

Memorabilia—Live Peace in Toronto

For those who are new to this institution, or those who have simply not read me before, I occasionally review what I consider to be classic, if somewhat obscure, pop albums in hopes of sparking an interest in the wealth of music that today's listener largely ignores.

In light of John Lennon's forthcoming album, it is perhaps fitting to look at one of his earlier ventures. Released in 1969, **Live Peace** represents a herald to the Beatles' demise as a recording group. Although the ill fated **Let It Be** project was still to come, **Live Peace** proves once and for all that John Lennon, in many ways the heart and soul of the Beatles, had outgrown the confines of the Fab Four.

In fact, the recording of this album came about quite by accident. The story has it that some musical promoters were organizing a rock and roll revival in Toronto and asked John and Yoko to come as special guests. Lennon replied that he would be more than happy to go, provided that he could perform with his group. The hitch was, though, that Lennon **didn't have a group!** At the last minute, he began his stellar roundup which included Eric Clapton on

guitar, Klaus Voorman (who befriended the Beatles in Hamburg in 1961 and later played with Manfred Mann) on bass, Alan White (of Yes) on drums, and Yoko Ono on vocals. Lennon nearly backed out at the last minute, but was finally convinced to make the plunge.

Before going on stage, Lennon was violently sick with nerves. He had not appeared in concert in 3 years, and never without his fellow Beatles. He opens the concert with what sounds like a warning: "We're only going to do numbers that we know, you know, 'cause we've never played together before."

The warning proves unfounded, though, as the group breaks into a rousing version of Carl Perkins' "Blue Suede Shoes". Backed by the inimitable Clapton, Lennon really cooks. He proves that in spite of all the psychedelic trappings and eastern junketings, he remained the Liverpudlian rocker of the late 1950's. As he put it himself: "It's my kind of music, man. For my money, you just can't improve on 'Whole Lotta Shakin'' and that sort of thing."

Lennon proceeds to take the listener on a journey through his musical develop-

ment. The first three cuts are all old rock and roll numbers. "Blue Suede Shoes" is followed by "Money" and "Dizzy Miss Lizzy" (both, incidentally, recorded by the Beatles).

The fourth cut, from 1968's **White Album**, is "Yer Blues". Written as a parody of the late 1960's British blues revival, it nonetheless gives insight into Lennon's psychological condition of the time. He reveals just how fed up he is with the Beatles and the music business in general: "Feel so suicidal / Even hate my rock and roll," and just how important Yoko is to him: "If I ain't dead already / Ooh girl, you know the reason why". One can really sense the emotion in Lennon's voice as he belts out this number.

Next is Lennon's premiere of the as yet unheard "Cold Turkey". He introduces it with a hesitant "we've never done this number before, so best of luck". The song is an incred-

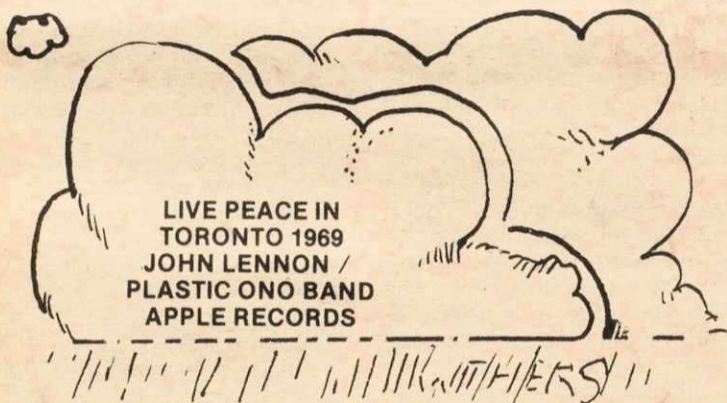
ibly stark account of the agonies of withdrawal: "My feet are so heavy / So is my head / I wish I was a baby / I wish I was dead". It is given weight by Lennon's riveting vocal and Clapton's driving chords. When Lennon returned his MBE, it was not only in protest of the British involvement in the Biafran crisis, but also against "Cold Turkey" slipping in the charts.

The final cut on side 1 encapsulates the whole album. As Lennon says: "This is what we came for really, give peace a chance!" John and Yoko were still on their peace campaign and believed, if somewhat naively, that encouraging people to grow their hair and stay in bed would help foster world peace. Again John warns the audience: "I've forgotten all those bits in between, but I know the chorus", but it is the chorus that carries the message—"All we are saying is

give peace a chance".

Side 2 is Yoko's side. It is comprised of two extended cuts: "Don't Worry Kyoko (mummy's only looking for her hand in the snow)", and "John, John (let's hope for peace)". For the most part, Yoko just wails in accompaniment to Lennon's and Clapton's guitars. Indeed, for a major portion of the last song, the band leaves the stage altogether, leaving their instruments to feed back, and Yoko to wail. All very avant garde.

However inconsequential side 2 may be, the first side more than compensates. Lennon's exuberance shines through the rottenness of the Apple, and his voice has never sounded as powerful. "Live Peace" is one of the best examples of audio verite I've ever heard. In short, it really moves. Without a doubt, **Live Peace in Toronto** is one of the best 'live' albums ever made.



Upcoming Movies

Pretty Baby is showing in the McInnes Room, Thursday, Oct. 2 at 7:30 p.m.

This week's Fall Film Series presentation is Truffaut's **400 Blows**, the first in his Antoine Doinel cycle. All these movies were filmed with actor Jean Pierre Leaud, this first one (from 1958) covering Antoine's adolescent years. The films covering later periods of Doinel (partly based on Truffaut himself) were made when Leaud had reached the appropriate age.

The Hyland, The Oxford, and the Casino are holding over **My Bodyguard**, **Smokey and the Bandit II**, and **Cheech and Chong's Next Movie**, respectively.

Starting Friday, Oct. 3 are **Coast to Coast**, Paramount 1; **Oh God, Book II**, Paramount 2; **He Knows You're Alone** at Penhorn 1 and Downview 1 (and you probably will be if you go to see it); and 'No

Nukes at Downview 3. Scotia Square is holding over **Middle Age Crazy**, as is Penhorn 2. **Divine Madness** is held over at the Cove, **The Big Brawl** at Penhorn 3, and **The Blue Lagoon** (recommended) at Downview 3.

The **Safe Energy Festival** is at **Wormwood** until the 5th.

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