

\* **GRAM PARSONS AND THE FALLEN ANGELS:** Live 1973 and EP (Sierra Records, PO Box 5853, Pasadena, CA 91107-0853) These recent releases from the struggling Sierra label are of significant historical interest, much like that of Vol. 1 of the same set (which chronicled Parsons' early group The Shilos). These newer issues feature Emmy Lou Harris, a new backup band called the Fallen Angels, and even some Clarence White guitar playing to add to the "collector" status. Parsons fans will want to own both of them, even though the recording, playing, and musical importance of the records falls a little short of the standards one expects from Parsons. The band (this is after James Burton, Glen D. Hardin, etc.) is practically a pickup band, and their playing, though adequate, is not especially distinguished. There are however, some interesting air checks of short interviews with Parsons: these are enjoyable and more or less funny. Most cuts are covers of previous Parsons tunes ("We'll Sweep Out the Ashes," "Streets of Baltimore," "Cry One More Time,"...) and gain little from these alternate versions. A few new tunes, previously unrecorded by Parsons (Chuck Berry's "40 Days" among them) give some idea of the directions he might have gone. Both records were recorded live on March 13, 1973 (not long before his death) at WLIR-FM in Garden City, NY, but the second side of the EP contains a kind of posthumous release (the liner notes are unclear) of "Hot Burrito #1," one of Parsons' most beautiful compositions. This features Gene Parsons singing lead and Clarence White on acoustic guitar.

—Larry Polansky

**THE PASSAGE** "Wave"/"Drugface," "Angleland" (Cherry Red Records Ltd., 53 Kensington Gardens Square, London W2 4BA) This is a great single, very catchy dance music and an interesting musical composition. For a three-minute song this has a lot to offer—pounding drums that never let up, simple melodies transmuted and recombined to form polyrhythms, well executed and complex vocals, even touches of humor. The two songs on the flip side sounded like typical ostinato-based techno-pop.

—Tim Walsh

**LEE "SCRATCH" PERRY:** Mystic Miracle Star (Heartbeat, 186 Willow Av., Somerville, MA 02144) Your enjoyment of this oddball reggae LP depends upon your willingness to perpetuate the mystique of this legendary producer/songwriter. I think all can agree that he's got a unique sound, but the songs are long and obscure (Roky Erickson kept coming to mind), and there's nothing revolutionary about the production. Perry's scratchy vocals (he raps like an old bluesman over his own singing) and unusual effects (harmonica, xylophone, etc.) are the whole show. Rochester, NY's Majestics just keep the songs from drifting away. While I enjoyed the basic song structures, the ideas seemed a bit thin.

—JF

**PERSONAL EFFECTS** 5-song 12" EP (Cachalot, 611 Broadway, Suite 214, NYC 10012) Formerly the Hi-Techs, this Rochester, NY Band is led by the vocals, sax, and organ of co-songwriter Peggy Fournier. Based on the success of bands like Martha and the Muffins and Romeo Void, I'm betting this danceable serious-side-of-pop group has a good chance of acceptance. Fournier's vocals are strictly breathy "new wave" beat poet, but she has a strong melodic sense. The atmospheric music, making good use of guitar and keyboard effects, is stylized, distanced, captures the nouveau pose perfectly.

—JF

**PERSUASIVE PERCUSSION**, Vols. 1-3. The Command All-Stars. (Command/Pickwick) Back in the days when Avery Fischer brought us living stereo, such folks as Enoch Light and Terry Snyder had the bright idea of "allying music with test patterns" for checking out our RIAA speaker separation, and whatever else you were interested in doing. The result is the Persuasive Percussion series of stereo albums. I only know of three volumes, but that's more than enough to hook me on this great combo of early Jazz Muzak with occasionally inspired solo breaks and lots of stereo-shift gimmicks. Great with headphones. The series has been reissued on Pickwick, but search out the old, original Command Records... they're better pressings and have lots of useless information on the jacket, like the fact that they used a Telefunken U-47 mike on the opening bongo solo in "Blue Tango." Makes for great background music that you can occasionally rumba to.

—Tom Leonard

**POISON GIRLS:** Where's the Pleasure (Xntrix Records, c/o Rough Trade, 137 Blenheim Crescent, London W11) This record actually makes me think, something I can say about very few records these days. The second album (I think) from England's Poison Girls veers further from their punk roots musically but not lyrically. This is one of those bands where the musical backing—which varies in this case from garage-like to ballads to funky to what must be some type of Irish folk hymn—seems incidental in comparison to the words and feelings expressed. Puzzling at times, the emphasis here is on love and freedom, or rather the lack thereof—the deceit, failed expectations, and falsity. It's biting, often hard to swallow, but nonetheless thoughtful. "Where's the Pleasure" is a heartfelt and stern indictment of all that is manufactured, hip, competitive, ingenuine, and expected. It's not easy listening, but the truth never is.

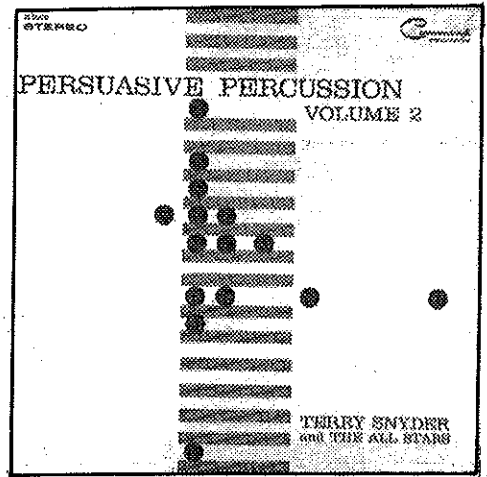
—Blake Gumprecht

**POLYROCK:** Above The Fruited Plain (PVC, c/o JEM, 3619 Kennedy Road, South Plainfield, NJ 07080) Although a bit more accessible than their two albums produced by noted composer Philip Glass, Polyrock still suffer from their self-indulgent trappings. The complex, shifting rhythms are commendable and Billy Robertson is a fair vocalist, but the tunes are drab and faceless. Polyrock's main problem is that they're trying to reach too many people. The final outcome is overly simplistic for the "serious" listener and not dumb enough for the trendies on the dance floor. There's talent here, but it's still struggling to find a way to come to the fore.

—C.P. Lamey

**RICHARD POVALL:** Another Time, Another Place/End Music cassette (Povall, Mills Center for Contemporary Music, Oakland, CA 94613) Povall is a young composer from England, now a grad student at the CCM, interested in compositions dealing with recorded modification of a homogenous instrumental texture. Both of these pieces are for live instrumentalist and tape (the first for saxophone, the second for trombone). Another Time, Another Place is a kind of jazz/pattern music fusion work featuring the solo playing of altoist Magdelene Luecke. Povall produces some beautiful multi-tracked sax section playing, and the use of an old ribbon mike on the saxes give the work an even more distinctive sound. End Music is a long work for trombone and multi-track tape delay, and features the fine "extended" playing of James Fulkerson. The recording is a good documentation of the live performance version of the piece. Both of these works are enhanced by Povall's fine recording skills, and the sax piece is one of the newer pieces to come out of CCM.

—Larry Polansky



**RICHARD POWELL:** Roses of Hell (Zyzzle Records, 36 York Rd., Montpelier, Bristol 6, U.K.) Solo improvisations overdubbed in multi-track, using sax, piano, guitar, etc., that left me rather cold. The label is owned by Northampton Cooperative, a British performing arts organization that looks very interesting and exciting. But here is another case of free music losing its freedom in the process of disc mastering. An experiment is no longer experimental at its conclusion—and here the conclusion is dull. However, I admire and respect any musician with the honesty to release such a record and stand behind the effort.

—Michael Huntsberger

**PROPELLER LABEL**, Box 658, Allston, MA 02135. Specialty: Post-punk garage rock. Latest 7" sampler EP has V., Dangerous Birds, Christmas, and 21-645. Charts no new ground in active rock rhythms, but the groups all seem exceptionally committed, sincere, and there are a lot of women involved in the group music-making process. The resultant music leans towards melodrama, but it's kind of engaging bluster.

—JF

**PULSATIONS** "Fat Girls"/"Creature of Habit" (Mirror Image; PO Box 10430, Chicago, IL 60610) "Fat" is a poppy lyric-oriented discourse on the love life of fat girls that goes for Elvis Costello poignancy and falls flat. "Creature" is a spooky cartoon instrumental with wads... guitar tricks, tinkly bells, keyboard washes. Pretty good.

—JF

**PYLON** "Beep"/"Attitude" (DB Records, 432 Moreland Av. NE, Atlanta, GA 30307) Aural seduction. Produced by Chris Stamey and Gene Holder of the DBs (no relation) and engineered by Mitch Easter, this is easily the best-sounding 7" I've heard in, well, a long time. Oh, those resonant vocals and snarls (Vanessa Briscoe's most expressive performance), that ringing guitar (one writer called it "surf and spy"), and pounding rhythm make for one happy boy. Zowel I have no idea what the songs are about and don't care. "Beep Beep" has the passion of the Neo Boys, but it's running hot, and is sure to be a dance floor hit. "Attitude" builds like one of those Neil Young gut-wrenchers (pre-vocoder), even takes one of Young's bass lines. Terrific.

—JF

**QUARTET** Soundtrack (Gramavision Records, 260 West Broadway, NYC 10013) The movie from which this record is taken is set in the "Jazz Age" of the '20s (as if we are not in a jazz age now). Each piece of music is a contemporary composition performed in the style of the '20s and '30s. As is generally the case with movie soundtracks, there is the usual "filler" music. But Quartet also manages to include some outstanding swing numbers—not surprising, as Marshall Royal plays both clarinet and alto sax. If you saw (I didn't) and loved the movie, you have probably rushed out to buy the record—if you didn't see the movie but love this style of music, there is much better classic fare around.

—Kevin Martin



**DEV SINGH:** *Made In Chicago* (Rampur, 2018 Delaware St., Chicago, IL 94709) Singer-songwriter in a mixed bag of styles, traditional to soul. Singh's got a clear tenor with unexpected range, but his phrasing is often haphazard and he can be overly theatrical. Arrangements tend to have the same problems. The highlights are a folksy, nostalgic look at the '60s, "Gone Are the Days of '64"; a goodtimey "Battle of New Orleans" with mouth-bow, fiddle, and dulcimer; Singh's stratospheric vocal on "Even the Sky's Got Soul"; and "Ellacombe," a lovely traditional tune where he plays harp and doesn't sing at all. —JF

**SLAPP HAPPY** "Everybody's Slimmin' (Even Men and Women)"/"Blue-Eyed William" (Half Cat; dist. by Recommended, 583 Wandsworth Rd., London SW8, UK) Peter Blegvad, Anthony Moore, and Dagmar Krause's reunion 45 features the funniest, funkier white rap to date—charming and down-to-earth. "Sweet William" has an entirely different set of sounds, is relaxed and mysterious, still has a soul beat. An essential slice of eccentric esoterica. —JF 9

**THE SORROWS:** *Take A Heart* (Raven Records, PO Box 92, Camberwell, VIC. 3124, Australia) Of the many groups that missed the boat to America during the mid-sixties British Invasion, the Sorrows were one of the best. Even in their homeland, their success was limited to a few minor hit singles, of which "Take A Heart" was the biggest. Their failure to make more of an impact is mysterious, for the Sorrows just about had it all. With a good lead singer and tight, powerful playing, the group produced an excellent tough pop-rock sound, recalling the Pretty Things (though not as R&B oriented) and the Kinks (though not as pop-oriented). They wrote well, got other songwriters to write good material for them, and knocked off a couple of unlikely covers (of the Strangeloves' "Cara-Lin" and the Lovin' Spoonful's "My Gal") which surpass the originals. They also hinted at exciting potential artistic growth, in the nearly psychedelic "Pink Purple Yellow and Red" (possibly one of the first rock songs about a bad trip, though probably on pills, not acid) and the Dylanesque "Don't Sing No Sad Songs for Me." All of which got them virtually nowhere, compelling the group to pack it up less than two years after they first recorded in 1965. A shame, for they decisively outclass many other more renowned second-rank British Invasion groups, such as the Small Faces and Hollies. This 14-song LP is remarkably consistent for its time and place—although some tracks are better than others, you can nearly always count on a sound which, as the sleeve notes claim, will "make your feet very, very tired." One minor complaint: the album notes, written as though it was still 1965, tell us all about the group's ages and birthplaces, but little about their history. —Richie Unterberger

**SO YOU WANNA BE A ROCK'N'ROLL STAR, Volume One—The Scream Years of Australian Rock, 1964-1966** (Festival Records, Australia). Australian rock archivist Glenn Baker set out to create an Australian Nuggets with this double album. While it is occasionally excellent, it fails to match Lenny Kaye's classic compilation for several reasons. First, there is just too much pop and lightweight pop-rock, ranging from pleasant to mediocre, as opposed to Kaye's straightforward rock selection. Secondly, the several covers of rock standards (such as "Poison Ivy" and "Ain't That Lovin' You Baby") are lame, although they may have special significance for Australians who had to settle for Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs concerts in the absence of the Rolling Stones. But there are some good moments. The Sunsets' "I Found You" and the Black Diamonds' "See the Way" are British Invasion-inspired pop-rock of the highest order; Chris Hall and the Torquays' "Don't Ask Me Why" is first-class R&B-tinged rock; and the Purple Hearts' "Early in the Morning" is a highly original hard rock interpretation of a traditional folk song. There are also some enjoyable Beatle imitations. You could easily boil this down to one pretty good record, but Baker chose to include a lot to make it a comprehensive document of mid-sixties Australian rock. That it is, but it means you have to take the bad with the good, for which you should be warned before investing in this expensive import. —Richie Unterberger

**SO YOU WANNA BE A ROCK'N'ROLL STAR, Volume Two: The Psychedelic Years of Australian Rock, 1967-1970** (Festival Records, Australia). This collection suffers from the same faults as its predecessor. There's too much pop (many of the "psychedelic" tracks are pop kitsch with some gratuitous arty orchestration and tape effects), and too many thoroughly undistinguished covers of American/British rock standards. Although several excellent tracks on Volume One helped make up for these flaws, this set doesn't contain anything really first-rate. There is some decent stuff; about the best are the James Taylor Move's "Magic Eyes" (equal parts Hendrix, Moby Grape, and early Soft Machine) and Chain's "Mr. Time," the best Traffic/Procol Harum soundalike I've heard. Combined with the extensive liner notes, this 35-track album gives a good overview of the late sixties Australian rock scene, a curious amalgam of pop-rock, pop psychedelia, and early "progressive" rock. But apparently it wasn't much of a scene, so only avid historians need invest in this volume. —Richie Unterberger

**LARRY SPARKS:** *The Testing Times* (Rebel, Box 191, Floyd, VA 24091) Sparks' version of hardcore "bluegrass" isn't for everyone, especially for those weaned on the progressive bluegrass of a younger generation. But I've always liked his unadorned and unabashedly urban bluegrass approach, and have especially been a fan of his simple, Travis-style guitar playing. This album, however, isn't all one would hope. The biggest problem is that fully half the cuts are reissues of earlier King recordings, although the liner notes do not give details as to which cuts, or (specifically) where they were previously released. I happen to own these earlier LPs, and it's interesting to note that these are the best on this new album. Some of the other sides feature Ricky Skaggs on mandolin and these are

excellent. Sparks specializes in gospel bluegrass and nearly every cut on this album is in that tradition. "When My Time Come to Go" and "I Want to Die Easy, Lord" are two of the standouts here, and should be of interest especially to guitar players—for, within the particular limits of his style, Sparks is one of the strongest and most polished in bluegrass. —Larry Polansky

**SPRAY PALS** "Happy Go Lucky"/"Dead Sea" (available from Wax Trax, 638 E. 13th Av., Denver, CO 80203, \$2.50) Two women (guitar, voice, and keyboards) with a fairly original sound—Mediterranean pop perhaps? "Happy" has bouzouki added, both have industrial percussion. Somber and arty but still different enough to make it special. —JF 8

**SQUEEZE LOUISE** "Wire Hangers"/"Train of Thought" (Wax Lips; dist. by Ladyslipper Music, 321 7th St. SE, Washington, DC 20003) 5-women rock quintet (usuals plus synth). "Hangers" is sarcastic, abrasive punk, a mother talking to her "bad girl" daughter. "Train" sounds closer to Patti Smith but has unimaginative hard rock backing. —JF

**DONNA STARK** "I've Gone To Hell Just To Get To Heaven"/"Time Alone" (RCI, PO Box 126, Elmsford, NY 10523) Sweet Karen Carpenterish vocal, flanged guitar, and rhythm unit, bright sound. "Time," the ballad, goes astray. GK:5, BP:6, JF:5.

