TAE COCATOES: CLOSE

The second in a two part series glorifying the live concert album. week: the best and worst of the 80's.

Dear Mr Ferguson:

Thank you for sending for our pamphlet "The Intellectual Approach to Picking to Top Albums for a Year-End or Decade-End Review Articles." Best of luck.

1) Pick one-third to one-half of the top "X" records of your list from certified chart toppers. Pick one-third (X/3) if you've got an ear for alternative music but aren't truly converted. Also pick X/3 if you hear music from other planets, hosts of angels, the hordes of hell, etc. DON'T REVIEW THIS MUSIC! Stick with the earthly material. You may need to sell your writing to a magazine with a middle of the road readership so that you can get enough money to pay your shrink or to purchase some "pharmaceuticals." All others pick

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This factor (either X/2 or X/3) utilizes simple division that even you can calculate except if you've decided on a "top ten" list, for example, and go for X/3. This complicates matters since you'll have to pick 3.33 charttopping records for your list. Note the significance of this number - it sort of looks like 33 1/3, but then, remember, no one buys LPs anymore. Chuck it! Round down to three (safe) or up to 4 (but not on an exam) and get on with it. This is the 80's so forget about being "true to yourself." (If you are a math major, stay with the 3.33 value - you'll figure something out.) 2) Add a couple of sentimental favourites (ie. some stuff YOU really liked) even if they actually weren't very good. To calculate this number take the cube root of the square of your IQ divided by your net income (this factor is subject to change if and when the GST is implemented). You should come up with the number 2. If not, you've a) made a wrong calculation, b) lied about you IQ, or c) you had no net

income because you're a student. Use

the number 2, anyway, and continue. To choose your sentimental favourites for inclusion on your list it's best to go with music of a particular genre such as rap, heavy metal, thrash, etc., rather than with mainstream records. You'll curry favour with the segment of the recordbuying public that laps up this material. The rest of them won't realize it's dreck, especially if its obscure enough that most have probably not heard it. They'll just assume that they missed out on something good that you are calling to their attention. At worst, they will poo-poo your selection (not so bad) but if you're really skillful (ie. you can bullshit) you'll be applauded for "championing the rights of the musically downtrodden" or the "musical minority brethren" by standing up for records that were overlooked by other publications. (Sprinkle in plenty of phrases like these to justify some of your selections and to invoke sympathy from liberal-minded readers who abhor

discrimination.) 3) Well, you're on your own from here on, kid. What do you expect for \$35? Besides we've got you safely halfway through the list. Choose 5 more albums from among a) brilliant new artists, b) jaded has-been who pulls through with unexpected comebacks, and c) artists with a social or environmental statement. People love these larger-than-life storybook endings where the good guys come out on top. Stay away from political bands! Ditto for those sporting horns and reeking of the stench of hell.

The BA Sucker Correspondence

4) Thanks for the \$35.

Here they are: The Top Five Albums of the 80's

No, it's not a top ten list for two very good reasons. First, everybody else is doing top ten lists of everything under the sun. More importantly, I couldn't think of ten live albums that deserved to be called top ten and a top eight just didn't sound right. Besides there is something about the number five that is as natural as the number 10 . . .

(thumb) PETER GABRIEL

Peter Gabriel Play: Live. Manna from a man whos irst three albums were each calle me to suspect he's an egotistical shit. theid bandwagon got rolling i music business, suggests some orn of holier-than-thou attitude a well as uncanny prescience. His work is suffused with a subtle, yet powerful moral righteousness that doesn sound preachy - just "right" - and that could explain the enduring power of Biko versus Sun City, for example. The death of an old Indian in San Jacinto is the focal point of this gnette that spans the ages from when men were a part of the land to the arrival of the white man who carves u no land. The passionate delivery is a trong a statement for the rights of original peoples and their culture as Il be found in today's music. The imitive jungle rhythms of The hythm of the Heat cvoke erful, savage elements from ring crescendo as adrenaline na toss you about then leave you and exhausted. The parallen the hunt and the ensu Hands on Me round ou the album. Anyone who Gabriel in concert ize the explicit trust he p audience as he allows the rese hands on him during spe the most remarkable st geature performed by an art oter Gabriel Plays Lives talbum in the career of ortant artist. Listening to matrates that while he may be

