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The Shakin' Street Gazette

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# Shakin' Street Gazette

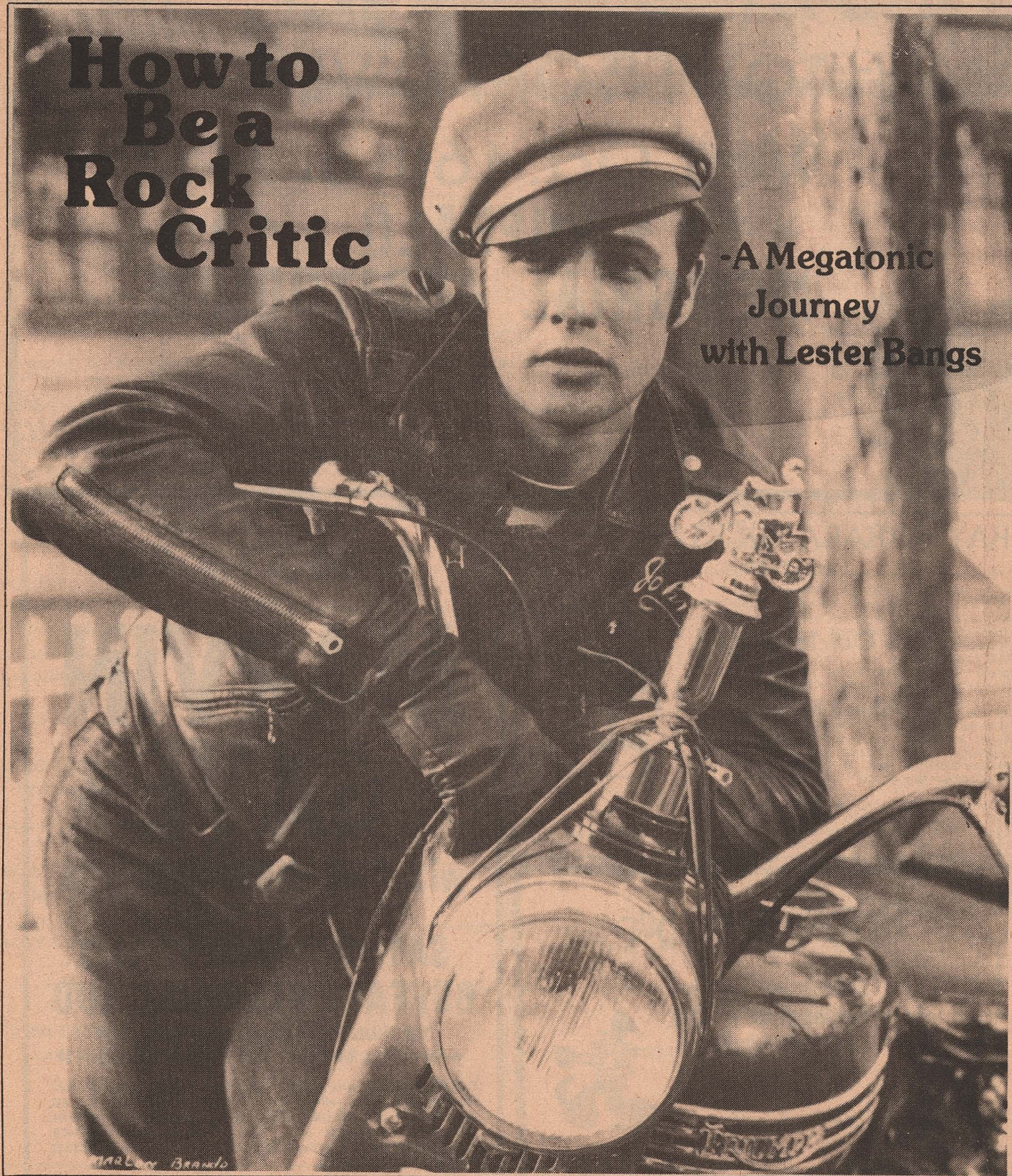
October 10, 1974

No. 15

Free

## How to Be a Rock Critic

-A Megatonic  
Journey  
with Lester Bangs



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# Rock'n' Roll Fantasy

by Joe Fernbacher

Tues. and beam-in on some future trends in the merryland of rockalong:

## PROSTHETIC ROCK:

Actually this trend is in its infancy right now. Back in the late sixties there was a psychopunkalicious band called The Barbarians. They had a few hits like "Are You a Boy, or Are You a Girl" (very prophetic judging from current gender confusion) etc. But they were in truth the frontrunners of appendage music. Why? Well, their drummer was called Moulty and he only had one arm. The other was a metallic hook which he fitted his drumstick onto when playing. Moulty, according to local legends, was a real rock-ass character, like he would get mind wasted in his apartment and start tossing bottles at the walls and tearing apart furniture with his hook. His neighbors would invariably find him out on the front lawn in the wee hours of the morning swimming in a lake of his own mawspit. Moulty even had a semi-hit record by himself, it was an autobiographical number named after himself. On it he told his own personal story—kinda like a rock'n' roll Queen for a Day - in a gracious punk slur with the band screaming out "MOULTY" after each heart wrenching stanza. It turns out the song is about how he joined a rock 'n' roll band to get the attention of the ladies 'cause whose gonna want to bed down with an amputee with long locks, remember Penthouse hadn't even been thought of yet. You might say that Moulty was the Godfather of Prostrock.

Currently, again according to legend, there's a band of Texas rockers which sport a character named the Silver Bullet. He's a multiple amputee (as in no arms, no legs, jus' a torso) who comes on stage encased in aluminum foil. Reportedly at the end of a set they cast off the foil and toss the Silver Bullet into the front frow. Now, that's rock 'n' roll esprit de corps at its most poignant.

However, that's now, what we came here to do was to take a brief glimpse into "what if." The age of sensual decrepitude has lapsed on into a society of Dorian Grey pervaholics. Alice Cooper, a former 70's creeper now floundering

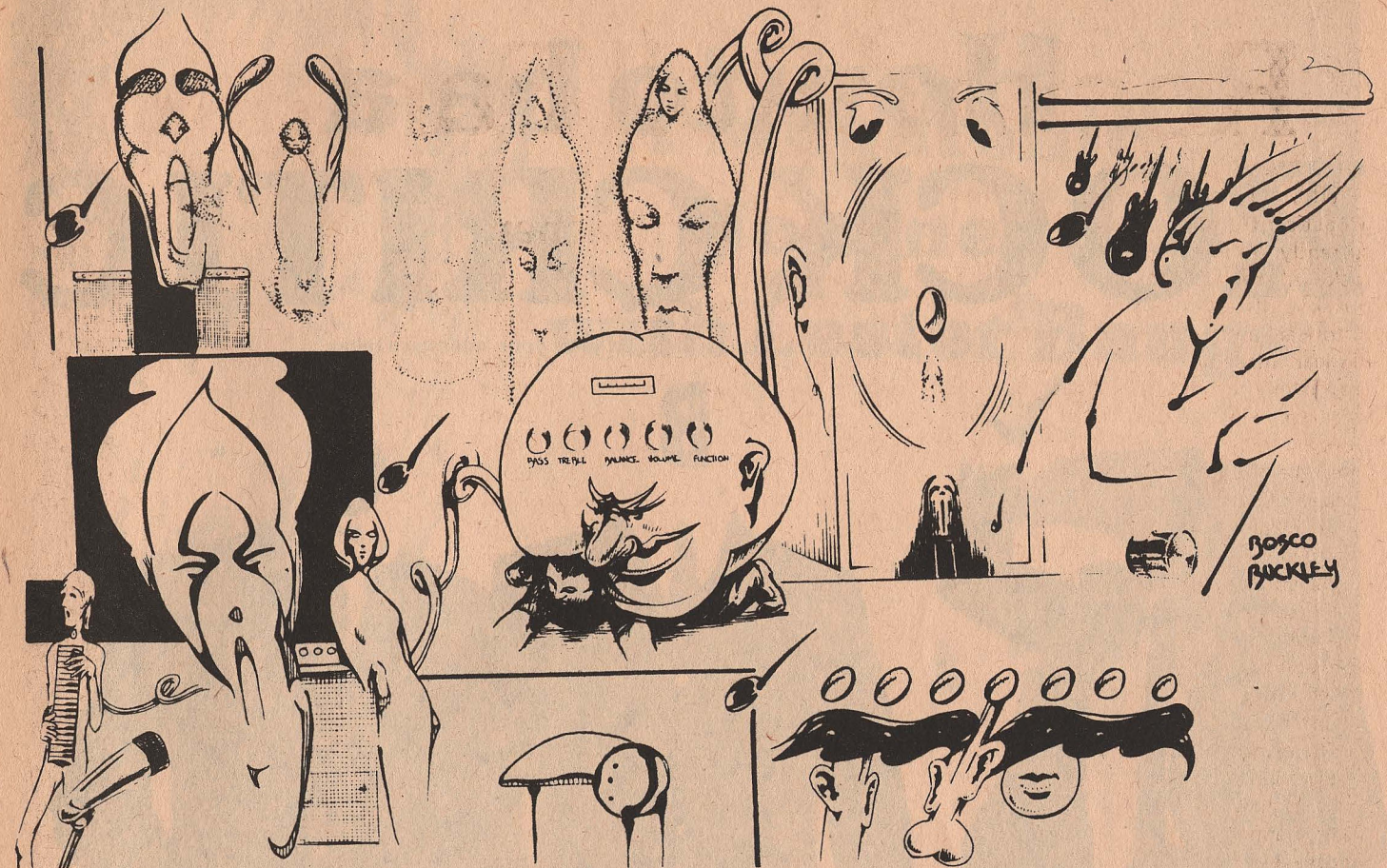
about in gawky senility, has to hitch up his rhinestone suspenders and daily chop off the heads of real live screaming brats (State Order 7983540-2BQ: all entertainment must function in a dual role, as escape for the people and as effective deterrents to population growth...) So rockinroll will become a tool of necessity. The following is a scene that just might be common place after man takes that one step beyond:

"... his ectomorphic frame reached for every bit of energy it could find... sweat beaded at the back of his neck... Johnny was searing the audience with his flame-throwing guitar... he stared at him... things were flying about the stage as the audience unleashed its collective violence and tore apart seats, ushers, and each other... now's the time, this is the moment... he moved slowly towards Johnny, he stared right into his eyes unblinking (the backbeat it was hard to master) Johnny grinned and stared right back, he caught a small electrical charge from the microphone which broke the trance, he rushed over to Johnny and tore his arm off right at the point where the shoulder meets the armpit, Johnny laughed as the blood and entrails spurted onto the stage, Johnny was an amputee... he started up another song, one dedicated to the mass murders of the sixties, and started to pound Johnny's arm on the stage until it started to shatter..." (For further reference to this kind of mischief, check out "Ballroom Blitz" by the Sweet.)

This should be a common scene in the future as man's moral decay usually goes hand in hand with his physical decay. If the trend pans out prosthetic bands will BE the logical regents of rock-on. The age of the cyborg—why not? A lead singer with amplifiers imbedded in his throat and a Marshall speaker encased in his chest cavity; a guitar player with a guitar in place of an arm; etc. etc.

