

RECORDS ON REVIEW

HUNTERS & COLLECTORS---HUNTERS & COLLECTORS

It's the debut album of the 6-member Australian group Hunters & Collectors. As with most debuts, there are weak points, but generally this one impresses me.

Hunters & Collectors was formed in May 1981 in Melbourne. The members come from a loose-knit group of writers, artists, and musicians, and were

TOM WAITS-SWORDFISHTROMBONES

It's the music of crowded, smoke-filled, honky-tonk bars; the kind you go to drown your sorrows alone. Swordfishtrombones is a Godsend to Tom Waits fans but a little obscure to the rest of us. That was my initial assessment and after repeated listening, still is.

It's not that it's really weird. Waits plays the mellowist fusion of honky-tonk jazz, funk, and both

greeted enthusiastically right from the start because of their decidedly dissonant, early-Gang-of-Four sound. Their name comes from a song by a U.K. group called Can. In naming themselves, Hunters & Collectors offered a salute to a group who survived fluctuations of fashion and the transience of the music scene around them.

And that's what they're attempting to do, too. It's

spoken and acappella passages, but I find it hollow and heartless. Like Springsteen, his stuff is boring. I know it's cool to sit through endless surges and wanings of sax, bass and cymbal-heavy percussion, but please, I only pose in public---never in front of my stereo.

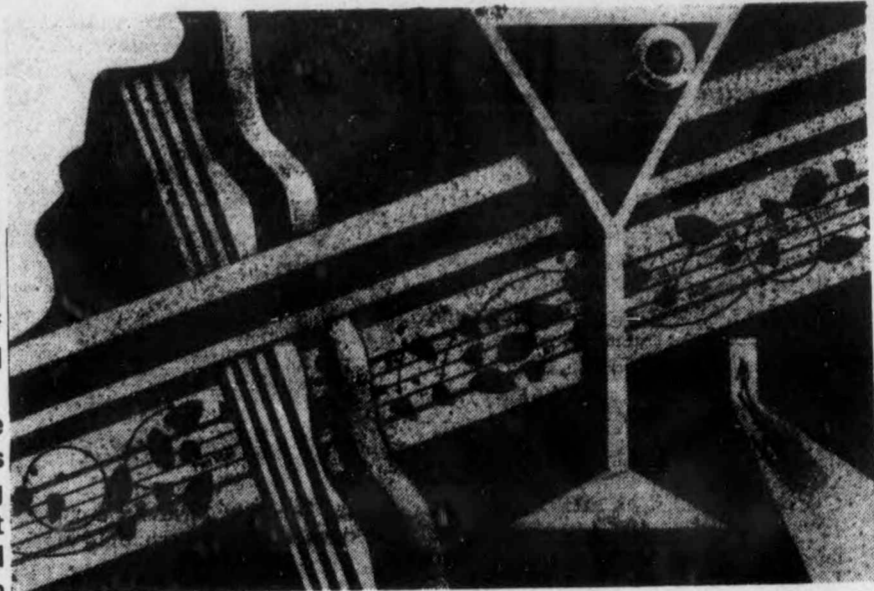
I'm sure the legion of Tom Waits fans will strongly disagree. Waits was once described as a cross between Lord Bentley and Jack Kerouac, the first true

beatnik and author of the classic *On the Road*. And, Waits has worked with such notables as Frank Zappa and Charlie Rich. He certainly is a seasoned and respected musician, and his fans are devoted.

But, I find *Swordfishtrombones* too dirgelike and lacklustre for my liking. I think Waits is past his prime and survives on past accolades. This album just lies there...like a big plate of soggy french fries.

hard to compare them to anyone else, for their intensity is spooky, their vocals searching, and their sound tinny. A twisted B-52's...with overtones of U2. How's that for an odd combination?

It's a record for the musically adventurous from a band that's going places. In fact, they've just relocated to London and signed a deal with Virgin Records, so we'll be hearing more from them. Guaranteed.



CHSR plays Santa

Whaddya want for Christmas? Make sure these are on your list---a selection of the year's best, compiled by the CHSR-FM Music Department:

Talking Heads-Speaking in Tongues
David Bowie-Let's Dance
U2-War
Rough Trade-Weapons
New Order-Power, Corruption and Lies
Thomas Dolby-Golden Age of Wireless
Eurythmics-Eurythmics
Violent Femmes-Violent Femmes
Genesis-Genesis
Japan-Oil on Canvas
Midnight Oil-10,9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1
Tears for Fears-The Hurting
The Police-Synchronicity
Thompson Twins-Side Kicks
Psychedelic Furs-Forever Now
REM-Murmur



RadioActivity, the official guide to 97.9 CHSR-FM. Published the last Friday each month in the Brunswickan. Remember, CHSR-FM remains on-air over the holidays. Keep us tuned in and turned up.

COORDINATOR
John Hamilton

CONTRIBUTORS
David Oancia
Tim White
Trans FM



OPINION rock v s. religion

If you've been reading the daily paper lately, you've undoubtedly seen several glaring advertisements offering to teach the 'truth' about rock music. Among other things, they are promoting meetings which claim to reveal to you the evils of rock and its undercurrents of Satanic worship.

While I don't object to people holding their own opinions, when they directly attack something near and dear to my heart---music---I begin to think and to seriously question. After all, by license CHSR-FM is a rock station; one of dozens across the country; are all of us here and elsewhere tiptoeing the tightrope between salvation and eternal damnation?

I think not. But a steadily increasing number of fundamentalist spokesmen seem to be promoting this idea. I have yet to hear a convincing argument.

I must admit that I didn't have the nerve to attend one of the abovementioned meetings. Instead, I've heard TV and radio interviews, so that's where I've gleaned their point of view. Principally, they, utilize

quotations from the Bible and a cornucopia of convoluted and emotionally charged rhetoric and reasoning. They are free in the condemnation of rock music and seem particularly concerned with the loosened moral standards it supposedly produces.

I have a number of responses. It goes without saying that more good has been inspired from the pages of the Bible than from any other work of art in history, but it's very dangerous to use Biblical excerpts as proof of ANY argument, because they're highly subjective and open to all sorts of interpretation. Smooth-tongued persuaders who know the Bible inside-out can pick practically any passage out of the air and twist it for their own purposes. And to put a finger on any one thing as the cause of the sexual revolution is preposterous; music is a cultural mirror which reflects the spirit and happenings of the times but is hardly at the root of the biggest social revolution of our time.

Other questions arise, too. The term 'rock music'

is a vague and all-encompassing one. How can a whole genre be evil? I mean, from Abba to Anvil, that's quite a range. And when these proponents of clean living speak of those hidden Satanic messages in music, how seriously should we take them? Messages can be hidden, by burying them in a wall of sound or by recording them backwards onto a disc (called back-masking). These things do exist, but I seriously doubt that we can really subconsciously understand them.

I don't think rock music is evil. Certainly some individuals in the industry are obscene and criminal, and I can understand the concern and confusion of those who see an Iron Maiden album cover in a record store. Worthless? Yes. But Satanic? No---and not representative of rock at all. Unfortunately, there will always be those who want to restrict other people's enjoyments. They'll try to give us a Muzak world where individualism doesn't exist. But it won't work.

Not with thinking people.