**START:** *Look Around* (Fresh Sounds, PO Box 36, Lawrence, KS 66044) Second release from this excellent pop trio. They blend the sounds of '60s American psychedelia with '60s British mod, giving them a diverse sound (kinda like the Doors meet the Jam). The eight cuts are all excellently produced, using light effects on the guitar, drums, and farfisa style keyboards. All the songs are very catchy, snappy, and quite enjoyable. My favorites though are "Little Fish/Big Fish" (which features Allen Ginsberg giving some of his socio-political commentary) and the moody dirge, "My Town." —Mike Clark

**CLIVE STEVENS:** *Brainchild 12" EP* (Guerrilla, PO Box 122, NYC 10276) Stevens plays tenor sax and lyricoon—a wind instrument that sounds like a synthesizer—and fronts a very energetic fusion ensemble. I'm not a big fan of this sort of fusion, but this is convincing with its screaming but wistful melodies and general sort of screamingly beautiful sound—rather like Return to Forever at their most strident. Of the four tunes I like "Caribbeing" most for its skillful but not too slick blend of reggae and jazz-rock. So, though it inhabits an uncomfortable position somewhere between genres—it's fairly funky but not dance music—I'd have to say I can dig it. —Robert Legault

**STICKMEN:** *Get on Board 5-song 12" EP* (Red, 810 Longfield Rd., Phila., PA 19118) Wild, wild white funk, the Minutemen of the funkateer circuit. Rapid-fire no wave guitars, clanging percussives, occasional contorted sax, imaginative J.B. meets Parliament vocals (in a parodistic style some would call racist). "Funky Hayride," with a big, loping bass-line, is long at almost five minutes (the only cut to break two minutes) but it allows the band to stretch out some of their super-speed routines. —JF 7





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**GUNTER HAMPEL, JEANNE LEE, THOMAS KEYSERLING:** Companion (Birth; dist. by NMDS, 500 B'way, NYC 10012, 212-925-2121) I'm not usually impressed by sound per se, but the clarity of this digital recording is remarkable, greatly enhancing the enjoyment value of this session for vibes, flute, alto sax, bass clarinet, and voice in various combinations. Vocalist Lee, heard on all six compositions, with her "bu-wa-bups" and "su-ya-flu-svias," has a pretty, gentle voice that usually softens and fleshes out the otherwise fairly sparse music in the way a bossa nova vocalist would if not expected to sing the song, setting the tone for edge-of-experimental jazz tunes that would have more sharp corners without her presence. Probably too jazzy and/or discordant for the stereotypical Euro-ECM sound, maybe too controlled for the stereotypical Hat Hut crowd, but it does find a pleasant spot somewhere between. —JF

**THE HAPPINESS BOYS:** Meat Parade 12" EP (Duotone Records, Box 1168, Miami, FL 33243) Duo playing a variety of instruments (synths, guitars, sax, etc.). Their press bio claims they play at a large number of "dance-rock clubs," which is sorta hard to believe, as they're kinda weird, even if they do have a beat. With "roots of Dada, Stockhausen, Sun Ra, and the Sex Pistols," this isn't exactly my cup of tea, but I still found it to be pretty interesting, especially since they seem to be trying pretty hard to keep themselves interesting, while not being so "out" that they can't get gigs. I wonder what they sound like live... —Steven Feigenbaum

**LLOYD HEMMINGS:** "To Slow to Disco"/"Believe" (Music Video Prod'ns, 2016 Lincoln Blvd., Venice, CA 90201, 213-399-6624) 23-year-old Jamaican singer (a recording veteran of 10 years) doing his stuff on a couple of lightweight reggae tunes, "Believe" stronger in all respects. It has a soulful and gentle vocal but is marred by somewhat poor production. Fast percussion plays a big role in the arrangement (until a "Kung Fu Fighting" synthesizer part at the end), providing an interesting contrast to the slow, natural singing style. —JF 5

\* **GEORGE HICKS:** Ragtime-Tickled Pink (Folkways, 43 W. 61st St., NYC 10023) Hicks is a kind of young specialist in ragtime, and in the tradition of his producer, David Jasen (responsible for the excellent liner notes), and people like Trebor Tichenor of St. Louis, has recorded an album of rather obscure rags, ranging from old folk and novelty rags, to two that might even be called modern. This record includes works by William Rowland (the only "contemporary"), Roy Bary, Rube Bloom, Arthur Schutt, Zev Confrey, Eubie Blake, Maz Janza, Elmer Olsen, and Billy Mayerl. No, I haven't heard of most of these guys either, but that's what's so nice about this album. And these are fine rags as well. I especially like Mayerl's "Virginia Creeper" and Roy Bary's "Pianoflage." Bary is represented by two other

interesting rags on this record, and I would like to hear more of his work. Hicks has done a fine job in putting together the material, and his playing is sensitive and technically excellent. Just one quibble, however—I'm not a ragtime scholar, but I do know that there's no law that says you have to play all these tunes as fast as you can (a la Max Morath), but I guess that's just a matter of taste. The three rags by William Rowland (b. 1948) are listenable but are surprisingly square, and one can't help but compare them to some of the great contemporary rags by people like William Bolcom and James Tenney. But I applaud Hicks for playing them, and indeed for this whole album which is an intriguing musical and historical gesture. Born in NY, but moved to St. Louis, Hicks is further proof that ragtime still hasn't moved up the river. —Larry Polansky

**THE HI FI ORCHESTRA** (c/o Ernesto Ramirez, Apartado Postal #33, Jalostotitlan, Jalisco 47120 Mexico, \$10, available from Wayside Music) I've heard very little progressive music from Mexico, and if this is any indication, I'd be up to hear more. The HFO seems to be the brainchild of guitarist Jesus Martin, as he wrote and produced the LP. They use a standard quartet format (keyboards, guitar, bass, drums) and are entirely instrumental. The music doesn't really reflect "native" influences to any great degree, except for "Piel Morena," where the marimbas lend a mariachi-band air to the tune. Pretty good playing throughout by all involved. While not earth-shattering or incredibly original, jazz/rock listeners and people looking for something a bit unusual will certainly enjoy this. —Steven Feigenbaum

**DERECK HIGGINS:** Dereck 2 4-tune 7" EP (4115 N. 36th Av., Omaha, NE 68111) Very different than his first (under just the name Dereck), this finds one-man band Higgins working with clear, beautiful sonorities, producing impressionistic rock-based instrumental landscapes with titles like "Sky Blue," "Clouds Adrift," and "Dream Music" that are excellently self-produced (of course) and never overblown. Probably of more interest to Eurockers than minimalists as these are fairly complex arrangements. Higgins, incidentally, is a black Residents fanatic, a great fan of Stockhausen, Fred Frith, and Cecil Taylor—all the more reason for him making music like this in Omaha. —JF 7

**TOSHIYUKI HONDA & BURNING WAVES:** Boomerang (Electric Bird Records, 2-12-13, Otowa, Bunkyo-Ku, Tokyo, Japan) This band plays high-spirited, melodic jazz rock that immediately reminds me of several other artists of this ilk. Strains of Weather Report, Return to Forever, and Spyrogyra can be heard throughout. Band-

leader Honda plays sax and flute with apparent ease but doesn't hog all of the solos, the rest of the band turning in their share as well. I liked "Nile Pts. 1-3" the best. The keyboard work is particularly nice on this cut. The album almost sounds like a sampler, going from straight swing to heavy metal guitar riffs all in one side.

—Dereck Higgins

**HUDSON ROCK—15 BANDS FROM ALBANY, NY** (MCE Records, 463 State St., Schenectady, NY 12305) A neat collection of rockers (modern variety) excellently recorded at Mark C. Ernst's 8-track and released as an alternative to the local AOR station's "best of local rock" album. I'm not sure how all these guys get along on the mean streets of Albany, but they sound great together; better, in fact, than on their own projects, if songs by Blotto ("Lightnin' Strikes" again), the A.D.s, the Morons, and Fear of Strangers are any indication. The Young Reptiles version of Peanuts Wilson's rockabilly number called "Cast Iron Arm" is revelatory if you've heard them as the arty Leopard Society. But art bands aren't afforded much space here; most bands would come under the "real rock'n roll" or "punk" rubrics. There's even some hardcore punk, including a message by Capitle snuck onto the end groove. I don't think any of the bands on this album are as good as the best bands in Olympia, but at least they've been able to put out an LP that is listenable all the way through. —JF

**HUGO KLANG:** "The Wheel of Fat"/"Mouse Runner" (Au-Go-Go, PO Box 251, Fitzroy, 3065, Victoria, Australia) "Ollie" sings kind of like the Birthday Party's Nick Cave and clangs (with extra singing by Marie Hoy), gets a good rhythm going, too. I enjoy his low, rumbly grumblings and yelps, reminds me of my own intuitive approach to singing, but at least I know what I'm rambling on about. —JF 6

**THE HUNGARIAN QUARTET:** Quincy Porter—String Quartet No. 7, Cecil Effinger—String Quartet No. 5 (Owl Records, PO Box 4536, Boulder, CO 80306) I enjoyed both of these quartets, though they may not be music for all time. Porter and Effinger are of an older generation of American composers whose music is based in tonality and neo-classicism, though clearly in a modern idiom. Of the two, Porter's is the more piquant, especially in the first movement which reminded me of Peter Garland's *Matachin Dances*, though it has none of Garland's experimental tendencies. Effinger's work seemed to synthesize aspects of Impressionism and the more conservative side of Bartok. Perhaps not the most challenging music, it is nonetheless well crafted and finely executed by the Hungarian Quartet.

—Dean Suzuki



**MITTAGSPAUSE** (Pure Freude, Derendorfer Str. 55, 4000 Dusseldorf, Germany) A beautifully packaged record from the progressive, new Pure Freude label. Frankly, this release was disappointing. Yes, Mittagspause avoids current trends like thrash and electronic disco, but they offer nothing to fill the void. The bass, drums, guitar lineup wanders aimlessly from one unmemorable song to the next. Although the production has a raw, studio sound, these guys lack energy to the point of being anemic; it also isn't as noisy or challenging as the best Zick Zack material. Forget this record, but keep your eyes on Pure Freude.

—Bruce Pavitt

**MIXED NUTS DON'T CRACK:** (Outside Records, 3111 First Street North, Arlington, VA 22201, \$6.75) Just when I thought that Dischord was the only label releasing hardcore in D.C., out comes this excellent sampler of six relatively unknown bands, all of them interesting in their own way. Media Disease, Social Suicide, and United Mutation play a more typical ultra-fast thrash. The other three bands use a more experimental style, but I still think of them as being hardcore. Chalk Circle, an all-female band, play garage punk with Crass-like vocals. Nuclear Crayons (who also have an EP out on the same label) sound like ½ Japanese meets thrash, creating a very interesting aural attack. Hate Through Ignorance don't rely on heavy guitar distortion, using a cleaner, more intricate sound, and letting their singer's gravelly voice bring out the anger. The only minor drawback to the album is the raw production. Still recommended.

—Mike Clark

**THE MOB** 9-song 7" EP (Mob Style Records, 246-14 54th Av., Douglaston, NY 11362, \$3; dist. by Important, Rough Trade) Fast, anthemic hardcore wall-of-sound. Op copy was missing its lyric sheet and it was hard to tell what the raspy lead singer was caterwauling about, but it's a good grunge recording, so who cares. Let's pogo fellows!

—JF:5, SP:5

**MODERN DAY SCENICS: No One Is Innocent...** 4-song 7" EP (Talking Mule Prod'ns, PO Box 6738, Omaha, NE 68106, 402-551-4719) Pop-rock band without much identity; basic instrumentation, unpolished delivery, over-long songs.

—JF:2, SP:3

**MODERN PIONEERS** 7" 45 and Big Hookup 12" EP (Adventure, PO Box 886, Plaindome, NY 11030) Solid pop-rock trio with overly-mannered vocals but a great guitarist (playing a Mosrite in updated Ventures fashion). 7" has more garage-appeal and a real '60s throwback called "Native Nights" with jungle drums and a funny spoken part about "moving upstate to the jungle." 12" has a good instrumental tribute to Ben Gazzara and his exotic TV show Run For Your Life.

—JF, SP

**MONUMENTS GALORE "Doom & Gloom"/** ("Maybe One Day) Anthem" (Notown, PO Box 547, Wpg. Gen. P.O., Winnipeg R3C 2J3, Canada) Pardon me for saying this sounds British, but it does; an energetic modern rock band with sax, shouted singing, funny background vocals on "Doom & Gloom" (title is best part).

—JF 5

**THE MOODISTS: Engine Shudder 12" EP** (Au-Go-Go, PO Box 251, Fitzroy 3065, Victoria, Australia) What you might get if you crossed early Gang of Four (primitive guitar playing; trebly, aggressive bass; pounding, flailing, and often quite syncopated drumming) with Joy Division (stream-of-consciousness singing/chanting; generally minor, doomsday-ish sound), though this sounds like neither of them. It also seems to me that most of the songs on this record were more spontaneous than "written." If I had to come up with one adjective for most of it, it would be "depressing," but that's not necessarily bad, is it?

—David Mandl

**MOODISTS "Gone Dead"/"Chad's Car"** (Au-Go-Go) Scratchy dissonant guitar, stretched out overdubbed vocals mark yet another post-Joy Division rock band.

—JF

**TIM MORAN & TONY VACCA: Wizard's Dance** (Fretless/Philo, The Barn, N. Ferrisburg, VT 05473) Though on Philo's not-ready-for-big-sales subsidiary, this ethno-jazz "new age" LP has plenty of boundary-melting crossover appeal. Vacca plays a colorful array of percussive devices; Moran is heard on various flutes, shells, bells, alto sax, and other percussion. Their exotic fusion of world musics (esp. African/Asian) and jazz is given a crystalline recording and totally professional performance, light-years away from the "let's jam with wooden flutes and funny hand-made percussion instruments" ethos so popular in my neck of the woods. While lacking in spontaneity, no one can deny the, uh, "simple beauty" of this outing. I predict cross-cultural explorations of this sort will be the next-big-thing in indie land. (Windham Hill's acoustic mood music was the last.)

—JF

**JELLY ROLL MORTON: Piano Classics, 1923-24** (Folkways Records, 43 W. 61st St., NYC 10023) These solo piano recordings of original rags, stomps, and blues not only show us Morton the pianist but present works in skeletal form which were later developed and orchestrated as ensemble pieces. Ferdinand "Jelly Roll" Morton (1890-1941) is generally recognized as the first great master of compositional form in jazz, beginning a lineage of pianist-composer-orchestrators that includes Ellington, Monk, and John Lewis. Morton blended the various influences of New Orleans along with other influences picked up in his travels into an original body of piano pieces and ensemble works. Using as a point of departure the more strictly organized European forms of ragtime, he added the blues influence, and was also the first real "jazz" composer to draw on Latin music (what he called the "Spanish tinge") in his work. These recordings (1923-24) show him to be no slouch as a pianist and are a much better documentation than the later Library of Congress recording, done when ill in the later years of his life. They are, unfortunately, scratchy and lacking in fidelity. Recommended for musicologists, collectors, and anyone interested in the history of black North American music.

—Peter Leitch

**JUDY MOWATT: Black Woman** (Shanachie, Dalebrook Park, Ho-ho-kus, NJ 07423) When this came out as an import in 1979, I heard a couple of these songs on the radio and liked them, but that's water under the bridge. As a pop-reggae LP it's okay, with a bright, functional self-production that lacks presence and no truly outstanding vocal performances, Mowatt's voice lacking flexibility. The title track, steady beat, percussion, bluesy guitar, and a la-de-la-da... oo-oo-oo vocal refrain echoing the horn line, is very strong, has all the earmarks of an anthem. A few of her other songs also connect, while the three Bob Marley songs (she was in the I-Threes, Marley's backup vocalists) do nothing for me.

—JF

**ALAN MUNDE: Festival Favorites/Southwest Sessions** (Ridge Runner, dist. by Richey Records, PO Box 12937, Fort Worth, TX 76116) An excellent album of very traditional fiddle and bluegrass instrumentals played by some of the pros. Munde is one of the cleanest and most careful banjo players in bluegrass, and is a veteran of some of its more progressive experiments (i.e. Country Gazette; Slim Richey's Jazzgrass). This album features some of his old friends as well—it's produced and distributed by guitarist Slim Richey and has Roland White on many of the cuts. Though



I've never been much of a fan of his mandolin playing, I think Roland White's guitar playing is superb and tremendously underrated. Here, I think his mandolin sounds better than it ever has, especially on "Roanoke," played in twin mandolin style with Bob Clark. (I confess that anytime it's played that way I immediately go into bluegrass bliss). Munde is in fine form throughout the album—he has a unique sound on the melodic banjo that reminds me of the early Bill Keith (with Bill Monroe)—faithful to the tunes but still managing to bring freshness to everything he plays. "Little Rock Getaway" is a good example. All acoustic musicians will appreciate this record for the high quality musicianship, and, if nothing else, as a sort of textbook for how to play bluegrass instrumentals tastefully (these guys don't play them all that fast!).

—Larry Polansky

**MUTABARUKA "Drug Kulcha"/SISTER BREEZE** "Slip" 12" 45 (Heartbeat, 186 Willow Av., Somerville, MA 02144) Both sides are produced by "dub poet" Mutabaruka, whose scathing, hard-edged vocal on the "A" is ferociously anti-drug. The full, disco sound includes appropriate rock guitar. The flip, composed and sung-spoken by Jean Breeze, features the same self-righteous tone. The instrumental dub versions at the end of each side are nothing special.

—JF 8

**NERVOUS MELVIN & THE MISTAKES** 4-song 7" EP (2110 Village Dr., Louisville, KY 40205) Straightforward pop-rock quartet with the usual attributes and influences, including rockabilly, ska, and British Invasion. Deceivable, yes; new and exciting, no.

—JF 4

**THE NEW AGE STEPPERS: Foundation Steppers** (On U Sounds, Studio 345, O&N Warehouse, Metropolitan Wharf, Wapping Wall, London E1, England) Adrian Sherwood takes two tracks by Arri Up with the Roots Radics (one of them the worst version of "Stormy Weather" I've ever heard) and expands them into an LP. Not as bad as it sounds. There are only a couple of instrumental tracks, and he got Bim Sherman to contribute four very good new songs. Sherman has a great voice, like Gregory Isaacs, and he's a top-rate songwriter (as you would know if you got his Across the Red Sea LP). On previous New Age Steppers albums Sherman has only sung background vocals or written a few songs. Here he steps out front (including experimenting with new vocal styles) and makes this worthwhile. Creation Rebel backing tracks rule okay, too.

