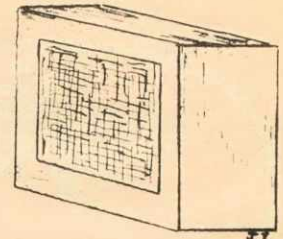


# DISC ~



# COURSE



by Bob Hutchings

Hi! I'm Hutch. I have the great pleasure of working for Dal Radio and coming into contact with most new LPs. I'd like to do this column every week and plan to review at least two albums an issue. I'll try to cover as many categories of pop music as possible — rock and roll, soul, easy listening, jazz, folk, and blues. I don't pretend to know anything about classical, and country and western doesn't really appeal to me. We don't get enough humour and international records to make reviews of them practical.

**QUINCY JONES — SMACKWATER JACK** (A and M) Jazz buffs have been waiting for this LP for some time. It's the third in a series by Quincy — the first, "Walking in Space", won the Playboy Jazz Poll award a while ago and the second "Gula Matrai", in which Quincy and bassist Ray Brown really shone. Brown, of course, is one of the best bassmen in the industry today.

I like Quincy's stuff; it's far enough ahead of competition to be refreshing yet not so radical that it's incomprehensible.

The album has a great cover — Quincy wears a landscape shirt you have to see to appreciate but the Isaac Hayes-type ego picture in the middle and the liner notes on the back make me fear that Jones is getting a swelled head from all the praise.

The LP is not standard by any means. Side one/ cut one is the title song "Smackwater Jack" written by Carole King. Quincy sings on this one, a pleasant surprise, but the chorus he could do without. The lyrics don't mean much, but Ray shines on bass, making this a funky cut. Also a harmonica licks in for a while — a taste of things to come.

"Cast Your Fate to the Winds" is a soft and brassy number but the drums and brass do not intrude. It has an adequate piano and midway through, the great guitar enters. While you're listening, take a look at the artists on this album. God! The guys that come 1000 miles to play for enjoyment with this cat!

The next cut, the theme from Ironside, starts off raucously — loud, fast, brash, with Hubert Laws on a husky flute. It's mostly a wandering soprano sax and

horns but oh, that flute! A good cut but lacks greatness.

"What's Goin' On", originally done by Marvin Gaye, is typical Quincy à la the first two albums. A shortened version of this was released as a single. Quincy sings again — doing a nice solo job — check the vibes on this one too.

(While listening to this I'm thinking of Ray Brown.)

What Chet Atkins is to guitar and Baez is to folk, Brown is to bass — only he can still surprise you. Side two starts out with a suspenseful theme from the movie "The Anderson Tapes". The Moog synthesizer is used well here but only when needed and only in this one cut. The Moog is good when common sense dictates its usage — I bet you never thought of a Moog "artist" before, eh? Edd Kalehoff is the man here. The next song "Brown's Ballad" is for you Ray! Buy the LP for Toots Theilman's harmonica on this cut. Don't miss the piano, though — it sounds a lot like Al Kooper. "Hikky Burr" is a fun cut written by Quincy and Bill Cosby. A great bass and trumpet and "jazz whistling" make this cut the best on the LP. Try the lyrics on a friend.

The final selection is best explained on the liner notes — 95% is guitar. It's the story of the evolution of the guitar from Robert Johnson to Jimi Hendrix. At 6 min. 38 sec. it's not the longest he's done but the most adventurous. Written by Quincy, it has Eric Gayle, Jim Hall, and Toots doing the guitar work. Notice the stereo separation on the Hendrix-like thing.

**BILLBOARD** reports that Quincy has decided to move from writing movie scores to producing LPs for Aretha Franklin and Ray Charles so this may be the last LP for awhile.

If you're looking for the same old QJ, this LP is not for you. If you want variety in contemporary jazz, buy and treasure "Smackwater Jack".

John Denver — **AERIE** (RCA Victor). This third LP from Denver revives the promise offered in "Poems, Prayers and Promises" and lost in "Rhymes and Reasons". Most of Denver's songs are soft and nice with meaningful words. They sound great but can become boring because of their similarity. Not so with this album. It contains twelve songs including "Friends with You", his new single. The first cut,

"Starwood in Aspen" is typical — nice, soft, with a clear voice and a well-played acoustic. It has country overtones with a subtle harmonica (Toots again).

"Casey's Last Ride", a Kris Kristofferson ballad, is in the same style but much better. I think it's because the background guitar and the vocal predominate. A delicate love song — very moralistic.

"City of New Orleans" is very country-ish, not western — so how come I like it?

"Friends with You", the hit, was not written by Denver. It's a good selection for a single — you've heard it already. John Denver has a whole slew of friends doing chorus for him.

The next cut is called "60 second song for a band ...". It is 63 seconds long and I love it. It's not a protest song — it's not what you think at all.

