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The Shakin' Street Gazette, Volume 6

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Recommended Citation

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'Where all the kidz wanna do is -hey, we're back!...Rock'n'Roll!!!!!!

Volume one, Number six

The Shakin' Street "Evade thee" Issue

COURT AND SPARK

Joni Mitchell

Asylum

PLANET WAVES

Bob Dylan

Asylum

Less than a month into the year and already we have what will probably be two of the biggest albums of 1974: featuring a new Joni Mitchell, and Bob Dylan with the Band.

One would think that Joni's new album released on the same day as the long awaited Dylan LP (coming in the middle of his first tour in seven years) would be sort of over shadowed. Not this one.

Joni, who is also doing concerts for the first time in a long time, (including one at Kleinhans on February 11, courtesy of Festival East) has changed her style a little. Her voice has improved a bit and she has tightened up her singing style. In addition, the arrangements are full, often lush, and very listenable. All of this may distress some of her old fans who preferred her musically simple and lyrically complex, but it will also attract some new fans.

Court and Spark is Joni Mitchell at her most accessible, and most commercial. The single from the album, "Raised on Robbery," is one of her tightest pop compositions and sports the ever popular Andrews sisters harmonies and a genuine rock 'n' roll arrangement with some Robbie Robertson tasty-licks guitar. It's a hit, and the album will doubtless follow it.

Side one of "Court and Spark" is a suite of five songs with a basic theme of social life and the love involved. It starts with the title cut which is a song about courting, sparking, and related pasttimes. But there is a problem expressed which comes out in the second track "Help Me" which presents a love versus freedom conflict by balancing the good times of

the present moment against the fears and hopes of the past and future. It also has a catchy tune which fades into "Free Man in Paris," a song about getting away from it all again:

You know I'd go back there tomorrow

But for the work I've taken on

Stoking the star maker machine

Behind the popular song

The cut features double electric lead guitars (Jose Feliciano and Larry Carlton) on top of a light acoustic rhythm. "People's Parties" follows, again balancing diversionary pasttimes (people's parties) against the underlying sigh of repressed despair in this song and the longing request for release in the final cut "Same Situation" which ends:

I called out to be released

Caught in my struggle for higher achievement

And my search for love

That don't seem to cease

Side two is a mixture, including a little rock and roll ("Raised on Robbery" and to a lesser extent "Car on a Hill") and some more standard Joni Mitchell things. "Troubled Child" and "Just Like This Train," ("Counting lovers like railroad cars") are metaphoric picture/poems set to music. "Down on You" is a long and pleasant piano and orchestra song with impressionistic lyrics on what it's like when "love is gone."

The surprise cut comes at the end. If the Andrews sisters harmonies on "Raised on Robbery" don't cause a few people to wonder what Joni is up to, her rendition of Ross & Grey's "Twisted" will. The song is a jazz vocalese number which can

For a change here's a concert you can't go to (Judy Kaye ...?) Joni Mitchell won't be here on February 11 at Kleinhans, tickets aren't sold out, they aren't \$6.50, \$5.50 and \$4.50, Festival East is not sponsoring it, and we lie thru our teeth.

also be found on Bette Midler's latest album. However, where Midler has garish horns and an affected hot 'n' heavy vocal delivery, Joni sings sweet and smiling over a cool string bass and drums arrangement with a muted trumpet doing the breaks. She has also replaced Bette's needless between verse chatter with a couple of throw away lines from (are you ready for this?) Cheech & Chong. Exactly what the purpose of the cut is, I couldn't say. Perhaps she is asking her fans not to take her too seriously anymore. What ever the reason, it is very well done, it sounds like she had fun doing it, it's fun to listen to, and it's an interesting way to top off a very enjoyable album.

As for Bob Dylan's "Planet Waves," I have to admit I'm a real dyed-in-the-denim Dylan disciple, (I liked "Pat Garrett & Billy the Kid" and even "Dylan") (poor Kid-Ed.) so anything I could say would not be very objective. With this in mind, I'll just try to give you an idea what it's like in case you haven't heard it yet.

Over all, it sounds pretty much like you'd expect Dylan and the Band to sound. (For reference, see the four Isle of Wight cuts on *Self Portrait* and their three songs on the Columbia half of the "Tribute to Woody Guthrie" recordings, or some of the available bootlegs.) The production is simple with a sort of homemade basement quality which seems to fit the performers well.

"On a Night Like This" is a "Nashville Skyline" type song with a loose, rollicking arrangement and an accordion/organ which blends nicely with Bob's harmonica in the end. "Going Going Gone" is a slower, more flowing number with some excellent Robbie Robertson guitar. "Tough Mama" relies heavily on the Band's distinctive sound. On this one Dylan is singing with the Band, instead of them accompanying

him. "Hazel" is a slow beautiful ballad and "Something There is About You" is a love song with a sort of sentimental, nostalgic lyric ("Something about you that brings back a long forgotten truth"). Again Robertson displays virtuosity and imagination with a swirling, dreamy guitar.