—Jim Finnigan

**NO GUITARS** (CMI, 36 W. 38 St., NYC 10018) They must be trying hard to sound like the Buggles, but there's no "Video Killed the Radio Star" to keep the proceedings from getting boring. There are even moments when No Guitars manage to capture the essence of Elton John at his most mediocre. The humor of the lyrics isn't especially engaging, either.

—Dave Luhrszen





**THE NOT: What's The Reason** (Not Records, PO Box 288, Cambridge, MA 02238) Thanks, John, for sending this to me. I needed it. Good to hear an original garage band that sound a bit like the Buzzcocks but know how to play their instruments and don't get in each other's way. All six of the songs here are similar in form and sound to any number of other bands, but any number of other bands don't perform songs like these nearly so well. More fun than cable TV.—Steve Jones

**THE NOVAS** "The Crusher"/"Take 7" (Mean Mountain Music, PO Box 04352, Milw., WI 53204) Reissue of "The Crusher," since made famous by the Cramps, is similar to Fred Blässie's forays into popular song (e.g. "Pencil Necked Geek"), though the phrase of note here is "turkey necks." The "B" is a R&R instrumental for electric guitar. CJ:8, VB:8, DS:6, JF:5

**THE NYLONS: Seamless** (Attic Records, 624 King St. West, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5V 1M7) A cappella and vocal ensembles seem to be making a real comeback. The Nylons are 4-man group accompanied only by percussion. Their sound is very much like that of Motown groups before the advent of disco. The harmonies are sweet, lush, incredibly tight, and amazingly soulful. And this is a Canadian group! However, one member is from Tennessee and bass-baritone Arnold Robinson is black, from North Carolina, and a former member of the R&B group The Platters. Still, the three white boys had me fooled, especially Claude Morrison, whose falsetto is derived from R&B without a hint of Frankie Valli's stiffness. Their talent was spotted by Lamont Dozier, of Holland-Dozier-Holland, who wrote a song especially for this album. The Nylons also trace their roots and the vocal tradition with their fine rendition of "Oo-wee, Oh Me, Oh My" originally done by the Ad-Libs of "Boy From New York City" fame and the Shangri-las "Remember (Walking in the Sand)" where they fail to add any insight into this rather corny number. They do an absolutely ravishing arrangement of the Beatles "This Boy" and show their contemporary side on "Take Me to Your Heart" written by the Eurythmics. The second side is devoted to songs written by members of the group, and here they succeed as well, with songs ranging from a sweet love ballad to the jungle rhythms and percolating energy of "Combat Zone."—Dean Suzuki

**MICHAEL NYMAN, PAUL RICHARDS, BRUCE MCCLEAN: "The Masterpiece" Award-Winning Fish-Knife** cassette (Audio Arts, 6 Briarwood Rd., London SW4 9PX, England) Composer Nyman has provided the soundscore for the "performance sculpture" created by Richards and McClean. Side one is devoted to large extracts recorded during a live performance of the score by Nyman's band. For those familiar with his last couple of records, this will sound familiar, characteristic of his current style, though his indebtedness to Philip Glass and Steve Reich is even more pronounced. The steady pulse, the timbres (keyboards, woodwinds), and the tonal melodic and harmonic elements are obviously derived from the American minimalists, especially Glass, by virtue of motivic repetition and irregular and changing phrase lengths. However, Nyman is his own man and the style he employs is identifiable as his own. The glitches found in this live recording—inexact entries, inaccurate intonation, etc.—are mitigated by the vibrant energy of the performance. The second side is like a multi-texted sound poetry piece in which several readers enunciate their texts separately and simultaneously. The entire work is an inter-media piece which incorporates dance and gymnastics.—Dean Suzuki

**OFFENDERS** "I Hate Myself"/"Bad Times" (Rabid Cat, Box 49263, Austin, TX 78765; 512-482-8891) Rabid Cat was formerly Frodo Records, but Tolkien Ent. threatened to sue. Amazing! Nicely-recorded sort of atypical metallic hardcore with changes in tempo, some dynamic range. "Bad Times" rails against organized religion, sounds like Motorhead and early Circle Jerks combined. Vikki thought the lyrics were refreshing, better than the usual "rock with meaning."—DS:3, CJ:5, JF:5, VB:7

**BRUCE OLSEN: Home on the Range** 4-song 7" EP (Generic Records, PO Box 7054, Richmond, WA 23221) Written, performed, produced, and engineered by Olsen at the local Floodzone studio, where he has been churning out a bunch of records for Richmond bands. His biting guitars, in the grand, ringing, Townshend/Richard tradition, add an extra sting of hope to "Home on the Range's" tale of a dissipated man's search for salvation in the American wilderness. Sound too heavy? Try "Pressure Point," where he has the gall to rhyme "beer and pizza" with "the girl I see ah." All in all, a nice, fun rock and roll record.—Jeff Lindholm

**THE OSBORNE BROTHERS: Some Things I Want to Sing About** (Sugar Hill SH-3740, Box 4040 Duke Sta., Durham, NC 27706) Fine new record by this pioneering bluegrass band—a must if you're an Osborne Bros. fan and a good place to start if you're not. They haven't changed their style much, still incorporating electric bass, pedal steel, and drums in a tasteful blend of country-influenced bluegrass, and still relying on Sonny Osborne's fantastic banjo playing, Bobby O's funky mandolin and patented "high tenor" sound. The Osborne Bros. have always voiced their trio harmonies differently than other bands—Bobby sings the melody above the tenor, and on this record they sound unusually clean and in tune, with a great recording. It's hard to single out favorite songs, but "Harvest of My Heart," "Doggone Lonesome," and the old chestnut "Wreck of the Old 97" (which can almost make you like banjos) are standouts. Also, pay special attention to the playing of young fiddler Blaine Sprouse—who's as fine a backup player as I've ever heard. Though there's little that's new on this record, it's first class in all other respects.—Larry Polansky

**OZ: Fire In the Brain** (Combat/Important, 149-03 Guy Brewer Blvd., Jamaica, NY 11454) Fast, convoluted (2 guitarists) ultra-heavy metal from Sweden (sung in English, if it matters). Advanced mania.—JF

**THE PAISLEYS: Cosmic Mind at Play** (Psycho Records, 24 Cecil Sq., Margate, Kent, UK) If you can imagine the Mothers' *We're Only In It For the Money* performed with total sincerity instead of total sarcasm, you'll have some idea of what the Paisleys sounded like. If you can get past the badly dated absurd naivete, you may find yourself enjoying this reissue. The six songs on side one are respectable, cosmic but with a lightheartedness and verve which would soon be swamped by a more "heavy" approach. Said heaviness is all too apparent on "Musical Journey," one of the earlier side-long rock tracks. Some interesting moments, but ultimately a trial to sit through, though it's the kind of cut which might be fun to hear (once) on the radio. At one point the track is inexplicably interrupted by some ninth-inning baseball drama; just as inexplicably a crazed TV commercial intrudes on one of side one's better songs. Far from great stuff, yet I liked it.—Richie Unterberger

**PALADINS: R&R** (Star Records, 148 Simcoe St. S., Oshawa, Ontario, Canada) Modernized rockabilly with excellent sound as the mix gives slapped bass, piano, and drums equal status to guitar—a real asset. The original "Billy D" stands out, with fine honky tonk flavored piano and atypical lyrics that enhance the threatening mood of a rocker not unlike some of Johnny Horton's better efforts. There's more Horton influence on "Rockin' Boy Blue," and there's a good choice of covers including Warren Smith's "Uranium Rock" and Sonny Fisher's "Pink and Black." Only debit are rather thin vocals which for some reason don't project much on uptempo material but are OK on mid-paced items.—John Johnson

**THE PANDORAS: It's About Time** (Vox Records, PO Box 7112, Burbank, CA 91510) I have mixed feelings about this all-women '60s garage/psych revival group. On one hand, I admire them because they obviously share my love for mid-sixties rock, because they're invading an almost ex-

clusively male genre, and because unlike some of these groups they write almost all their own material. At the same time, I have to admit I'm not all that excited about this record. Songwriter/vocalist/guitarist Paula Pierce can get a mean sound out of her Vox amp, the band looks cool (hell, almost all these '60s inspired groups look cool), but their sound is high on reverence and low on originality. The raucous tracks were acceptable garage rehashes, but I liked their folk-rockers better, especially the anthemic title track, although some of them liberally rip off the Leaves, Buffalo Springfield, and Count Five. The band, or more particularly Pierce, shows too much potential to be dismissed. Whether she can transcend her influences to produce something original & exciting remains to be seen.—Richie Unterberger

**PARIAH: Youths Of Age** (Posh Boy Records, PO Box 38861, Los Angeles, CA 90038) I was predisposed to like this hardcore group before I heard them for two reasons. First, they're from Concord, the ultra-sterile suburb of my present home city Oakland, and I hope to hell they're raising some roofs in the area which inspired another Concord group to name themselves Negativland. Also, with their flannels and college t-shirts, they look like guys I actually knew and went to school with—no poses, this bunch. Sure enough, I liked the record. It's angry, spirited, intelligent, and level-headed hardcore—you don't get that combination as much as you should, especially the level-headedness. Musically they're pretty tight (I wouldn't be surprised if some or all of them did their apprenticeship in heavy metal bands), with inventive tempo changes and call-response choruses. The varied rhythms of drummer Greg Travers are a particular plus. What I could make out of the lyrics were effective rehashes of youth alienation and defiance, but unfortunately the dense mix buried a lot of them. I don't listen to much hardcore, but I found this pretty listenable, and I imagine real punks may like this group a lot.—Richie Unterberger

**PEBBLES #3 and #4** (BFD Records; dist. by Bomp) These babies are back in print and I'm certainly glad! #3 is the "Acid Gallery" Pebbles, full of genuine Sixties deranged teen stuff as well as some fake teen stuff that's also quite edifying and amusing. Highlights; all of it! Absolutely essential #4 is the "Summer Means Fun" set, and I was a bit disappointed by this one, as it's all vocal surf stuff (I was desperately hoping for some rare instrumental stuff). If you're a fan of surf vocals, then this is a necessary item; good otherwise unreissued tracks by the Pyramids and Trashmen, a Coke commercial by Jan and Dean, the Beach Boys under a pseudonym, lots of studio groups by all the big surf producer names (such as Terry Melcher, who never did produce Charles Manson). Pretty good, but we all know that true surf music is instrumental, right?—Cindy Makepeace

**KRZYSZTOF PENDERECKI: Symphony No. 2 "Christmas Symphony"** (Pavane Records; dist. by Harmonia Mundi USA, 2351 Westwood Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90064) It is sad when the innovative, creative genius of one of the most radical, inventive composers of the post-World War II generation dries up. Penderecki has abandoned the thick, rich textural approach to composition, the emphasis on timbre, for a neo-Romantic style. No "Threnody: For the Victims of Hiroshima" here, rather a symphony that belongs to the likes of Bruckner or Reger. Of course, one cannot go on re-writing pieces based on huge clusters forever, but Penderecki's look back to the nineteenth century is really no answer. In and of itself, the symphony is nice enough; lush and immediately listenable, but amid the crush of other neo-Romantic works, it fails to rise above and assert itself.—Dean Suzuki

**PENNYROYAL: Well All Right!** (P&R Records, 12 Academy Rd., Palos Verdes, Pen., CA 90274) Modeled after The Boswell Sisters, Pennyroyal consists of three women who sing and play (guitars and bass) swing music with a repertoire that includes composers such as Fats Waller. Their singing is very nearly overshadowed by the guest instrumentalists including the pianist/song stylist Dave Frishberg and violinist Richard Greene. Jackie Kelso contributes some very tasty clarinet lines on the title cut. There is some understated, but nicely done scat singing (by lead vocalist Donna Medlock?) doubled by solo guitar played by Patsy Fiske on "Big Bad Bill Is Sweet William Now." A past era is evoked, somewhat humorously, by the use of a male chorus that answers the female ensemble in a manner that recalls Cab Calloway on "Your Red Wagon" and "Well All Right." This is tailor-made for those who want to wax nostalgic.—Dean Suzuki

**BUNNYDRUMS: On The Surface** 5-song 12" EP (Red Records, 810 Longfield Rd., Philadelphia, PA 19118) Grinding post-punk, just the way I like it, with lots of distortion on the guitars, loud drums, a healthy dose of echo throughout the mix, and emotional, sometime shrill, vocals. Fans of Bauhaus, Killing Joke, and their ilk should enjoy this immensely.—Mike Clark 8

**CRAIG BURK: Codes of Abstract Conduct** (Alia, 345 E. 80th St. #33E, NYC 10021) Burk refers to this as "21st century art song." OK, I'll go along with that. He writes some pretty good ironic poetry and then talk-sings (that's *sprechstimme* for you classical buffs) the lyrics over a background of improvised guitar, violin, electronics, etc. A good idea, using the song format as a context for free improvisation. I only wish I liked the results more.—SP

**B. WILLIE SMITH BAND "Let's Make A Party"/"Take Too Long"** (TNA Records, PO Box 57, Wallingford, CT 06492; dist. by National Distribution Network, 150 W. 94th St., NYC 10019, 212-977-4166) "Party" is the old rockabilly tune done previously by Wanda Jackson & Elvis. B. Willie Smith (not a guy) give it a bright, jumpy bluesy bar band interpretation with horns. The B-side also hops right along. CJ: 5, DS: 5, JF: 4, VB: 4

**CHARLIE BYRD: Bossa Nova Pelos Passaros (Bossa Nova by the Birds)** (Original Jazz Classics OJC-107, Fantasy, Tenth and Parker, Berkeley, CA 94710, \$5.98) (Previously issued as Riverside 9436) Of the making of records by Charlie Byrds there is, and there emphatically should be, no end. There has been an unbroken string of recorded performances available by this most tasteful, highly swinging jazz musician ever since his initial appearance on disc on the long defunct Washington label in the late 1950s. Byrd has, over the years, exemplified the best in jazz guitar expression—whether as a solo, in small groups, or with orchestral backgrounds. This recording shows him to good advantage in a well-recorded album from the early 1960s, cut at a time when Byrd, like saxophonist Stan Getz and others, was quite taken by the captivating Brazilian import bossa nova beat. Like all other musical fads, bossa nova came and went, but not before leaving as its legacy some very pleasant musical memories such as the jazz-tinged works at hand—not immortal stuff, but withal certainly well worth auditing from time to time. The most compelling cuts on this album are those featuring Byrd with his trio and augmented instruments. The several selections with orchestra tend to make the musical scene portrayed heavier than it deserves to be.—Norman Lederer

**\*THE CACHE VALLEY DRIFTERS: Tools of the Trade** (Flying Fish 290) This record interests me because it indicates the extent to which the string band music experimentation of groups like the Central Park Shieks, the Red Clay Ramblers, Good 'Ol Persons, and others has filtered down to where it is now common practice for less accomplished bands to play a combination of bluegrass, swing, jazz, blues, and other styles. This is a very listenable live album by an L.A. based group made up of two guitarists, a mandolinist, and a bassist. Several of the tunes are recognizable as covers of other bands' trademarks, like "Cherokee" (Central Park Shieks), "I'm Satisfied with You" (Good 'Ol Persons), "Hot Burrito #1", and even an obligatory Bob Wills Tune ("Blues for Dixie"), and are, I'm sorry to say, poor imitations. What I like best about this record is the singing, and the tunes I had not heard before, like "Cane Fire" (my favorite), "Shout Wa Hey," "Barbados," and a tune by long time California favorite Kate Wolf called "Green Eyes" (I knew it was only a matter of time before other bands would start doing her music). What disappoints me about this record is the mediocre instrumental playing, especially on the frequent and overlong solos. The Drifters seem to try to fit rather mundane bluegrass and rock licks over the more sophisticated jazz changes of tunes like "Cherokee" and "I'm Satisfied..." and it doesn't work, especially if one has heard the brilliant and innovative acoustic guitar of Richard Lieber-son (of the Shieks) on the former, and mandolinist John Reischman (of the Persons) on the latter. Overall, a lukewarm recommendation for this record.—Larry Polansky

**THE CALAMITIES** (Posh Boy, PO Box 38861, L.A., CA 90038) Trends seem to be slow to take hold in non-Anglo Europe, but in the case of this French female trio (plus one Anglo male drummer) it's been worth the wait. The sound is vintage late '70s pop-punk, what girl group new wave like Blondie and the Go-Go's should have sounded like. Admittedly, I probably wouldn't like it as much if they weren't French—it's real novel and refreshing to hear a familiar style in a foreign (or heavily accented English) tongue. A good mix of material, with originals in both French & English and distinctive covers of "The Kids Are Alright" and the Troggs' "With A Boy" (formerly "Girl") Like You." Infectious and sprightly with tight harmonies, well-produced but still raw and exuberant. A strong debut, one of the most uplifting recent releases I've heard—wish there were more than 9 songs.—Richie Unterberger

**C.A. QUINTET: Trip Thru Hell** (Psycho Records, 24 Cecil Sq., Margate, Kent, England) Reissue of rare late-60s LP by a Minnesota outfit who sound something like a macabre blend of the Ultimate Spinach and Country Joe & the Fish at their weirdest. I've read 2 reviews of it, one which advised "Get this, it's great," and another which asked why the hell Psycho bothered to reissue it. My own reaction is in-between but overall positive. As you may guess it's fairly trippy stuff, but unlike a lot of acid groups they seemed more into bad trips than good ones, what with a doomy horror-movie organ and songs about trips through hell and a "Cold Spider," despite the good-timey "Underground Music." Songwriter Ken Irwin's unusual use of trumpet in rock context, gothic female choruses, and the occasional paranoid lyric put finishing touches on what's definitely a distinctive sound, whether you love it or hate it. They should have cut out a couple of bad jams and added more content (only 7 songs, one a reprise of the title track), but I'm glad it's been retrieved from the great psychedelic unknown. Anyone know what C.A. stands for here?—Richie Unterberger

