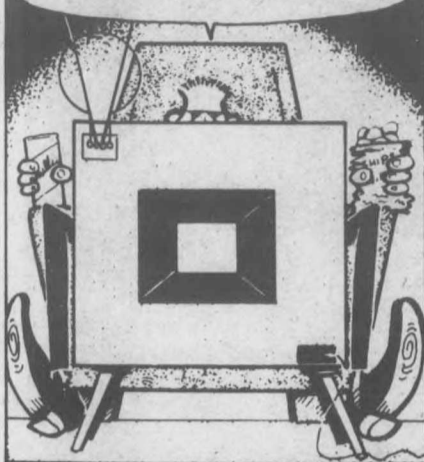


MY FRIENDS KNOW NOT TO CALL ME WHEN "THE A-TEAM" IS ON!



SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES Peepshow (Polydor)

Goodness me! Can it really be almost thirteen years since Siouxsie grabbed the mike in the 100 Club and squawked out some bloody awful row with Sidney Vicious doing something with a guitar? Yes it was.

It's hats off to the gal in black then, because now after eleven (count 'em!) albums Siouxsie's credibility still shimmers like a blinding diamond set in a coal face. After a few slightly dodgy albums and a well received album of cover-versions, I think I can safely say that we all wondered what was to be forthcoming from the old cave wherin her dark highness and her attendant banshees hang from the ceiling contemplating all manner of woeful and goose-pimplly ideas. The result is quite good - but not as good as we hoped. Got your cloak on? Then let's go.

Peek-a-Boo will be the most immediately recognisable peice on the album for us campus-radio listeners. Remember? It's that one that has all those horns farting about the place with great drunken buffoons of Bavarian accordion players stumbling around in the melee like shell-shocked clowns. Unfortunately it is probably the most adventurous style on the album with the remainder being instantly recognisable as Banshee material. Although perhaps not immediately apparent Peek-a-Boo has a far deeper meaning. Steve Severin takes up the story "...we're being presented more and more with soft-core porn masquerading as advertising and using women as accessories in a way thats nothing to do with image or confronting people with their sexuality. It's designed to make them desire something thats unobtainable, and to change their values, to make them dissatisfied with what they have, and want more. Its not too outrageous to say that much advertising promotes rape. Sexual images of women in selling proliferate by the day and bombard with a certain idea of a woman" "...thats available to them whenever and where ever they want them", finishes our Sioux, jumping into Steve's rhetoric. "Accessible instantly and freely usable and touchable. Its not just rape either, there are so many more subtle forms of assault, such as

MEAT

sexual innuendos and verbal abuse." It is just this sort of trenchant observation and cold uncompromising intelligence from the songwriting team of Sioux and Severin that makes a roll around in the lyric sheet such an enlightening experience. But, more often than not, the emotions expressed are dark and faintly wicked in their elaboration of dark places and creeping animated emotions pursuing the listener about his own haunted house with gay abandon. But you know thats just fine with me. I personally couldn't be happier that 'Peek-a-Boo' contains some excellent examples of the brooding melancholy for which Siouxsie and the boys have become expert craftsmen. Not experts enough to let a few little stinkers pop up on the album namely Rawhead and Bloody Bones and Burn-Up. The former is an irritating tingly turgie, concerning something about monsters under the stairs or somesuch and the latter is a Casey Jones type steam train romp that does not complement all the references to Fire and Brimstone and Jack O Lanterns.