## WOMB ROCK:

Now this one isn't as far fetched as might like to think it is, why? well it seems that a straining of this kind of psychotechnological Orwellianism is actually going RIGHT NOW. Where: one of the leading radio stations in Chicago has already put into practice a form of corporate brain control. It seems these



normally innocuous MOR heads have devised a plan—now pay attention to this—whereby they bring a random selection of teenmeans into the studio and strap them into polygraph machines: what they use for inducement I don't know, free records, dope, suckers, who knows, then they play a sampling of new releases, ones they're not sure of putting on their play lists or not. It seems most radio program directors are so insecure as to what the kids wanna hear that they have to resort to such measures—why are they insecure, could be that 99% of them are so caught up in their own hype and lack of knowledge of ATTITUDES: music don't mean jack shit anymore because it's nothing more than multi-cultural strained oatmeal—as in there ain't nothing new happened since 1969 'cause that's when the world nodded out. Whatever happened to things like "I give it an 85 'cause I can screw to it..." Believe it or else this trend is slowly gaining national attention, pretty soon most radio stations will be running Saturday afternoon Pavlov sessions for teenmeans. Does this all remind you a little bit of human jukeboxes? Shudder.

So let's get back to extrapolation. Womb rock. This will be a form of

cultural conditioning whereby young enceinte females and malefe's (men turned into breeding machines) will have special operations in which microspeakers are attached to the frontal lobes of the slowly developing fetus. Then a continuous series of muzakized tapes will be fed into the subconscious of the child, subliminally creating a younger youth market for the corporate mommy to wean than already exists. Like when kids are born they'll know what the top tens supposed to be, they'll know just what record they'll want for their first Birthday party, etc. Think about it, what with current thinking learning towards general acceptance of psychosurgery psychotechnology, brain manipulation with Pavlovian culturalisms, and whatever other secret government propaganda programs being enacted in mile-deep silos off in the middle of Arizona. PARANOIA—and why the hell not? It's healthy.

Another possibility which is even more far reaching than any of these others (which are all fetishes) deals with a rock-on consciousness as applied to bodily functions. This brings up endless possibilities. At a recent concert given by a secondary buncha limywarts called

Nazareth, the lead singer in a fit of let's-show-how-neet-we-really-are-pulled out a bag-like device which he had hooked up to a bank of amplifiers by a long brutish looking white catheter tube. He proceeded to make himself an instrument—a machine. At first I thought this was totally obnoxious and I almost began to like it for its obvious attitude, then I decided that it could've been done with much more pazzazz. Like why not shove that white tube up his hiney and pass wind through a dozen Marshall amps—atonal and all that Cage-ish do-wah—thus becoming the first practitioner of ENEMA ROCK. Then you could plug it into hearts, stomachs etc. etc.

Perhaps the end result of all civilized rock 'n' roll will culminate in what I like to call TECHNOROCKALOT. This is when the machines get rid of the people and perform for other machines. Hints of this can be seen currently by such groups as ELP and how about when Ronnie Montrose (oh, how I like that boy) sets up an excruciating wall of feedback and walks off the stage with his guitar still taking the solo all by itself—powerful, you betcha.

Then... well, ennui has finally erroded my visions so's later.



# How to be a ROCK CRITIC

-You too can be a rock critic. Just pick your mannequin below.



## A Megatonic Journey with Lester Bangs



"Nobody will come up to you and say 'Hey, I recognize you. You're Jon Landau.'"

Lately I've noticed a new wrinkle on the American landscape: it seems as if there's a whole generation of kids, each one younger than the last, all of whom live, breathe and dream of but one desire: "I want to be a rock critic when I grow up!"

If that sounds condescending let it be known that I was once just like them; the only difference was that when I held such aspirations, the field was relatively uncluttered - it was practically nothing to barge right in and commence the slaughter - whereas now, of course, it's so glutted that the last thing anybody should ever consider doing is entering this racket. In the first place, it doesn't pay much and doesn't lead anywhere in

particular, so no matter how successful you are at it, you'll eventually have to decide what you're going to do with your life anyway. In the second place, it's basically just a racket in the first place, and not a particularly glorious one at that.

It almost certainly won't get you laid. (Rock critics are beginning to get groupies of a sort now, but most of them are the younger, aspiring rock critics - like the kind on Shakin' Street - of one sex or another.) It won't make you rich: the highest-paying magazine in the rock press still only pays thirty bucks a review, and most of the other magazines fall way below that. So you'll never be able to make a living off of it. Nobody will come

up to you in the street and say, "Hey, I recognize you! You're Jon Landau! Man, that last review was really far out!" A lot of people, in fact, will hate you and think you're a pompous asshole just for expressing your opinions, and tell you so to your face.

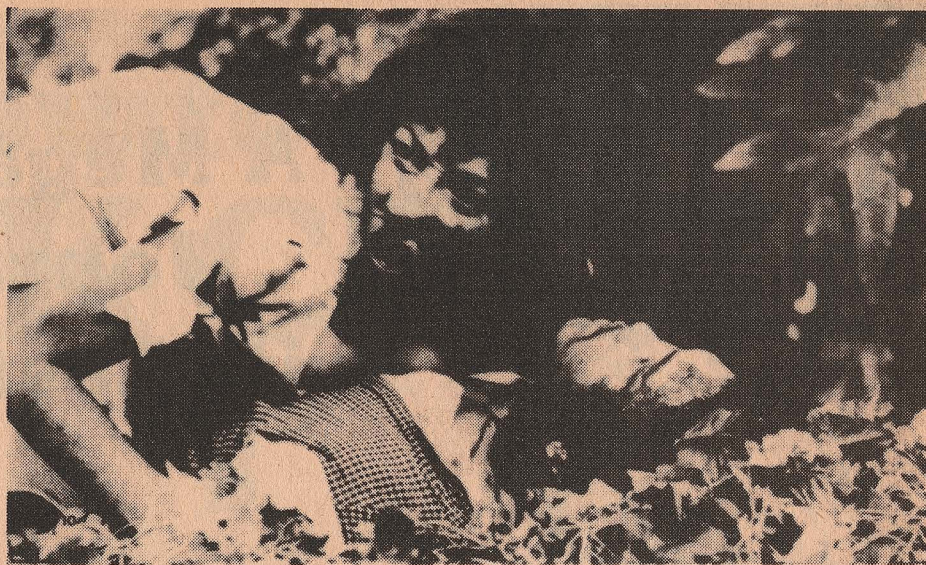
On the other side of the slug, though, are the benefits. Which are okay, if you don't get taken in by them. The first big one is that if you stay at this stuff long enough you'll start to get free records in the mail, and if you persevere even longer you may wind up on the promotional mailing lists of every company in the nation, which will not only save you a lot of money on payday and ensure that you'll get to hear everything and anything



you want, but help to pay the rent on occasion when you sell the albums spilling into your bathroom to local used records stores, at prices ranging from \$.05 to over a dollar apiece. Plus on Christmas you don't have to buy anybody any presents if you don't want to: just give your mother the new Barbra Streisand album Columbia sent you because Barbra's trying to relate, your big sister one of the three copies of the new Carole King that you got in the mail, your little sister that Osmonds double live LP you never even opened because you're too hip . . . all down the line, leaving you with enough money saved to stay fucked up on good whiskey over the holidays this year.

Another fringe benefit which will sooner or later accrue if you hew steadily on this jive ass scrawl, is that you will be invited to press parties for the opening of new acts in town. It helps to live in places like L.A. and New York, because they have more of them there; I know some people, in fact, who have almost literally kept themselves from starving for months at a time by eating dinner at a different press party every night. (I know other people who have made entire careers out of attending these things, but that's a different story.) The food's usually pretty good to magnificent, unless it's some bluejeaned folkie and the company's trying to be with-it by serving organic slop unfit for the innards of a sow; even in such an extreme case as that, though, you can content yourself with sopping up the booze, which is plentiful and usually of high quality. So even if you live at home or haven't had any trouble lately keeping the wolf from the door, you can get drunk free a lot and that's always a pleasure, even if you do usually have to sit through some shit like John Prine of Osibisa just for a few glasses of gin. Sure you're prostituting yourself in a way, but so are they, and what are most modern business, social or sexual relationships if not a process of symbiotic exploitation? It's the same tub of shit no matter where it perches, so you might as well kick back and enjoy yourself while you can.

The next big step up after press parties is that you'll start receiving invitations to concerts, events and record company conventions in distant cities. Free vacations! The record companies will pay your plane fare, put you up in a swank hotel with room service (usually), and wine and dine you like mad for the duration of your stay, all just because they want you to write about some act they're trying to break. This is where things get a



-"It almost certainly won't get you laid."

little cooler and less of a hustle, because once you've had enough stuff published that they're willing to drop a few hundred smackeroos to get you to do a story on somebody in their stable, you can pretty much pick and choose who you want to write about. Well, not totally, but everybody finds their own level, and it finds them. Like if you're a redhot flaming-eared heavy metal fanatic, they'll call you up one day and offer to fly you to Chicago or New York to see, oh, the Stooges, maybe. Or at least Jukin' Bone.

The final benefit (and for some people, the biggest) is that during most of these stages and at an increasingly casual level as time goes on, you'll get to hobnob with the Stars. Backstage at concerts, in the dressing room drinking their wine, rapping casually with the famous, the talented, the rich and beautiful. Most of 'em are just jerks like everybody else, and you probably won't really get to meet any real Biggies very often since the record companies don't need publicity on them so why should they inflict you on 'em, but you will become friends with a lot of Stars of the Future. Or at least also rans.

Okay, so that's the rosy vista. I painted it for true, and if you want it, it's yours, becuz after almost five years in this racket I finally decided I'm gonna break down and tell the whole world how to break in. I could get a lotta dough for this if I wanted to—some of us have talked for years about starting a Famous Rock Critics' School—but fuck it, I'm too lazy to take the time to set up some shit like that, and besides it's about time everybody got wind of the True Fax of Rock 'n' Roll Criticism. Listen well, and

decide for yourself whether you wanna bother with it.

The first thing to understand and bear in mind at all times is that the whole thing is just a big ruse from the word go, it don't mean shit except exploitatively and in the zealotic terms of wanting to inflict your tastes on other people. Most people start writing record reviews because they want other people to like the same kind of stuff they do, and there's nothing wrong with that, it's a very honest impulse. I used to be a Jehovah's Witness when I was a kid so I had it in by blood already, a head start. But don't worry. All you gotta do is just keep bashin' away, and sooner or later people will start saying things to you like, "How do you fit the Kinks into your overall aesthetic perspective?"

Well they won't really talk that jiveass, but damn close if you travel in the right (or wrong, as the case may be) circles. Because that old saw is true: most rock critics are pompous assholes. Maybe most critics are pompous assholes, but rock critics are especially - because they're working in virgin territory where there's absolutely no recognized, generally agreed on authority or standards. Nor should there be. Anything goes, so fake 'em out every chance you get. Rock 'n' roll's basically just a bunch of garbage in the first place, it's noise, it's here today and gone tomorrow, so the only thing that can possibly trip you up is if you begin to reflect that if the music's that trivial, can you imagine how trivial what you're doing is?

Which actually is a good attitude to operate from, because it helps keep the pomposity factor in check. Half the rock critics in the country, no, 90% of the



Above - the only existing picture of the Buffalo Rockwriters Symposium. Note Mendelsohn at left, Bangs at his best (No.

