocker "Saturday Night's Alright for Fighting" with pure punk guitarwork by Davey Johnstone and some great macho-kill lyrics, even though it's hard to picture pudgy Elton and Bernie as tough asskickers.

Plowing through the sediment, some cuts such as the aforementioned pop up but still the poorer ones get in the way. Y'know it's a drag pulling out the album, playing a cut ononeside and then jumping up and flipping the side. What can ya do? Elton's stuck on himself and if he wants four sides, *he gets 'em!* Enjoy the gooduns here and thumb yer nose at the rest.

-Andy Cutler



The Grateful Dead

WAKE OF THE FLOOD
GRATEFUL DEAD (G.D. Records)

It wuz a great party, you know what I mean. Warm pepsi, potato salad, ice cream, cream chicken. The vibes wuz good, and everybody wanted to hear the Dead. I didn't want to do it man. I knew what was coming. Jerry Garcia and his astral cowboys, non-existent percussion, slow-tempo tunes, blah, blah, blah. But people started to chant, we want the Dead. Damn, some people never learn.

So I got it on, you know what I mean. It started to play as I put on my ear muffs and ran into the closet for cover. It was bad, real bad. They started to keel over, one by one, their faces fallin' into their bowls of ice cream. A sleepin' epidemic if you ever seen one. Ice cream all over the place. What a mess.

Shit, I had to do something. The party was fallin' apart. Everybody was snoring. Even Snuffy the insomniac fell asleep. I was in a jam. Steel guitars, violins and saxophones; saxophones even! The Dead go together with saxophones like Charlie Brown makin' it with Aretha Franklin. And Garcia, man he's been dead for years, but he don't know it yet. Some people say that the Dead are a livin' myth. I don't know man, I could hear the snoring through my ear muffs.

Just then I got a great idea. Kill two birds with one stone. Save the party and help out the Dead at the same time. I put on my wool mitties and approached the stereo with an air of confidence and commitment to my purpose.

You'll never guess what I did. I changed the speed. Yup, I put it on 45. My reason being that the Dead play so damn slow, they probably don't know the difference no more. But let me tellya,

it was great. The people all started to wake up. They started talkin', singin', laughin' and playing ring around the rosey around Snuffy the insomniac, who wuz still asleep.

I sat down, exhausted but triumphant. And you know what? The Dead are great on 45. All these years I thought it was Garcia and Weir and Lesh and the rest of them guys. I was wrong. It was Alvin and the Chipmunks in disguise. Remember that whole trip? Wasn't it kinda funny the way the Chipmunks disappeared after their Christmas song and their cartoon show? Why did Alvin wear his wristwatch on his left paw when we all know that Alvin was left-handed? Huh?

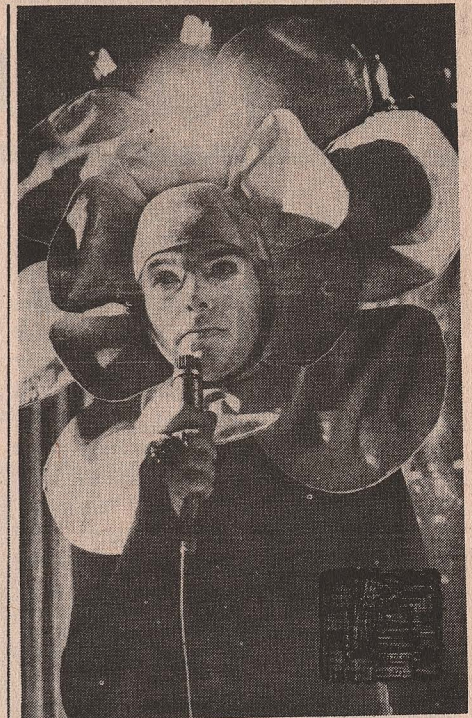
Well, my theory is that the Chipmunks got pissed off at Dave Seville, their manager, dumped him, and decided to form a rock and roll band. Rather than having to become established, they decided to abduct a real good rock band and slip into their places. Smart little critters, eh? But they couldn't find no good rock bands cause there wasn't any to be found in Hanna Barbera studios. Then they saw the Dead, all umpteen of um, walkin' arm in arm down the street; needless to say they got the Dead, dumped um in Lake Erie and took their places.