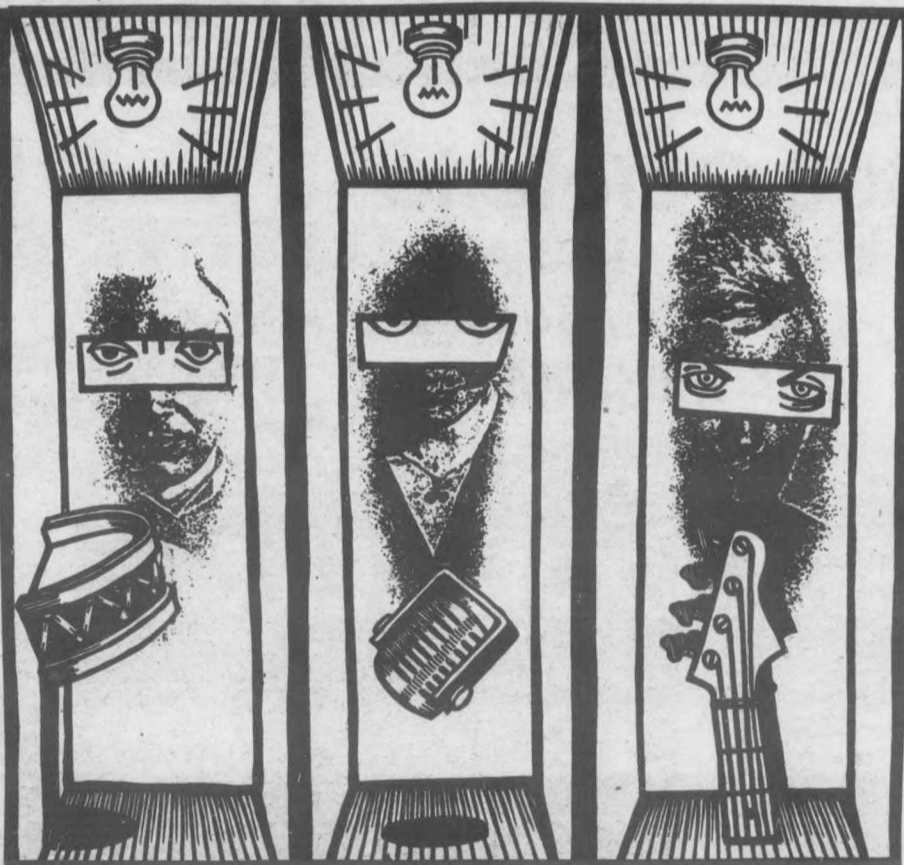
And hey kids - what do you know, we may even have a Christmas single here in the shape of 'The Last Beat of My Heart'. Like 'Scare Crow' it has one of those galloping percussion motifs but, as mentioned, in this instance the effect is very seasonal. Even on first hearing my head was filled with visions of the lovely Sioux dressed from head to toe in flowing black, riding sidesaddle over a windswept and snowy moor, with the ubiquitous ravens cawing overhead. As the drums and tambourines build to a crescendo the listener prepares him/herself to be suddenly pounced upon by a swirling breath-taking melody but, I'm sad to say, it is an idle

threat. The song ends dead in its tracks without any of the promised ~~music, leaving the~~ of a long face. It was like being teased with the prospect of getting a pony for Christmas only to find you have in fact been given horse-manure to fertilise your garden with. Well... a bit of a severe metaphor really because it is still an enjoyable song, but I think you get my drift. However they Do get things right in 'Rhapsody' where the tension builds throughout the composition until such a time as Siouxsie unfolds her leathery wings and buzzes around the room like a valkyrie on benzedrine spouting out a great dollop of almost operatic delivery. Actually I had a dream the other night whose soundtrack involved this song and some bits and pieces of Killing Joke. It was quite scary I can tell you.

Otherwise songs with titles like 'The Killing Jar', 'Scarecrow' and 'Carousel' are obvious examples of what we've come to expect from a bunch obsessed with interpreting social issues and relationships through very dark glasses. As the last two albums were, so is this one a well polished effort that contains a least five hit singles (in Britain anyway chumps!). While the rather baroque and creepy style prevails throughout, there's no doubt that Sioux and Severin are no fools when it comes to putting together an infectious tune and verily they shall be rewarded.

Right now I'll play the old crystal ball gazer and say that the next effort from Siouxsie and the boys will be a double album that'll leave everyone gasping for breath. Any takers?

STEVE GRIFFITHS



THE BALANCING ACT CURTAINS (IRS)

They're a bunch of amiable looking self professed eccentrics (a bad sign actually) that are probably vegetarians, the Balancing act are we all have our opinions, but I personally would like to suggest the amalgamation of a bit of Syd Barrett, some of the later Beatles material and a liberal dose of Adrian Belew's Bears. Back to the old PR release, the suggestion is that these chaps are spitting in the eye of "corporate board-room rock" that "refuses to whimper and lie down". That may be so, but there's certainly nothing very threatening here. Instead, I begin to fidget nervously - slowly but surely the unmistakable aroma of yuppies (Nyeaargh!) fills the apartment and I have to rush outside for a gulp of fresh air. That said there are definite favourites on this pretty mellow piece of work, namely (she doesn't work here) which is the most aggravatingly catchy song on the entire work and the faintly Christmasy

"Dangerous Roof" which, to my third ears, sounds like the reflective treatise of a girlfriend's suicide. But I could be wrong.