3) in center, and Arthur Levy after midnight (bottom right).

rock critics in the world have some grand theory they're trying to lay on each other and everybody else, which they insist explains everything in musical history and ties up all the loose ends. Every last one of 'em has a different theory and every last one of the theories is total bullshit, but you might as well have one as part of your baggage if you're going to pass. Try this: ALL ROCK 'N' ROLL CULTURES PLAIGARISE EACH OTHER. THAT IS INHERENT IN THEIR NATURE. SO MAYBE, SINCE WHAT ROCK 'N' ROLL'S ALL ABOUT IS PLAIGARISM ANYWAY, THE MOST OUT-AND-OUT PLAIGARISTS, THE IMITATORS OF THE PRIME MOVING GENIUSES, ARE GREATER AND MORE VALID THAN THOSE GENIUSES! JUST CHECK THIS OUT: THE ROLLING STONES ARE BETTER THAN CHUCK BERRY! THE SHADOWS OF KNIGHT WERE BETTER THAN THE YARDBIRDS! P.F. SLOAN'S FIRST ALBUM WAS A MASTERPIECE, WAY BETTER THAN BLONDE ON BLONDE (I know one prominent rock critic in Texas who actually believes this; he's a real reactionary, but so are most of 'em)!

Pretty pompous, huh? Well, that just happens to be one of my basic theories, although I don't really believe all the stuff I said in there (not that that makes a diddley damn bit of difference), and you can have it if you want it to bend or mutate as you please. Or come up with your own crock of shit; anyway, it's good to have one for those late-nite furious discussions leading absolutely nowhere. See, the whole thing's just a big waste of time, but the trappings can be fun and you always liked to whack off anyway. Like, look, you can impress people you wanna fuck by saying impressive things

like "John Stewart Mill couldn't write rock 'n' roll, but Dylan could have written 'An Essay On Human Understanding.' Only he would have called it 'Like a Rolling Stone!'" (Dave Marsh of CREEM Magazine actually said that to me, and everybody else who lived with us, and everybody he talked to on the phone for the next month, once.) Just imagine laying that on some fine little honey—she'd flip out! She'd think you were a genius! Either that or a pompous asshole. But in this business, like any other, you win some and you lose some. Persevere, kid.

Where were we? Ah yes, you should also know that most of your colleagues are some of the biggest neurotics in the country, so you might as well get used right now to the way they're gonna be writing you five and ten page single spaced inflammatory letters reviling you for knocking some group that they have proved is the next Stones. It's all very incestuous, like this great big sickoid club full of people who were probably usually the funny looking kid in class, with the acne and the big horn rims, all introverted, and just sat home every night through high school and played his records while the other kids yukked and balled it up. Tough luck, genius is pain. Or frustrated popstars, all rock critics are frustrated popstars and you should see 'em singing to themselves when nobody else is around. Boy, do they get corny! Melodramatic? Whooo!! Some of them actually go so far as to invest their entire life savings in trendy popstar wardrobes, and others are so monomaniacal as to go beyond that to the actual steps of forming a band of their own. And you can rest assured that all of them write songs, and have constant daytime and

nightdaze fantasies of big contracts with ESP-Disk at least.

Speaking of investing your life savings, another good way of letting on to everybody on the block that you're a rock critic is to go out and waste a lot of money buying old albums in bargain bins. They have these turd-dumps in most drugstores or supermarkets, full of last year's crap and older stuff at prices ranging from as low as a quarter all the way up to \$2.50 and more. If you patronize these scumholes regularly, you will soon begin to build a Definitive Rock 'n' Albums Collection, which is of course a must for anybody who's into this way of life really seriously. The object is simple: you gotta have EVERYTHING, no matter how arcane or shitty it is, because it all fits into the grand bulwark of Rock. So just go out there and throw all your money away, it's a good investment. You'll be filling your room with mung, but so what: how many other people do you know who have the Battered Ornaments album? Right. They don't know what they're missing.

I know one rock critic who actually drew out his life's savings and drove from St. Louis, where he lived, to New York and back, by way of Chicago, Detroit and New Jersey, AND STOPPED AT EVERY BARGAIN BIN ALONG THE WAY. That was the entire purpose of the trip, to visit bargain bins. Now this guy is obviously a real doofus and totally out of his mind, but you can see where this business can lead you if you're lucky and apply yourself: down blind alleys.

Speaking of this same doofus reminds me of another riff that is essential to have if you're gonna be a hotshit rock critic. You gotta find some band somewhere that's maybe even got two or three albums out and might even be halfway good, but the important thing is the more arcane it is the better, it's gotta be something that absolutely nobody in the world but you and two other people (the group's manager and one member's mother) knows or cares about, and what you wanna do is TALK ABOUT THIS BUNCH OF OBSCURE NONENTITIES AND THEIR RECORD(S) LIKE THEY'RE THE HOTTEST THING IN THE HISTORY OF MUSIC! You gotta build 'em up real big, they're your babies, only you alone perceive their true greatness, so you gotta go around telling everybody that they're better than the Rolling Stones, they beat the Beatles black and blue, they murtelyze the Dead, they're the most significant and profound musical force in the world. And someday

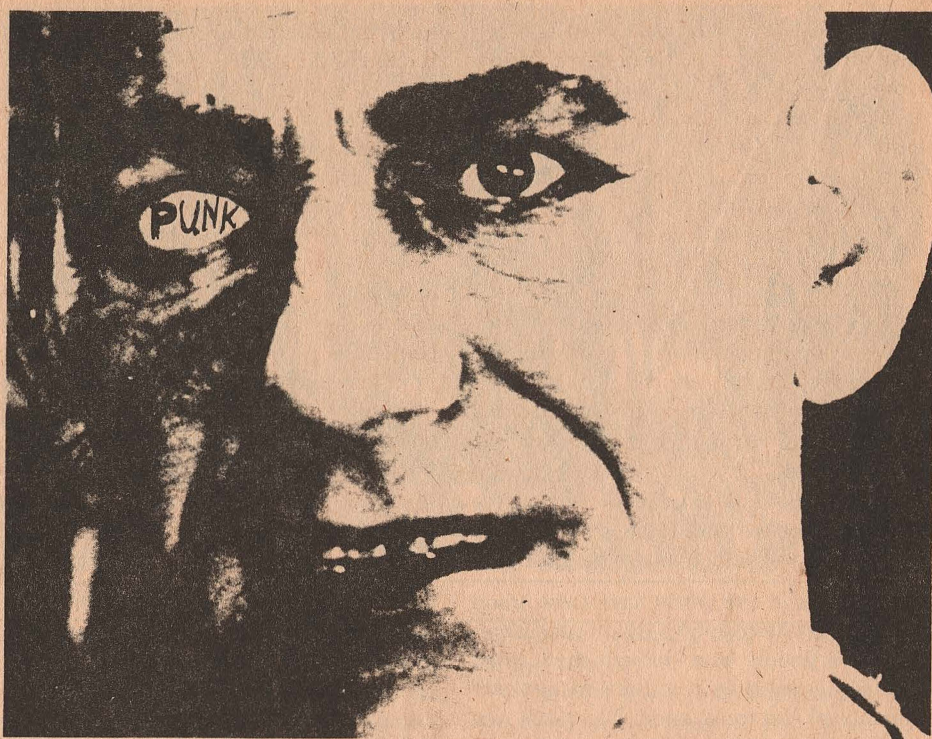


their true greatness will be recognized and you will be vindicated as a seer far ahead of your time.

Sometimes this scheme can really pay off, like if you happen to pick a Captain Beefheart or Velvet Underground way before they get widely known, although they're not really eligible because this group has gotta be so obscure that they can put out all kindsa albums and nobody pays any attention to 'em but you, they're just off mouldering in a cutout rack somewhere if not for your devoted efforts.

Doofus (of the preceding paragraph) came up with a lulu in this department, couple of 'em in fact: All he ever talks about is Amon Duul II, Bang and Budgie. Ever heard of any of 'em? That's what I thought. And you probably never will except if he's around to pester you about them. Amon Duul II are this psychedelic experimental avant-garde chance music free jazz electronic synthesizer space rock group from Germany. They got all kinds of albums out over there, there's even two groups with the same name, Amon Duul I and Amon Duul II, but they only got three albums out here and hardly anybody ever heard of 'em, although a whole shitload of people sure will if Doofus keeps up his one-man propaganda campaign in their behalf! They happen to be real good, but that's beside the point. And Bang and Budgie, his other two pet monomanias, are a couple of Black Sabbath imitations, one from Florida and one from England, one pretty good and one not so hot. So he and this other critic from Texas (also previously mentioned) send big long hate letters back and forth to each other telling each other what morons they are, because the Texan don't like Budgie or something like that. Get the idea?

Also I turned Doofus onto the Can, another German psychedelic schnozz-ball that has lotsa 17-minute electrorga jams, and he listens to one side of their album one time and sez to me: "Don't you think the Can are better than the Stooges?" See what I mean? When all week he's been asking me things like "Don't you think Amon Duul II are the greatest group in history?" and "Don't you think **Dance of the Lemmings** (one of their albums, featuring such standards of the future as "Dehypnotized Toothpaste," "Landing in a Ditch" and "A Short Stop at the Transylvanian Brain Surgery") is the greatest album of all time?" and I keep saying no, but he won't take no for an answer, he's a man with a Plan! A crusader on behalf of



"I wanna be a rock critic when I grow up."

Neglected Genius. So you see the key: **persistence**. Make a total nuisance of yourself, and people will begin to take you seriously. Or at least stop regarding you as not there. And if he wants to continue on this obscure roller-coaster ride, there are zillions of German bands: take Guru Guru or Floh de Cologne, for example - these qualify as two of the finest choices in the Arcane Masterpiece department in hisoty, indeed they do, because both are imports and you can't even find a single Floh de Cologne or Guru Guru album anywhere in the United States except by ordering it special from Germany! So **nobody** knows what it sounds like so they gotta listen to Doofus. So as you can see Doofus copped himself a real hot item, but chances like that come only once in a lifetime.

That pretty well takes care of the qualifications. Like what you see? Wanna give it a try? Well, get ready, because the big time is just around the corner. The only thing left to mention before you embark on your career as a rock critic is that talent has absolutely nothing to do with it, so don't worry if you don't know how to write. Don't even worry if you can't put a simple declarative sentence together. Don't worry if you sign your name with an X. Anybody can do this shit, all it takes is a high level of unconsciousness (and you just got done reading an unconsciousness expanding session) and some ability to sling bullshit around. Also the bullshit is readymade,

you don't even have to think it up, all you gotta do is invest in a slingshot. All the word type stuff you need has already been written anyway, it's in old yellow issues of **Shakin' Street**, **Rolling Stone**, **CREEM** and all the rest; just sit around reading and rereading the damn things all day and pretty soon you'll have whole paragraphs of old record reviews memorized, which is not only a good way to impress people at parties and girls you're trying to pick up with your erudition, but allows you to plagiarise at will. And don't worry about getting caught, because nobody in this business has any memory and besides they're all plagiarists too and besides that all record reviews read the same. I learned to write 'em outa **Down Beat**, and it's the same shit in **Rolling Stone**; it's the shame shit all over. Just stir and rearrange it every once in awhile. Take off riff and staple it to another; and if you get tired of thinking about how you're a rock critic, remember William Burroughs and the cutup methods and think about being avant-garde. I do all the time.