The last song on the first side, "Forever Young," also kicks off the side two. The first version is slow and thoughtful, a la the sound track album. The second is double timed and is reminiscent of "The Mighty Quinn." The optimistic lyrics simply wish every one (no doubt Bob included) good fortune and "May you stay forever young."

"Dirge" is some old fashioned Dylan poetry with sparse, stark images and an appropriately dirgy piano balanced with some rather nice acoustic guitar. "You Angel You" is another up-tempo Band number with Garth Hudson's nicely controlled organ bouncing off still more of Robertson's great plunky guitar. "Never Say Goodbye" is a sentimental poem with a convenient melody.

The final tune, "Wedding Song" is a Dylan solo (vocal, guitar, and harmonica), and probably has the most significant lyrics, including the lines:

The tune that is yours and mine
To play upon this earth
We'll play it out the best we know
What ever it is worth
What's lost is lost
We can't regain
What went down in the flood
The happiness to me is you
And I love you more than blood
and:
It's never been my duty
To remake the world at large
Nor is it my intention
To sound the battle charge

So while Bob Dylan is reminiscing about the past and expressing optimism about the future, Joni Mitchell is examining facets of social life and reaching for an even larger audience with what will probably be her best selling album yet. With these two to start with, things look pretty good for '74.

—Dave Meinzer

Welcome...

With this issue, *Shakin' St.* welcomes the Masterful Doctor of Soul, Cornelius Johnson and James Braun, who doesn't even know it yet, to the arms of rock 'n' roll.



This group is gonna Rock your Sox off!!! Chrysalis recording artists, Black Sheep will have their first album released in March, and the single from it, "Stick Around," is destined to be a hit in the fine old Rock 'n' Roll tradition left for lost by groups like Free, Spooky Tooth, Trapeze. And the fact that they're from

this area makes it all more important. Fri., Feb. 8 Black Sheep will be at the Niagara Falls Canada Union Center. Tickets are \$2 at the door and don't complain to us a year from now that you missed 'em when you had the chance. *Shakin' St.* sends its congratulations to Black Sheep.



Jan Akkerman

TABERNAKEL

Jan Akkerman
(Atco/Atlantic)

What could be wrong? There is no question of Jan Akkerman's sincerity towards his music. The accuracy he displays on his guitar is dynamic. His execution is nearly flawless. He performs with a clear sense of direction. What is wrong with Jan Akkerman is that he is too serious. It is a rare dedicated musician who is willing to sacrifice unit sales for the sake of laying down the music that he genuinely loves.

On his new album, *Tabernakel* (Atco SD 7032), Akkerman plays galliards, pavans, and corantos. These are melodies that were used to accompany dances in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. More than three quarters of *Tabernakel* is filled with this kind of composition. The obvious question is "Why?" Why does the premier guitarist of Focus (a solid contemporary band) revert back to music that was popular three or four centuries ago?

There is no simple answer. In Focus, Akkerman has to contend with Thijs Van Leer, who is a creator himself. Therefore his music is never purely expressed. On the Peter Banks solo album (*Two Sides of Peter Banks; Sovereign*), Akkerman contributes an instrumental entitled *Beyond the Loneliest Sea* that is very artistic. On his second solo album, *Profile* (Sire), Akkerman utilized the commercially successful idea of mixing in imaginative rock guitar styles with acoustic ballads and jigs. On *Profile* he kept the attention span of the present day listener by providing an album of mostly current styled compositions (some will go as far as to say that Akkerman plays a JAZZ guitar; in reality he generally falls back on his choppy rock chords). A well versed jazz guitarist improvises. Akkerman is comparable to a young child who is first learning how to walk alone. After a few short lively riffs, which some interpret as improvisational, he runs back to mother rock. This makes for an album that flows smoother, that the consumer can enjoy easier. By comparison, *Tabernakel* contains an overabundance of sixteenth and seventeenth tunes. For example, a tedious fourteen minutes and six seconds of the second side is taken up by an Akkerman "musical idea" entitled *Lammy*. This begins with a heavy church organ (played by Akkerman) backed by a medieval oriented chorus. The melody drifts into some decent guitar work, where upon we are met by the biggest joke of all. Imagine this; through out a good portion of the album Akkerman and producer Geoffrey Haslam retain the services of a full orchestra (conducted by George Flynn) to add richness to the atmosphere of the finished product. In the midst of all this



Why is this man (Jackson Brown) smiling? You'd smile too if you were on the same bill as Linda Ronstadt. That's right (hotcha), Feb. 17, 9 PM, Canisius presents these two Asylum escapees at the Student Center. Tickets are \$4 or \$2 with a Canisius ID, and are only sold at Canisius (blast it!).



"Who says were dead, Ya Muddahs?" asks the Shakin' Street staff, played by the James Gang.