**CARGO OF DESPAIR: 4 Headaches** 4-song 12-minute 7" EP (Dumb Artists Collective, 172 Chestnut St., Rm. 209, Springfield, MA 01103, \$3) We all thought this bit of inspired amateurism was unique but didn't know quite what to say about it. There's a song that goes in its entirety, "One night with you is like a week with someone else." One song says Flipper the porpoise "spends all his money on breads & blow/loves snortin' coke between their legs." Then there's a recital by the God of Stupidity who, coincidentally, lives in Springfield, Mass. Not to mention the lousy scratching effects, which are truly spectacular. VB: 4, JF: 7, DS: 6

**NICK CAVE: From Her To Eternity** (Mute, 53 Kensington Gardens Sq., London W2, UK; dist. by Dutch East India, 516-432-3500) Debut solo outing from former Birthday Party lead singer sounds as though it's the kind of record he always wanted to make. Freed of the sonic bombast his old mates would usually opt for, Cave has the opportunity to let his strong voice carry the material, and he does a bang-up job. He croons, groans, and yelps with such passion that you know he means every word of his horror-story lyrics. Musically, the songs pick up where the BP left off—slow, deliberate tempos with a deep blues feel that's just perfect for Cave's bellowing. The band includes Einsturzende Neubauten guitarist Blixa Bargeld, ex-BP drummer Mick Harvey, and ex-Magazine bassist Barry Adamson. Quite possibly the best LP so far this year.—David Sheridan

**CHAINS OF HELL ORCHESTRA: One Bad Trip** 4-song 12" EP (Dr. Stimson, PO Box 95172, Seattle, WA 98145) Very disappointing. The tone is flat. The performances are insular and self-indulgent. And while someone thinks this is bright (I do, I do!—JF) and even experimental pop, only the bullfrog vocal on "One Bad Trip" provides any joy, and the rest of that song is a mess. The French version of Creedence's "Born on the Bayou" is reminiscent of Portland's Dance Combeau, and it's just as insipid. One thin joke.—Scott Jackson

**THE CHAVARRIA BROTHERS: Los Hermanos Chavarría** (Folklyric, 10341 San Pablo Ave., El Cerrito, CA 94530) A collection of ballads and love songs recorded in the '30s. Two-part vocal harmonies are accompanied by guitars in a style typical of the early Tex-Mex border music, prior to the rise in popularity of the accordion. This music is an acquired taste for most non-Hispanics and, as the 78s

from which this record was made were not in great condition, the uninitiated may prefer the more contemporary music from the region. For serious collectors, this edition, with its copious notes and lyrics/translations, is recommended.—scott fraser

**CARLOS CHAVEZ: The Six Symphonies** (Vox Cum Laude; dist. Moss Music Group, 48 W. 38th St., NYC 10018) Mexico's one claim to fame in music of this century is Chavez. He belongs to a rather conservative camp, though was championed by the likes of Henry Cowell. In some respects he might be viewed as a kind of Mexican Aaron Copland from his early works, such as his "Sinfonia India" and "Sinfonia de Antígona" which date from the '30s. His last 4 symphonies are quite another matter. Nos. 3, 4, & 5 were written in the early '50s and belie the influence of some rugged Americans. The third symphony contains the raw power and tension one finds in works by one such as Ruggles, though Chavez's work is not pervasively dissonant. It is a very fine work and makes one wonder why this composer is not better known. In spite of its homogeneity of color, the Symphony No. 5 for string orchestra is rich and lush, with more than a hint of Stravinskian sound. The rhythms and melodic content resemble those of some of the Russian composer's works for chamber orchestra, such as Dumbarton Oaks. The symphonies are conducted by Chavez's fellow countryman Eduardo Mata with the London Symphony Orchestra. For the most part, the performances are solid, but there are occasional passages where the intonation is surprisingly off.—Dean Suzuki

**THE CHEEPSKATES "Run Better Run"/"Xtra Collestrial"** (Midnight, PO Box 390 Old Chelsea Sta., NYC 10011) The "A" side from this very active band on the NY garage scene is a taut rocker with a gripping chorus. The flip is a spacy instrumental that makes excellent use of their combo organ. An album is on its way and having recently seen them live, I know they've got enough decent material to make it something to look forward to. Meanwhile, garage fans should not miss this single.—Charles P. Lamey

**THE CHESTERFIELD KINGS "She Told Me Lies"/"I've Got A Way With Girls"** (Mirror, 645 Titus Ave., Rochester, NY 14617) I don't care what the detractors want us to believe, the Chesterfield Kings are in no way a cartoon version of the garage era or a lounge act for pseudo-nostalgia buffs, but one of the better bands playing any sort of music that the tag "rock & roll" is placed on. This new 45 is "again" a testament to rock & roll music that says more about the music than anyone at *Circus* could comprehend. The first side is an original because a bunch of dopes (one time including myself) wanted the band to do originals (as if the cover material wasn't obscure enough) and although not as frantic as King's vocalist Greg Prevost's sides with the great Distorted Levels this song is almost indistinguishable from the best cuts on your average Pebbles/Boulders compilation. The flip's a cover of some obscure garage record and like all of their other songs it has that patented Prevost growl and raw backing.—Christopher Stigliano. [Hey, you should mention that the Vox organ gets a chance to stretch out. Anachronists rejoice! CJ: 6, VB: 4, DS: 4, JF: 4]

**CHRISTIAN DEATH: Catastrophe Ballet** (Invitation Au Suicide import, address needed) American Gothic—references include Bauhaus, Bowie, Joy Division, and Alice Cooper, plus the British Batcave stuff. Some of it is ponderously mid-'70s (such as the organ-dominated "Sleepwalk"), while other tunes rock out without pretensions. An extremely dense sound overall: thundering-lumbering bass punctuated by tom-heavy drums, dronelike organ work, snatches of quivering guitar lines. The singer is a bit overdramatic but has a unique resonance, if not a wide range of mannerisms. Best cut is the Sisters of Mercy-sounding "Androgynous Noise Hand Permeates."—Fred Mills

**LOU CHRISTIE "Guardian Angels" 12" 45** (Plateau Records, 1650 Broadway, NYC 10019) The definitive anthem of those fearless crime-fighters led by Curtis "Rock" Sliwa. The rap style is combined with a falsetto chorus and break to create a stunning sound. The lyrics even tell a great story ("They Saved My Momma"). The Crown Heights Affair provides the instrumental backing—check out those tingling guitar licks and that solid swinging beat! Subways, whistles and handclaps make dramatic appearances too. Lightning Strikes again here—so "Keep It Angels!"—Harry Young 10





**DAVID KNOPFLER: Release** (Passport, 3619 Kennedy Rd., S. Plainfield, NJ 07080) A very ambitious debut by the former member of Dire Straits (& bro to band leader Mark Knopfler). The PR describes it as "earthy" and "adult" rock, which sounds about right. Knopfler's gruff voice (lower but similar to Mark's) sounds forced, but makes an okay contrast to everything else—which is just fine but ultra-slick. It's a credit to his co-production, which manages to make the most of modern multi-track recording techniques, that this works as well as it does. The lyrics, too, are personal and poetic, & I wouldn't be too surprised if someone told me it *actually* was Dire Straits' latest, though piano & synthesizers get the nod over guitars in most cases. I'm not sure I like it, but I definitely admire the craft involved in putting something like this together.—JF

**KOO DOT TAH: Perpetrators** (KDT Records, Box 85781, Seattle, WA 98145) A busy, bouncy, poppy attempt at new wave rock by people who seem old enough to know better. The recording quality is superb, the musicians sound talented, but I don't get the feeling they have their hearts in this at all. The lyrics strive for cleverness and wit but never say anything (sample titles: "Free Rita Hayworth," "I Faced the Insomnia Squad," "Be A Helicopter"). The music cries out for hooks and melodies—after all, this is pop. Yet the words are crammed sideways into the hyperactive arrangements and the songs get lost in the process.—Scott Becker

**LAIBACH EP** (Les Disques Du Crepuscule, address needed) An odd release from Crepuscule, dark and foreboding, heavily percussive, yet primal and strikingly urgent. Laibach's material is very industrial, with its ferocious rhythms and twisted, pained vocals. This reminds me of a cross between the Joy Division at their most depressing moments, combined with the dissonance of P16D4's recent nightmare visions. Overall, it represents a powerful fusion of industrial elements and traditional dirge rock, not nearly as extreme or inventive as Neubauten but far more unsettling than the Box, Clock DVA, and a host of other brooding groups.—Paul Lemos

**MAJOR LANCE: Monkey Time** (Edsel Records; available from City Hall, 15 Tiburon Dr., San Rafael, CA 94701) Vintage pre-Motown soul sung in the high tenor with falsetto swoops range. While Lance was no Jackie Wilson or Smokey Robinson, he did have the good fortune to be a close, personal friend of Curtis Mayfield, who penned all the songs here, giving them the expected Impressions-like backup singing and horn arrangements to really rock the house. Side two's tunes are all great and it includes the classic "You'll Want Me Back," while side one tends toward samey sounding dance craze songs in the vein of his hit "Monkey Time." An outstanding record that is at the top of my list.—GK

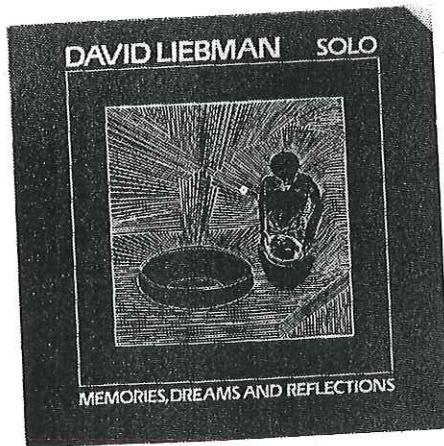
**MARK LANE: Who's Really Listening?** 5-song 12" EP (Idiosyncratics, 832 Empire Ave., Ventura, CA 93003) The kind of record that makes Op readers write letters about why they hate synthesizers. Lane layers sequenced synthesizer lines over electronic percussion to produce five turgid, nearly indistinguishable tracks derivative both of British electro-pop and the more rigid German electronics.—Michael Draine

**ELODIE LAUTEN: Concerto for Piano and Orchestral Memory** (Cat Collectors' Productions, 141 Ridge St., #10, NYC 10002; dist. by New Music Distribution, 500 B'way, NYC 10012) Don't be suckered in by the rather pretentious title; this is little more than forty minutes of repetitive, Glass-cum-Riley piano ostinatos set against muddled tape effects that are almost laughably trite and cliched. The dif-

ference between this and Glass or Riley is that they don't ignore things such as melodic and/or textural development; Lauten's piece just rambles on and on, going nowhere. Pink Floyd fans would have gone ga-ga over this stuff twelve years ago, now it just unintentionally reminds me why I quit doing drugs.—David Sheridan

**STEVE LAYTON: 84 et al.** cassette (119 E. 3rd #2, Moscow, ID 83843) Many of the pieces are short, almost pop rhythm structures overlaid with light, sometimes "keyboardly" synthesizer solos. However, the electronic rhythms are tight and more complex than most synth-pop and some border on straight electronic music. The tape also contains two pleasant pieces for celesta reminiscent of some of John Cage's work from the 1940s. A few pieces use tracks borrowed from ethnic music recordings layered over synthesizer rhythms. One track reminds me of Ivor Cutler. Another track sounds like an ensemble recital piece for a modern composition class.—Marc Barreca

**RICK AND LORRAINE LEE: Leeway for Dulcimer** (Greenhays Records, 7a Locust Ave., Port Washington, NY 11050; dist. by Flying Fish) An interesting if uneven record of post-Jean Ritchie (who appears on the record) neo-dulcimer—"whole grain"—fusion music. On the plus side, Lorraine Lee is an interesting songwriter and dulcimer player—playing everything from hornpipes to Ellington tunes, and capable of a wide variety of techniques. Hearing the Ellington sax-chart from "I Let A Song Go Out of My Heart" replicated on a dulcimer is worth the price of the record. On the minus side, however, the other musicians' playing and most of the singing is forced, poorly balanced, and simply doesn't swing. On the jazz medley ("As Time Goes By," an original called "Leeway," and "... Song...") the backup band sounds like they got their changes from Mel Bay, and play time, as the saying goes, like it was a periodical. On several tunes Rick Lee plays a cheap sounding synthesizer, which is annoyingly out of place. However, Rick's singing, especially on the Woody Guthrie tune "Ludlow Massacre," is nice, and some of the original tunes (like Lorraine's "Haying Time" and the countryish "Heart For A Song") might work better in the hands of another group. Dulcimer lovers should add this record to their collection. For all others I recommend it as a sincere first effort.—Larry Polansky



**LES I: Dans L'hemisphere Nord** (Wayside Music, Box 6517, Wheaton, MD 20906) OK, let's get the factual stuff out of the way. This was produced by Ferdinand Richard of Etron Fou Leloubian. The sax player from Etron Fou's last lp, Bruno Meillier (here spelled Bruni Maillio), played with this group prior to joining Etron Fou, and now he's back again. Given all that, it's no wonder that there are some strong stylistic similarities between this LP & the last Etron Fou disc, *Les Sillons De La Terre*. But you never find more than similarities. Etron Fou Leloubian play with far more authority, subtlety, and power than Les I. Yeah, there's some interesting rhythms and horn parts, but the problems seem to stem from the fact that Les I are moving in several different directions at once, and one of them too convincingly. For instance, the guitarist keeps coming up with these funky little chords on the top strings, kind of like David Byrne, but he never even comes close to getting DOWN with it. And the drummer keeps time admirably, but he never cuts

loose at all. Then there are some jazzy parts, but they only allude to the potential of jazz, never going far enough out on a limb to get interesting. Basically, the material is good, and if this group would grab the music by the throat and play the living hell out of it, I think it would sound pretty interesting. Unfortunately, as it is it's kind of lackluster. One thing though, for those who care—this has one of the most novel covers I've even seen. That ought to be worth a couple of points, I guess.—C.W. Vrtacek

**DIDIER LEVALLET OCTET: Scoop** (In and Out Records, c/o Corinne Leonet, 16 Rue De Bruxelles, 75009 Paris, France) An interesting and unusual group. The three French musicians are relative unknowns. But the supporting cast is comprised of some of the best musicians on the European free jazz scene: soprano saxist Steve Lacy, reedman Tony Coe, trombonist Radu Malfatti, trumpeter Mark Charig, and percussionist Tony Oxley. But this date is not quite what one might expect. There are sections of collective improvisation, but many of the ensemble passages bring to mind Gil Evans in their harmony and voicings. The use of Lacy and Gerard Bucquet on tuba reinforced this. A real plus to this group is guitarist Gerard Marais. His solos are good, but he really shines behind other soloists and in the ensemble passages where he frequently employs feedback to great effect. Bassist Levallet's compositions are interesting and are not merely heads for a bunch of soloists. He frequently has the octet integrated into solo passages. This works especially nicely on the ballad "Sweet Lacy" and Lacy turns in one of his best solos of the set. This record looks as if it might be difficult to come by, but it is worth searching for. The address above is the one given for management (there was no other address on the record), so if they don't have the record, they can probably direct you. Recommended.—R. Iannapollo

**LIBERTE/A STATE OF MIND: Don't Vote...** Subvert 5-track 7" flexi (Mind Matter, PO Box 4766, S.F., CA 94101, \$1.50) Political punk/poetry (2 groups) with lots of neat inserts, sort of from the Crass model, including a punk rap/scratch track that's pretty unique. Eva-tone beeped out their "fucks," god bless 'em. JF:5, VB:4, DS:6, CJ:7

**DAVID LIEBMAN: Memories, Dreams, and Reflections** (PM Records, 20 Martha St., Woodcliff, NJ 07675) Liebman's first solo excursion, recorded in Aug. 82 and recently released, fails to take advantage of the possibilities inherent in the setting. It's a rather self-indulgent affair complete with program notes for each selection and other explanations of purpose. The music itself is simple and unadorned, in an introspective, meditative mood. Liebman plays his usual soprano sax and flute as well as some rudimentary piano and percussion. The only composition not his is an interpretation of Satie's "Trois Gnossiennes," which is mildly interesting. Two of the songs have annoying voice-overs, grinding ideological axes that Liebman missed covering in his notes. An unremarkable recording.—Steve Hahn

**LILA "Illuminatus"/"Zeitfenster"** (c/o Helmholtzstr. 12, D-4000 Dusseldorf 1 or Michael Tesch, Das Buro, Furstenwall 64, D-4000 Dusseldorf 1, West Germany) This spacy electronic duo call their pretty instrumental pieces "electronic sound pictures." Both shift gradually, adding new elements and melodies as they go. DS:5, CJ:4, JF:5

**SCOTT LINDENMUTH GROUP: Another Side, Another Time** (Dark Stream Records, PO Box 5494, Lynnwood, WA 98048) Why is it all jazz-rock fusion sounds alike after awhile? Mostly loud, mostly unmelodic. Mostly forgettable. And where's the jazz in jazz-rock? There's nothing here you can go away whistling after listening to these guys. But if you really, sincerely, with all your heart, like fusion and don't give a hoot about whistling, you may like this album.—Betty Huck

**LIVE SKULL** (Massive Records, 231 West 29th St., Suite 602, NYC 10001) The promo sheet reads: "Live Skull creates emotionally charged songs that avoid the tedium of much experimental music. The cyclical bass lines and rhythms derived from dance and rock beats form the core of the sound, the guitars adding dense modal harmonies. The vocals act as a textural rather than purely melodic element, responses to an abrasive social environment." Um, yeah. That's pretty accurate, a little pompous, but accurate. Call it slow death/sludge rock for short.—Bill Bois 6



# SOURCES

This list of record, tape, and/or publication sources supplements and updates all previous lists. See back issues for other good sources of material.