(index finger) THE SMITHS - "Rank". The Smiths' rocket flight exploded in high orbit and perhaps that's the best way for a band to part company. This recording captures the band late in their career and at their peak. It also demonstrates that the band didn't revolve solely about the Morrissey/Marr axis. Morrissey's vocals and Marr's guitar are still the dominant features of the recording but the drumming and bass of "what's their names" adds a dimension that was perhaps, in retrospect, not given sufficient space on the studio albums. Highlights of the album are Still III and Ask. (Nature is a languages/Can anybody read?). Morrissey's grunts, snows, yodels and other associed vocal gymnastes and a new dimension to his lystes as the studio

versions are taken from the showroom for a hair-raising spin around the block. They pass the road test, and

No Smiths' album would be complete without the requisite "death" songs. Whether it be emotional or physical, death, dying, and decay are facts of life that few artists place in life-affirming perspective. The irony stemming from two lovers agreeing to meet at The Cemetery Gates gives way to sobers reflection and finally to renewed zest for life. The dirge-like cadence and the imagery of I Know it's Over create a mood that builds to an emotional climax which convincingly demonstrates the largely untapped potential for the musical analysis of the "mysterious finality" in our death-denying, deathfixated existence.

All the other tunes from the breakneck London and The Queen confirm the mantle of genius.

They will be missed. (But they'll be back! - Ed.)

(impolite finger) U2 - Live Under a Blood Red Sky. Fair is fair, so, despite the most recent live venture, I won't dock U2 marks. Besides, the circumstances surrounding the making of this album and Rattle and Hum are different. Back then Bono and Co. were a popular band on the verge of superstardom. All that was required was the monumental final thrust. This is it. Packs all the wallop of a D-Day to capture this continent. 11 o'clock tick tock may be their

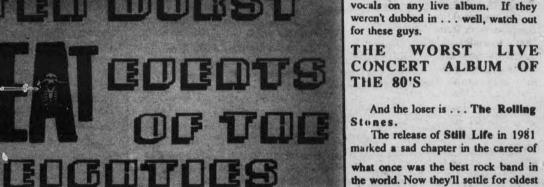
Outstanding versions of Gloria, Sunday Bloody Sunday, and New is Dead to the quirky Panic and the Year's Day, make the studio bizarre Bigmouth Strikes Again versions pale by comparison. The confirm the mantle of genius. other tunes: I Will Follow, Party Girl, The Electric Co., and 40 make the studio versions shrivel in the light of day, crumple to powder, and blow away.

Their best work to date (I'm' still hopeful). The albums that follow (Unforgettable Fire, Joshua Tree) were cynically engineered to mop up the last remaining traces of opposition. And the rest, they say, is history.

(ring finger) TALKING HEADS - Stop Making Sense. The fevered torment of the opening track's Psycho Killer captures the obsessive-compulsive homicidal maniac that may lay in all of us. Doesn't sanity seem boring by comparison? Every time I listen to Swamp I form this mental image of mutant alligators holding Miami hostage and calling out for "No Nukes". Guess the Dolphins will be looking for a new stadium.

The highlight may well be the smoldering version of Burning Down the House, though the captivating version of Take Me to the River provides stiff competition. Proof the 80's may not always have been sane but they were a lot of fun.