What are we gonna do with these drunken Loons? See Page 35!

notable striving (*Lammy* itself contains flutes, violins, violas, cellos, contrabass and harpischord) who should appear but the Katzenjammer Kids of rhythm section rock, BOGART AND APPICE! It was lame enough of them to resurrect the Fudge through Cactus, but why destroy Beck's mind and reputation in BBA? (I fear Beck was not only physically disabled in his unfortunate car accident.) Carmine Appice relies on rudimentary beats. Bogart still perceives the bass as an underlying instrument that should be kept in some back storage closet. The mood of *Lammy* shifts with Akkerman delivering interesting lute and guitar phrases. However, this over-extended piece always manages to misappropriately find its way back to sixteenth and seventeenth roots. As stated previously, the musicianship is exceptional, yet its overall outcome suffers because the material is so outdated.

Most of the first side of the album is taken up with short galliards or corantos



James Gang

BANG
James Gang
(Atco/Atlantic)

I know, why bother with the James Gang? Ever since Joe Walsh left, those other two dildos have been fighting just to keep alive, forcing their own albums into the quick death of the bargain bins, right? *Passin' Thru* passed out, *Straight Shooter* committed suicide, that Dago replacement Dominic Troiano forced his personality on the band and before leaving, turned the whole thing into a bore, right? They've had two chances, why give 'em a third, right?

Well, the band switched to Atlantic, finally got the OK to call their LP *James Gang Bang* with an equally amusing cover (they tried to get the title passed for each of their last two albums, but you know how it is with such "shocking"

that sound like abbreviated lute studies. Akkerman refrains from trying to shock. He painstakingly exhibits his acoustic knowledge and agility. Mostly he performs with a delicate gentle tone. This does not mean to say that he is indistinct. Here he is layed back and most serious. The melodies truly move the listener.

The closest that this album comes to rock is *House of the King*. This instrumental tune is quite catchy. Remaining within the context of the LP, Akkerman has composed a song with old English overtones, yet complete with a quicker pace. He overdubs guitars quite succinctly, succeeding tremendously. Regretfully the rest of the side slows in velocity.

Summation. This elegant production will not make it commercially. It is too involved. In today's market, the one poor soul expressing himself, the MUSICIAN, loses. He always does, and always will. And that is what makes him beautiful.

-James Braun

ideas), added a guitarist and singer, practiced dutifully and *Bang* is one of the surprises of the year: it's, it's ... Damn, it's good!

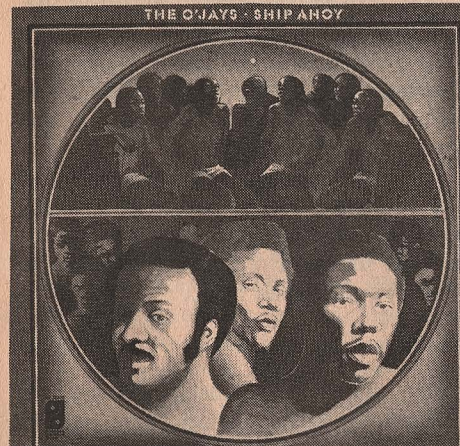
Vocalist Roy Kenner has polished up his vocals, the veteran rhythm section of Dale Peters and Jim Fox have even come to the fore as one of the finest teams in rock, not having to resort to excess to get their point across, as with the talented but offensive Bogart & Appice of Beck Fame (Hey, what the hell does everyone have against these guys?-Ed.). Most impressive is new addition Tommy Bolin on "British-flash" guitar that gives the band the strong new burst of power needed, once the initial resemblance to Joe Walsh has passed (Walsh picked him for the group).

Bolin is partially responsible for all the tunes except one, an a cappella "Rather Be Alone With You." A happy-go-lucky "Must Be Love" is the choice for single, with Roy Kenner doing a great imitation of Roy Wood impersonating Elvis. Rockers rule here with "Standing in the Rain," a Sabbath-like "Devil is Singing Our Song," "Ride the Wind" (close enough to the old James Gang sound to be mistaken for such). "From Another Time" combines Latin rhythm with biting guitar, not unlike Captain Beyond's recent work. Roy Kenner's voice works best with the acoustic-based tunes that build to delightful levels, like "Alexis," "Got No Time for Trouble" and "Mystery."

The surprise here is that, in light of lullaby comebacks like Clapton and the

Byrds, here is a band that was given up for lost and have fought their way through the sludge to make us all ashamed for giving them up for lost. *Bang* is enough to make you renew your faith in rock, America, the government, last year's stale lover. Well, maybe not all that but at least it proves that just because it's over doesn't mean that if you keep on grindin', they're can't be a one-more-time.

-Gary Sperrazza!