**Bertus**, Industrieweg 45b, Berkel En Rodenrijs, Holland, distribute Dutch indies.

**Boudisque**, Haringpakksteeg 10-18, Amsterdam, Holland, distribute Dutch indies.

**Country Dance & Song Society**, 505 Eighth Av., NYC 10018, (212) 594-8833, "have a full range of materials concerned with English & American traditional dance & music." Send \$1 for catalog or ask for free price list.

**Elderly Instruments**, 1100 N. Washington, PO Box 14210, Lansing, MI 48901 (fairly new address), put out three huge catalogs—one for records (mostly all types of traditional music but also some reggae, classical, jazz, what-have-you), one for books of music or about music, and the other for folk-type instruments & kits.

**Kicking Mule**, PO Box 158, Alderpoint, CA 95411, has also expanded operations to include sales of instruction books & tapes, tablature, and many folk/jazz labels besides their own.

**Rounder Distribution**, One Camp St., Cambridge, MA 02140 (also a recent address), is a wholesale distributor of hundreds of indy labels, strongest in folk styles and mainstream jazz.

**Roundup Records**, PO Box 154, N. Cambridge, MA 02140, is a mail-order service also strongest in traditional musics, but they've got their hand into just about everything but rock. Their catalog, in magazine format, is very entertaining.

**Staal Plaat**, Spui Straat 183, 1012 VN (PO Box 11453), Amsterdam, Netherlands, is "a cool cassette/record store."

**Trax**, c/o Vittore Baroni, via Raffaelli 2, 55042 Forte Dei Marmi, Italy, puts out bizarre publications & recordings and may distribute other weird stuff as well, but I can't be sure.

**Upstart Distribution**, 11343 Homedale St., L.A., CA 90049, (213) 472-3242, are now distributing hardcore recordings and fanzines, but they are interested in handling all styles of sincere new music.

**HOLLY TANNEN: Invocation** (Kicking Mule, PO Box 158, Alderpoint, CA 95411) Based on five years of living and research in the British Isles, Holly Tannen presents a beautifully recorded and sung collection of songs on what I find is a puzzling theme. An enclosed circular asserts: "Folk Music: A Return to Ritual and Ceremony," and alleges these songs to be pre-Christian survivals. Sounds like an interesting idea, but I have difficulty matching the contents with the idea. Many songs were "written" by specific people, at least one is based on a Child ballad, and two selections are waltzes. None relate directly to ritual, ceremony, or invocation as I understand the terms. Ignore the title if it bothers you and just listen to the music, which is delightfully sung and played.—Terry Miller

**DICK TARRIER: Songs For Kids** (Wheatland Music Org., PO Box 22, Remus, MI 49340, \$8.25) Reissue of folk songs for younger children, Tarrier on vocals and banjo backed by an appropriately loose and playful group that includes fiddle, harmonica, guitar, mandolin, and bass. Rowdy little munchkins contribute their voices (and North Carolina accents) to a couple of songs. Subjects are traditional: tractors, trains, tattle-tales (Rosalie Sorrells's "I'm Gonna Tell"), and a barnyard of animals. Like Woody Guthrie's children's songs (of which "Wash My Face" is included), parents won't feel the need to leave the premises when this is playing—makes me look forward to the "older kids" volume due soon, just one in a whole series of children's records planned by Wheatland. This one is an ideal kick-off.—JF

**JOE TARTO: Titan of the Tuba** (Broadway Int., Box 100, Brighton, MI 48116) A tribute to "One of the great men in the Rhythm Section," this record taps Tarto's tuba repertoire of the twenties, thirties, and forties. He plays Dixieland, polkas, "symphonic music," and some solo tunes I would hesitate to characterize. But despite the humorous title and the comic introductions on the album, the record is a serious and well-made look at the talented Tarbo's long career.—Jean Grey

**THE TEMPEST "Lady Left This"/"Attic"** (Glass; dist. by Pinnacle, 1 Oasthouse Way, Cray Av., St. Mary le Cray, Orpington, Kent, England or Rough Trade U.S.) Pleasant albeit undistinguished punk-influenced hard rock with gruff vocalist, Derek & Dominoes guitar.—JF

**MALCOLM TENT "Airplay"/"U.S.A."** (Goldtent, PO Box 3079, Margate, NJ 08402) The most interesting thing about this punster with a gift for overstatement is that he plays accordion in a rock context.—JF

**TERVEET KADET** (Propaganda Records, Box 393, 00101 Helsinki 10, Finland) 17 short, fiery bursts of extreme intensity! You can feel it even though you can't understand a single word. Yeah, there are those three basic punk themes, but I think it's admirable that even though I can't understand one Finnish lyric, I can still identify with what they're saying. As a whole, this record is not as good as some of their earlier stuff, but it's still quite a good record—give it a listen.—Duane Dinham

**THEY ALL PLAYED THE TIGER RAG** (Folkways, 43 W. 61st St., NYC 10023) At first glance the idea of a bunch of folks playing the same song might seem of interest only to diehard jazz fans with bad skin and thick glasses. But this collection of wild, loose, barrelhouse, gut-bucket, struttin, stompin jivey jazz is too free to be caged. This disk has more stars than Graumann's—Tatum, Armstrong, Ellington, and even pre-Harriet Ozzie Nelson. If you do possess a music degree (or thick glasses) you'll really appreciate the way the tune has adapted and metamorphosed via

oral transmission, as well as pre-Basie band Count, the almost modern modal Earl Hines, the tuba player at the end of side one, and, best of all, Jelly Roll Morton playing the original French dance tune that inspired the "Tiger Rag." Kudos to D. Jasen who composed it. An entirely painless jazz history lesson with appeal to the head and heart. It can't be tamed, but it can be purchased.—GK

**DAVID THOMAS AND THE PEDESTRIANS: Variations On A Theme** (Sixth International Records, Rough Trade, 326 Sixth Street, San Francisco, CA 94103, \$6) This would sound a lot better without Thomas. His vocals aren't cute—they're inane—and they're definitely inferior to the instrumentals. The record is brimming with piquant ear-catchers, from Lindsay Cooper's comical woodwinds on "Semaphore," to Richard Thompson's sea-chantey guitarwork on "A Day At The Botanical Gardens," to Anton Fier's clatterboom drumming on "The Rain." The overall sound is an eclectic stew: jazz-folk-Burundi-spastic. There's even some ersatz rockabilly ("Bird Town"). The ensemble has a loose improvisational feel, in contrast to the trim orchestration on *The Sound of the Sand*, the group's previous LP. The players are sharp and sassy, and they sprinkle moments of genuine soul throughout the disc. But David's singing is hard to stomach, even to a die-hard happy-guy such as myself. His childish mannerisms—the whooping and mewling—cling like unsavory barnacles to the performances, infecting them with a cloying, self-conscious goofiness. His inability to hold a note ruins whatever poignancy the "accessible" tracks—"A Day At The Botanical Gardens," "Hurry Back"—might have had. And his lyrics, more now than ever, are self-referential and self-indulgent. He's always straining for significance, trying, without success, to squeeze fresh inspiration from a stock of empty pet-metaphors: birds, buckets in the ocean, semaphore, the "art of walking" and the "voice of the sand." His attempts to introduce new pets—Humpty Dumpty, beavers, garden hoses—are noticeably devoid of wit or insight. What, for example, is the point of this line: "The egg & I cannot deny the consequence of being bootless."???? It appears that David is trying to get away with as little original thought as possible, and still make it look as if he's hard at work churning out fresh poetry.—James Kobielus

**GUTHRIE THOMAS: This One's For Sarah** (Eagle Records, PO Box 23344, Nashville, TN 37202) One of those singer-songwriter albums that used to be made in the early 1970s by artists like Jackson Browne and James Taylor. Thomas is a talented musician and, though this album does not sound very trendy, it shows he can play well in more than one style of music—rock, country, and folk. Some high-powered session musicians, including Rolling Stone guitarist Ron Wood, drummer John Siomos, and Drummer Howard Wyeth contribute their talents to the music. Thomas' lyrics—a bit hackneyed at times about being a ramblin' man—more often than not are introspective and biographical.—Tom Spigolon

\* **GUTHRIE THOMAS: Buffalo** (Eagle) Cliched melodies and tired chord changes combined with almost unbelievably inane lyrics ("I can see that it's raining, it's really comin' down"—and it gets worse), and a poor recording to boot (how can one over-modulate a quiet acoustic guitar and voice?), I can't recommend this record at all, though I'm normally a real sucker for simple acoustic music. Several of the tunes are very bad and painfully obvious stylistic rip-offs of people like John Prine, Bob Dylan, and others, but it isn't clear to me if Thomas is even aware of this kind of "imitation." Rarely have I found a record so annoying, and because of this I would like to invite other Op reviewers to submit a second opinion—maybe someone else can find something good about it that I don't hear.—Larry Polansky

# REVIEWS

## ABOUT REVIEWS

This latest batch of reviews by our readers includes independently-produced and distributed recordings received through August 15, excepting those that we didn't have enough space to run this time. We should be able to catch up in the "U" Op. We'll start with artists/groups whose name begins with "T" (our featured letter, after all) and run through the alphabet, squeezing in as many as possible. In-house reviewers are John Foster (JF) and Geoff Kirk (GK). If you wish to have your record/tape reviewed by a specific Op reviewer, you may send it directly to us with your preference or, in most cases, we'll be able to supply you with reviewer addresses if you send us a stamped postcard. Stamped postcards are also handy if you wish to find out if we received your package. Some records are rated 1—10. 10 is the best. We welcome comments, criticism, other opinions on recordings/reviews and also sometimes print unsolicited reviews of noteworthy indy releases if they're TYPED and DOUBLE-SPACED. Keep them short (½ page or so) and follow the format used in the following pages. Reviews for "U" Op must be received by Nov. 15. Lost Music Network, PO Box 2391, Olympia, WA 98507.—JF



**METAL MASSACRE VOL.III** (Metal Blade, 22458 Ventura Blvd., Suite E, Woodland Hills, CA 91364; marketed by Enigma, PO Box 2896, Torrance, CA 90509) While not as uniformly well-recorded as the U.S. Metal series, this sampler of heavy bands is a bit more diverse, evenly divided between those with debts to Zep-Sabbath-BOC-Van Halen and others who come closer to approaching the speedy hardcore sound a la Motorhead. Obligatory faster-than-light guitar solos, high-pitched screaming (it's an art). A couple of bands (Snowwhite and Bitch, natch) have female lead singers. Other bands include Slayer, Tyrant, Medusa, Test Pattern, Black Widow, Warlord, Virgin Steele, Sexist, Marauder, and La Mort. Almost every track has something to recommend it. JF:6, GK:7

**PAPA MICHIGAN AND GENERAL SMILEY** "What a Life"/"Sugar Daddy" 12" 45 (RAS Records, PO Box 40804, Washington, DC 20016) Super reggae DJ duo that they are, I have very high expectations. Too bad the instrumental tracks and most of the DJ rap used here are getting worn out. They can do better, although it's still fun music.—Keith Bowman 4

**THE MILKSHAKES: IV the Men With the Golden Guitars** (Milkshake Records, 5 Kentish Town Road, London NW 1, England) Possibly the wildest instrumental rock album of all time; harsh, spooky and beautiful, treading a fine line between an authentic early Sixties sound and lead guitar that often sounds Stooges (especially Williamson-era) influenced. The net result sounds like a 1963-1964 band that was incredibly ahead of its time. Cool photos and liner notes, too.—Peter Bronstein

**SUGAR MINOTT: Sufferer's Choice** (Heartbeat, One Camp St., Cambridge, MA 02140) No brittle vocals or instrumentation, but some deep throbbing reggae stuff for a change. Easily the best instrumentation behind Minott that I can remember. Also the songs mean something. Not a masterpiece, but worth a shot.—Keith Bowman

**MISSISSIPPI DELTA BLUES BAND: Greatest Hits** (T.J. Records, PO Box 8443, Stanford, CA 94305) If these are their greatest hits, the Mississippi Delta Blues Band is in deep trouble. Fronted by Sam Myers, who does vocals and plays harp, the band grinds on with track after track of sodden, cliché-abundant urban blues facsimiles. Perhaps the band is a smoking performing group, I don't know. On this record, the party's over. Everybody sounds like everybody else. Myers sounds like B.B. King singing in his sleep. His Little Walter harp sounds adequate but never urgent. The lead guitarist (there are two listed on the album) sounds like he's riffing solos out of a music store book on how-to-play Basic Chicago Blues. Only once, on "Sleeping in the Ground," does a guitar solo emerge with any kind of articulate intensity. Caveat emptor.—David Meltzer

**MONTAGE** "The Boy Is Hot" 12" 45 (Birdie, 1626 Wilcox, Suite 333, Hollywood, CA 90028) Could almost be an answer to Michael Jackson's "Billie Jean," using a similar tune/groove with a more ragged production and lots of those shooting-star effects so popular in disco. The emotional lead singer reminds me of Labelle.—JF

**JOHN MOONEY: Telephone King** (Blind Pig Records, 208 South First St., Ann Arbor, MI 48103) Mooney borrows the horn section from Roomful of Blues and harpist Mark Wenner from the Nighthawks for this New Orleans R&B set, comporting himself well on vocals, National Steel, and slide. Piano player Bob Cooper is a capable Longhair exponent, but, all in all, the album should cook a lot harder than it does. Despite solid musicianship, there are few moments to distinguish this from the conventional. Mooney

needs more of the horn sound in the arrangements. Fats Domino's records might even sound thin without that delicious punch from the sax section. There is also a flaw in the rhythm arrangements and a subsequent failure to capture the flavor that sets New Orleans R&B apart. That fine line between straight 4/4 and shuffle has to be located and goosed. Listen to Huey Smith (**Rockin' Pneumonia**), The Meters (**Hey Pocky Way**), Charlie and Inez Foxx (**Mockingbird**) to find out just how irresistible the New Orleans magic can be.—Rix Zeers

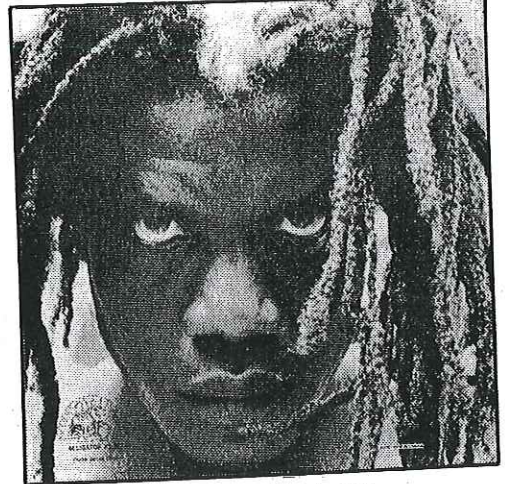
**MOUSE & THE TRAPS** "Bottom Line"/"Gypsy Girl" (Smudge, Po Box 23376, Nashville, TN 37202) Can't say if this is the original Mouse &/or Traps, but it could be judging from the Dylanish vocals on the otherwise Dicky Bettish southern vocal ramble of "Gypsy." "Bottom Line" is weak, southern boogie-rock.—JF

**MOUSTACHE BLUE** (Glen A. Prior, 846 N. Avenue 65, L.A., CA 90042; \$13.25 includes 32-page booklet of information and complete scores) Some microtonal music which is quite notable, and some marimba/percussion/bagpipe that is poorly recorded and/or not very interesting that will not be discussed here. Ivor Darreg's "Prelude for Guitar with 19 Frets per Octave," which was printed in the February 1978 issue of *Guitar Player* is heard here for the first time. It is a simple little piece which shows the ease in which 19 tone equal temperament fits on the guitar. In this case the guitar had been refretted by Ivor himself. A short improvisation shows another instrument of Ivor's, the megalyra. This is an eight foot long string instrument (15 strings on one side, 16 on the other, tuned to a drone in octaves and fifths), which is amplified via pickups and played like a slide guitar. Two pieces, "The Leaf" and "Voyage Through a Hexany," are played on the 31-note per octave conduit marimba, an instrument developed by Erv Wilson. The hexany system on which the latter piece is based is also an invention of Wilson. It is a way of arranging tonal material (musical notes) in three dimensional geometric space (as opposed to the one dimensional linear space of our ascending and descending scales). This facilitates a new way of looking at scale structure, modulation, and the interrelatedness of intervals and chords. Don't sound half bad neither.—Stephen Smith

**MULKINS & GRACE** "Welcome to America with Love"/"Seeds of Time Today (Ten Years Later)" (RCI, PO Box 126, Elmsford, NY 10523) "Welcome" is dedicated to Vietnam War vets; 12-string, voice, and cheesy MOR synth arrangement.—JF

**ELLIOTT MURPHY: Murph the Surf** (Courtisane, 107 E. 88th St., NYC 10028; licensed and distributed by Plexus Trading, PO Box 270, Gedney Way Sta., White Plains, NY 10605) The new Dylan who never was, Murphy seems trapped in the early '70s of David Bowie, Lou Reed, Ian Hunter, and Steve Harley. He's a fair introspective songwriter, very good lyricist, throws in a lot of knowing references—certainly his song about suburban life is more witty and polished than thousands from the punk era, but it's an old story, and his relationship songs just don't convey the passion of Bruce Springsteen. The band includes Richard Sohl (keyboards), Ernie Brooks (bass), Peter Gordon (sax, clarinet, synth), Tony Machine (eh?), and Jesse Chamberlain (drums, fake drums), Murphy on guitars and harmonica.—JF

**MUSICAL CHAIRS** "Because It's You"/"One Man's War" (MCM, 5005 Bryant Av., Suite 111, Mpls., MN 55419) "You" is pleasant, light pop with a lousy rock guitar solo towards end. "War" adds a reggae beat, was another one of those inappropriate heavy guitar solos. Hopeless!—JF



