

# Alice Cooper's Killer one of year's best

By STEVE GELLER

**Alice Cooper:** Love it to Death (Warner Bros. Records 1883). Released about a year ago, Love it to Death contains more unpretentious, unadulterated hard rock than most groups are capable of putting out at their peak. Considered by some to be the group's straightest album, production and arrangement techniques complement the desperation Alice Cooper seems to reflect. An excellent album overall, cuts such as I'm Eighteen, Hallowed be Thy Name, and The Ballad of Dwight Fry set the pace.

**Alice Cooper:** Killer (Warner Bros. Records 2567). Picking up from where its predecessor left off, Killer is also an excellently produced and arranged album which allows the fine musicianship and overall tightness of the group to shine through.

With Killer it becomes apparent that the attitudes of Alice Cooper and company seem to be very

similar to those of another popular group — the Rolling Stones. Alice Cooper manages to cut through the false sentimentality of pop music, mirror all the things that society labels deviant and throw them right back at us with no holds barred. The issue of bi-sexuality is handled rather well in the tune Be My Lover while the impact of Under My Wheels and Desperado set the pace for the remainder of a fine album.

**The Byrds:** Farther Along (Columbia Records KC31050). This latest album by the Byrds shows that they are still one of — if not the — most progressive groups around. Probably the group's most lyrically political album, Farther Along adds the elements of straight rock, vaudeville and bluegrass to the Byrds consistent country premise.

**Jerry Garcia:** Garcia (Warner Bros. Records BS2583). His first solo album features one side of an almost straight forward Grateful Dead approach, music by Jerry Garcia

and lyrics by Bob Hunter. The second side consists of some electronic experimentations within the realm of the easy country and western sound that Garcia seems to represent. An excellent sounding album overall but nothing really drastically different from anything Garcia could have recorded with the Grateful Dead.

**Lord Sutch (and heavy friends):** Hands of Jack The Ripper (Cotillion Records SD9049). Recorded live in London with such friends as Noel Redding, Keith Moon, and Mathew Fisher, Lord Sutch attempts to put out some heavy rock'n'roll. However the straight forward drab approach to the classic tunes of Chuck Berry, Little Richard, and Jerry Lee Lewis makes this album one of the worst of its kind ever.

**John Prine:** (Atlantic Records SD8296). The best contemporary solo artist to reach popularity this year, John Prine is able to reflect the thoughts of his generation and the problems of his society in a most thorough way. His best known pieces on the album are Illegal Smile and Sam Stone. Although comparisons of Prine to Dylan may be a bit premature, John Prine has definitely made his mark with his first album.

**Jackson Browne:** Saturate Before Using (Asylum Records SD5051). Although he has been around for a few years doing small gigs and studio work this is Jackson Browne's first L.P. Featuring fine production, arrangement, and personnel (Clarence White, Jesse Davis, Jim Gordon, Sneaky Pete, and David Crosby), tracks which stand out are Doctor My Eyes, Rock Me On The Water, and Jamaica Say You Will, a song written by Browne, and previously recorded by the Byrds.

**Jamming With Edward:** (The Edward Records C0CS39100). Studio work with Nicky Hopkins, Ry Cooder, Mick Jagger, Bill Wyman and Charlie Watts seems to be influenced most by Nicky Hopkins. Ry Cooder's guitar work is the most striking feature on an otherwise dull album which is also not one of Glyn John's finer production efforts.

**Barclay James Harvest:** And Other Short Stories (Sire Records SI5904). This British Quartet has finally made it with a release in Canada. (They have two or three fine albums out in England.) The group puts out a soft sound with the use of a mellotron along the same lines as the Moody Blues except that their music is much superior.

**The Incredible String Band:** Liquid Acrobat As Regards The Air. (Elektra Records EKS-74112). This album reflects the group's tendency to sound stereotypically British and too structured. Lack of inventiveness from track to track makes this album a drag.

**Cat Mother:** (Polydor Records 2391019). Formerly produced by Jimi Hendrix and called Cat Mother and the All Night Newsboys, this album features some fine boogie-rock. Adequate vocals and good instrumentation typify the entire album.

**Bonnie Koloc:** After All This Time (Ovation Records OVQD/14-21). A young performer from the Mid-west, Bonnie Koloc's main premise is that of folk with a blues overtone. Her music is sensitive and reflects a down home type of image.