The only problem wuz, that they sounded like Chipmunks when they sang. Chipmunks just can't do country or blues or folk-rock junk, or nothin' like that and expect to be taken seriously. So they recorded, changed the speed, and then recorded again. Not bad for a bunch of amateurs. They grew beards, grew their hair, developed pot bellies, wore work shirts and jeans and toured the country with the Band, who are really the Katzenjammer Kids and Rocky and Bullwinkle in disguise. (But that's another story.)

But the reason that it's all so obvious is that the chipmunks didn't quite get the imitation down pat. We all know the Dead ain't as bad as this new album of theirs makes them sound. So if you change the speed, you hear the real culprits, them screwy, little chipmunks, and they just do freak out jams.

They get Felix the Cat to play violin on "Mississippi Half Step Uptown Toodeloo," which is supposed to be one of those typical Dead folk-rock numbers. But when played on 45, it turns into a hype, neurotic country orgy.

On the second cut, "Let me sing your



"People say I'm the life of the party cuz I tell a joke or two." When Genesis is in town, the city changes its tune. Find out why Dec. 1 when Buff State's SUB presents Genesis with no dilutions.

blues away," they got Pogo the alligator to play saxophone and make them sound like Ike and Tina Turner jammin with a roller derby team.

On "Stella Blue," the chipmunks do some cute harmonies and sound like a bunch of Nashville cats speedin'. "Row Jimmy" was pretty bad on 45 so I moved it up to 78. It was heaven. The chipmunks flipped out, playin' bongos, and steel guitars with their teeth.

With "Weather Report Suite," the chipmunks prove that even dumb critters can be progressive. They got the Hollywood strings and Chicago to back em up and Theodore sang the lead vocals cuz Alvin wuz guzzlin' beer.

The album ended, the party was nice, Snuffy is still sleepin', (I hope he thanks me for this someday, when he wakes up.) and a great mystery was solved. I knew the Dead were dead, and that their records couldn't be as bad as lotsa people think.

But the chipmunks got a little too cute this time around. They sounded too much like the old Dead, on 33. Someday, somebody is gonna have to abduct them and dump 'em in Lake Erie. Like, maybe the Cosby Kids or somethin' like that.

-Michael Sajecki

Cold Cuts

FULL SAIL

Loggins & Messina (Columbia)

This is more of "the same old wine in a brand new bottle." While it's not a bad album, it has nothing new, nothing we haven't heard from L&M before. They've simply reshaped the material from their first two albums. "Lahaina" is a slightly spritely repeat of "Vahevala." "Path Way To Glory" is a "new" and even more monotonous "Golden Ribbons," or "Same Old Wine." "My Music" is a repeat of "Your Momma Don't Dance." "A Love Song" is an attempt to repeat the successful tenderness of "Danny's Song." It's no longer a fresh breeze that L&M's sails are full of, it's hot air. Or maybe it's gas. Things are repeating. Loggins and Messina seem to prefer it that way, but a belch like this is unexcusable.

ALL AMERICAN BOY

Rick Derringer (Blue Sky/Columbia)

Not as bad as one would think, but not as good as one would want. This solo album business is becoming such a bore, with Bowie's make-up artist or Led Zep's roadie all singing their fave hits, etc., but if anyone has deserved a well-received solo career, it's Rick Derringer. Sure you know him as leader of the McCoys, as Johnny and Edgar Winter's guitarist and producer and for his guitar work on albums by Steely Dan, Richie Havens, Todd Rundgren and (surprise) Alice's past two albums and his newest, *Muscle of Love*. It's just that Rick should have released this in early 1972, when it would've been dubbed a classic but now, with rock and pop on the upswing again, *All American Boy* can only be called 'nice.' As Rick sings, it's an "uncomplicated" album of solid rock alternating with slower ballads. Highlights are: "Slide on Over Slinky" which could've been a great follow-up to "Hang On Sloopy" - "Teenage Love Affair," can't miss with a title like that and I think he knows it - "Joy Ride" and "TimeWarp," two hi-energy instrumentals that are pure knock-outs - the best version of "Rock and Roll Hoochie Koo" around (after all, he wrote it). If he can shuck his occasional resemblance to Johnny and Edgar (a problem with hanging out with them too long), he'll do just fine.