Mutabaruka

**MUTABARUKA** "Ode to Johnny Drughead"/"Junk Food" 12" 45 (Alligator Records, Box 60234, Chicago, IL 60660, \$4) 1. Once again the dub poet mounts an issue and eliminates the opposition. Mutabaruka's anti-drug campaign (particularly cocaine) seems to point the finger at the big star. Just who could be Johnny Drughead? Good tracks both words and soundwise. The dubs are both smoothly segued into the lead tracks.—Keith Bowman 7. *Second opinion:* Warning against the evils of ice cream, hot dogs, and drugs, Mutabaruka's self-produced "dub poetry" (a la Linton Kwesi Johnson) is a very effective mix of dead serious vocal delivery with colorful sound effects and odd production gimmicks, e.g. scratchy electric guitar solo, electric piano, crying, unusual placement of background vocals. You wouldn't think a guy who lives in the country without electricity would take such delight and care in recording his accompaniment with the tools of Babylon. GK: 7½, JF: 7

**THE NASHVILLE GRASS** (with Curly Seckler): **China Grove My Hometown** (Folkways) I believe this is the first album by the Nashville Grass since the death of Lester Flatt, and it is a recording of mixed quality. Many of the tunes are mediocre and played in an uninspired fashion (e.g. "China Grove...," "Cold Cold Loving," "Till the End of the World Rolls Round"). There are also some nicer ones—"Old Joe" (fine fiddle/banjo duet), "Reuben," and "Dixie Holiday." Curly Seckler, for many years a regular with the Nashville Grass, is the lead singer, and his style is a direct reference to Flatt's wonderful voice, yet not nearly so strong. Kenny Ingram, one of the last of the great "straight ahead" bluegrass banjo players, is rock steady but a little dull—it seems to be business as usual for him on this recording. The big surprise for me is the superlative dobro playing of Gene Wooten. Even though he plays in a very traditional mold, there is a freshness and interest to his playing that is missing in the rest of the group. Wooten's intonation is also superior—especially when compared to the vocal harmonies here.—Larry Polansky

**NATIVE TONGUE: Yowl** (Modern Method Records, 268 Newbury Street, Boston, MA 02116) Ten generally fast tempo songs featuring jangling, ringing, sometimes noisy guitar and punchy bass and drums. Native Tongue's instrumental interplay and sound reminded me of Pylon's at times, but N.T. are more chaotic (on guitar) and melancholic (vocally). It's pop, I guess, and some of the songs are even danceable, but this record's not at all silly or saccharine. Recommended.—Pam Kirk



**GET OFF MY BACK: Philly Hardcore Compilation** (Red Records, 810 Longfield Rd., Phila., PA 19118) Ten bands, none of whom I found really outstanding. Production quality varies greatly from band to band. The majority of the bands favor a stop and go, alternating fast and slow parts thrash style. There's a few slow songs and one dub/thrash number. Most cardboard drum sound (several contenders here): Seeds of Terror. Deepest voiced singer: YDI. Only use of wah-wah pedal: Little Gentlemen. Most chaotic: Heathens. Only band with vocalist who "sang": Ruin.—Pam Kirk

**GLUONS** 4-song 12" EP (Beth Records, 132 Garfield St., New Bedford, MA 02746) Expatriate Colorado band whose feminine-sounding, theatrical, yet convincing singer and tense persistent guitar parts on top of a locked-in rhythm section, plus a developed melodic sense, put over songs that would sound contrived in other hands, e.g. "We're living in a plastic land/I want to hold your mannequin hands." Compelling 'dissonant pop.'—JF 6

**GOLDENEN VAMPIRES** 7-song 12" EP (Zensor, c/o B. Seiler, Stuttgarter P13, 1 Berlin 12, West Germany) Because the music is clunky bash-&-riff post-punk, I think the soberly-recited lyrics must be of prime importance. Unfortunately, no sprechen de Deutsch (typical ignorant American).—JF

**MAX GOLDT** 6-song 12" EP (Zensor) An authentic German eccentric but, of course, the only words I can understand are "David Bowie." Anyway, within a fairly minimal chant context, are some munchkins (voices at different speeds), some ethnic percussion, interesting vocal arrangements, Residents touches. It's kind of engaging.—JF

**DICKIE GOODMAN: Greatest Hits** (Rhino, 1201 Olympic Blvd., Santa Monica, CA 90404) Goodman constructs fake "special reports" on newsworthy media events, having Reagan or Luke Skywalker answer his questions with actual excerpts of hit songs, so you can find out Nixon "was drinkin' wine spodi-odi [sic], drinkin' wine" during the Watergate break-in. This is a good sampling of his artform, more than enough actually, that includes 3 new pieces. However, "Superfly Meets Shaft" is inexplicably missing.—JF

**THE GOOD OL' PERSONS: I Can't Stand to Ramble** (Kaleidoscope Records, PO Box 0, El Cerrito, CA 94530) Comprised of three women and two men, the Persons achieve a rare and beautiful balance of terrific singing, superb playing (especially John Reischman's sophisticated mandolin), and good taste. Most of the lead singing is done by guitarist Kathy Kallick (who also wrote several of the tunes), and it's nearly flawless, with a kind of relaxed yet carefully ornamented style that reminds me of the Bluegrass Cardinals. Bethany Raine, the bass player, sings lead on one gospel tune and she has such a beautiful and subtle sound I'm surprised they don't let her do so more often. In general, the harmonies are far more interesting than the typical parallel motion bluegrass standard. Much of the material is nicely influenced by non-traditional bluegrass themes, like male/female relationships or growing up in the city. Most of the soloing is done by Paul Shelasky on fiddle and Reischman on mandolin, and though Shelasky is a great fiddler, it is Reischman's playing that really bowls me over. Whether he's playing background leads, fiddle tunes, or simply taking a solo, he is consistently inventive, exciting, and clean, and head and shoulders above most bluegrass players in musical sophistication. His "comping" on the swing tune "I'm Satisfied With You" is the hottest this side of Lew London, and every mandolin player should own this record just to hear the superb sound of his vintage Lloyd Loar Gibson mandolin (though some credit should be given to Bob Lindner for the excellent recording quality). The "rhythm" instrumentals (bass guitar and dobro) are all much better than compe-

tent, and Sally Van Meter even gets off a couple of tasty dobro solos, especially on "Get Up" (though I wish dobro players would finally get tired of the Mike Auldridge "raised sixth" lick—listen to Van Meter's comping on "Open Up Your Heart" for example). If you have any interest at all in acoustic music buy this record.—L. Polansky

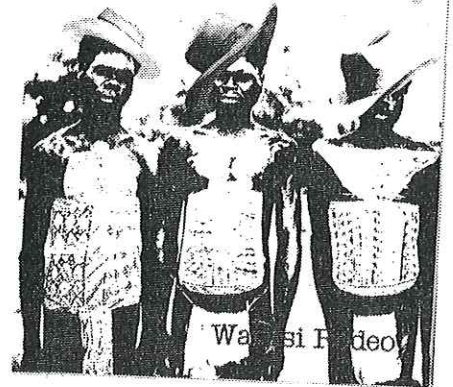
**JOHN GREAVES: Accident** (Europa, 611 Broadway, NYC 10012) Greaves is an unabashed melodicist who punches up already strong tunes with a fastidious ear for pleasingly odd production flourishes. There is nothing radical, anarchic, or belligerent to be heard here, yet I sense the spirit of a former firebrand. Every sound we hear evinces care and choice, and his choices are pleasingly pungent, a bit skitter—but never haywire. The tunes are mid-tempo, and we hear Greaves' early morning precaffeinated voice with keyboards, horns, some guitar, and some remarkably sympathetic and unobtrusive percussion work. This is an impressive album that doesn't shout its attributes, but calmly displays itself, confident of your enjoyment.—Joe Harrison. *Second opinion:* After being delayed for more than a year, Greaves' first solo lp will be a grave disappointment for progressive fans, but a refreshing change for lovers of perverse pop. *Accident* consists of short, gentle, yet slightly twisted pop songs, somewhat similar to those found on Peter Blegvad's recent lp, *Naked Shakespear* (sic). Basically, the record is pleasant enough, with its soothing synthesized strings and resonant vocals, yet it lacks the vitality that has always marked Greaves' work with Henry Cow, National Health, etc. *Accident* rarely rises above mediocrity. There are indeed some fine passages which feature adventurous use of percussion and electronics but, unfortunately, they are few and far between.—Paul Lemos

**GREY PAVILION EP** (Pink Shoe Production, Suite #204, 12021 Wilshire Blvd., L.A., CA 90025) A rather boring attempt at the already overdone field of techno-pop. The rhythm programming is average (drum and clap machine). The vocals are uninspired. A danceable EP, but nothing to get excited about.—Deborah Wigger

**DAVID GRISMAN: David Grisman's Acoustic Christmas** (Rounder, One Camp Street, Cambridge, MA 02140) Essentially, this volume has Grisman superimposing his dawg on Xmas, though he also throws in touches of reggae ("Silent Night"), renaissance ("What Child Is This?"), and "Respighi: Ancient Aires and Dances"), and Scottish music to mix things up. His regular cast, including bassist Rob Wasserman, fiddle player Darol Anger, guitarist Mike Marshall, et. al. are on hand to turn in vital albeit predictable solos. In fact, during the solo sections, one easily forgets the seasonal launching pad (which is good or bad depending on one's orientation), though Grisman is usually careful to provide an almost straight reading of the pieces before blast-off. Also on hand are recorder, crumhorn, and hurdy gurdy players to add to the undawg (read: straight) parts, as well as a certain famous duck for a cutesy closer to side one.—milo fine

**GROCERIES** 6-song 12" EP (RD3 Records, Mountianview Rd., Belle Mead, NJ 08502) Self-consciously witty, with a nod to reggae, funk, and new-waviness, these guys struck me as a Jersey version on Men At Work. Not that they really sound alike, but the lightweight earnestness and the halfway rhythms aren't very convincing. The tunes chug along at a clip too dull to be danceable; suffice it to say I wasn't moved to get on my good-foot. The band exerts too much effort trying to be clever and topical ("Government Rock," "Heiroglyphic Shuffle," "Intelligentsia Junkie") and not enough energy on anything else. One cut does stand out: the dreamy, enchanting "Noon on Tuesday." Otherwise, this is pretty uneventful stuff.—Scott Becker

## Guadalcanal Diary



**GIGI GRyce QUINTET, FEATURING RICHARD WILLIAMS: The Rat Race Blues** (Fantasy, 10th and Parker, Berkeley, CA 94710) The late Gigi Gryce was a prolific composer-arranger-alto saxophonist in New York from the mid-50s to the early 60s, collaborating with such artists as Thelonious Monk, Art Farmer, and Donald Byrd as well as leading his own groups. After fading into the relative obscurity of the public school system in the 1960s, Gryce passed away last year in Florida. *The Rat Race Blues* presents us with a typical 1960 Prestige "blowing session": two horns and a rhythm section playing five originals. The compositions, although not all based on the classic 12-measure form, are all close to the spirit of the blues. One of these, "Blues in Bloom," indicates that not only Miles and Trane were investigating modal music in 1960. Gryce plays in the Parker tradition (almost impossible to avoid at the time), but with a slightly mellower tone perhaps suggestive of earlier influences. Truly impressive is the playing of trumpeter Richard Williams, who is one of the great underrated jazz trumpeters. He is still active in the New York City area. Richard Wyands, Julian Ewell, and Micky Roker provide a solid swinging cushion for the horns, and each also solos capably.—Peter Leitch

**GUADALCANAL DIARY: Watusi Rodeo** 4-song 12" EP (Entertainment on Disc, PO Box 95233, Atlanta, GA 30338, \$4.50; dist. by Important; promoted by Mark Pucci, 9400 Roberts Dr. NE, Atlanta 30338) I play a game with myself every issue where I try to pick the band with the most commercial potential—I think this is it for the "V," despite a tendency towards glibness, like Human Sexual Response, who they kind of resemble, on songs such as "I Wish I'd Killed John Wayne," which is awful, its local popularity and a nice swipe from "Stepping Stone" aside. However, an arrangement of Miriam Makeba's "Liwa Wechi" in Congolese is swell, "Michael Rockefeller" is tense and intriguing in that post-punk pop sort of way, and "Dead Eyes" features a dandy surf-drums beat. Produced with aplomb by honcho Bruce Baxter and played with precision and flair, Guadalcanal Diary look to occupy a spot between the B-52s and the late, oft-great Pylon.—JF

**JOHN HAMMOND: Live** (Rounder, One Camp St., Cambridge, MA 02140) To most of its contemporary "advocates," black and white, the blues is a score for a night of beer drinking. Hammond, one of the original white blues revivalists, fashions his renditions from an understanding of the uncertainties, the deep well of pain and the transitory joys that gave birth to the blues. If giving little evidence that Hammond has wrestled with the demons that overtook Robert Johnson, *Live* shows him to be in greater command of the material than most any post-Jim Crow bluesman.—Dave Luhrssen



experimentation abound, yet at the same time there's still a sense of daring and wit which was all but lost by British art bands in the seventies. Despite the "heaviness," these tunes often manage to be melodic and soothing. Highlight is the accurate Family impersonation of Ghost.—Richie Unterberger

**BURST** (Streetwise Records [note: not NYC's], PO Box 474, Hales Corners, WI 53130) Looks don't deceive here. They *look* like corporate rock stars and play the part all too well. Songs are overly long dabble in the erotic, quasi-mystical, pseudo-romantic, and macho stances which make AOR radio a haven for white womanizing high school guys who put on some guise of sensitivity. The guys graduated, paid their dues, and wrote some tunes to appeal to their kind of crowd. The only pity is that such musical talent is wasted on such clichés. Ah, the capitalist dance...—Jamie Rake

**BUTTHOLE SURFERS** (Alternative Tentacles, PO Box 11458, S.F., CA 94101; dist. by Subterranean) The legendary Texas group (re-formed), originally from San Antonio. A joke but a good one. Abrasive, outrageous sax, guitar, and scream improv that will appeal to hardcores and artsies alike. And it doesn't all sound the same.—JF

**RAY BUTTIGIEG: The Essential Transition, Symphonic Poem No. 1** (Cykx, PO Box 299, Lenox Hill Station, NYC 10021) With all of the synthesizers, processors, and electronics at his disposal, Buttigieg hasn't enough compositional savvy to create a substantial work. *The Essential Transition* consists of a series of vignettes based on devices ranging from musique concrete to purely synthesized sounds. There are many effects and sounds, but they are strung together haphazardly and never form a cohesive whole.—Dean Suzuki

**BY PRODUCTS OF AMERICA (BPA) 6-Song 12"** EP (Hospital, c/o 594 Ridge Ave. #1, Cincinnati, OH 45213) An interesting, thought provoking EP reminiscent in sound to early Pere Ubu and Devo. While their influences are obvious, their work rises above mere imitation and is some of the most intelligent music coming from Ohio. Most of the songs feature jagged rhythms, jangling guitars, and nervous vocals (a la David Thomas). Each piece represents an observation of alienation experienced in everyday situations, giving the entire record a depressing, hopeless tone. A very challenging, worthwhile release.—Paul Lemos

**OSCAR CACERES: 12 Songs for Guitar, 3 Temas Populares Cubanos** (Pavane Records; dist. by Harmonia Mundi USA, 2351 Westwood Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90064) Toru Takemitsu, who wrote the 12 Songs for Guitar, is Japan's best known composer and writes in an elegant, often delicate, yet mostly dissonant style that is wholly his own. These songs are a departure from the style with which he is associated. They are actually arrangements of popular songs that prove Takemitsu to be sentimental, nostalgic, if not a bit mushy. The songs include "Summertime," "Over the Rainbow," "Londonderry Air," and four Lennon & McCartney songs. The arrangements are sophisticated, sympathetic, and, in a few cases, such as in the "Londonderry Air," opulent. The Popular Cuban Themes by Leo Brouwer are delightful works. They too are arrangements of popular songs, but they reflect a strong Afro-Cuban influence with their syncopated rhythms and jazzy harmonies. Oscar Caceres has never been one of my favorite guitarists. His tone is too nasal and his interpretations are usually flat. However, this is an exception. Though his tone is not exceptional, he plays with tremendous feeling and insight. His use of varying dynamics and tempo fits the music extremely well.—Dean Suzuki

**JOHN CAGE: Freeman Etudes I-VIII** Paul Zukofsky-violin (CP<sup>2</sup>; dist. by NMDS, 500 Broadway, NYC 10012) Like so many recent large works from Cage, this one begins ethereal, almost non-existent, and creeps towards complexity. If you are patient the silence is wonderful and I imagine that Etude 32 will be more like the war in Lebanon—a quirky barrage. In 32 minutes you hear more silence than sound (determined by star charts as in *Etudes Australes*). Zukofsky's timbre is breathy—it sounds like he is using a lot of bow and very little pressure—& takes getting used to. If you know and like Cage you might like this; if you think you're interested in violin music or Cage begin somewhere else.—Jay Hamilton

**ROYCE CAMPBELL: Solo Guitar** (RedBud Records, 611 Empire Mill Rd., Bloomington, IN 47401) Campbell is a guitarist out of Indiana who is best known for his work with the Henry Mancini concert orchestra. He lists as influences John McLaughlin and Wes Montgomery, although the former is more evident on this recording than the latter. Campbell overdubs on several tracks, and percussion by Art Reiner is also utilized on three of the ten tunes. Displaying fine musicianship on both acoustic and electric, Campbell crosses many stylistic boundaries with ease (the ECM-Windham Hill sound, straight-ahead bebop, lush post-bop harmonies, etc.), unfortunately resulting in a kind of anonymity all too common to studio or commercially oriented players. Perhaps a more focused choice of material might have helped. The music, all original, almost seems to have been chosen to demonstrate versatility or mastery of styles, rather than any kind of unified concept. Still, in spite of the above reservations, an entertaining album for guitar fans.—Peter Leitch

