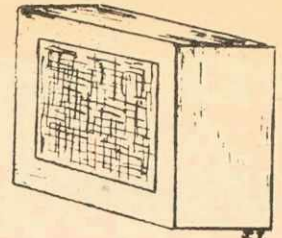


# DÉJÀ



# ENTENDU



by Hutch

Today I have two unusual LP's — one is a medium LP by a great group and the other a fresh new discovery. Rather than review each cut on the LP's I'd like to mention outstanding cuts on each — either very good or very bad — and class the rest as typical.

**CHICAGO — AT CARNEGIE HALL** (live 4-LP set) (COLUMBIA). A bit of background to the mammoth LP:

The cost: approximately \$14. The record: four LP's recorded live at Carnegie Hall in New York. A six-night concert sold out each night. Sides 1-4 are the first night, 5-8 are the last, with no cut times given on the entire LP.

The production of the LP is rather poor — the balance of these seven musicians is not great and the overall level of the LP is low. Those who know the group will realize that the astounding crisp brass, magnificent bass, fantastic drumming and stupendous guitar are at less than their best in this LP.

Sides 1-4 are undoubtedly better than 5-8, simply because the group is much fresher. "In the Country" was well chosen

as an opener — the bass (Peter Cetera) carries the song and their brilliant brasswork is shown to advantage on this song.

"Does Anyone Really Know What Time It Is?" has an excellent "free form intro" (their words). It's all piano, and done very nicely by Robert Lamm, Chicago's lead vocalist. The intro is one of the best parts of the set. I must say backing side 1 with side 2, etc. was not a smart move, especially with automatic record-changer-owners. The group starts a new song then fades it down with the applause, and starts again on the flip side. Meanwhile you're softly cursing to yourself while you're turning it over.

"South California Purples" has got to be the best cut on the LP. Although the song is done slightly slower than in the studio, it's the 9 1/2 minute guitar at the end of the song (Terry Kath) that makes this cut. This man is incredible. He uses feedback very skillfully and is a master. Also check the organ on this cut.

"Beginnings" is rather standard for Chicago; again a bit slow — something that curses this whole LP.

I never did like "Mother". The brass is used incorrectly and it's too raucous for my liking — the trumpet sounds like Miles Davis, whom I have

trouble understanding.

The first three cuts on side 6 are part of the Travel Suite from the third LP. "Flight 602", the CSN&Y type number fails here, probably because it's hard to keep harmony after six nights of gut singing. "Motorboat to Mars", the drum solo, sounds like it comes from tired hands, while "Free" should be either shorter (to retain the power it has) or much longer (to enable artists to get into individual solos.).

A beautiful flute starts an otherwise bad side 7. The "Ballet for a Girl in Buchanan", that gives me such a rush feeling on Chicago II, is poorly done here.

Side 8 contains the only new song on the set, "A Song for Richard and His Friends". It's an anti-war song using a Hendrix-like guitar abstract that's very similar to the "Star Spangled Banner". An organ punches out machine gun bursts. It works well, although the "message" could be more subtle.

Too bad it wasn't a three LP set — side 7 and 8 don't make it. It shows how tired they were of touring all over America night after night. The album is a musical document this way — it shows that a supergroup can get tired, and perhaps even shows many of the reasons the Beatles stopped touring and then broke up.

When I heard about this LP I expected a lot more from a four LP live set than I got. The group is versatile enough not to bore you over the two hours and fifty minutes, but don't buy this LP to judge Chicago — buy their first LP.

\* \* \*

**MEL BROWN: "MEL BROWN'S FIFTH"** (Impulse).

Admitted I don't know much about this guy. We just got this LP although it was recorded in October 1970. I don't know if this is his latest LP or not. I classify Mel as jazz, although he plays long cuts of instrumental guitar, mostly blues cuts. Like Isaac Hayes he can be classified in many categories — rock, jazz, blues and easy listening.