**Doug Kershaw:** Swamp Grass (Warner Bros. Records 2581). Doug Kershaw seems to be overpowered by the supporting musicians on his latest album. With the exception of Zacharia, the title tune from last year's first electric western, Kershaw's usually exciting and versatile violin work has been subdued.

**Captain Beefhart:** The Spotlight Kid (Reprise Records MS2050). Further experimentation in production techniques have allowed Captain Beefhart to come up with some even farther out surrealistic boogies. (Must definitely be in the right frame of mind for this one.)

**Hardin and York:** For The World (London Records XPS602). Eddie Hardin and Peter York, two original members of the Spencer Davis Group seem to have directed their interest along the lines of blues, country, folk, and jazz on their first album. This drummer-organist duo are far superior to the similar efforts put out by Teagarden and Van Winkle.

**Judee Sill:** (Asylum Records SD5050). Arrangement and production seem to be the strong points of this album. Judee Sill's voice is pleasant, lyrics simple but she appears confused with the

religious overtones she tries to make use of.

**David Blue:** Stories (Asylum Records SD5052). This artist has returned to the pop scene after an absence of about four years. Indicating an increased social awareness, Blue manages to come across in a style still very much his own. Excellent backing comes from supporting musicians such as Ry Cooder, Chris Ethridge, with Rita Coolidge helping out vocally and Jack Nitzsche arranging the strings.

**Mick Greenwood:** Living Game (Decca Records DL75318). A young artist whose music reflects the questions and problems of his generation. The lyrics are poor, the music predictable and there's nothing special about the arrangement and production.

**Stone The Crows:** Ode To John Law (Polydor Records 2425042) and Teenage Licks (Polydor Records 2391018). This group has come a long way from their beginnings a few years ago. Led by Maggie Bell, a young woman with a gutsy voice, Stone The Crows has become one of the most promising jazz-rock groups around.

**King Crimson:** Islands (Atlantic Records SD-7212). This album is evidence that King Crimson has fallen apart since Lake left the group.

**Lindis Farne:** Fog on The Tyne (Elektra Records 75021). A young British group who have still got quite a way to go before they will make any kind of impact on the music world, their first L.P. reflects their inconsistencies rather well.

**Tom Ghent:** Yankee Rebel Son (Kapp Records KS-3655). Probably the most promising Canadian folk oriented contemporary artist to arise this year, Ghent's album presents an overall pleasant well rounded sound.

## CULTURAL BRIEFS

### Sandberg translates bible into music

Mordecai Sandberg will present a concert of his compositions on Sunday, April 9, at 3:00 pm in the Junior Common Room of Stong College. Dr. Sandberg translates his vision of the bible of mankind into music. Some of his works include the Symphonic Psalms (using the original text of the 150 Psalms), more than 15 oratorios including a tetralogy on Solomon, Ruth, Micah, and Ezkerah. Sandberg teaches a Stong College Tutorial on Musical Setting of the Bible.

### Courageous book on child beatings

Every year, 96 to 144 children in Canada are killed by their own parents. It's a sorry statistic about an affluent society unable to cope with its own young. Mary Van Stok has written a good account of cases giving the needed reasons about how and why it happened. The Battered Child In Canada is easy reading for anyone concerned about the need for reporting your suspicions about beaten children, the law, the community and the new role of family physicians. The only disadvantage is the book's cost. At \$3.95, it's relatively expensive for a 127 page paperback. But as the author points out in her acknowledgements, she thanks Jack McClelland for commissioning a book on a problem which less courageous publishers might hesitate to be involved in. Quite true when the vast majority of doctors, lawyers, neighbors, teachers, politicians and social welfare agencies have yet to demand comprehensive child-care legislation which would by necessity challenge the parent's authority in today's society.

### Tantrums hard to talk about

It's hard to talk about Passe Muraille's latest play, Tantrums. The avant-garde theatre has come up with another poser for drama critics and has left nothing but emotion and impression for guidance. Basically, it's a series of short scenes where people throw — you guessed it — tantrums at each other. In the background, numbers are counted down while psychedelic noise builds tension for the actors to blow up. There's the hired man who demands and gets whatever he wants from a scared family. He ends up getting them totally insane by demanding a better and louder "good-night" from them all. There's the two whores that offer their services — not without another fight of words — to two men dressed in the 20's Sunday outfits. And that build-up includes a strip show by a third whore who turns out to be a man. But his services are taken nevertheless. Not to be without nudity, one precious couple watches a nurse roll out the biblical apple between their feet. And it rolls on by. The play's written by Hrant Alinak and directed by Louis Del Grande.



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