**DON CARLOS AND GOLD: Raving Tonight** (RAS Records, PO Box 40804, Washington, DC 20016) A nice blend of voices from Carlos and Gold puts this reggae album a little above some other solo Carlos material. A nice bonus is the inclusion of some songs with segued dub versions. This increases the "dance chance" potential of some cuts. The hit "Spread Out" (which in various forms appears on several albums) and two of my favorite Carlos songs, "Black History" and "Harvest Time" make this worthwhile.—Keith Bowman

**THE CHARLATANS** (Eva Records, F.G.L. 15, rue de l'Amiral Roussin, 75015 Paris, France) A lot more people seem to know about the Charlatans than have actually heard them. One of the very first San Francisco groups, they didn't get an album together until 1968, and never recorded again before breaking up the following year. Original members Dan Hicks and George Hunter left before this LP, and the word is that it failed to capture the group's essence, which like many San Francisco groups was best experienced live in the city's unique social climate of that era. Still, this reissue of their one-shot album has its share of good stuff. The Charlatan's good-timey sound is well balanced by an engaging sincerity and folksy, melodic compositions reminiscent of the very early Jefferson Airplane (though there are a couple ho-hum jugband tunes). On the other hand, the production and performances are too complacent and tame, lacking the spaced-out recklessness of the San Fran scene which groups like the Airplane captured so well on record. It's best likened to what Van Dyke Parks would have sounded like if he had a decent group (in fact, there's a cover of one of his songs on this album). Apparently, the true spirit of this legendary band comes through better on a collection of rare singles and demos from 1966-68 (Eva's *Alabama Bound*)

which I haven't heard yet. However, I'm not sorry to have this record in my collection. As a bonus, this reissue includes the album's original commercial promo.—Richie Unterberger

**CHRISTMAS SOUL SPECIAL** (Varrick, One Camp St., Cambridge, MA 02140) A nice idea, getting classic '60s soul singers back in the studio to cover Yuletide hits. The singers—Wilson Pickett, Mary Wells, Ben E. King, Martha Reeves, Sam Moore (of Sam & Dave), & Shirley Alston (original leader of the Shirelles)—generally sing well, but the upfront, leaden arrangements and plodding rhythm section are not up to the standards of the singers. The only interesting instrumental break comes on a cameo by saxophonist Clifford Jordan on King's velvety rendition of "The Christmas Song," still no match for Nat King Cole's. First issued in 1982 on QAG Records.—JF

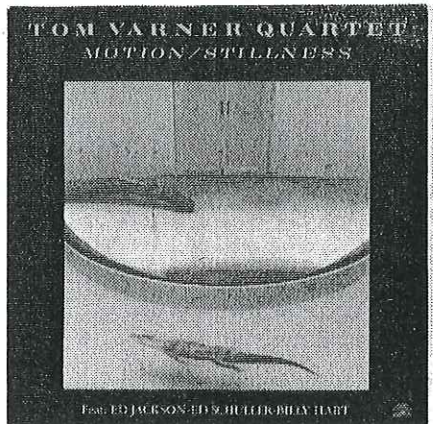
**CHURCHICAL CHANTS OF THE NYABINGI** (Heartbeat, One Camp St., Cambridge, MA 02140) Recorded on a portable cassette and sounding like it, these slow chants accompanied by drum document a 7-day ceremony in the Jamaican hills commemorating Reagan's 1982 visit to the island. Real Rastafari roots, chants of redemption and indignation aimed, literally, at the white devils (the Pope is considered to be Satan incarnate, the Queen of England the Whore of Babylon). The ½ a century old Jamaican equivalent to the hardcore movement. Excellent notes.—JF

**RUDY CIPOLLA: The World of** (Rounder Records 0189) Cipolla is one of the mandolin's true patriarchs and this monumental first recording, produced by David Grisman in Berkeley, should be on every mandolin players' shelf, and on everyone else's as far as I'm concerned. The 82 year old Cipolla has defined a unique style of plucked string music, drawing heavily on his Italian background and on the American tradition of mandolin ensembles (mandolins, mandolas, mandocelli, etc), and this album is a fine representation of the type of music Rudy has been playing in the Bay Area for years. The Berkeley Mandolin Ensemble, perhaps the leading such ensemble in the world, accompanies Cipolla on most of the cuts, and is well qualified to do so, as they have been concertizing with him for years (they call his music "Ruditunes"). Mike Marshall, David Grisman, Bob Bruen, Rob Wasserman, and other "New Acoustic Music" performers are on a few of the other songs, and it is nice to hear these younger musicians accompanying and at the same time paying tribute to this man who has been an important teacher and influence to many. Cipolla's compositions, extremely idiomatic for mandolin ensemble (Cipolla writes practically the only interesting mandocello parts of any composer writing for this idiom), are honest, beautiful, harmonically complex, and full of drastic and romantic changes of tempi and mood. Cipolla's "chops" are nothing short of phenomenal: a small man with a tremolo like a machine gun and a tone as loud as the entire Berk. Mand. Ens. combined! Even if you hate mandolins, you won't be able to resist the pure uninhibited joy and dedication that is present in abundance throughout this long-awaited record. My highest recommendation.—L. Polansky

**CIRCLE JERKS: Golden Shower of Hits** (Allegiance Records, 7527 Fountain Avenue, Hollywood, CA 90046) The title cut is the standout, a medley of pop "greats" including hilarious versions of "Afternoon Delight" and "D-I-V-O-R-C-E." However, "In Your Eyes," "Coup d'Etat," and "Product of my Environment" all have that classic Jerk mania, most of this record has the classic Jerk problem of not being able to put that mania into gear in the studio. Much of the material is hardcore only by association, and therefore will probably disappoint their biggest audience. Still, the above-mentioned songs kick.—Bill Bois



OP "V" March-April 1984



**ROLF TROSTEL: Two Faces** (See You Later, PO Box 322, 3000 AH Rotterdam, Holland) Trostel is another one man band composing, arranging, recording, and mixing his music played on analog and digital electronic instruments. Ostinato is the principal structural device. A three bar, three chord descending pattern marches through "I love europe." To sustain longer forms the length of the ostinati are varied from section to section, but the chords, changing on the downbeat, are rigidly regular. At one point in "BAO" the melody line tries to free itself from the rhythmic chains of the ostinati. In a fit of brief emotion it disintegrates in its own vibrato expanding to an uncontrollable tremolo. But the beat goes on undisturbed. "Hope is the answer" seems overly optimistic. What hope is there while marching in place to a lock-step beat; what hope in simulated movement? Even the attempt to soar above in melody seems insidiously tied to an invisible, mechanical drill sergeant.—Ralph Blauvelt

**ERNEST TUBB: Honky Tonk Classics** (Rounder Records, One Camp Street, Cambridge, MA 02140) A dozen 1940-54 chunks of Texas country from a prime Jimmie Rodgers-Merle Haggard connecting rod. Tubb is a true vocal stylist, compensating in grainy, bluesy/boozey warmth what he might lack in pure technique. Backing is clean and simple with three guitars (electric, acoustic, and steel) augmented by string bass, drums, and an occasional fiddle. A neat division of material between scrubland waltzes, hardwood stompers (like the subsequent rockabilly standard "You Nearly Lose Your Mind," and weepers ("Letters Have No Arms" is a fully guaranteed heart-breaker). The album title is apt, for Tubb did pioneer a form that reached its zenith when Hank Williams ruled the world in the early 50s.—John Johnson

**DUKE TUMATOE & THE ALL-STAR FROGS: Back To Chicago** (c/o Sounds Rite Records, 707 E. Michigan, Urbana, IL 61807) The title had me hoping for some rough-and-tumble Southside blues, but the contents turned out to be a bar band hodge-podge. For instance, side one includes a Sam Cooke cover, reggae, Tower of Power-style funk, some vocal jazz, and a Peter Green-type instrumental that smolders but never catches fire. The tempos never really let fly and the production gives everything a certain sameness of texture. Best cut to my ears is a slow blues number on side two—some tasty guitar highlights the only arrangement limited to just the four band members. Overall, the record lacks bite.—Scott Becker

**DUKE TUMATOE & THE ALL-STAR FROGS: Naughty Child** (Blind Pig, 208 South First St., Ann Arbor, MI 48103) Bluesy r&b more than a little reminiscent of mid-period Allman Brothers. The same fat Leslie (or was it Hammond?) organ tone, the same ethereal electric piano on slow stuff, plus slabs of wheelhouse jamming featuring southern fried (alas, not slide) guitar. Add in relaxed, nearly off-hand vocals and you've got a not unpleasant anachronism.



"Love to Play the Blues" has some fine single-string Chicago-style playing and is a good change-up from the simulated Peach Street shuffles.—John Johnson

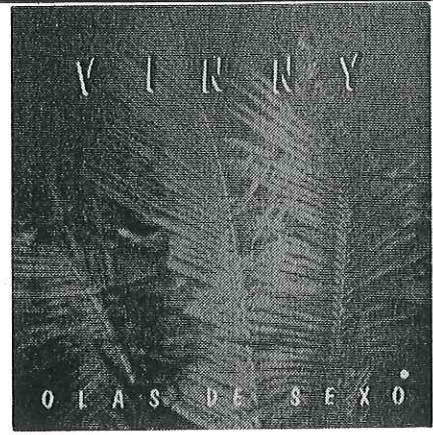
**DUKE TUMATOE & THE ALL-STAR FROGS: Red Pepper Hot!** (Sounds Rite) The blues were full of pathos and pain, irony and high spirits, resignation and defiance, not glibness and self-satisfaction. Collectively, Tumatoe and the Frogs convey the angst of a suburban kid who can't get layed and wonders if it's because of acne or his brand of toothpaste.—Dave Lührssen

**TWICE AS MUCH: That's All and Own Up** (Line, Parkallee 20, D-2000 Hamburg 13, West Germany) Like Peter & Gordon and Chad & Jeremy, Twice As Much were a British duo (David Skinner & Stephen Rose) who tried hard to be part of the mid-sixties British Invasion. They were managed by The Stones' string-puller Andrew Loog Oldham, who convinced Jagger and Richard to give them "Sittin' On A Fence," which Twice As Much took into the top 30. Unfortunately, they couldn't do the same in the states, and their follow-ups as well as their two albums didn't fare very well. Still, because they were on the highly collectible Immediate label, people have been seeking their vinyl, hence these two reissues. The music is pleasant, simple British pop. Skinner & Rose certainly had pleasing, though nondescript voices, and the material was very fashionable.—Charles P. Lamey

**U-BROWN/TRISTON PALMER "Kick-Up"/"You're Too Young"** 12" 45 (Live and Learn, 3903 Georgia Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20011) U-Brown isn't pumping out vinyl like Yellowman but is more consistent. "Kick-Up" is a hot mover with easy sing-along stuff that stays in your head after the needle is hitting the paper in the center. Palmer (or Palma) is a gold-tongued singer with all the stuff to break the hearts (much like a Dennis Brown or Gregory Isaacs), but uses a little different angle. "You're Too Young" is good, but expect to see him do much better.—Keith Bowman 8

**UPBEATS 3-song 7" EP** (Laser, 1304 Fletcher Rd., Tifton, GA 31794) Formerly the Beats, "Look At Me Now" & "Cadillac Blues" were found on their first 45 and have a light Donovan meets early Bowie tone to them. "So Free" has a nice new wavy rhythm to it, but is mostly taken up by a screaming guitar solo.—JF

**JOE VAL & THE NEW ENGLAND BLUEGRASS BOYS: Cold Wind** (Rounder) Val is an interesting case in bluegrass. He has established a kind of "radical-conservative" sound, developing his music far from the geographical and commercial centers of bluegrass. I have always felt that Val's bluegrass—hard edged, "high-lonesome," and blues-tinged—is an art, not a business. And I think that he represents an interesting musical phenomenon in this country, that of the "local" musician, who, relatively unen-



cumbered by the prospect of "selling out," has dedicated himself to a rare sort of musical and instrumental mastery with a high degree of integrity. How many virtuoso country guitar players are right now playing night after night in midwest roadhouses without even Val's modest degree of recognition? This album is one of Val's best and most eclectic. Some highlights are the almost note-for-note Everly Bros. rendition of "Old Rocking Chair," the particularly apt "Cold Wind," and the Bill Monroe/Jimmy Rodgers yodeling showcase "When the Cactus is in Bloom." There are also some old standards, like "I've Been All Around this World," Bill Monroe's "Never Again," and the Louvin Bros. "You're Running Wild." Every song is characterized by tight, straight bluegrass harmony, Val's more-Bill Monroe-than-Bill Monroe mandolin playing, and excellent high-energy ensemble playing. The LP may not be so accessible to listeners weaned on more commercial or progressive, or even more watered down acoustic music and bluegrass, but then again, neither is Gustav Leonhardt meant for everyone who wants to listen to a little Bach. However, if you want to hear the real thing, even if it's not from the real place, pick this album up. It's an acquired taste, but a good one.—L. Polansky

**TOM VARNER QUARTET: Motion/Stillness** (c/o 2350 Broadway #1212, NYC 10024) Second album by Varner, who stands virtually alone in the category of jazz French horn stars. The quartet features Ed Schuller on bass, Ed Jackson on sax, and the ever-energetic Billy Hart on drums. Varner's horn combines the voicing of the trombone with the animated style of the trumpet to produce a new tonality in jazz that is thoroughly enjoyable. The long-time relationship of Varner and Jackson is evidenced by their tight duos, particularly on "Neutron Bomb Shuffle." Schuller provides punchy bass, and Hart is impeccable, as always. The tunes range from straight ahead bop, to shuffle, to the loping "New Moonshiner," adapted from Appalachian folk music. This is a quality album, well-worth your consideration.—Michael Huntsberger

**V-EFFECT: Stop Those Songs** (Rift, marketed by Rough Trade; dist. by NMDS, 500 B'way, NYC 10012) Difficult songs for difficult times. This good first effort by V-Effect is appropriate after a year of bleak events like the invasion of Grenada, *contra* attacks in Nicaragua, the occupation of Lebanon, and other foreboding acts of imperialism. V-Effect is a New York trio (drums/bass/alto sax) assisted by the ubiquitous Fred Frith who is continuing in the Lower East Side tradition of dissonance, nervous rhythms, and general apocalypse. Snatches of Etron Fou and Slapp Happy/Henry Cow appear as Ann Rupel's snaky bass lines provide the foundation for sixteen tracks of political intensity, frustration, anger, and even a little grim hope for the future. (Example titles: "Master/Slave," "Battle of Algiers," "A Tree Grows in Managua"). The live tracks are of special interest.—Roger Kleier



**X LOU HARRISON: Double Concerto for Violin and Cello with Javanese Gamelan** performed by Kenneth Goldsmith & Terry King with the Mills College Gamelan Ensemble (TR Records, 1910 Ingersoll Ave., Des Moines, IA 50309) Harrison is undoubtedly one of the finest and most interesting living American composers, and the *Double Concerto* ranks with his *Pacific Rondo, Canticle #3*, and a very few other works as his best. It's a radical and highly successful experiment in the combination of traditional Javanese forms with western ones, precisely the type of thing that Harrison has concerned himself with for the last 15 years. The Mills Gamelan was in fact built by Harrison and his colleague William Colvig (who also plays gambang), and though it is based on Javanese ideas, in many ways a radical and Americanized departure from tradition as well, most notably in the use of aluminum and a nicely worked out just intonation (based on 7-ratios for the pentatonic slendro, and on the 2,3rd octave of the harmonic series for the pelog). The *Double Concerto* is in three movements. The first, marked "Grandly, but moderate," is a lyrical pelog excursion for the two strings, and serves as a warm prelude to the second movement, marked "Stampede," which is nothing short of astounding. In this movement, the gamelan drops out (except for the kendang, or two-headed drum), and the two strings play a long rapid, mostly unison melody based freely on the octatonic mode. This is Harrison at his finest, drawing on his many years of meditation of the "proper melody," and the listener can hardly believe how long the phrases breathe, soar, and propel themselves past any prior expectations. It is this movement which has been the most talked about, and rightly so. The third movement, though less dynamic ("Allegro Moderato"), provides an elegant slendro cadence to the whole work. Harrison is a composer's composer, and one who has transcended lesser questions of style, device, and intent to produce a music of profound integrity and deep emotional content.—L. Polansky

**HATERS 7" EP** (Jupiter-Larsen, PO Box 48184, Van., Can. V7X 1N8) It reminds me most of Henning Christiansen's *Requiem for Art* with its being less musique concrete and more borderline pop anti-pop or anti-pop pop. But Haters probably hate being compared to anyone. Despite the broken record style repetitions and deliberately fuzzy recordings (both of which I usually like anyway) it's more varied than "hardcore" or other such violent confusion stuff. Scratched near the center of side A is "This is destroyed music" and on side B "Support terrorism"—so, I'll call this destructivist or nihilistic. As organized sound it seems to be selective in keeping with the philosophy expressed with its words. There are "Orchestrated Explosions" and tuned instruments such as accordion (?) that aren't used for their tunings. "I only feel alive when there's nothing to live for" is said in "Eye want to be nobody" and this record conveys that feeling better than most. It's not so much the specific sounds that make this one so enjoyable as it is the casually befuddled bounce through what might be for most people grating.—tentatively, a convenience

