

Wrack n Roll by Alex Varty

Ah, normality! Some of you out there may have come to the conclusion that I am some sort of burnt-out freak only interested in aural perversions, elitist gabble and musical one-upmanship. Some-all of the above may not be true, but in actuality I often enjoy music that celebrates the virtues of the simple life.

A true example of that sort of music can be found in Randy Newman's latest album, *GOOD OLD BOYS*. The record is a chronicle of working class life in America, told through Newman's unique mix of boogie, blues, country and popular styles. Newman eschews the smart-ass qualities which made *SAIL AWAY* often irritating in favour of narration backed by strong orchestral arrangements. The songs concern life in the south, especially during the depression era, but like the best of Newman's work they transcend regional or stylistic categorizations. The record reminds one of Elton John's *TUMBLEWEED CONNECTION*, the difference being that Newman is concerned with realities, whereas Elton's America is a fantasy, varnished and remote. Typically, *GOOD OLD BOYS* isn't as strong as *12 SONGS*, which is finally becoming available in Fredericton, but the album is much more cohesive thematically. Newman's earlier records were more collections than albums.

Musically, this record is superb. Although the orchestration is dense, it is handled with skill and innovation. The rhythm section, including Ry Cooder, Willie Weeks and Jim Keltner is perfect. Finally Newman, who has always been an interesting pianist, displays what almost amounts to virtuosity on many of the selections. The record fits comfortably between *The Bands* earlier sound and Ry Cooder's solo efforts, a labelling which in itself ensures excellence.

Traffic's new LP is a similarly comfortable record. *WHEN THE EAGLE FLIES* is unassuming for the most part, perhaps because it was largely taped in Winwood's own studio, where much of the first two Traffic albums and *JOHN BARLEYCORN* were recorded.

The addition of bassist Rosko Gee has added a solidity often lacking in the albums recorded with the Muscle Shoals rhythm section. Jim Capaldi once again proves that his drumming is an essential part of the Traffic sound: I don't know why he stopped playing publicly for a while, but it's obvious that he was using his spare time to advantage.

The members of the band, especially Capaldi, who contributes almost all the lyrics, seem to have attained an enviable state of tranquility, perhaps equivalent to that condition known in certain circles as the state of NEBRADA. The music and vocals are soothing, and while the album is not soporific, it's the sort of thing to play late at night.

The one disturbing cut is "Dream Gerrard", with lyrics by ex-Bonzo Vivian Stanshall. Although Winwood's vocals don't convey all the confusion suggested by the words, the track recalls some of the delightful peculiarities of the *DEAR MR. FANTASY* album.

Winwood's feel for jazz has improved and he has become a quite competent synthesizer player. Frankly, I feel that he is at his best when he is emotionally disturbed [e.g. "Empty Pages"] but I like his piano and voice even on calmer material. I can't claim that *WHEN THE EAGLE FLIES* is great, but it is a most enjoyable and relaxing record.



Creative Arts Concert series

Heen Baba coming to town

Heen Baba and His Dance and Drum Ensemble of Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon) will be featured in the second concert of the UNB-STU Creative Arts Concert Series at the Fredericton Playhouse, November 8 at 8:15 p.m.

On their first North American tour, Heen Baba and his ensemble will introduce the audience to traditional Kandyan dances of Sri Lanka. These are dances performed in praise of the Gods and animal kingdom, depicting such animals as the monkey, eagle,

elephant, peacock and horse.

Heen Baba, considered by many to be Sri Lanka's greatest traditional dancer, has received gold medals for his performance in the USSR, Czechoslovakia, Pakistan and India.

Other dancers of the troupe include Surasena, Heen Baba's brother, who has performed before royalty and has been chosen as the lead male dancer in many international festivals and competitions; and Sicille Kotelawala, a former student of Heen Baba, who

is now recognized as one of the leading female exponents of the classical dances of her country.

Two drummers accompany the dancers. M. Premasiri, who is Heen Baba's son, and L. Sirisena provide the rhythmic backdrop integral to many of the performances.

Tickets for students and subscribers to the series will be available from November 1 at UNB's Student Union Building, Residence Office, Art Centre and the St. Thomas Faculty Office.

.....movie review.....

Phase IV

By DANIELLE THIBEAULT

This movie, unfortunately, has not received what I consider to be proper recognition. To those who warned me against just another "invasion-type" movie I must protest as *Phase IV* was one of the better pieces of artistic movie-making to come along this year.

It's a science fiction thriller with a sound base and good countenance. Unfortunately, the advertising is misleading. It is not a kid's show.

It's concern is mainly with the four stages of a plan that was supposed to lead to the destruction of a poisonous ant colony which had grown to epidemic proportion because of an unexplained disappearance of all the ants' natural predators.

The discovery of this biological imbalance was made by a noted researcher, Ernest Hubbs (played by Nigel Davenport) in a semi-deserted area of the States. He obtains permission to build an experimental station in the center of that area for the study and eventual eradication of the pest.

Phase I - A project to study the speech pattern of the poisonous ants brings a young communication and data-processing expert (Michael Murphy) to the scene and the battle against annihilation begins.

Phase II - A destruction of the giant anthills stimulates an attack from the ants who are killed off by a yellow colored chemical. The survivors manage to drag away pieces of the insecticide to the lair of the queen ant who absorbs them and begins to produce yellow tinted ants adapted to and able to survive off the new medium.

Phase III - The new ants begin to build anthills with slanted surfaces chrysal-coated to reflect the sunrays onto the observatory. The temperature inside the station makes it impossible to operate the computer and all research and communication must be terminated except for a few hours at night.

Doctor Hubbs, furious at the fact that his research is being foiled by insignificant ants, and delirious after being bitten by one of the poisonous ants, sets out on a

senseless quest to destroy the queen's lair. He quickly falls into a trap and is devoured by the insects.

The communication expert is left to finish Dr. Hubb's task and sets out for the queen's lair only to discover that he is the one all along that was the subject of the ants' experiment not the other way around. Coupled with a young girl (Lynn Frederick) who survived an earlier attack by the ants he will be sent out to the rest of the world for a task he knows nothing of at the present. In due time, his job will be explained to him and so will begin *Phase IV* of the experiment.

The photography and artwork in this movie are incredible and breathtaking. The details and close-ups of the behaviour of the insects will thrill any entomologist and any naturalist even though some of the theories may fall short of reality under close scrutiny.

It's a good movie, interesting for many people yet it was short-changed at the publicity level and that's a rotten shame. Try to see it, should it come your way again.

