



by Mark Teehan

ROGER McGUINN - "Peace On You" (Columbia). This is the album Roger McGuinn has been threatening to make for the last 6 years since the psychedelic beauty **Notorious Byrd Brothers**; the wait's been worth it, not only because of this goodie but also because of some fine (if uneven) music of Byrdmaster helped deliver in the interim with various casts of Byrds. Stuff like "Chestnut Mare", "Just A Season", "Come Back Home", "Lover of the Bayou", "Tiffany Queen" and "Buglar" could leave you breathless with their pristine sound and haunting melodies. McGuinn's first solo LP of a year ago was nothing spectacular, being a bit too electric in material and sounding somewhat tired, but nevertheless it had its moments and showed that old Roger was putting the pieces back together-sort of a spiritual/musical re-charging. Well, all the promise/potential of that debut effort has been fully realized. **Peace** brings back memories of the old Byrds at their best with its floating 12-string guitar sound and stylistic unity, though at the same time it exudes the calm maturity and confidence of an older, wiser McGuinn. As such, it's a consistently enjoyable album with much more coherence and polish than its predecessor of last year.

Partial credit for **Peace's** success should go to the talented musicians playing alongside McGuinn: Russ Kunkel on drums, Lee Sklar once more bass, keyboard man Paul Harris (who's worked extensively with Steve Stills in his now defunct Manasses band), and guitarist Ronnie Dacus who alternates on 6-string rhythm and lead with McGuinn, handling his traditional 12-string Rickenbacker with consummate dexterity and economy. Plus Turtles Mark Volman and Howard Kaylan add some backing vocals to a few tracks, while several other friends help out occasionally. Sticking with a similar crew all the way through was a smart move on McGuinn's part, as the instrumentation is tighter this time around and his pickin' seems better integrated into the surrounding musical environment. Unlike the last album, which came across a little disjointed - McGuinn supported by back-up musicians - this one flows much more naturally. And Dacus works out quite well, contributing 2 songs of his own and supplying an appropriate degree of subtlety on guitar to mesh with Roger's 12-string.

The production work of Bill Halverson is another plus-mark, giving **Peace** a remarkably even and full sound. Halverson has been noted for his engineering work with CSN&Y in the past and here he makes effective use of multi-tracking techniques; the final mix is heavily layered/expansive/lateral without losing very much from the rhythm section, which (especially Kunkel's drumming) comes through OK and delivers some solid backing.

McGuinn's composing, alone or as is more usual with Jacques Levy, emerges much more developed and of generally higher quality than on the first album. It is these 5 tunes that give the album its wistfully romantic core. "The Lady" has to rank among the best of this team's overall output, a superlative song that

combines a great melody, a nice airy sound that jangles in true Byrds '65 fashion, and some sensitive lyrics. Roger's vocals, here as elsewhere, are assured and delivered with genuine compassion. While crystal-clear guitars thread a soaring melody, he ends a tale of lonely yearning for love: "The lady's soul is mystical/And in the night it flies to heaven/Trouble finds a holy soul that's looking for a dream/Visions grow and they fade away/And the lady begins to pray/But grace is not as easy as it seems." A similar theme, from a male point of view, is dealt with by "Together"; some flamingo guitar work from Tommy Tedesco gives this mostly uptempo cut a Latin feel in places.

Side 1 is bolstered by the slower-moving "Without You," where some well-crafted licks from Dacus and McGuinn produce a soft, bell-ish tone that hardens up slightly on the chorus. The ending peaks in a wall of sound, with Harris breaking through on organ and working nicely off the guitars. Roger deals with his past and the Byrds legacy on the self-penned "Same Old Sound" - the Byrdsy guitar arrangements help generate a nostalgic effect but the song stands well enough on its own. The veteran folk-rocker turns in a stunning break and acknowledges that "...everywhere I'm bound/I got to play that same old sound." It may be old but it sure does sound good. On "Gate of Horn" he reminisces about his days at a Chicago folk club back in the mid-fifties.

The outside material all works pretty well, with the exception of the opening title track written by Charlie Rich - it's a good enough tune but really isn't suited to McGuinn's singing style and also suffers from too much orchestration/background vocals. "(Please Not) One More Time," and Al Kooper song on which its author plays clavinet, piano, and guitar, sounds a bit mechanical at first with its sudden pace changes but grows on you after awhile. Dacus's "Do What You Want To" injects the most country flavor by virtue of some mellow steel guitar from Al Perkins.

I think the "bald-eagled with stars" cover could be dispensed with, but ya can't win 'em all. Without taking anything away from the California country-rock scene typified by newer groups like the New Riders, The Eagles and the Souther, Hillman, Furay Band, I'd say McGuinn has it down best - the fact that he can still sound unique/distinctive is pretty remarkable. McGuinn has been noted for saying "everything will turn out all right" in interviews, and he was right - it sure does here. Peace on you.

**Mike Oldfield** - "Hergest Ridge" [Virgin]. If you ever wondered what a mandolin, acoustic & electric guitars plus other assorted instruments would sound like when overdubbed 30,000 times now's your chance. Strictly synthetic Symph-Rock Muzak that's so safe and conservative it bores. Like all high-bridged that don't quite come off, it's deficient in both component areas. Good pap to play when you don't wanna hear what's on your stereo or are too busy to care. Would be excellent for a "Son of Exorcist" film.

Spring into Summer and Fall into Winter  
at  
**fifth avenue**  
SCOTIA SQUARE  
and  
MIC MAC MALL

## ARGYLE T.V. SALES & SERVICE

\*BAYERS RD. SHOPPING CENTRE  
453-0119

\*2063 GOTTINGEN ST.  
422-5930

*Stereos, Components, Changers,  
Electronic parts, Cassettes  
Speakers, Recorders,*

**T.V. Rentals (at 422-5930)**

|             |             |               |               |
|-------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|
| 12" B&W     | 19" B&W     | 15" Colour    | 19" Colour    |
| \$5.00/WK.  | \$5.00/WK.  | \$12.50/2 WK. | \$25.00/MO.   |
| \$12.50/MO. | \$15.00/MO. | \$20.00/MO.   | \$35.00/2 MO. |

## LEATHER SHEEP SKIN SUEDE

we have a coat for YOU!!!

**Colwell Brothers**  
Established 1891

**THE ENGLISH SHOP**  
1673 Barrington Street Mic Mac Shopping Centre  
HALIFAX - N.S. DARTMOUTH - N.S.

Now two locations to serve you better