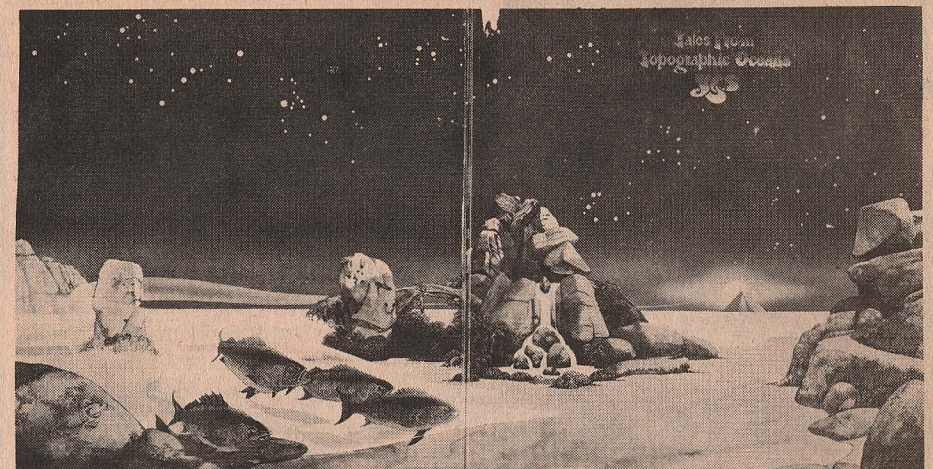


O'Jays

SHIP AHOY
O'Jays
(Gamble-Huff)

Sweet, melodic 3 part harmony, interwoven with master musicianship is what you are baptised with when you get into the O'Jays piece *Ship Ahoy*. The O'Jays, a group of 3 lead singers (in their own right) who are originally from Buffalo, N.Y. that's right Buffalo, N.Y., are on the move, riding on the expertise of the definite "Dynamic Duo" Gamble and Huff, the O'Jays are super-star bound. For those of you who have applied to the Buff State administration for a temporary leave of (memory) and your application was accepted Gamble and Huff 'only' wrote and produced hits for Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes, Billy Paul (of "Me and Mrs. Jones" fame) ... and just about every big hit the Delfonics ever made. To note the genius of the Gamble and Huff empire, they have taken the O'Jays and incorporated them with just about one of the premier instrumental groups on the music scene today, MFSB. MFSB stands for Mother, Father, Sister and Brother. Individually both groups are BAAAD but together they are definitely a Mutha.

It is Gamble and Huff who came up with what was known formerly as the "Philly Groove." Now they have expanded into the domain of the



Tales from Topo Gigio's Bathtub



"Philadelphia Sound." In the short span of approximately 7-8 years, Gamble and Huff have almost become legends even as far as the "Golden State" home base of you know who. What? Oh you don't know who? Well dig this. If a certain group of people don't hurry and polish their groups there will be a new black dynasty on the recording company side.

If you don't believe me, go and ask you Mama, or pick up on the O'Jays "Ship Ahoy." You'll thank me for it later. And speaking of later; be cool.

Signing out,
Dr. Corn M.D.S.
(Masterful Doctor of Soul)

P.S. stands for Philadelphia Sound!



The Band

MOONDOG MATINEE
The Band
(Capitol)
Last year a lot of very talented song

writers took it easy, preferring to release albums of non-original oldies and favorites. David Bowie, Don McLean and Leon Russell (alias Hank Wilson) put out collections of classics of the past, and with *Moondog Matinee* the Band has done the same.

Though it's been two years since their last album of new material, they have in that time recorded and released a live album, *Rock of Ages*, which stands as the definitive Band performance. (On it they even manage to improve on some of their own classic originals, including "The Weight.") Their encore on the concert album, "(I Don't Want to) Hang Up My Rock and Roll Shoes," is sort of a preview of *Moondog Matinee*. Yeah, they're still wearin' th' shoes.

They've chosen ten songs, each of which qualify as a blast from the past (or at least a strong breeze). They do Chuck Berry's "Promised Land" with a mock amateur off-key imitation of the Berry

intro riff, and Robbie Robertson's wah-wah guitar. "I Ain't Got No Home" has a nice dramatic arrangement and the Leiber and Stoller number "Saved" is paired with Fats Dominoe's hit "I'm Ready" for several minutes of real rockin'. They include "The Great Pretender" an early smash R & R ballad, and a good example of the type of song that made TV's *Your Hit Parade* out dated; (Dorothy Collin's really couldn't do it justice once, let alone a dozen weeks in a row). And speaking of TV, they also do "Third Man Theme" (without a zither). Closing out the collection is a fine rendition of Sam Cooke's "A Change is Gonna Come" with an excellent Garth Hudson saxophone solo.

But in the final evaluation, as good as it is, *Moondog Matinee* falls a little below their past efforts. Their original material is better than this old stuff. I'll give it an 85%, (it's got a good beat).

-Dave Meinzer

Imports



Deke Leonard

ICEBERG
Deke Leonard
(UA Import)

Wales is a fairly isolated place and if the Welsh had their way, it would be as far away from England as possible. It's no wonder then that Welsh rock has traveled in a different direction from English rock. Both had a common origin, so to speak, in Blues and R & B but where the English have progressed (or regressed, depending on whether you're talking to Sperrazza or Dan Axt) into the glam-punk scene, the Welsh have created their own version of

rock 'n' roll. It's a crude brand of rock and if some bands still play Eddie Cochran and Ray Campi material, it's because they've been playing it all along, it's no half-assed nostalgia shit. About the only Welsh bands to have releases in America (excluding Badfinger) are Man and Help Yourself. They aren't exactly rockers in the true tradition but they ain't no glamour boys either. Once in a while, one guy will wear some kind of weird costume but it's always been good P.R. to have at least one seemingly raving idiot in a band (so now you know why you're writing for us-Ed.). It adds color.