Here's his back-up — maybe you'll recognize some of these incredible musicians: Carle Vickers (trumpet), Jake Riley (trombone), Lorenzo Carnegie (alto sax), "Onion" Miller (tenor sax), Tobie Butler (baritone sax), Clifford Coulter (electric piano), Jimmy Davis (organ and keyboard bass) and Jeff Osborne (drums).

After the brash brass of "Good Stuff" we go immediately to a rhythm and blues guitar number heavy on the blues side. It's called "Seven-Forty-Seven Airport Blues". I'm reading the liner notes and I've found that it's Mel's father, "Bubba" Brown doing the singing.

"Luv Potion", a ten minute jazzy blues guitar number is a well done piece, with the organ punching out accompaniment

for accent and then doing a nice bit on its own. "Luv Potion" has a nice bass (sounds like Ray Brown) but it is a keyboard bass. The cut ends with a cuckoo clock going off, then cuts abruptly. I don't understand the significance of it; to me it ruins a great song.

Side 2 opens with "Drifting Blues", an old blues number done quite standardly by Mel. It's long (as usual) and Mel's guitar plus Jimmy Davis' organ give you that soft swaying feeling that slow blues or easy jazz can give you.

In "Cheap at Half the Price" Mel uses natural distortion on his guitar, and the organ and drums make this a fine piece. Too bad it's so short.

"Home Made" is pure blues guitar with brass spicing. The guitar sounds much like BB King (and close to Albert, too). It's seven minutes, 27 seconds of funk that could go on for seventy and I still wouldn't be tired. The stereo separation of the winning guitar is truly incredible. The producer is Bill Szymczyk, who also produced the James Gang — quite a range of music.

The last cut is called "Gimme a Little Slack" and it's hard to understand why Mel would do this. It's just talk, then the words "We're gonna fade it", an echo, a slow down in speed and then a fade-out. It sounds very amateurish, and after the professionalism of "Home Made", it's in very bad taste.

That's the album. Overall I'm impressed. Mel, at 32, has a long life of guitar ahead of him. I'll be waiting for more from him. Meanwhile I gotta find his other four LP's. Bye!

## CINEMATTERS

by Stephen R. Mills

"Dirty Harry" (Capitol) proves once and for all that a) Don Seigel deserves the reputation he has in Europe as a first class director, b) Clint Eastwood is a fine actor and, c) violence on the screen can be

justified in context.

The film opens with a shot of a memorial to San Francisco cops killed in action, dissolving from the department badge to a sniper focusing on his first victim. The picture chronicles the pursuit and slaying of the

sniper by Detective Harry Callahan (Eastwood). To accomplish this, Callahan is forced to go beyond the bounds of the law. In the final shots, Callahan contemplates his badge and, knowing his action will get him booted off the force, throws it away. The movie thus becomes a tight and satisfying package.

Director Seigel includes in his package a credible story, amusing dialogue, remarkable photography, and excellent acting.

The screenplay and dialogue give insights not only into "Dirty Harry" and his department but into such metaphysical heavies as The City and The Law.

The City, how Harry is part of it and how it affects him, is brought out most effectively by the photography. The camera is constantly on the move — through the streets, the nightclubs, the apartments, the mayor's office — and above showing the skylines, the harbour, the bridge. The noise and confusion of the cars and

the crowds is also there and, yes, the camera cannot help but capture the glamour of it all.

The Law, of which Harry is also part but which he must defy to preserve his own integrity, is characterized by the people in the picture. Eastwood successfully radiates the confidence and defiance found in "Dirty Harry" — he obviously loves his job and it hurts him greatly to give it up. Perhaps the point of the whole enterprise is to make one wonder why he must abandon his profession for probably the same reasons he joined — to make life a little more bearable for the people of his city.

The supporting performances are excellent and it's nice to see John Vernon back on the screen if only in a bit part. And violence? It's there — in abundance; shootings, a stabbing, brutal beatings, and torture. But it's absolutely necessary as you'll realize once you've seen the film. Violence is part of Harry Callahan, part of the city he protects. That it's one of the things in this film that makes it successful is a tribute to all concerned.

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