(pinkie) WALL VOODOO - The Ugly Americans in Australia. Who the hell? ! Wall of Voodoo that's who. From the hilarious opening introduction [emcee: "Let's have a real warm Melbourne welcome for Wall of Voodoo"/audience: (boo)/the band: "C'mon, you can do better than that"/audience: (boo even louder)] to the incredibly bizarre reworkings of Johnny Cash's Ring of Fire (all growed up and electronically embellished) and Woody Guthrie's Pretty Boy Floyd, this is an album of neverending surprises. Mexican Radio and Far Side of Crazy are the hits and are admirably done. The biggest discoveries, however, are Wrong Way to Hollywood and Living in the Red. The former encapsulates the sense of helplessness and isolation of modern times as well as any song I've heard; the latter is a riveting, eerie piece that implies we've mortgaged our souls. Scarier than any tax grab Michael Wilson dreams up? We can only hope so. Living in the Red also features the most haunting ethereal backing vocals on any live album. If they weren't dubbed in . . . well, watch out for these guys.



IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER, WHETHER YOU WANT IT OR NOT . . .

Roseanne Barr - Misleads thildren into believing that being a large, bitchy person in unny and admirable. Should she diet tips from Oprais.

Nancy, though.

Terrorism · Improvement in hostage video needed to bring them up in network rating. Good points for their use of stants and action props.

Movie Sequels - Deja vu takes on a whole new meaning.
I'm waiting for something innovative; like, in Batman II, the caped wonder begins a reign of terror in Gotham City or Rambo becomes a dairy farmer in daho during tuff times.

Professional Wrestling . Doh, Asagh. What big muscles they haven't decided

Iran-Contra Hearing . Bac script, bad acting, bad wardrobe, bad lighting, etc, etc. Absence of Casey really left holes in the production. No one else could remember their lines.

Ronald Reagan - Heavy Metal Music Contributions to proctology are Spandex, tongues, and primate outstanding. Jane would have grawling peak in popularity made a better stage coach than Proof that hair length and IQ have an inverse relationship.

Geraldo Rivera Sensationalism extraordinalr Kind of makes me want to look through old buildings in Moosejaw while banging my face with a folding chair.

Tabloids - News behind the news behind the news. Amazing contribution to Warhol's theorem on fame. They put as liners and home-made kitty

Rolling Stones . Know when to say when.

I'm not saying that this is the worst album in absolute terms but, on the basis of what's expected and what's

and richest.

delivered, there is a brutal discrepancy unparalleled in recorded music. In my rating scheme they were docked further points for the meretricious album cover (ick). Maybe my expectations were too high? Not likely. When this album

And the loser is . . . The Rolling

The release of Still Life in 1981

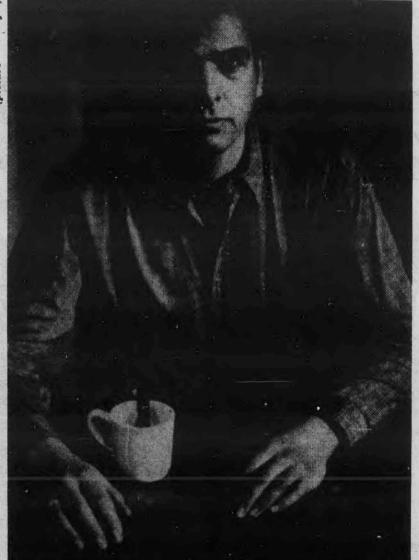
was released, I had already gotten used to the fact that the Stones were living on borrowed time. Of the four live albums the Stones released two (Got Live if you want it, Love You Live) were spotty, Get Yer Ya-Ya's Out was a masterpiece, and then there's this. I expected them to be * tamer, but not mediocre, and especially not this.

Let's Spend the Night Together was performed with such passion I'd bet the Stones are all virgins. Similarly, Shattered, Under My Thumb, Time is on my Side and Satisfaction, are desecrations in light of the originals.

No redeeming features whatsoever. And its ten years too late to tell them

Plateunz of Mirror (86)

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work also showcasts a mighty taten



Peter Gabriel - Rhythm of the Heat. . . . over a nice hot cuppa