Side Two beginning with "Blow Up Your TV (Spanish Pipe Dream)" is a fun, country song. Sing and clap along to the banjo and fiddle. It has a message, though.

This is followed by a soft one — "All of my memories" — similar in style to "Casey's Last Ride". The title explains it. I guess the country life really is the best — he convinces me.

"She won't let me fly" shows the free spirit and rebellion in John. "She" might easily represent "civilization" in 1972.

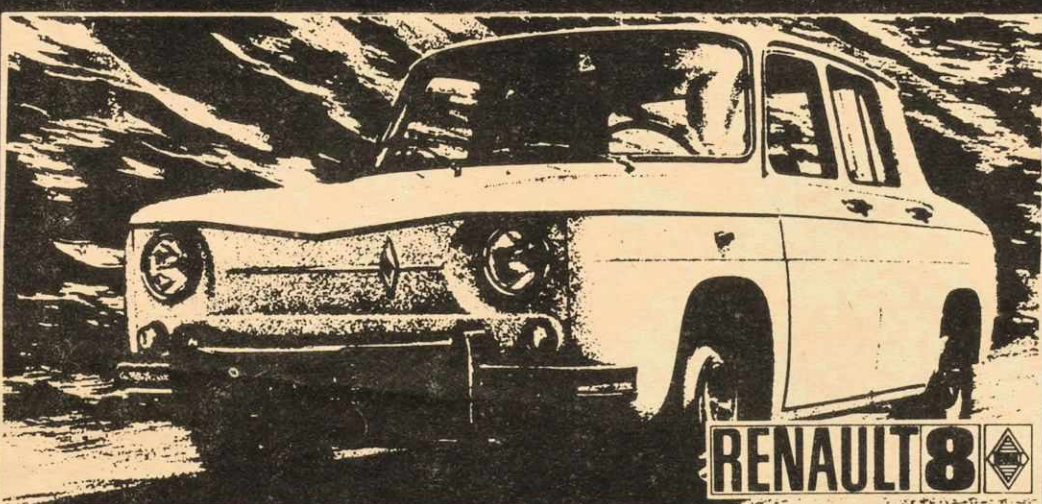
"Readjustment Blues" features a fine guitar and a haunting voice. The satire in the lyrics is magnificent. Denver works himself into a frenzy at the end — undoubtedly the best song he's ever done.

"The Eagle and the Hawk" features a Lightfoot-like guitar with nice stereo separation for a folk LP. He expresses in musical poetry the desire to be free, to fly, to live away from other men — a theme that keeps recurring in the LP. (The title "Aerie" means the nest of a bird of prey.)

The final selection, "Fools", has a wistful guitar and vocal piece that sounds vaguely like "Oh Susannah" and (thank God) breaks the dramatic mood of the previous two cuts. Overall an excellent LP. The freedom theme succeeds without being hokey.

Comments or suggestions on reviews and records are welcome. Contact Hutch c/o Dal Radio.

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## CINEMATTERS

by Stephen R. Mills

"Diamonds are Forever" (Casino), the latest in a long line of James Bond epics from United Artists, is a really bad film. The plot is absurd, the dialogue incredible, the direction poor, the acting almost non-existent, and the photography weak. Yet "Diamonds" is drawing huge crowds and making bundles of bread for Harry Saltzman and Albert Broccoli, the enterprising producers who own the rights to the Bond books.

Considering the abominable nature of the picture, why the tremendous success?

The fact is, the artistic quality of a film simply does not interest most people attending movies. They want a cinematic experience that will provide a brief escape from their essentially boring life-trip.

In "Diamonds" and every Bond flick, this experience is a formula presentation of the escapades of one man who has everything Western 20th century man is socialized into desiring — sexual gratification devoid of any responsibility or interpersonal communication, material wealth in the form of amazing automobiles, luxurious wardrobes, hotel suites, amusements, adventure, intrigue, and a confident control of his destiny.

But also to be found in this film: two men drowning in boiling clay, two being stabbed to death with surgical instruments, one being beaten to death, another shot in the head, several dozen machine gunned and/or blown to bits in exploding helicopters, and one burned alive.

These latter incidents don't bother an audience and there's no reason they should. The horrifying fact is we've been brought up to believe things — diamonds, cars, clothes, "women", — more valuable, more to be sought after than people, than human beings! It's insane!

This picture and hundreds like it seem part of a tremendous scheme to keep people apart by reinforcing their naive notions of goals in life.

Let me repeat in closing that this is a serious matter and one should not entertain any notions that "Diamonds" and pictures like it "don't matter", and are "just movies". They are where people are at and if you are concerned about them and changing their condition for the better, this is where you should be.

Next week, a longer feature on violence in movies in light of the new cycle of cop pictures — The French Connection, Chandler, Dirty Harry, etc.