

rock notes

Joplin soundtrack

A new double album by the late Janis Joplin will be released by Columbia Records during the first week of April. One of the records will be a collector's disc of never-before released songs which Janis cut in Texas and California in 1963 and 1964.

The second record will be the soundtrack from the Biographical film "Janis," including excerpts from her interview with Dick Cavett. The double album also will feature a 16-page photo booklet of Janis.

Bowie's Young Americans

David Bowie disagrees with the categorization by the music industry and media that his new album is a rhythm 'n blues record. In an interview with *Radio & Records*' Mike Harrison, Bowie says "Young Americans" is "not really R & B."

Explains Bowie, "There 2, no 3 songs on the album that are R & B. The others aren't really. There's one with John Lennon, and I've done one of John's songs. A couple of my

own and 3 rhythm and blues" numbers.

As for the title tune, his latest hit single, Bowie comments only that "you can dance to it. It's a good dance tune." Bowie, who admits he loves to dance, agrees that the art is a significant part of American culture today: "I think dancing seems to flourish in these kinds of remote periods," he says.

Asked whether he is a genius or an extremely talented showman, the mysterious Mr. Bowie responds, "Time will tell."

Perkins-new stone?

It looks like Wayne Perkins definitely is going to be The Rolling Stones' new guitarist. Bob Duncan of *Creem* magazine says he has learned from a source "very close to Perkins" that Wayne has signed a contract with the group to become Mick Taylor's replacement.

The source says that Perkins was recommended by both Eric Clapton and Leon Russell. Perkins, a Birmingham, Alabama based guitarist, has

done session work with Russell before. Friends familiar with his guitar playing say Perkins is "terrific."

Moodies back together

The Moody Blues have decided to continue recording as a group after a six-month break-up. They're beginning work on a new album for their label Threshold Records.

About six months ago, various band members reported that they were breaking up, saying that the Moodies had come about as far as they could as a group. Since then, several

members have completed solo projects, most recently Justin Hayward and John Lodge whose joint "Blue Jays" album is being released this week.

West's solo album

Leslie West's new solo album will be titled "The Great Fatsby" and features songs written by the Rolling Stones, Paul Rodgers of Bad Company, Tim Hardin and Gary Wright, as well as Leslie's own compositions. The album will be released this week on the Phantom label. Leslie, of course, is

Wheel reformed

Stealers Wheel had disbanded shortly before their song "Stuck in the Middle With You" brought them international stardom a couple years back. The success of that song convinced the band members to get back together, and now they're about to release their third album. The new work is called "Right or Wrong".

Dietrich and Cooper in Morocco

This Thursday the Graduate Students of English Association "Great Directors" Series continues with its penultimate film, Josef von Sternberg's *Morocco* (1930), starring Marlene Dietrich, Gary Cooper and Adolphe Menjou. Showings are at 4:00, 6:30 and 8:30 in the Humanities Bldg. Audio-Visual Centre L-1. Admission will be \$1.50.

Audiences who attended the free showing of Sternberg's *Scarlet Empress* (also with Dietrich) earlier this month will have some idea of what to expect of *Morocco*. Sternberg is perhaps the most visually ravishing director in cinematic history, and in *Morocco* every veil, shutter and fan is exquisitely arranged into a richly sensual conglomeration of images which stamps every frame of the movie as Sternberg's own.

Dietrich was of course "discovered" by Sternberg, and that fact alone is enough to put him into the category of Marco Polo and Christopher Columbus (though it might almost be more accurate to say that

Sternberg invented Dietrich rather than discovered her.) *Morocco* was their second film together, and Dietrich's first Hollywood film. It's also one of their best.

The plot, which is outrageous but apt, has Dietrich as a cabaret singer abandoning dapper, civilized Adolphe Menjou for happy-go-lucky French Legionary Gary Cooper (perhaps Cooper's most charming performance). Certainly much of *Morocco's* action seems absurd, but it is no more sensible to be bothered by this than it is to be bothered by the flagrant artificiality of Sternberg's decor. As Andrew Sarris has pointed out, Sternberg's stylistic consistency produces a very personal kind of meaningfulness which is far more important artistically than superficial plausibility of plot or character.

In Sternberg's films style is everything. Even the characters have no existence independent of the lush world Sternberg has invented for them - they simply become further aspects of the

style themselves. Meaning in a Sternberg film resides in the director's attitude to life, his perception of impulse, control and grace in act and gesture - and this perception is communicated through the characters, not by them.

Thus, Dietrich's final gesture of surrender in *Morocco* is often seen as ridiculous by critics who view the film according to criteria of "realistic" plausibility, neglecting the fact that the entire film takes place on a level of stylization which renders any such judgement meaningless - a throwback to the kind of criticism which condemns Picasso for producing portraits which don't look exactly like real people.

But it isn't necessary to plumb the depths of aesthetic theory to enjoy *Morocco*. It was a big hit in 1930, and present-day audiences who luxuriate in the candy-floss artificialities of *American Graffiti* will surely have no trouble with Sternberg's "excesses". And anyone who can't appreciate Dietrich's luminous beauty is only to be pitied.

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