Deke Leonard has been in the Welsh scene since the beginnings. Starting with Lucifer and the Corncrackers in 1963, he played in various pub bands until the formation of the original Man band in 1968. He left them before their latest and only American album, *Be Good to Yourself at Least Once A Day*. Deke recently surfaced with *Iceberg* which is still an important step for Welsh rock even if it's 50% disappointment. Leonard is not the greatest guitarist in the world and he insists on playing lead and rhythm on a lot of the cuts. Also there's a lot of needless repetition running rampant, in lyrics, chord progressions and even solos. He's aided throughout by members of Man and Help Yourself and two of the

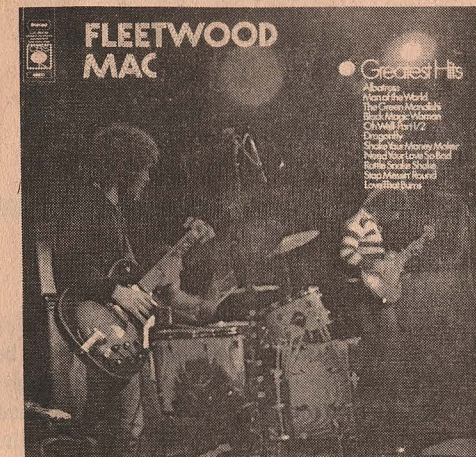
better cuts feature Malcolm Morley and Richard Treece on guitars, both of HY. Former Man bassist Martin Ace (who had his own band, the Flying Aces) plays on all cuts except "Lisa," where he's replaced by Paul Burton of HY.

Side one opens nicely with "Razor Blade and Rattlesnake," with an interesting confrontation between electric piano and fuzz guitar at the end. The rest of the side drags on aimlessly except for "Looking for a Man" with flash guitar overshadowing the repetitious lyrics.

Side two has "Broken Ovation," featuring a great "ooooohing" chorus and combined lead by Leonard and Morley. "10,000 Takers" has Leonard on second guitar (slide) to Treece's biting lead. The best is saved for last in the form of "7171 551." Here Leonard seems less restrained and breaks loose, not brilliantly but more than adequately. There are also a couple of curiosities on this album, one of them being "Crosby (Second Class Citizen Blues)," a dog's (?) outlook on life, mostly growling backed by an insane computer (?). Bryone Berline of Country Gazette plays fiddle on "Lisa" and he seems almost embarrassed to be caught in such maudlin surroundings.

With the vinyl shortage, it may be some time before UA releases *Iceberg* in the States, if at all. Hopefully UA will release it and more of Welsh rock when this shortage clears up. In the meantime, pick 'em up in import form or check the few American releases.

-Andy Cutler



GREATEST HITS

Fleetwood Mac
(CBS Import)

Not a very comprehensive collection of "Greatest Hits," since nothing after their first Reprise LP, *Then Play On* is included on this album. Hence no material from *Kiln House*, one of their finest moments minus Peter Green. Another main hinderance is the poor selection of "hits," witness being the low key clunkers like "Oh Well Pt. 2," the well meaning insipidness of "The Green Manalishi" and the banality of "Albatross." These are the financial hits, but the true creativity of the band lies in "Rattlesnake Shake," and "Black Magic Woman." The reworkings of Elmore James' "Shake Your Money Maker" and Little Willie John's "Need Your Love So Bad" sound reasonably true to the originals, which is something most blooze bands don't tend to do. What bugs me is that the liner notes say Christine McVie played on *Kiln House* which she didn't and she's present in the group promo picture adorning the inner sleeve and none of the material she has played on is on this album. What meaningless drivel, what ridiculous statements. Who the hell cares about this bullshit! The fact remains, the rockers are rockers, the crud is crud is crud is crud. . . .

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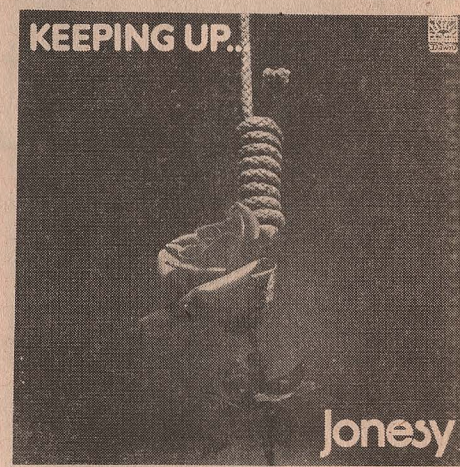
What do English bobbies do for kicks? Besides Alice's ass that is.