Okay, now it's time for you to write **YOUR VERY FIRST ORIGINAL RECORD REVIEW**. It's easy, all you gotta do is point. First, pick a title for the album:

- a. **Oranges in Exile**
- b. **Outer City Blues & Heavy Dues**
- c. **Cajun Sitar Dance Party**
- d. **Hungry Children of Babylon**
- e. **Eat Your Coldcream**

Got it? Okay, the next part's just as easy. Just fill in the blanks: **This latest offering from**

- a. Harmonica Don and His Red Light District
- b. The Armored Highchair
- c. Ducks in Winter
- d. The Four Fat Guys
- e. Arturo de Cordova

is

- a. a clear consolidation of the artistic moves first tentatively ventured in his/her/their/its last album.
- b. a real letdown after the masterpiece album and single that carried us all the way through the summer and warmed us over in the fall.
- c. important only insofar as it will delineate the contours of the current



-Is this really Gordon Fletcher?

malaise for future rock historians, if there are any with all the pollution around now.

- d. definitely the album of the year.
- e. a heap of pigshit.

(How you doin' so far? See how easy it is!) Onward! (Choose one of the following for the next sentence:)

- a. In dealing with such a record, the time has come at last to talk about the responsibilities, if any, which any artist making rock 'n' roll bears to his audience, and specifically how those responsibilities relate to the political situation which we, all of us, and perforce rock 'n' roll, are compelled to come to terms with by dint of living in the United States of America today.
- b. I don't really think these guys/this dude/ the chick in question/a singing dog can defend musical output which has proven increasingly shoddy by referring to such old handles as "personal expression," "experimentalism," a new

kind of artistic freedom," or any other such lame copout.

c. It's such a thrill that this album finally came, that I am finally actually holding it in my hands, looking at the fantastically beautiful M.C. Escher drawing on the cover whilst trembling all over to the incredible strains of the music on the record from inside it which even now are wafting from the old Victrola, that I really don't know if I am going to come or cry.

d. It's so goddam fucking boring to have to open all these pieces of shit every day, you waste your time, you break your fingernails, half the time it's just a repeat of an album that came yesterday, that I can hardly bring myself to slit open the shrinkwrap once I get 'em outa the

did, so I don't even care where I am, I don't care if I got rolled last night, I don't care if this place gets busted right now, I don't care if the world comes to an end because the cosmic message of truth and unity which this music is bringing to me has made me feel complete for the first time since 1968.

(Well, that wasn't hard at all, was it? A whole paragraph written already! But this is no place to stop: the most fun's yet to come. Tally ho!)

**The first song on side one**

(choose one)

- a. "Cataline Sky"
- b. "Death Rays in Your Eyes"
- c. "I Wish I Was a Rusty Nail"
- d. "Lady of Whitewater"
- e. "Nixon Eats"

(choose again)

- a. is a rousingly high spirited opener in march tempo
- b. starts things off at an extremely high energy level
- c. sets the pace and mood of the album most atmospherically
- d. won't win any Grammys this year
- e. reminds me of my Grandmother puking up her sherry into the bathtub the night we had fish that had gone bad for dinner when I was three years old.

**The first thing you notice is**

(choose one)

- a. the vicious, slashing guitar solo
- b. the deep, throbbing bass lines
- c. how mellowly the sensitive, almost painfully fragile vocal is integrated with the mesmerising Spanish chords from those four fine hollowbody Gibson guitars
- d. that the cymbals aren't miked right
- e. that the entire mix is a washout and this album has what is probably the worst production of the year.

**The full impact of what's going on in this cut may not reach you the first time, but if you keep listening a couple of times a day for a week or two, especially through headphones, it will come to you in a final flash of revelation that**

(choose one)

- a. you were wasting your time
- b. you are listening to a masterpiece of rock which so far transcends "rock" as we have known it that most people probably won't recognize it's true worth for at least ten years
- c. all the instruments are out of tune
- d. you should have bought the Band instead



- e. you're deaf in one ear.
- Cut two is \_\_\_\_\_  
(choose one)
- a. a nice change of pace
  - b. more of the same pigshit
  - c. a definite picker-upper
  - d. interesting, at least
  - e. insulting to the human ear (my dog didn't like it either)

by virtue of the fact that \_\_\_\_\_  
by virtue of the fact that \_\_\_\_\_

- a. it was produced by Phil Spector's cousin from Jersey
  - b. it's only two seconds long
  - c. the lyrics say more, and more concisely, about what we have done to our natural environment than anything else written in the past decade
  - d. Bobby Keyes, Jim Price and Boots Randolph sit in for a real old time "blowing session"
  - e. I spilled Gallo Port in the grooves and it made it sound better.
- In spite of that, I feel that the true significance of its rather dense and muted lyrics can only be apprehended by \_\_\_\_\_

- a. the purchase of a hearing aid
- b. reading the sheet enclosed with the record
- c. going back and listening to "Memphis Blues Again," then come back to this and see if it doesn't blow you right out the door!
- d. taking a course in German
- e. throwing the incoherent piece of pigshit in the trash and going out for a beer, where something good is probably on the jukebox

(Time for paragraph three already! Smooth sailing, bunky! You're almost there:)

This record has inspired such \_\_\_\_\_

- a. Ambivalent feelings
- b. helpless adoration
- c. bile and venom
- d. total indifference
- e. a powerful thirst

in me that I can't bring myself to describe the rest of the cuts. Track by track reviews are a bore anyway, and the album only costs \$4.97 at the right stores, so go down and get it and find out for yourself whether you'll like it or not. Who am I, who is any critic or any other sentient being on the face of the earth, to tell you what a piece of music sounds like? Only your ears can hear it as only your ears can hear it. Am I right or am I wrong? Of course I am. I do know that I will \_\_\_\_\_

- a. go on listening to this album till I drop dead of cancer



-Shakin' Street's El Mono looks at the new Warners shipment.

- b. walk out into the backyard and toss this offense unto mine eyes into the incinerator soon as I finish typing this spew
- c. never forget the wonderful chance I've had here in the pages of **Fusion** to share this very special record, and my own deepest dredged sentiments about it, with you, who whether you know it or not are a very special person whom I love without qualification even if we've never seen each other, I don't even know your name, and am so righteous that I don't even care if you look like a sow
- d. break this elpee over the head of the very next Jesus Freak or Hare Krishna creep I see in the street, just for thrills!
- e. go to sleep now and awaken upon a new morning in which I may be able to appreciate this unbridged poetic outpouring with fresh ears.

So before I sign my name at the bottom of this page and pick up the check which the cheap kikes that run this rag will never pay me anyway, I would like to leave you with one thought: \_\_\_\_\_

- a. Today is the first day of the rest of your life.
- b. There are many here among us who feel that life is but a joke.
- c. The red man lost this land to you and me.
- d. Rock 'n' roll is dead. Long live rock 'n' roll.
- e. Since these assholes that're stupid enough to print this shit don't pay me anything, why don't you? I've probably turned you on to a lot of good records

over the years, and what do I get out of it? Nothing but a lot of grief! A lot of abuse from cretins who can't understand that rock 'n' roll IS the Revolution! A lot of cheap bloodsuckers like hellhounds on my trail! I got "Yer Blues"! I've paid my body and soul! So send me som SSS, goddammit, or I'll never write a word again as long as I live! Your faith correspondent, \_\_\_\_\_

(just sign your name here)

(and write your address here)

You did it! You really did it! There, you see, that wasn't so hard, was it? Now YOU TOO are an officially ordained and fully qualified rock critic, with publication under your belt and everything. Just cut out the review, if you've finished filling in all the blanks, and send it to the rock magazine of your choice with a stamped, self-addressed envelope! If they send it back, send it to another one! Be persistent! Be a "go getter"! Do you think Jon Landau ever let rejection slips get him down? No! And if you send it to all the rock mags in America, one of them is bound to print it sooner or later because most of them will print the worst off the wall shit in the world if they think it'll make 'em avant-garde! You could send 'em the instruction booklet on how to repair your lawn mower, just write the name of a current popular album by a famous artist at the top of the cover, sign your name at the bottom of the last page, and they'll print it! They'll think you're a genius!

And you are! And when all the money you asked for in this review starts pouring in from your fans, you'll be rich! David Geffen will invite you out to his house in the Catskills for the weekend! Miles Davis will step aside when you walk down the street! Seals of Seals & Crofts will tip his hat to you and sing "Bah'ah!" as you walk down the street! David Peel will write songs about you! So will John Leonon! So will everybody! Andy Warhol will put you in his movies! You'll tour with David Bowie, Leon Russell and Atomic Rooster, reading your most famous reviews to vast arenas full of rabid fans! You'll be an international celebrity and die at 33! You made the grade! You are now a rock critic, and by tomorrow you will be one of the most important critics in America! You'll make Esquire's Heavy Hundred in 1974! Congratulations, and welcome to the club!

Your pal,  
R.J. Gleason



FREE ALBUMS! FREE ALBUMS! FREE ALBUMS!!!

Ok, boys and girls, here's another chance to clean up on the new releases without spending a cent.

Throughout the history of rock 'n' roll, there have been artists and groups who gave themselves titles with some vestige of authority in their names. There's **King** Harvest, or **Captain** Beyond, and **Commander** Cody and N.Y. group **Queen** Elizabeth . . . these are just some examples.

What we want is a list of title/names like these - and we want a really loonnggg one. In fact, we'd be so pleased that the entry with the longest list can have his pick of any 10 albums listed below.

Contest closes October 30, so winner will be announced in our November 7 (SSG No. 17) issue. So, send that list to The Shakin' St. Gazette . . . c/o Gary Sperrazza . . . 35 Knox Ave. . . Buffalo, N.Y. 14216. Winner will be judged by the editor on the basis of authenticity, originality, length and accuracy, and overall readability. Don't forget to list the albums you want should you win, from the list below. Good luck!

- 1) **Quatro** - Suzi Quatro
- 2) **Quo** - Status Quo
- 3) **Phaedra** - Tangerine Dream
- 4) **Turn of the Cards** - Renaissance
- 5) **461 Ocean Blvd.** - Eric Clapton
- 6) **Welcome Back My Friends** . . . Ladies and Gentlemen - Emerson, Lake & Palmer
- 7) **The Human Menagerie** - Cockney Rebel
- 8) **Child of the Novelty** - Mahogany Rush
- 9) **White Lady** - Badger
- 10) **Journey** - Arthur Brown's Kingdom Come
- 11) **Road** - Johnny Rivers
- 12) **Monkey Grip** - Bill Wyman
- 13) **Live in Memphis** - Elvis Presley
- 14) **Heavy Metal Kids**
- 15) **Mr. Natural** - Bee Gees
- 16) **Preservation Act II** - Kinks
- 17) **Greatest Hits** - CSNY
- 18) (all three count as one) **Can't Get Enough** - Barry White; **In Heat** - Love Unlimited; **Together Brothers Soundtrack**

# Contest

This is the official entry blank! Use this, or you'll be forced to listen to Album Choice No. 18.

(Alright, five is easy. Flex those brain tissues.)

(So you've got 10, huh? Keep goin'.)

15! Didja remember the naval officers?)

(If you've gotten this far, you've probably won already, but continue on another sheet anyway. . .)

Mail to: Shakin' St. Gazette  
35 Knox Ave.  
Buffalo, N.Y. 14216

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Your LP choices  
(list number)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Long Players



## Traffic Jam

AS THE EAGLE FLIES

Traffic

(Asylum/Elecktra)

Record companies amuse me. As soon as their bands get an established name, the corporate mouths start watering as they see visions of dollar signs floating across the room. And it is to be expected - companies exist to make money. I know, such profundity ... but it oftentimes is the people *within* the companies who spout news like: "our label strives to be an outlet for the cultivation of artistically creative talent and to reach the maximum amount of people by supporting our artists through radio promotion, newspaper publicity and advertising, blah, blah, blah."