In all, a very professional tuneful package of clever harmonies and sinewy carousing that while-drompting me to say "Hmmm...that's nice", also leads me to say "who were those masked men?" Folkie types are getting quite a bit of attention these days. "The Balancing Act" fit quite nicely into this category, but at the same time the bases are loaded with any number of influences (they even cover a Funkadelic tune!) that suggests a real appreciation for the popular medium. More than anything the lack of pomposity with obvious creative ability shines through to make this well...rather interesting. Bothe the kids at CHSR to play "She Doesn't Work Here" and you'll see what I mean.

Steve Griffiths

U2

Rattle and Hum

(ISLAND RECORDS)

As you sit in a less than crowded movie theatre (due to bad reviews), you try to picture some of the scenes that you heard were really sappy (ie. U2 goes to Graceland, and the self-centered emissions from the interviews.) In your mind you silently hum the words to "Where the Streets Have No Name", partly so as to get yourself in the mood to see a film that you didn't really want to come to, and also because The Joshua Tree was the last U2 album that you bought. The 18 bucks for the new record seemed less than impressive.

Well, anyway, here you are: Sitting sipping on an "ice cold drink" and munching on "popcorn with hot, golden topping" (private joke - eh Carey!). After watching the previews for "Lawrence Welk vs. Iggy Pop - The Concert Battle of the Century" or something like that, the real show begins.

"Here's a song Charles Manson stole from the Beatles. We're stealin' it back!" says Paul Hewson (a.k.a. Bono) in a calm voice to a not-so-calm concert audience. They then proceed to blow my mind (which takes a lot - a little arrogance there) with an updated version of Helter Skelter. I knew right then and there that this movie would be phenomenal (Groan! -Ed.). I was not to be disappointed.

Throughout the movie, that the band jokingly refers to as a "musical journey", we are transported from one concert to another, all of which were performed in 1987. There is also some footage filmed in Dublin in an abandoned factory where Dave 'The Edge' Evans manages a very patriotic Van Diemen's Land. He also does some spectacular guitar work on stage that sends chills down your spine! One thing about U2, and certainly about this movie, is that they are masters of emotions. I have never seen a band that can get a crowd as involved into a mood as they do. Sure, I hear the crap that they are "too commercial" from some of these alternative people (alternative to what? Music maybe!),

but hey, if they do a good job at presenting what they want to present and can make some money from it - more power to them! At least they aren't following the chain of Stevie Vai (who he? -Ed.) puppy-puke bands! They have some kind of a style left!

For those of you concerned about the black and white footage, don't worry, be - (no, I can't bring myself to say it). The B+W definitely adds to the film. It helps to give a cold, gloomy atmosphere that relates to some of the topics they sing about, and in turn, helps to put lumps in your throat. Phil Joanou director did a great job at assembling colored film with B+W in order to gain that desired (no pun intended) effect.

The film has its comical moments such as when the great B. B. King turns to Bono after doing a number with him and says "you're awful young to be singing about such serious things!" and when the band is about to do an outdoor concert in front of 20,000 screaming fans, they are in their trailer trying to get a song ready (that they obviously never practiced or performed). Bono sings and then says to the Edge "no wait - lets try a C!" Five minutes later they are doing it on stage!

The movie is laced with soul (including a new version of "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For" with a Harlem church choir), and a number of other aspects which are just too outstanding to mention. You have to see it yourself! Oops! Almost forgot! It left Fredericton already, didn't it? Oh well, its only a few hours to Montreal (its worth it), or buy the tape when it comes out on video (I'm gonna). For now, the \$18 for the LP (double length album) is a steal. (That enough free plugs -Ed.) It should go into the collection of every beginning and professional musician because of its inspiring qualities.

Well, I've gotta go to class, so keep rockin' and most of all, keep reading my reviews (so they don't throw me out of the Bruns!)

Rating: 10 1/2 out of a possible 10.

Rod the Bod