HELLO

Status Quo
(Vertigo Import)

It's been a long time since "Pictures of Matchstick Men," Quo's 1968 American hit, but so what? Status Quo have regressed into one of the most basic rock 'n' roll bands around. They make Slade sound like Yes. Quo have made five albums since then and the fact that this one, *Hello*, has clobbered all other albums in the running on the British charts shows that there are still lots of people who like their rock 'n' roll loud, proud and basic with a lack of pretentiousness that makes them all the more endearing. Unfortunately, *Hello* and their previous LP, *Piledriver* (still the best rock 'n' roll album cover in ages), seem more like a celebration of their dynamic live performances and leave you wishing to see them live. If Quo attempt it, an American tour will send half the American bands running, ashamed that in all their progressive experiments they've lost the rock 'n' roll roots that gave them their appeal in the first place. *Piledriver* is already out in the States on A&M and they plan to release *Hello* in a month or so. Let your body tell you what to do.



KEEPING UP

Jonesy
(Dawn Import)

Another in a long line of the "Let's see how much we can sound like Yes without being compared to them" groups. As this is their second album (first called *No Alternative*) and there's a new one out in England, perhaps they've broken away from this Critics Trap. As the whole Cloud Rock scene is theorized to have evolved from the Beatles experimentation period coupled with the lyrical cliches of Psychedelica, Jonesy bore with the best. Trebly bass, wah-wah guitar, mellotron notes dominating the precedings and slick drumming coupled with "cosmic significance" lyrics using words like "realm," "destiny," "universe," "questions and answers" (that one's enough to scare anyone away), etc. Fine trumpet work by Alan Bown of the Alan Bown (Boy, aren't we hip-Ed.), but as soon as people realize that either the Could Rock scene got lost along the way or it's as restrictive as any other rock spin-off, there will be no end to these cosmic rummagings.

Cold Cuts

NEXT

The Sensational Alex Harvey Band
(Vertigo)

Never to be confused with the folk-based Alex Harvey who has an LP on Capital, the Sensational Alex Harvey won't win the monthly modesty award, but in the "look-at-me" rock scene, nobody usually does. Alex Harvey, like Slade, the Sweet (who have the same producer as Harvey, Phil Wainman) and others too numerous to name here, wants your mind, you whole being, even, even YOUR SOUL. Demonic R & R at the very best is the best description for this LP. Even the song titles are enough to send shivers down your spine: "Swamp Snake," "The Faith Healer," "Gang Bang." At times sounding like Noddy Holder, Alex Harvey possesses one of the best rock voices to emerge from England in a long time. The sensational band is fresh and crisp and never stalls, a common malady these days. The title song is the most electrifying thing to leap out of my speakers since Gato Barbieri caused the dog to attack the turntable. Believe it or not "Next" is a Jacques Brel song. Handily translated into English by somebody or other and Harvey's dramatized delivery is incredible. You might even think he could out-fop Ray Davies. Watch out for Alex Harvey, you never know where he'll pop out from. Once he's got you, as the Americans say, he'll never let you go.

THE TAIN

Horslips
(Atco/Atlantic)

Horslips are a band of latter day Irish minstrels. Mixing traditional marches and jigs with rock elements, *The Tain* is a musical retelling of the ancient Irish saga, TAIN BO CUAAILAGNE (the Cattle Raid of Cooley). Horslips differ from such English semi-traditionalists as Steeleye Span and Fairport Convention in that their arrangement and selection of music mixes better with electric guitars, the others getting buried in tradition. The story centers around a cattle raid circa 500 B.C. and should be of interest to those with a taste for traditional myth and music.

PAINTER

(Elektra/Asylum)

Before Elektra president Jac Holzman was kicked upstairs only to be replaced by David Geffen (who brought his Asylum label with him), Jac signed two last acts: Queen and Painter. The difference between the two bands is like that between catsup and ketchup. Painter offers a softer, more pop feel but have the same slick production and maniacal rock base as Queen. Fine harmonies and a tight rhythm make the best cuts "Goin' Home to Rock 'n' Roll," "Slave Driver," and "Crazy Feeling" (close enough to Led Zep's "Good Times Bad Times" to sound almost like a take-off). In fact, since Led Zep have never matched their own first album (they've since "progressed"), Queen and Painter do a satisfying job of recreating the tight and tense sounds that Zep have laid to rest.

SOMEBODY'S WATCHING

Rare Bird
(Polydor)

Not as inaccessible as their last LP, *Epic Forest*, Rare Bird present us with what could be their finest album to date. A shake-up in the personnel finds Nic Potter, of the incredible but defunct Van Der Graaf Generator, on bass. Pity these boys should be typecast in the progrock category, they're a rich combination of rock, jazz and classical with well thought out melodies and strongly emotional voices. As this album rocks a bit more, it could garner good sales if the people at Polydor pull an Elliot Murphy (tons of promo stuff, lots of publicity and reviews) on Rare Bird. Picks to click are "Third Time Around," "More and More," and "Dollars."