And most labels combine "product" (a terribly sterile term) of blatant commerciality and creativity in a manner that lets them exist successfully, on a financial and critical level. So perhaps one can't blame **them** as much as the consumer. Not the critic or rabid fan, but the audience bulk who will buy an artist's album either to impress his friends, play at a party, stick on as background music, or because 'everyone else has got it.'

Any self-respecting artists should be **insulted** by this kind of LP-buyer, but it is this guy that helps turn an album into a gold-seller and no commercially-minded artist with a gold record sitting on his mantelpiece can afford **not** to pander to this hack-segment of his audience, not if it was that segment that helped him to afford that mantelpiece in the first place.

So, the three characters in this absurdist play - the artist/group, the hack-fan, the record company - all enact a complicated pattern of lies, backstabbing, and back-patting that, in the end, will do a good job of stifling any personnel interrelation with the muzak. Twenty years from now, I don't want to tell my kid that music was invented so there'd be something to listen to in elevators.

As the **Eagle Flies**, the new Traffic LP, is on Asylum Records, who made a deal with English-based Island Records. Since Dylan had switched from CBS to Asylum, Asylum agreed to have Island distribute Dylan's **Planet Waves** LP if Asylum could distribute the Traffic LP in the States.

Now that doesn't seem a deal, as Dylan is more popular than Traffic, but since there are so many more LP-buyers in the U.S., Asylum must've figured they could use their reputable promotion and publicity departments to push this LP down your throats and up the charts.

We now go back a few months to discuss the Dylan deal. Did you know that the Dylan LP didn't go gold (sell \$1,000,000) in the U.S. and fared worse in England? Right, and Dylan was reportedly so mad he left the label to return to CBS. Actually, from talking to diehard Dylan fans, the fault lies with the artist himself - **Planet Waves** was initially satisfying but ultimately disappointing.

Now, Asylum keeps their part of the bargain ... and here is **As The Eagle Flies**.

It's quite hopeless to expect a rejuvenation in Traffic, particularly after the dismal **Shoot Out** and **On the Road** (actually half of a two-LP live set issued in England). What Traffic were able to crystallize on **Low Spark**, they can no longer recapture, even though the band are back to four-man basics: leader Stevie Winwood, veterans Chris Wood and Jim Capaldi (who has returned to drums) and bassist Rosko Gee.

Cut breakdowns seem senseless, as they're calling individual attention to songs that are so nondescript, they're just not worth talking about. Chris Wood's sax contributes nothing, seeming to float aimlessly throughout the album as Gee and Capaldi set down a merely adequate rhythm that allows Winwood's hung-over, tired voice to compile a plainly directionless collection of jamming, with the pretensions that they've created a 'mood.'

"Something New," "Graveyard

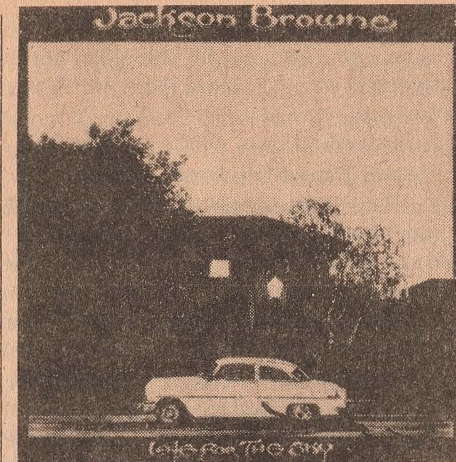
People," "Love" and "When the Eagle Flies" are so plain as to seem monotonous. "Dream Gerrard," written by Winwood and Bonzo Dog-man Viv Stanshall (also the announcer on **Tubular Bells**) is drawn out to an excruciating 11 minutes. "Walking in the Wind" provides the only pleasant melody until, three minutes in, the band decides to end the song while fooling around for an extra four minutes. "Memories of a Rock 'n Rolla" (No. 3580 in a series of songs with rock 'n' roll in the title that is **not** rock 'n' roll - there must be a conspiracy going) has such profoundly inspired lyrics as "And the music is so sweet/ That it makes me tap my feet/ And my mind is so very high/ I am almost touching the sky" - oh, really, Stevie?

This previously superb band - God, when I think of such well-developed entertaining albums like **Low Spark** and **John Barleycorn**, I can't believe it's the same band - professes to be a fusion of rock, jazz and R & B. Well, there's not enough power for rock fans, not enough drive for R&B fans and they'd get laughed out of jazz circles, unless they were considered an exercise in delicacy. Even as a 'fusion,' it doesn't work as there's not enough of any single form or theme to hold attention or satisfy anyone.

All that remains is the name - Traffic - previously regarded as a dependable band for good, solid music. And that's the only thing Asylum can bank on to sell this album. If recent sales for the Dylan album are an indication that music fans are wising up to the absurdist play discussed previously, then **As The Eagle Flies** will die a swift death. So Traffic and Asylum can't bank on the band's rep anymore - they lost half their audience through laziness two albums ago.

Asylum and Island just stuck each other with two turkeys - they should have known better. It's hoped that an important lesson will be learned here - it's financially and critically more profitable in the long run for companies to spend their efforts developing good new bands than to keep milking the old ones, well after the old ones run out of drive and ideas. One look at the charts tells you people are looking for something new. Both Asylum and Island have lots of artists worthy of your attention and Traffic isn't one of them anymore.

-Gary Sperrazal



## Browne

LATE FOR THE SKY

Jackson Browne

(Asylum/Elecktra)

Let's just say...

Dusk dusts slowly across the cloud flecked sky, and I sit by, outside a house where **nobody** lives in an early model Chevy with bloody-nose stains on the seat and tooth-trimmed fingernails on the floor.

Music comes slowly from the speaker with a sigh, and **now** we try, outside a sound where somebody gives like a late model James Dean with **nobody**-knows pains and the painter says, "Heywaitaminit!" as he knocks on the door.

Though I feel he's talented and punky enough to be a pop rock 'n' roll star, apparently Jackson Browne isn't interested. He seems to be "deep into his

well" and more interested in his personal styled picturesque lyrical ballads. Nothing on **Late for the Sky** reaches the intensity of "Doctor My Eyes" or "Redneck Friend." Only two songs break out of the slow Jackson Browne mold we've come to know so well in only two albums. One, **The Road and the Sky**, a sort of sped up slow ballad has been compared fittingly to Elton (Rockaday) Johnny. The other, "Walking Slow," has an unusual (for Browne) reggae rhythm.

Yet as laid back (admittedly a cliché, but too often appropriate these days) as the album is, with its even tempered piano/guitar music, there is more of an agitated sigh in the mood than a calm one. And as dull and repetitious as the music might get there's always something a David Linley slide or fiddle solo, or more often a lyrical gem, to sustain interest. Like the cover photograph (done in imitation of surrealist painter Magritte) Jackson's lyrics give the illusion of surrealism but instead of twisting things part way as a surrealist would, he brings them full circle, back to reality. He is, to use his own phrase, "Gonna get a little higher, see if I can hot-wire reality."

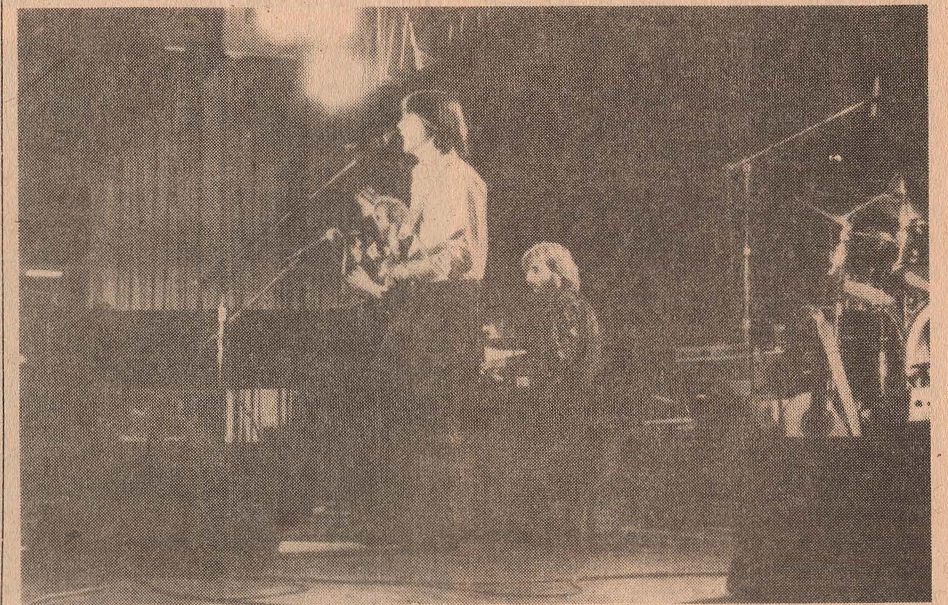
"Look," he says in the album's only spoken word (near the end of "The Late Show"). Listen long enough to **Late for the Sky** and you'll see.

Let's just say **nobody** gets out and goes into the house where she lives.

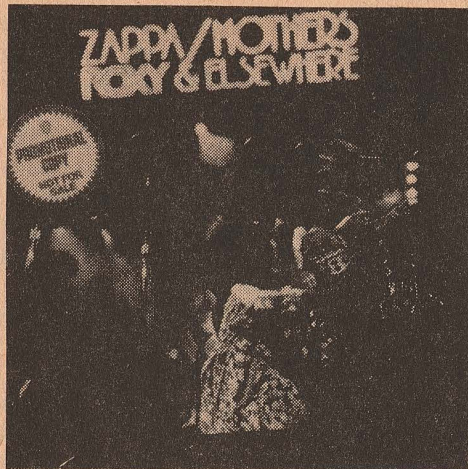
And let's just say I drive away, in an early model Chevrolet, and as I go I sing:

"Hey, let's just say."

-David Meinzer







# Zappa

ROXY AND ELSEWHERE

Frank Zappa/Mothers  
(Discreet/Warner)

After two major disappointments - **Overnite Sensation** and **Apostrophe** - on his new Discreet label, Frank Zappa, the Machiavelli of contemporary music, bounces back with a new live double elpee that should put him back into the niche of glory he once so prominently occupied.

Certain rock critics would write him off these days as unimportant, unfunny and hopelessly redundant (see last ish-Ed.). Not entirely true, I say. He's definitely past the hungry/ugly freak stage that once had sociologists worrying if he and his Mothers were the beginning of the End, as far as nihilistic teenage rebellion goes. If you were a parent in 1967 and someone showed you a picture of the Mothers, it wouldn't be too hard to imagine that these guys were convincing your kids to piss on the flag, skip school or hang out with Negroes, Beatniks or (God forbid!) worse.

Since these early days, Zappa has cleaned up his act but he never stopped being one of the greatest satirists of American life since H.L. Mencken and he certainly has not ceased to be the ultimate serious contemporary composer. One can definitely call Zappa a continuation of Varese and Stravinsky with as much plausibility as if one were to speak of Lukas Foss or even John Coltrane. He also happens to play guitar like practically no one else.