GRANICUS (RCA)

Careful with this one. The 50's rock 'n' roll revival has died away to be replaced, on the critics level, by a punk-rock revival. Even though the punk revival hasn't run its course from the critics to the audience thoroughly, a new revival has been started. Following a chronological order, the punk rockers then discovered drugs. Acid punk rock, that's what Granicus is. Granicus' music is straight driving rock with dips and escalation in power coupled with such moronic lyrics as "Let me drop my load on you, America" and "I've been high, I've been low/I've been people I just don't know." Funniest thing on the album is Stephen (Rolling Stone) Holden's predictable liner notes as, in true Stone form, he makes a mountain out of a molehill and an ass out of himself: "Granicus advances white blues progressivism in rock without sacrificing the grass roots populism that "blah blah blah." What's a political science major doing reviewing records for *Rolling Stone*? Anyway, Granicus is so bad that it's a sure shot they'll make it. We're just worried that, by following this order in music revivals, the next revival is going to be acid rock, and then we'll all nod out quietly with Jerry, Grace and those other robots.

HIGH ON THE HOG

Black Oak Arkansas (Atco/Atlantic)

Look out, those home-spun high energy rockers, BOA, are back with more of their get-down-rock-and-roll. Still think they need a singer since Jim Dandy's vocal masturbation is not my idea of a good clear voice, but he's a good gimmick. He gets to jump around and answer when people ask him why his skin-tight pants never split in mid-kick. Basically BOA is a fair rock and roll band and this is a fast improvement over their previous releases. A clearer production job allows "Swimming IN Quicksand" and "Jim Dandy" to shine brightly on an otherwise uninspiring disc.

CRAIG DOERGE

(Columbia)

Let's get serious for a moment: we

have, at times in the past, made joking references to what we call the "CBS House Band," a group of session musicians who back up noted or un-noted singer/songwriter types and appear to be quite close as when you'll find one member on an album, a closer look will reveal other House Band members present also. To give a complete personnel list would be no fun, that's for you to figure out (gives you something to do next time you're browsing through your local record store, right?). Since they are sessioneers, they're not paid to be too inventive, hence hindering the new solo artists' chances by giving him a lifeless backing. With this album, Craig Doerge (in the trend of some of his fellow House Banders, Larry Carlton and Danny Kootchmar, who've both attempted solo albums) brings together many of his pals to produce an album that reveals all of the CBS House Band's faults. Doerge hasn't the strength to carry this limp collection of tunes alone and even his own buddies show no signs of wanting to help. It looks like the CBS House Band will never break up, so remember, boys, we'll be watching you. Rock on?

FM LIVE

Climax Blues Band (Sire)

Disappointing, but by no means bad, set from this fine English band with a misleading name. Although blues is used as a backdrop for their material, the music is raw, powerful rock which draws from any other music form it sees fit. This foursome is a tight, cohesive unit with snappy vocals (a great bass vocalist), but most of their strong points are lost in this overlong live two-record set. Live versions of many of their older gems ("All the Time in the World," "Shake Your Love," "Standing by a River," "Country Hat," "You Make Me Sick"), traditionals ("Seventh Son," "Let's Work Together") and new material ("Mesopopmania," "I am Constant") are lost in the chaos of the rowdiest New York crowd ever captured on vinyl. Constant chattering, yelling and firecrackers going off lead this reviewer to recommend any of their five other studio albums, where Climax really shine.

LIVE AT THE RAINBOW

Focus (Sire)

What this world needs is a good laxative. When an album's highlight is the best stereophonic applause ever recorded.....