STU NUNNERY

Evolution

If it weren't for one very good song, "Sally from Syracuse," this album would be very easy to ignore. Nunnery sounds a lot like Kenny Loggins and has a tendency to write the same sort of over indulgent songs. Some of the arrangements are good, and there are moments of inspired musicianship, but the final track points out one of the major problems. The synthesizer

orchestration on "Roads" is just too much, too pretentious maybe, for this kind of thing. Oh well, as long as "Sally from Syracuse" is there things can't be too bad.

REMNANTS

The Crickets
(Vertigo/Mercury)

Knowing your rock 'n' roll history, you'll remember the Crickets as the legendary Buddy Holly's back-up band. But if you're expecting rehashed Holly material, you're wrong. This band of Crickets (or should it be swarm or something?) is more or less countryfied. Like their counterparts in the insect world, they're harmless if not slightly aggravating with their incessant chirpings. You know, you're trying to get to sleep but the goddamn crickets are having a bleeding rock festival about three feet from your ear. Anyway, one of the high points of *Remnants* is the presence of Legend-in-His-Own-Right Albert Lee on keyboards and greased lightning guitar. Believe it or not, Ric Grech, the winner of the Eric Clapton Look-alike Contest (next to Foghat's Rod Price and Genesis' Steve Hackett, all of whom are dead-Ed.), plays bass and even sings one song which is more than he does on that ripoff Greatest Hits album of his (The Rich Grech Memorial Album on Atco Records-Ed.). The Crickets should have changed their name, the inference to the great Holly is enough to turn any dedicated rocker into a Lobo fan.

FOR SALE

Casey Kelly
(Elektra/Asylum)

Dear Casey: Lissen, Godammit! Two times I've shown up at a concert where you were slated to appear and you cancelled. Stop, already. You may get buried under because of the growing dislike for the singer-songwriter-plus-backup-session-people but you do have the talent to shine through all the dreck. Even though you employed the CBS House Band on 6 of the 10 cuts, they can't stop *For Sale* from being a fine blend of country and acoustic with an enthusiasm matched only by the rock-like feel you add to it. So how can you lose? You look like Andy Cutler and if he catches me writing this, he'll take my rockin' shoes away. Lemme go.

RIDIN' THE STORM OUT

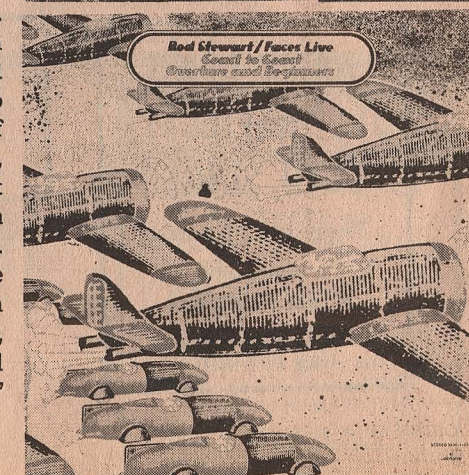
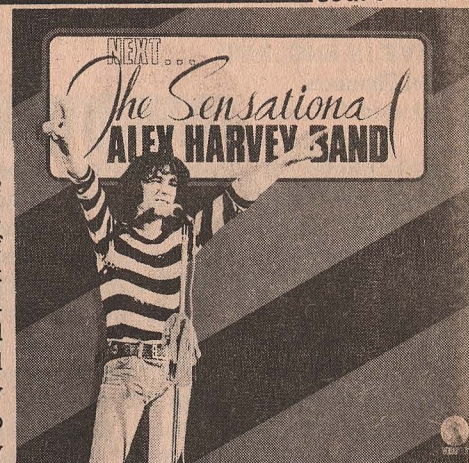
REO Speedwagon
(Epic/Columbia)

This should be retitled *Please Save Us From the High School Dance Circuit*. REO wouldn't be such a bad rock band if they would give their producer the boot and get a good one. But then they would have to perk up their ho-hum material stolen from countless other bands yet still producing nothing original. So they would have to get rid of the guitarist who handles most of the songwriting. They should can the singer who can't. And the drummer who won't. And the keyboardist, ashamed of his Farfisa, who gets a Moog solo here and there to prove he's got one. That leaves ... well, who knocks bass players? Who can hear him? Certainly not Epic, who by this time, should have given their "vinyl shortage, y'know," reason to their No Man's Band.

COAST TO COAST

Rod Stewart and Face Live
(Mercury)

"Throat" Stewart is at it again, trying to refry stale boogie. This time around he (or the company) has made sure Rod's at center stage, note cover and label. The concerts where this album was recorded (Anaheim and Hollywood) might have been good as Faces concerts usually are but vinyl is not such a hot mirror of these events. For lack of visuals, the listener tends to doze as the Faces plod through their time-worn repertoire like so many Pavlovian dogs, their "hard" work rewarded by monstrous applause, screaming, etc. John Lennon's "Jealous Guy" and the Temp's "I Wish It Would Rain" are given mediocre reworkings. The raw power of "Borstal Boys" which their last album *Ooh La La* just managed to catch, fizzles into a boring slide solo courtesy of Ron Wood, revitalizes itself and then lapses into, of all things, "Amazing Grace." To even some stalwart Faces fans, *Ooh La La* was mostly a disappointment but this is even more so. The rare flash moments could be compacted into about five minutes worth but no, in spite of the vinyl shortage, albums like this one are shoved unmercifully down the consumers' throat.