**Roxy and Elsewhere** is a collection of live segments recorded at the Roxy in L.A., Chicago, and (of all places) Edinboro Pennsylvania. Everything is new with the exception of two reworked Mothers' classics: "More Trouble

Everyday" - based on the song of the same name (minus the 'More') from the Mother's first LP **Freak Out**, and "Son of Orange County" - born of "Oh No/Orange County Lumber Truck" from **Weasels Ripped My Flesh**.

The lineup is basically the same as the last two albums, the only new additions being second drummer Chester Thompson and Walt Fowler replacing Sal Marquez on trumpet. Don Preston, prominent member of previous Mothers incarnations, makes a reappearance, playing synthesizer, his first since **Waka/Jawaka** back in 1972. Also appearing is former Zappa underling Jeff Simmons on rhythm (who can hear him?) guitar. Simmons had an album on Bizarre, **Lucille Has Messed My Mind Up**, a minor masterpiece now available at ridiculously low prices in bargain bins. So much for the band and on to, da da da DAAA: The Music Herein.

The last time Zappa really got intricate, for my money at least, was on **Uncle Meat**, the avant-rock classic of the 60's. But the material on side two comes close. "Village of the Sun" is about growing up in the desolation of Lancaster, Calif., located in the Mojave Desert. Sung by Napoleon Murphy Brock, it sounds more soulful than any other previous attempt by any edition of the Mothers. "Echidna's Art" and "Don't You Ever Wash That Thing" bear the closest resemblance to **Uncle Meat** which is not that surprising considering Ruth Underwood (nee Komanoff) assisted Artie Tripp on the marimbas and others tunable percussives on **Uncle Meat**. These same percussives echo through her

playing here.

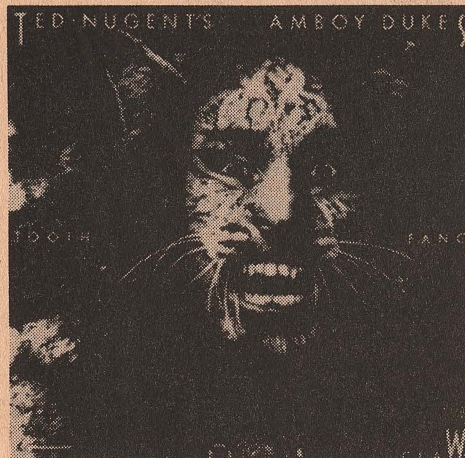
Rehashed and slowed down, with Murphy singing, "Son of Orange County" is superb as is "Be Bop Tango," a long highly structured so-called tango that drizzles into an audience participation segment which bores quite a bit in the translation to vinyl. In "Dummy Up," Zappa and Jeff Simmons try to convince Brock to smoke a rolled-up college degree ... "You mean if I smoke this it's the same as if I went to college?", asks Brock. Zappa replies "Oh no no, the college degree is stuffed with nothing. You get nothing with your college degree." Sardonic words from a college dropout-cum-maniacal maestro.

For a while, I thought Zappa might have jinxed himself in killing the ol' Bizarre/Straight record labels, the home of the strangest mutations of the psychedelic age. But, as a whole, **Roxy and Elsewhere** makes up for the qualities missing in Zappa's first two Discreet releases. If you've never seen Zappa live, it may seem wondrous that a live double LP can sound musically and technically as good as this one does. But it is live, although minor overdubbing was done, and it presents a clear picture of Zappa paired with a highly competent crew of Mothers. Together they've never sounded better and it seems the longer Zappa is in the business, the better he can play guitar. The only thing that bothers me (make sure you listen for this): at the end of "Be Bop Tango" when Zappa says it's the end of the concert, why does everybody start cheering?

-Andy Cutler



"Listening to Frank Zappa is like having your head stuck in a pinball machine." -Anonymous



# Ted Nugent

TOOTH, FANG & CLAW

Ted Nugent's Amboy Dukes  
(Warner Brothers)

Let's face it, the heavy metal scene in America has very little meat on the bones. That's why a guitarist like Ted Nugent is now an important factor. Since the disappearance of guys like Leigh Stevens (Blue Cheer), Wayne Kramer, and Fred "Sonic" Smith (MC5), rock in the states is zilch. Ted possesses all the creativity and the enthusiasm to at least give heavy metal rock a fighting chance.

Ted was driving his axe even when it was chic to get laid-back in Marin County and sing from a wheelchair. For instance awhile back Ted was doin' a gig up in Cleveland, and the dude got so excited that he went out to perform in just a loincloth. Well, as the concert progressed, Ted, in a fit of animalistic furor befitting his behavior, savagely jumped upon his towering Marshall amps. As if one were possessed by the demon, he suddenly leaped into the crowd (remember the Christians being tossed to the lions?). The crowd was absolutely crazed and writhing with a hungering insanity ecstatic by the fact that Ted had offered himself as the supreme and sublime sacrifice. His loincloth was ripped to shreds by the avid fans, and poor Ted found his ass in the clink for indecency (Ah! the life of a rock star).

Nugent's ingenuity combines with this craziness to fill the position for one of the best rock guitarists in the U.S. this side of BOC's Buck Dharma. Look don't believe me I don't give a shit. But you tell me who you got in mind! When you're as good an axeman as the Nug, creativity flows with the feelin' and the fever in your bod. And that's Teddy 100%.

This album left me with so much

feedback in my system one burp could bring down the Empire State Building. I played this album for a chick the other night and she started bleedin' between the ears, man we had to use a tampon to stop the flow. The opening cut "Lady Luck" along with other comps like "Living In The Woods," and "The Great White Buffalo" all possess that crashing flow of sound that makes you feel like you've been run over by a 350 pound sweat hog.

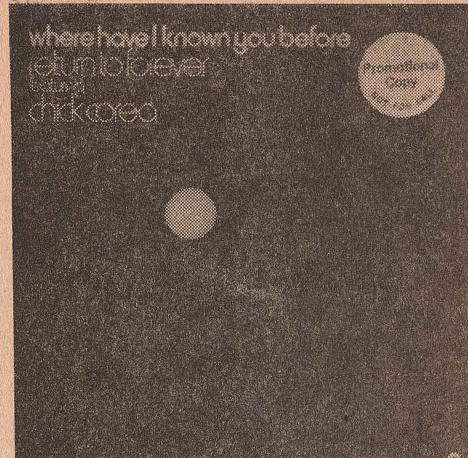
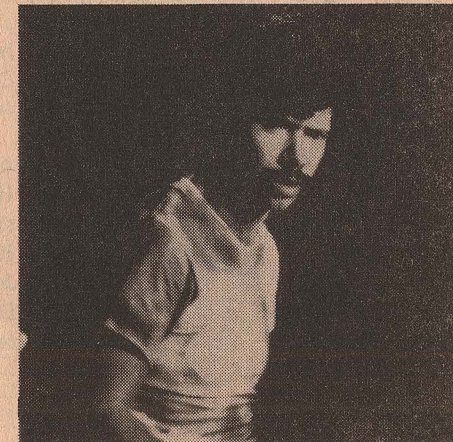
"Hibernation" and "Free Flight" are both instrumentals with the same type of fluidity. Ted opens with a high-pitched sustained note that comes in from all directions in different pitches, (I member Fever Tree with their AM hit "San Francisco Girls" circa 1967?). Nugent's diversification is underrated cause there's a lot of good tracking and overdubbing, the notes are pure and cleanly sliced ... smoothness.

"Maybelline," (hah! see if you kin tell) sounds better than when Berry does it. Listen to him screamin' "highway sound" a few times, cause the geetar sounds like its piledriven' into a Porche when he holds a high voltage note, (please pound your head into the wall at this point).

This album not only proves that Ted is one of the head honcho axemen in the U.S. but also that he definitely creates a formula of working sound. This proves once and for all that this kinda ruck 'n' roll has as much substance as any particular kind of muzak. Ted's feeling for the weapon is the tour de force of the LP, and I'd like to see him jump the Snake River Canyon with a 5,000 foot electrical umbilical chord attached to his guitar.

The album is pure energy and while your listenin' to it you kin jump up and down on some old lady, or take your Bic pen and stab yore Zippy doll to death, or stick your head in a waffle iron or ...

-Mitch "J.D." Hejna



# Chick

WHERE HAVE I KNOWN YOU BEFORE  
Return To Forever featuring Chick Corea  
(Polydor)

Since the early sixties Chick Corea has been one of the most dominant forces in all the realms of Jazz. In the beginning Chick was building his reputation and learning from the cream of the crop. People like Miles Davis, Elvin Jones, and Herbie Mann employed his talents. Later, Chick started out doing his own tunes with Joe Farrell, and Hubert Laws (Atlantic Anthology: **Inner Space**). Many of his compositions were fresh, new, and intricate, it was "his" sound and nobody else's. He has always possessed consistent ability, scaling over heights that some musicians have not overcome ... redundancy.

Chick's abilities have become even sharper in the seventies with such flawless accomplishments as: **Light As A Feather** and **Piano Improvisations Part I**. Now he faces another great transition forming Return To Forever. The group consists of Stanley Clarke, bassist extraordinaire, Lenny White, drums, and Al DiMeola, guitars. Their first album, "Hymn Of The Seventh Galaxy" (Polydor), exhibited much strength and promise, the channeling and direction of the music was new and energetic. **Where Have I Known You Before** is another confirmation of that strength they hold, it is one of the most important, fluid, and distinctly beautiful albums of the year.

This album is a graceful encompassment of each member's ability to communicate to the listener and still retain a musical individuality within the confines of their musicianship as artists. The communication is now a critical factor in the group because White and Clarke are contributors along with Chick.



Cuts like "Beyond The Seventh Galaxy," and "Vulcan Worlds" contain a danceable aura but still retain the hypnotic listening effects. That in itself is an accomplishment, to be popular as well as original. Chick sprinkles piano sonatas as delicate and soft as a poet's verse throughout the album.

The most noticeable personality on the creation is the fuzz tonage of Al's guitar which offers another explored portion of talent which Chick evolves around with the synthesizer. I have not heard a more innovative use of this instrument in a long time. For Chick the synthesizer is not used to dress-up his

work, it is an instrument of mood incorporated with the clavinet and electric piano to "better" (if such a word can be used to describe this) and expand his superb technique.

The closing piece called "Song To The Pharaoh Kings" is probably one of the best works ever composed by Chick. I find myself listening to this piece over and over because there is so much tempo change and expression that this 14 minutes justifies the true genius and brilliance from all the members of the quartet. Clarke exhibits an astonishing dexterity when he plays his bass strings to a point of breakage and Chick assimilates

many forms to the synthesizer which at times actually sounds like an alto sax. Other times Chick and Al double up playing remarkable duets to which Lenny White adds his percussive intensity.

Return To Forever have accomplished what they wanted, an intense communication to the listener. This work has much more character than their previous release due to the immense unification the group feels with their music. You yourself will have to explore the music. You shall suffer no disappointment whatsoever, because RTF and Chick are firmer and much more confident. What more could anyone ask?