**HAUT "Der Karibische Western"/"Virginia," "Die Faulen Hunde von Tijuana" 12" EP** (Zensor, c/o B. Seiler, Stuttgarter P13, 1 Berlin 12, West Germany) "Western" is just that, a western (U.S.) style instrumental for surf guitars plus an incongruous morbid poem recited and written by American Stella Rico midway the 5½ minute piece. It's a hit! "Virginia" is a fast, spiky guitar workout. "Die Faulen Hunde" features "tropical heat wave wind noise" partially supplied by Nick Cave. It's a moody instrumental, again featuring those trademark jangly guitars.—JF 7

**DANIEL HEIKALO: Rataouille** cassette (Aylmer Press, 928 Spring St., Madison, WI 53715, \$7.50) This Nova Scotia-based steel-string guitar composer is being hyped as "one of the world's greatest guitarists." I'll be darned; he actually lives up to that vaunted description. With clear origins in Kottke and classical guitar, Heikalo has fashioned an original approach which melds such disparate influences as Renaissance lute music, Joni Mitchell, French Impressionism, ragtime, Hamza El Din, Ralph Towner, et. al with Heikalo's own lyrical personality and often highly complex arranging concepts. He strikes a surprisingly comfortable balance between a gentle, pastoral melodicism and an intense (though never tense) intricacy which can have him exploring three or more independent though interrelated ideas simultaneously. Rarely does his purposeful use of dissonance clash with his essential lyricism to the detriment of either the music or the listener. There are 57 minutes of unaccompanied solo acoustic guitar here (including two pieces in excess of eleven minutes each), yet Heikalo manages to keep interest at a high level throughout, generating several peaks of genuine excitement in the process. Heikalo has already been tabbed "a new guitar hero," and this reviewer has no intentions of arguing that point.—Tom Bingham

**PRISCILLA HERDMAN: Seasons of Change** (Flying Fish, 304 West Schubert, Chicago, IL 60614) Those who claim that Tracey Thorn or the Roches or Alison Statton have brought us full-circle back to the age of folk hippiedom need only listen to a real folk hippy album like this to realize that for most, the '60s are good and dead. This record is frighteningly hippyish for two reasons: 1. The songs included are old-fashioned political folk songs of the ilk that we rarely hear, even in the most fervent folk revival circles. Since they happen to be good, poetic, non-dogmatic songs and since they include a classic by one of my favorite lyricists, Woody Guthrie, that's perfectly all right with me. But reason number 2 makes this record almost unbearable: to put it simply, Herdman's recording is full of flowery sentimentality—in other words, it is extremely mushy. I managed to sit through the sweet accordions and soft-hearted violins (folkily referred to here as "fiddles"), but I had to tear my tone arm away when I finally heard Herdman sing Guthrie's "Deportees." ("The sky plane caught fire over Los Gatos Canyon/Like a fireball of lightning that shook all the hills/Who are these dear friends all scattered like dry leaves?/The radio said they were just deportees.") If done by someone with a rougher style—someone closer to Guthrie or (early) Dylan—this song can take an on angry or ironic tone. But Herdman, with her tragic balladeering, aims straight for the tear ducts.—Richard Singer

**HEZEKIAH & THE HOUSE ROCKERS "Do Your Thing"/"Low Down Dirty Shame"** (High Water, c/o Dr. David Evans, Music Dept. MSU, Memphis, TN 38152) From Natchez, Miss., this primitive trio makes up in spirit what they lack in technique. Hezekiah sings, plays harmonica, & drums to the constant accompaniment of trombone (!) and guitar that's not easily audible. It's unique to say the least, but, on the "B," with the trombonist singing (downhome, too), Hezekiah's harmonica and drums accompaniment is too busy.—JF

**HIGH PERFORMANCE: The Record** (Astro Artz, 240 S. Broadway, 5th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90012, \$10) Yet another "art record." This one is bit different in that it is intended as an issue of High Performance, a magazine that documents performance

art. The interface between the arts (visual arts, music, theater, dance, etc.) continues unabated. This particular collection consists of songs by 17 different performers. The quality ranges from excellent elegance (Jacki Apple, Carole Caroompas) to humorous (Paul McCarthy, Bob & Bob, Martha Wilson) to obscene decadence (Michael Peppe). Most of these works are truly songs, including lots of C&W, blues, rock, and even reggae. The best and most successful pieces are those that incorporate music as a substructure and do not pretend to be primarily musical compositions. Fine examples of this include works by Apple, whose narrative style, spoken over a musical accompaniment, is contemplative and evocative, and Wilson's political pieces which deal with right wing politics and art with an ironic sense of humor. Others, such as Terry Allen and Jill Kroesen seem less successful, though both have been highly touted. Other big names include Johanna Went and The Kipper Kids. Among the lesser knowns, Bill Talen's "Slow White Heterosexual Man" is both humorous and revealing, while Michael scatalogical "City" attempts to serve as an insight into a state of decadence, but comes off as merely offensive. Something for everyone.—Dean Suzuki

**HIGHS IN THE MID-SIXTIES VOL. 1: L.A. '65 Teenage Rebellion** (Archive International, PO Box 7112, Burbank CA 91510) As in your typical *Pebbles* collection, there's a certain archetypal sameness to these songs: sneering self-pitying vocals and enthusiastically plodding Vox amps, though L.A. seemed to be bluesier and heavier on cheery organs than most locales. Some unmemorable Stones imitations here, to be sure, but about half these tracks are good-to-great. These include one of the best versions of "Louie Louie" I've heard (by the Epics) and the sullen but melodic folk-punk of the Spats and the Answer. The Standells are at their most Beatlesque in "Somebody You'll Cry," and Warden & the Fugitives "The World Ain't Changed" is a blatant but likable plagiarism of "Satisfaction." My winner for this battle of the bands is The Rumors' "Hold Me Now," as good a "Louie Louie" inspired original as you could want. And for the pop culture archivist, there's a couple telling period pieces: The Avengers' "Be a Cave Man," which back then they called tough and now we call offensively sexist, and the empty consumerism of the 4 Making Do's ("This is what I've always dreamed of/A simple life with nothing to think of/Just sit and watch TV all night!")—Richie Unterberger

**HIGHS IN THE MID-SIXTIES VOL. 2: L.A. '66 Riot On Sunset Strip** (Archive International) Second installment falls short of the first volume. Oh, all the familiar elements are here: snotty vocals, fuzz guitars, and roller rink organs. And there's a variety of interesting twists to the garage band norm. There's a psychedelic surf ode to the back seat of a '38 Dodge, an ode to Dylan and Donovan, and a ridiculous white teenage blues about going to New Orleans. There's yet another version of "Hey Joe" (by the Tangents), the original version of "Steppin' Stone" (by the W.C. Fields Memorial Electric String Band), a collage of sounds from the Sunset Strip Riots, and yet another rewrite of "Gloria." And also some folk-pop and folk-punk. But nothing that really grabbed me like the best of garage band rock does, with the exception of the torturous "Gotta Hold On" by the No-Na-Mee's (love these far-out names). Also good, though not exactly garage bands, are Terry Randall's "S.O.S.," a subdued but effective protest about the Strip Riots, and the Chymes' "He's Not There Anymore," a good girl group number in the Shangri-Las mode. For the historically curious, there's an ominous punker by the Second Helping, which was led by none other than Kenny Loggins. It isn't that good, but does decrease my contempt for him ever so slightly.—Richie Unterberger



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# REVIEWS

**ACTIONAULTS** "Hash Assassin"/"Vagabond" (Zulu Records, 1869 W. 4th Ave., Vancouver, B.C. V6J 1M4, Canada) Just a slam bang high energy rock band in modern trappings, but they hit straight-on and both songs connect.—JF 6

**AGAIN & AGAIN & AGAIN** "Forever"/"A Cold Place" (c/o 166 Second Av. 9J, NYC 10003) Formed in Pittsburgh by friends from Ithaca, NY, the quartet's 2nd 45 reflects UK influences such as Echo & the Bunnymen, Simple Minds, & PiL. With a ragged, dissonant, let-it-all-out approach, they give us passion & frustration within a now all-too-familiar framework but, because they are obviously smart and committed I, too, am "hopeful for the future."—JF

**AIRKRAFT:** Let's Take Off (Ark Records, PO Box 265, Wausau, WI 54401) The heaviest Wisconsin metal on vinyl since Bad Boy. Unfortunately, Aircraft is just as lyrically and vocally vacuous. "Alien Probe" almost emerges from the machismo clichés, but inevitably only brings on fonder memories of Brownsville's Station's similarly plotted "Martian Boogie." Still, the music has a bite lacking from what is often passed off as HM lately.

**AKASHA** (Bat Records, PO Box 240, N-9301 Finnsnes, Norway; dist. by See You Later, PO Box 322, 30300 AH Rotterdam, Holland) Recorded 8 years ago. The lyrics—about futuristic wars and the "Afro-Asia Confederation" and "The Spaceships of Srin plundered 200 worlds!" and stuff about "Mankind's Destiny"—are fucking unbelievable. Excruciatingly boring, ponderous, operatic in the worst way, and bad, bad, bad as only 4th rate heavy/electronic European groups can be when taking on the cosmos with their gleaming swords.—Harrison Fisher

**DAVIE ALLAN:** An Arrow Escapes (ALKor, PO Box 2393, Northridge, CA 91323) One of the most underrated guitarists of the sixties is Davie Allan. Don't feel too sorry for him, as his group The Arrows contributed to the soundtracks of over 20 movies and they had a monster smash with the powerful "Blues Theme." But, unlike The Ventures, Dick Dale, and The Shadows, the instrumental sound of The Arrows has been wrongly ignored by historians. Allan has, for the time being, left the world of fuzzed out guitar instrumentals behind and issued an album of country music (his first love). Being a die-hard Arrows fan, I admit I expected the worst. Fortunately, I was proven wrong, as this is a consistent outing. Allan has a tight band, his guitar work of course still shines, and his vocals (first time ever as a lead vocalist) are smooth, relaxed, and sincere. The songwriting is strong enough to expect the more adventurous country stations to take a chance with it. Allan shares a few lead vocals with a fine female singer by the name of "Charlie." Hopefully, this combination will continue, as they promise to develop as a team. It's nice to see a veteran of the music biz willing to take some chances.—Charles P. Lamey

**ROSALIE ALLEN:** Queen of the Yodelers (Cattle Records, c/o Reimer Binge, Moenchstockheim, Rosenstrasse 12, D-8722 Sulzheim, West Germany) Country-pop from the late '40s and early '50s, Allen's smooth vocals (and occasional yodels) backed by her Black River Riders (steel guitar, accordion, sweet swing fiddle) with Chet Atkins (gtr) & Jethro Burns (mandolin) providing their magic on a few tracks. Mono sound quality is very good. Allen, originally from Pennsylvania, was a radio personality in New York City during this time. Most of these recordings, none of her hits of the period, originally appeared on RCA 78s. A period piece called "Hitler Lives" is especially interesting (no, it's not pro-Reich).—JF

**AND AND AND** 4-song 12" EP (Soundtrax, 8170-U Ronson Rd., San Diego, CA 92111, 619-560-8449) Two-person synth-fun-funk band highlighted by little effects and general playfulness. Vocals are as unafecting as most of those British dancesters who hog the hip airwaves.—JF

**ANGELS IN HOUSTON: The Legendary Duke Blues Recordings** (Rounder, One Camp St., Cambridge, MA 02140) Once considered too pop by purists (time certainly changes perceptions!); these late 50s-early 60s recordings by Bobby Blue Bland (4 tunes), James Davis (3), Larry Davis (3), & Fenton Robinson (4) showcase the tough, brassy sound of Deadrub's Duke label, Houston's answer to Chicago's Chess Records. It's an urban sound but not overly polished, all four earthy, emotional singers, Robinson having mellowed over the years. Arrangements are for horns, electric guitar, and ivories, with sound quality varying considerably. Excellent liner notes.—JF

**ANTI: Defy The System** (New Underground Records, 4305 W. 153rd St., Lawndale, CA 90260) At least half of this record "sounds" damn good, especially "Backfire Bomber" and "Your Problems." Medium tempo hardcore, counter-punched by a surfer beat and slashing guitars. This dense Blue Cheer wall of noise comes complete with a very groovy record sleeve. Unfortunately, the lyrical point-of-view is more "I want more for me, now" moaning. Strictly reactionary stuff.—Scott Jackson

**JOHN ARE** "Blown Away"/"Can't Talk 'til It's Over" (c/o Peter Gorman, 303 E. 76th St. #3, NYC 10021) Rough-edged pop-rock in a Tom Pettyish vein by basic all-pro quartet, Are putting his all into the vocals, reminding me of Alex Chilton.—JF 6

**ARKANSAW MAN** "Every Job"/"Mark Twain" 7" EP (Subterranean Records, 577 Valencia St., San Francisco, CA 94110) Punk minimalism meets classy jazz horns plus a bass boom as manic as any found on Jamaican dub sides. "Every Job" is a properly nihilistic rant about the backside of the American dream. The mysteriously titled "Mark Twain" is a fascinating instrumental with guitarist Stephen Clarke strutting his stuff. This single represents a considerable musical advance over their debut 12" EP because the horns augmenting the power trio format of guitar, bass, and drums are better integrated into the rock textures here without losing any of their manic crunch.—Norman Weinstein. *Second opinion:* A whacked out post-bop horn section collides with a garage band rhythm section on "Every Job." The lyrics are hilarious, yet telling; kind of a mixture of John Giorno and Cheech and Chong. "Mark Twain" is an instrumental with the same garage band rhythm section overlaid with a curious, oblique, though not altogether interesting guitar line, like a stretched out version of the Durutti Column.—Dean Suzuki

**ARMORED SAINT** 3-song 12" EP (Metal Blade Records, 22458 Ventura Blvd. Suite E, Woodland Hills, CA 91364) Definitely heavy metal contenders. The record is self-produced and they manage to get a sound that begs to be turned up. Together for little over a year the Saints (five men between the ages 19 and 22) come across as metal veterans, without the rust of yesteryear. The influences seem to cover a large spectrum: Black Sabbath, Van Halen... the intro to "False Alarm" brings to mind PiL. Other titles, "Lesson Well Learned" and "On the Way" are both piercing and powerful.—David Goerk

**ROBERT ASHLEY: Perfect Lives—an opera for television** 2-cassettes (Lovely Music, 325 Spring Street, NYC 10013) The "original soundtrack recording" of *Perfect Lives* (it seems to have lost its subtitle "Private Parts") runs for nearly three hours, and I was surprised to find it easy to listen to the whole thing in nearly one sitting. Those who have heard the LPs

*Private Parts, The Bar and Music Word Fire* have a good idea of what the complete opera sounds like: spoken narration, sometimes monotone, sometimes almost a sing-song, with atmospheric background music played by keyboards and percussion. Since the text is spoken rather than sung *Perfect Lives* is really a melodrama rather than an opera. But it is much more "operatic" than I expected from hearing the earlier recorded episodes. There is a true plot which can be followed without much trouble; the characters are distinct, the seven episodes each have a different atmosphere, yet the entire piece is cohesive; and the chorus is used throughout in its traditional role as both support and commentary on the action. There are some musical surprises, such as the short interlude of purely instrumental music and the Philip Glass-like music in Episode Five, "The Living Room." All three of the previously-released episodes ("The Park" and "The Backyard" on *Private Parts*, and "The Bar") have been reworked, with new narration, some changes in the text, and much more active keyboard and chorus parts. The songs from *Music Word Fire* do indeed recur throughout Episode Three, and have a very different effect in context. *Perfect Lives* is an altogether fine piece: lighthearted and profound, moving and entertaining. It's well worth having even if you own the LPs of excerpts.—Mark Sullivan

**SAMUEL BABBIT: Reads The Devil's Storybook** b Natalie Babbit cassette (Weston Woods, Weston CT 06883) A skillful reading of a fine series of short stories. Babbit casts the Devil as a mischievous magician. He reminds me of Wile E. Coyote in the Roadrunner cartoons. Very entertaining.—Alan F Thornton

**EMIL BARNES: The Early Recording Session** (Folkways FJ 2858) A fine record of New Orleans style jazz played by relatively little known musicians. The record serves as a companion volume to Folkways J 3857, entitled *The Dauphine St. Jam Session* and primarily composed of alternate takes to the former. As such, the liner notes for this particular record are more informative about the recording process than about the musicians, who are: Barnes, clarinet; Lawrence Toca, trumpet; Charlie Love, trumpet; Albert Glenn, string bass; Bill Huntington, banjo; and others. Glenn is a veteran New Orleans bass who has played with, among others, the great Buddy Bolden, and all I know about Barnes is from British recording made by English trumpeter Ken Coyer (Decca LFL196). Huntington, at the time this record was made, was a young student of the great banjo Lawrence Marrero. However, while I regret not being better informed by the notes, it's quite an album. Love and Toca are both relaxed and inventive trumpet players, and Barnes is a fiery clarinet player with a range that only wolves and porpoises can appreciate. Of most value to collectors, and to those with a deep interest in old New Orleans jazz, Barnes ever made! The recording quality, presumably made on "home" equipment, is surprisingly good the most part.—Larry Polansky

**BATTALION OF SAINTS** "Sweaty Little Girl S.V.D.B." "Chain Reaction" (Mystic, 6277 Selma Hollywood, CA 90028, 213-462-9005) San Diego BOS meet the Ramones and the Dickies on a spirited slice 'o thrash. S.V.D.B. also turn in a great performance on a lyric-oriented song with a great, zy bass-line—only wish I could follow the plot.—J

**BELFEGORE** "Belfegore"/"Heilige Krieg" "Nacht in Sodom" 12" EP (Pure Freude, Dordorfer Str. 55, 4000 Dusseldorf, West Germany) While the self-titled track is goblins with lead bo the other side finds the heavy trio in amore dance mode. With effects and all, they're sort of like Killing Joke, though cleaner and more melodic perhaps.—JF