Rivaling the Lou Reed/Judy Collins battle last issue, is Feb. 1's UUAB sponsored Eddie Kendricks/Persuasions concert (Tickets \$3.50 students, \$4.50 loafers) up against the sleep-in at the aud. Shakin' St. takes sides (Go, Eddie, Go!).

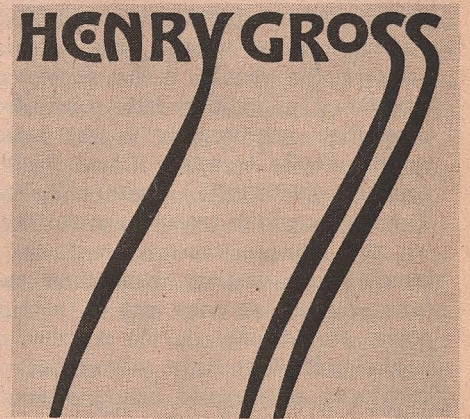
LIVE IN ENGLAND

Del Shannon
(United Artists)

Although recorded a year ago in Manchester, it doesn't matter when you're talking about Del Shannon. Being another of the fine rockers being re-discovered as a carry-over from last year's interest in rock and roll, he hasn't changed a bit in 15 years. He recreates here, to an ecstatic British audience, a string of 14 tunes, most of them his older hits. Included are "Hats Off to Larry," "Swiss Maid," "Two Kinds of Teardrops," "Keep Searchin'," "So Long Baby," and the killer encore "Runaway." It makes for a fast moving party album great for dancing, dips and Cokes. Shannon just completed an album produced and co-written with Jeff Lynne (ex-Idle Race, ex-Move, now heading ELO) and backing up Shannon will be fellow ELO members Rev Bevan, Mike D'Alberquerque and Richard Tandy.

HANGIN' AROUND THE
OBSERVATORY
John Hiatt
(Epic/Columbia)

It's about time that one of these seemingly one-shot artists came out with at least one good cut on their albums. Hiatt goes a step further with three, count 'em, three actually impressive songs. The rest of the LP is more or less poop, but the title cut, "Maybe Baby" and "Full Moon" warrant a back-pat for Mr. Hiatt. Aided by the Hot Babies Band, Hiatt uses his unusual voice (sort of a cross between Leon Russell, Joe Cocker and Van Morrison) to make the three aforementioned cuts stand out in the void inhabited by former grocery store stock boys and grease monkeys. Maybe this should have been a single instead of an album.

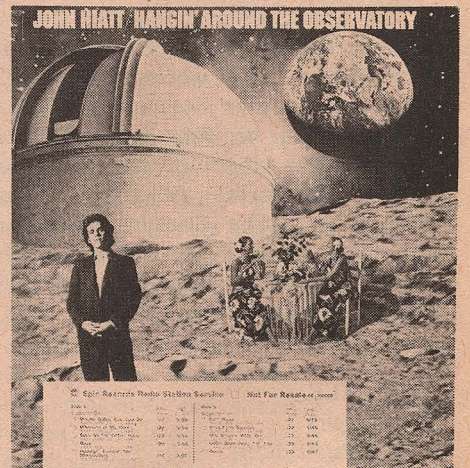


HENRY GROSS
A&M

The folks at A&M have been doing a pretty good job of finding talented unknowns lately. They recently brought us the Ozark Mountain Daredevils and now here's Henry Gross. His songs are tight, sometimes humorous, and the arrangements are interesting light rock. Henry himself plays some nice guitar and he gets some competent performances from a bunch of backup musicians, including Eric Weissberg. Now if the A&M promo people can do as good a job as their A and R men, you'll hear a lot more from people like Henry and the Daredevils.

LET IT RIDE
Chi Coltrane
(Columbia)

If her name is contrived, she sure picked a good one. Seeing the name Coltrane, you take a second look to see if there's any connection with John Coltrane but looking at her picture, it's easy enough to see that this Germanic beauty has about as much in common with the real "Trane as a VW does with a Lotus Europa. The music here is fairly typical and predictable: she sings, plays piano and is assisted by, get this, no less than 5 drummers, 7 bassists and 3 guitarists. Also helping out are Paul Buckmaster on strings and brass by Jim Horn, Jim Price and Bobby Keys. Chi has had some chart success with a single or two and this fact must account for such a lavish production but impressive it ain't.



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know then that their new bassist would be Nic Potter from the incredible Van der Graaf Generator? Does anyone really care about these trivial little fax that make Rock 'n' Roll so much fun, besides us?