-Mitchell 'J.D.' Hejna

## Felix the Cat Meets Todd

FELIX CAVALIERE  
(Bearsville/Warners)

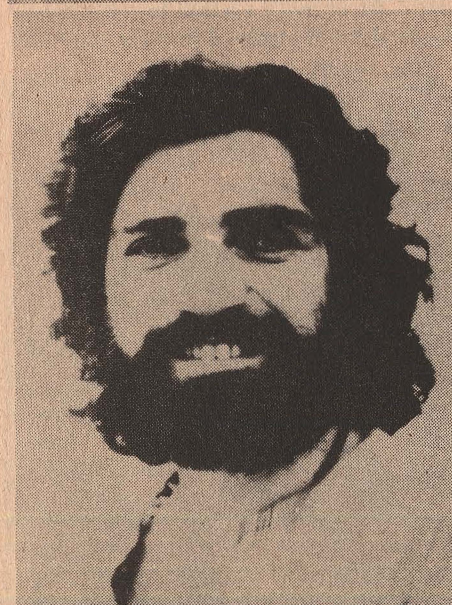
The Young Rascals were perhaps the best of the many mid-sixties N.Y.C.-Long Island punk bands that ever existed. But they, sadly to say, had to grow up and soon dropped the "Young" from their name. They still went on to produce good music, although it seemed as if they were getting more Un-Rascally with every new album. Their last albums, *Island of Real* and *Search and Nearness* were very jazz-influenced and were not exactly the old Rascals' sound.

Now the Rascals are gone, alas, but we do have Dino Danelli's Bulldog group and now Felix Cavaliere to carry on in their place. While Dino's group seems to be intent on playing much harder than the old Rascals, Felix seems to have refined his jazz influences and unlike the last Rascals sides, is once again working in an area similar if not exactly like the Rascals' old ballpark.

The album opens with "A High Price to Pay" which even though the title might suggest otherwise is a fairly happy tune. "I'm a Gambler" follows with lyrics like these:

"I'm a Gambler,  
I'm a Gamblin' Man,  
You Make Me Gamble Baby,  
I Need a Lucky Hand"

It's really kind of catchy after about forty or so spins on your turntable, and comes out sounding not unlike Little



Stevie Wonder backed by Felix's old group. The other tunes on this side find Felix a bit more depressed but "Long Time Gone" does end the album with some really fine Sargeant Pepper-ish trumpet and some fine ARP synthesizer work from Ol' Felix.

The second side opens with "Future Train" which sounds like the O'Jays' "Love Train" mixed in with some of Star Trek's best sound effects. On this and other tracks the female back-up is really good as is the fine co-production from Mr. Nazz, Todd Rundgren. The sound of the rest of the second side is uniformly good, even if the songs tend to be a bit similar.

The album ends on a quite bizarre note with "I'm Free," which is not the old standard but is a new number written by Felix, and sounding not unlike a totally stoned Iggy Pop backed by an equally tripped out Yes group. It has Felix singing the title "I'm Freeeee," starting very bass-like and reaching heights not equalled since The Chipmunks' last recorded work. Like I said, a very weird way to end an album.

Still, I can't hep but think how much better this would be if Felix had the Rascals behind him instead of the various studio cretins and Todd. Just think - The Rascals, all together again, in concert!!! Jeez, do you think we could have Dino, Desi & Billy reforming and being the second act? What a concert. . .

-Bernard Kugel

## Cold Cuts

SLOW FLUX  
Steppenwolf  
(Mums/CBS)

Most things are better off dead and this lame reincarnation of Steppenwolf is no exception. During the late 60's, Steppenwolf commanded a large following and had an impressive string of hit singles. "Born to Be Wild" was the best, the anthem of the strung-outs coming back from peace and love-land to harsh reality. It was fast and violent - a great song to race Daddy's new car to. *Slow Flux* is pretty hard too, but not enough to re-establish the Wolf to their former spot. John Kay seems to see what he hath wrought in "Children of Night": "Barely 13/ hard and they're mean/ Hunting in packs/ Like jackals/ They prey on the meek/ the old and the weak/ And 10-year old Jimmy got arrested in school/ They found a tank in his locker." Well, things aren't really that bad but it sure does seem as if kids are getting older earlier these days and if that's the case, they'll leave these ancients to us, the remnants of the old days. Kids don't give a shit about peace and love nowadays. So before they come to get ya', clap on yer headphones, turn up the volume and put on "Born to Be Wild" instead of this nostalgia crap. Mebbe, just mebbe, you won't get any older.

BLOOD ON THE SNOW  
Coven  
(Buddah)

Reports say stations aren't playing these misfits because of their connections with black magic and witchcraft, as they also ran scared from British group Black Widow. How ridiculous. The only things out- of- the- ordinary with Coven are some fairly good progressive-type rockers alternating with paino-dominated ballads, a bass player named Oz Osbourne (familiar?) and a stunning, wasted-looking blond lead singer named Jinx Dawson. Producer Shel Talmy (he who worked with the Who) makes Mx. Dawson's voice sound like Peggy Lee on a deathbed and her boys fall in competently. It's better than Spanky and Our Gang, not as good as Mama Lion, who can rock 'n' roll with me (!) anytime.

TASTY  
Good Rats  
(Warner Brothers)

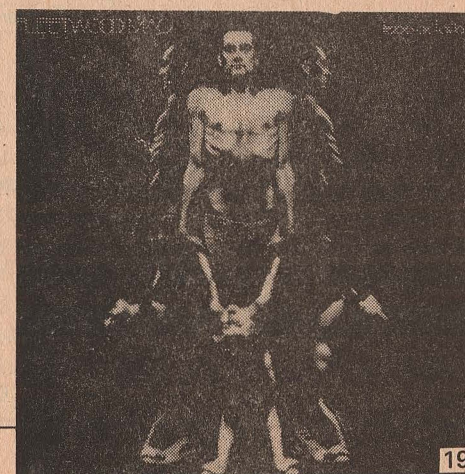
The most surprising thing about this album is that somebody like Warner Brothers had the guts to release such a good, punky LP like *Tasty*, from such an obscure, raunchy band like the Rats. The band hailed from deep down Big Apple from '67 to '69, mainstays of the city's club scene, and released one miniscule album in late '68 on Kapp. Revived with all the raunch and roll they spread back then, the Rats have come up with a damn good album in *Tasty*. Peppi Marchello's vocals are infectious throughout, with "Papa Poppa," "Klash-Ka-Bob," and the title tune real knockouts. Good Rats seem to have been locked up somewhere for the last five years, cuz they don't seem to know that rock like this is all but extinct now. Thank God for small favors.

EVERYONE IS EVERYBODY ELSE  
Barclay James Harvest  
(Polydor)

A very good politically-oriented rock album from a totally ignored group of Britishers. While they do present a rather bleak outlook on our chances for survival, they manage to come up with a fine set. Especially notable are John Lees' contributions including a reworking of the old Bee Gees' "1941 Mining Disaster," called "The Great 1974 Mining Disaster."

HEROES ARE HARD TO FIND  
Fleetwood Mac  
(Reprise/Warners)

Of all the Limey blues bands, Fleetwood Mac was once the Premier, coming closest to the original sound of Black America. Since then, the stuff they do is so limp, it practically oozes down and weeps as it comes outa the speakers. Now they're deeper into the wimpo crap they've been grinding out ever since *Kiln House*, their last genuine album. John McVie (bass) and Mick Fleetwood (drums) are the only remaining originals with American Bob Welch alone on guitar and Chris McVie on keyboards. The only cut that gets by is "She's Changing Me," which sounds adequately enough like the Beach Boys, only there's about 20 other







bands these days that can do it better. If this is what Fleetwood Mac fought to keep their name for, the bogus Mac should press charges against these deadheads.

#### THE FIRST CLASS (U.D./London)

What this is, guys and gals, is happy Beach Boy-type music, lots of studio musicians and vocalists who are lookin' for a little fame and glory. The group is led by one John Carter who takes the group from the beach ("Beach Boy"), to the stage ("Bobby Dazzler") and back to the beach again ("Surfer Queen"). A very good debut album which only suffers from kind of strange production at times. Perhaps U.K. head Jonathan King should have taken control to raise the quality of a couple of notches. Still, it makes fine music for those hot December Buffalo Beach days.

#### SKINNY BOY Robert Lamm (Columbia)

Hey, great! Another "Gee, I've got three weeks with nothing to do and all these songs that the other guys in my supergroup won't play 'cause they claim the songs suck, so I'll use them for a solo album" album. (And you can imagine what a Chicago reject sounds like.) Bob, Chicago's keyboard player, well, at least left the horns back home, love 'im for that. Anyway, he must love modern jazz (or what he thinks it is), cause it seems like every song starts out with eight beats of one piano chord followed by eight beats of the next piano chord and then back to the beginning again; and I guess that's contemporary jazz, huh? Well at least when you realize he can't write music it makes the fact that he's even less competent as a lyricist easier to take. All this guy's gonna take is your money.

#### TIM MOORE (SRC/Asylum)

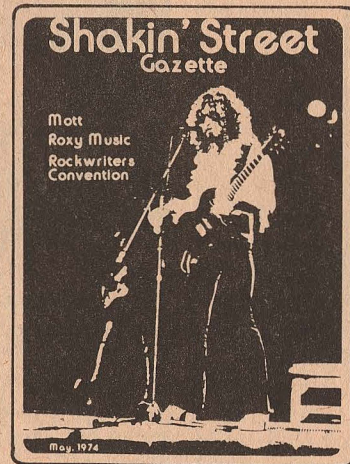
Things happen fast to this boy. First, he won the Great American song writers contest (or something like that). Then he released this album. And then Electra/Asylum head David Geffen bought the entire record company he was on (this was it's only release) just to get his hands on Moore. No kidding. Not a bad album either, with standouts including the contest winning "Charmer" (also recorded by Archies' singer Ron Dante on Bell - nice popish feel with

Motown-like strings), "When You Close Your Eyes" (should have opened the album), and "Aviation Man" (sounds like T-Rex when it gets going). The rest is mostly polite folk-pop, with bland session-man competence (although Moore does most of the playing), but with definite commercial potential which is your clue as to why Geffen wanted him.

#### TAKE MY JOKES PLEASE!!! Henny Youngman (ARTCO) +

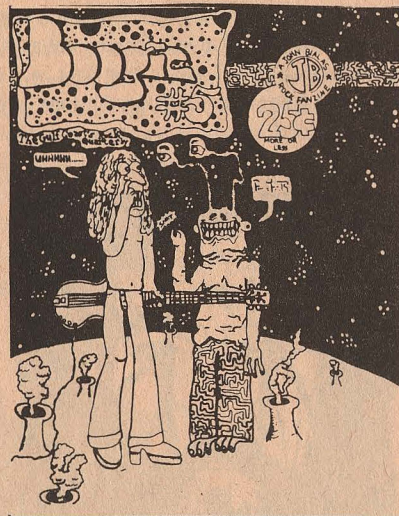
There are three or four, at the most five, truly funny men on this here sphere. One is Eddie Lawrence, the old philosopher, his records take you on journeys even Dali couldn't imagine: "Ya say ya came home drunk one night and tried to get Ch. 4 on your washing machine ... and your grandfather was just pistol whipped by a 7-year old dressed in a cowboy suit ... and the air conditioner just fell out the window ... is that what's taking the yeah outta yeah, bunky ... well, lift your head to the sky ... "the existentialist as eternal optimist. Another was Lord Buckley, whose jive-talkin' tales of the Nazz, and God's Own Drunk; and Bad Rappin' with the Marguis De Sade stand as masterful compilations of a language that was hip thirty-years ago. The Lord would stand on top of chairs and shout out in his gravelly voice: "And da Nazz came up to a cat with a bent frame and said, "Hey, man yo' frame's bent..." and his famous: "And da Nazz says dats coooool..." Number three on the all time chuckles parade is the perenial Professor Irwin Corey, the world's foremost authority. His Websterian diatribes on any subject are boogling, especially when they start to make sense. I remember once when he came on this talk show dressed in his five foot long tie, scruffy sneakers, sat down, started talking and finished up by rolling a joint right in front of all those tube-publics. Irwin Corey is a genius, and dat's dat. Well, anyway, well up there in the ranks of ha-ha merchants is that violin playing cow prince of dead pan one-liners, Henny Youngman. He tells more jokes in a minute than Carter's got little liva pills. In New Yawk they've even got him hooked up to the telephone: you dial a certain number and Henny comes on telling you one of his favorite jokes. And if that ain't enough just get this rekord because he does a total 27:54 of jokes and that's enough for any loon to twitter over.

# Our Big Brothers



In case you ever got the idea that the humble **Shakin' Street Gazette** was one of its kind in this vast teenage wasteland, here's our chance to introduce you to the rest of the international family of fanzines/magazines that are doing their best to keep their areas happy and comforted with the best rock 'n' roll writing around - much better than any national magazine can ever approach these days. Many of them appeal

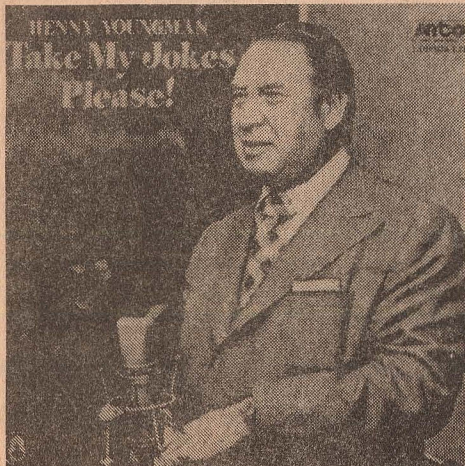
to very individual tastes, but there is something in this cross-section for everybody. The classy magazine pictured above you should know very well now - we're entering our second year of publication - October 18 (next week) and we've never felt better, thanx! Unlike **The Gazette**, you'll have to get a pen out to take down the addresses of these out-of-towners. Now, on to our partners-in-crime...



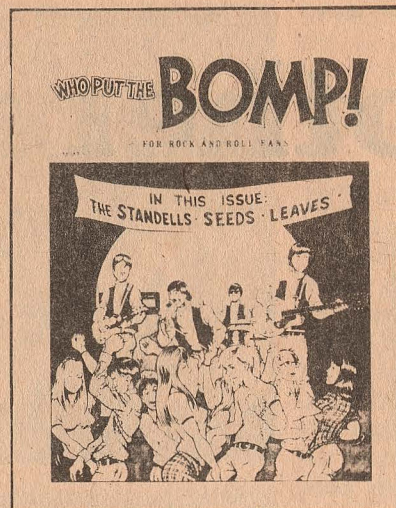
... John Bialas is still threatening a story, based on Meltzerian heresay evidence, on the infamous Rockwriters Symposium, May 10-12, 1973 in the Big Boffo, for his own fanzine called **Boogie**. Why anybody in Gulfport, MS, would want to read about it, we don't know, but we'd sure like to see it. **Boogie** is a general-interest fanzine, not always covering just music, but excels in its coverage of Southern music, of which John is a devout follower. **Boogie** No. 7 will be out soon at 25 cents an iddue, and for a fanzine that gets up to 60 pages with writing by pop-punk Eddie Flowers, Tom Bingham (love that boy!) from Dunkirk, Bangs, Meltzer, etc., it's more than worth it. The address is 221 Venetian Avenue, Gulfport, MS, 39501...



... Mike Saunders seems to hate everybody lately. An ex-rock writer (although I wish he'd get back to it), he is one guy we wish we could have gotten to Buffalo for that Rockwriters bash. He has resurfaced with issue No. 1 of **Brain Damage** (or **Who Took the Shelves**) and contains parodies (although it's all true) of the major rock magazines and many "Kock Kwitics" (as Rockin' Ron Weiser calls 'em): easily the funniest and most-needed fanzine on the market. It keeps all these critics honest. To keep Saunders honest, send 50 cents to Metal Mike Saunders; 6621 Yucca No. 2, Hollywood, Calif. 90028. Hey, Mike, if there isn't going to be a **Brain Damage** No. 2, send us the stuff and we'll run it...



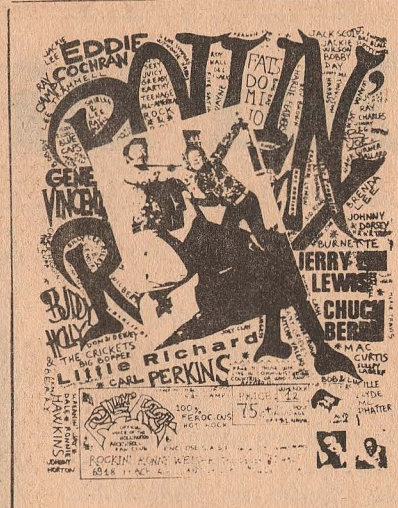




... From the man who brings you Phonograph Record Magazine, Greg Shaw, the czar of the fanzine scene brings you **Who Put the Bomp** (no relation to **Who Took the Shelves**) and he's full swing into his goal of completely cataloguing all the music of the 60's. Similar in style (but not in attitude) to **The Rock Marketplace**, **Bomp** is published quarterly, subscription is \$8 for 12 issues, write for it at the infamous P.O. Box No. 7112; Burbank, Calif. 91510. Coming in future issues: Kim Fowley, Curt Boettcher, Ohio rock, Bubblegum and Midwest pop, Flamin' Groovies, Girl groups, surf, pop, psychedelic, you name it. Auction and set sale lists abound for the collector and, by the way, we've got a certain someone's blue shirt that we'll auction off to the highest bidder. But if we keep our rates like **Bomp's**, it's gonna have to be a minimum bid of \$65...



... For those rabid fans (and casual listeners, too) who want to see the "complete" stories on any of their pop favorites as well as auction/sale albums and singles listings from people all over the country, you can't get much better than **The Rock Marketplace**. Past issues have total discographies and textbook-like information presented on groups like Jan and Dean, Yardbirds, 10 C.C., Creation, Bruce Johnston, Raspberries, Status Quo, Phil Spector, Easybeats, Move, BOC, Andy Bown, and the everlovin' Sweet. Lots of obscure pix and ads (which editor Alan Betrock devoted a whole special issue to). Subscription rates for a year (five issues) are \$6, \$7 for Canada. Address yourself to **The Rock Marketplace**; PO Box 253; Elmhurst-A-NY; 11380...

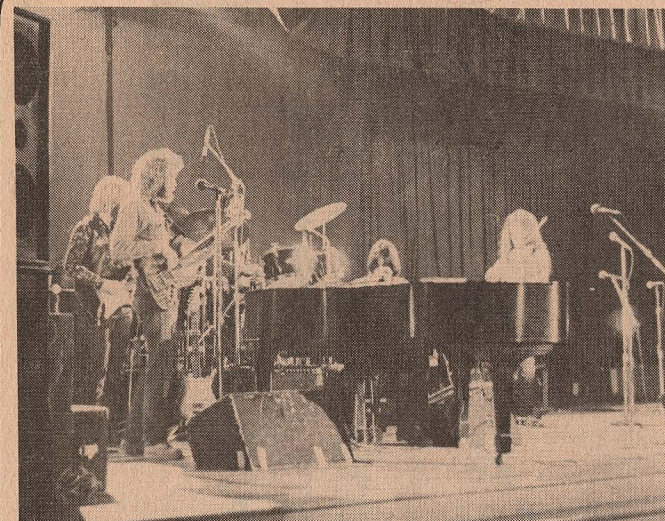


... for all those rock 'n' roll fans that think 60's and 70's rock is garbage and worship Eddie Cochran, Berry, Vincent, Holly, Little Richard, Charlie Feathers, Roy Brown, and general rockabilly, rhythm and blues and all around general Real Gone Wildcat Swing Bop Boogie Race Mixing Juicy Slurpy Succulent Sexy Savage All American Rock 'n' Roll!!!! To coin a phrase. **Rollin' Rock** just bursts with rock 'n' roll soda-pop effervescence and is available at \$4 a year to 6918 Peach Ave.; Van Nuys, Calif. 91406. As ace number one cat Ron Weiser would say: "awwwrrrrttt, yeeehh, now that's one hell of a miissive if I ever done did get one hop like this heah, now, woohoo!!! I agree like 100% cause this dad is real bad! See, ya' can't stop the Bop from being on Top at the Hop, Pop! Like, I reeally dig this Jive after Five, man Alive what a Drive! 'Cause when I'll see Sweet Sixteen - my Teenage Queen, I'll be in a Dream and see a Beam out of my Jean, that's like Gene said: Daddy's Wise to the Rise in Your Levi's!! 'Cause when I hear this Swing Bop Beat my Feet I can't Cheat 'cause I'm in Heat, Pete! Like it's a fact that the Rock is the Best in the West and the Most in the East to say the Least!!! Defeat the commies, racists, and the record mafia!! Support sexy orgasmic rockabilly and **Rollin' Rock** magazine." ...



... This one I'm particularly proud of cuz I named it. **Brum Boys** is the official voice/fanzine of the Move/ELO/Wizzard Appreciation Society. Editor and head-Roy-Wood-fan is Jack Springer and membership is attained by writing Jack at 1422 Northland Ave.; Lakewood, Ohio 44107...

-Gary Sperrazza!



-Howdee padnehs! Muh name is Jackson Browne and this time I'll be appearin' with that blues mama Ms. Bonnie Raitt, (I lost that gal Linda Ronstadt to Lowell George, the better man). We'll be at the Century Theater on Monday, October 14 at 8 p.m. Tickets for this Harvey & Corky Production will be \$6.50 and \$5.50. They'll be available at all Purchase Radic Shops, and all Festival outlets including U.B. and Buffalo State.

## Concerts

October:

12-McCoy Tyner (Fillmore Rm., UB)  
12-MARVIN GAYE, Independents (Aud)  
14-Jackson Browne, Bonnie Raitt (Century Theatre)  
16-J. GEILS BAND, TOWER OF POWER (Aud)

18-Gordon Lightfoot (Kleinhans)  
18-Stevie Wonder, Rufus (Aud)  
30-Shawn Phillips (Kleinhans)

November:

2-Freddie King (Clark Gym, UB)  
8-DAVID BOWIE (Aud)  
15-FRANK ZAPPA, Robin Trower (Aud, Trower tentative)  
16-Chick Corea (Clark Gym, UB)

Sundown ya better take care if I find you been creepin' into my performance at Kleinhans Friday, Oct. 18 at 7 p.m. & 10:30 p.m. without payin' \$6 & \$5 main floor, \$5 & \$4 balcony! Tickets available at all Festival East outlets, including UB and Buffalo State.

Shawn Phillips will preach his way into your heart at Kleinhans on Wednesday, October 30. Tickets for this Festival East Production will be available at all Festival East outlets including U.B. & Buffalo St.



The mysterious Peter Wolf

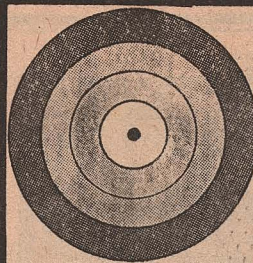


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