

EXTRACKS

Money and Cigarettes

Eric Clapton

WEA

ROMAN PAWLYSZYN

In the mid-1960's -- just after Eric Clapton recorded the seminal *Blues Breakers* lp with John Mayall--a legion of devout fans embraced the slogan "Clapton is God", scrawled it on walls everywhere, and made Clapton the first rock guitar superhero. And for a while, he almost lived up to it all.

But since then, the decades have seen Clapton convert from a virtuoso guitar deity to a wimpy mush-mouth who shuts up and plays his guitar about twice an album. On *Money and Cigarettes*, Clapton continues in holding pattern.

With some qualifications. For one, Clapton has the redoubtable Ry Cooder as second guitarist this time around. For another, he's got the crack rhythm section of Donald 'Duck' Dunn and Roger Hawkins--they don't come any tighter than this. And the recording has an appealing raw ambience to it.

But somewhere about halfway through side 2, *Money and Cigarettes* just falls asleep, and I think it's because of the unevenness of the material. Of course, in the past eight years, Clapton's practically based a career on uneven material, so that's no news. Here, there's more blues-rock raunch than usual, some near rockabilly, and some catchy pop tunes. And if there's nothing as wretchedly banal as "Lay Down Sally", neither is there much that's striking, or that hasn't been heard before. "Ain't Going Down", for instance, is a shameless plagiarism of "All Along the Watchtower."

When Clapton puts his guitar where his mouth is, the results come and go. Cooder and E.C. play some steamy slide guitar duets, straight from the swamp, that could browbeat the best of them. On the other hand, Clapton's solos on the bluesy "Crosscut Saw" sound like a Clapton imitator on a tape loop--he limps through the same old licks, and he plays them sluggishly, giving new meaning to the sobriquet "Slowhand".

On the cover of *Money and Cigarettes*, Clapton is standing beside an electric guitar that looks like it's melting. Sadly, it's an image that serves as an appropriate metaphor.

New View

York University Jazz Sextet

York University Records

ROMAN PAWLYSZYN

If York graduate Aaron Davis' recent *Nouvelle Afrique* can be accused of slickness, here's a related item whose makers never heard of the word. *New View* is saddled with what must be the most repellent cover since *Bo Diddley's Beach Party*, and features a piano that sounds like it was recorded with a tie-clip mike. Nevertheless, the music transcends the shortcomings.

New View contains nine original tunes played by six former York music students (several of whom are now part-time York instructors). Although released only recently, the album was recorded over two year's ago, in Toronto bassist/pianist Don Thompson's home studio.

Actually, except for the piano, the sound is quite good, and the performances are too. Standing out are saxophonist Chris Chahley, with his fluid rhythmic conception, and Roland Bourgeois, with his effortless, exciting cornet and flugelhorn work. And as a bonus, Anne Lindsay sings a few notes on one cut (don't clean your ears though, or you'll miss her).

But best of all are the compositions: bassist Al Henderson's tunes are vaguely reminiscent of mid-'60s Herbie Hancock, Chahley offers up-tempo bebop, pianist Mark Eisenman contributes an attractive riff blues, and guitarist Ben Heywood gives us some beautiful, brooding ballads.

Coming from a university band, *New View* is not very adventurous--there isn't a thing here that would have sounded out of place in 1965--but it's enjoyable anyway. It's available in the York bookstore.

Sharing the joy of movement

PAULETTE PEIROL

"Dance, as life itself, is not linear," claims Allan Risdill of Toronto Independent Dance Enterprise. Risdill compares T.I.D.E. to a group of improvisational jazz musicians using their bodies as instruments. T.I.D.E. will be performing at Toronto Dance Theatre next week, Wednesday through Saturday. All four dancers are choreographers. Their unique training backgrounds are an integral force behind their individual styles.

The Bittersuite employs director Allan Risdill's experience with puppetry, comparing puppets, manipulators of puppets, and people themselves. It uses the typical "girl meets boy" theme to show Risdill's concern with how relationships form and why they fall apart. The clown-like element in the work expresses for Risdill "the joy and the sorrow" of a bittersweet breakup.

Denise Fujiwara stresses that dance is primarily a form of communication, though there is no set interpretation that the audience should "figure out". Unlike classical dance, modern is not narrative, and relies on the audience's imagination. *Set in Motion* begins "Once upon a time..." then continues its story in motion. Director Fujiwara allows the dance to take over from where the words end. Dance, however, is not merely a substitute for words. Fujiwara remarks, "if we could say it



Photo by: Michael Foster

Paula Ravitz launches fellow T.I.D.E. dancer Denise Fujiwara.

better in words, then we would". T.I.D.E. aims not to be obscure but

to "show people the intrinsic joy of movement, and to share it."

Gang of four

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Andrew: Most groups are primarily concerned with the traditional kind of promotion of the individual as a personality or a star. That has never been our concern. We have been more interested in ideas. When we have space on an album cover instead of sticking our picture on it we have been more interested in doing something different with it. As personalities, we are probably more interesting than your average pop star but it's not been our prime concern to promote that image.

Excal: As a group, who are your influences?

Andrew: There is a wide variety but there is none which you can really point at to say "that's where it came from." When we first started out it was the band's first premise to make exciting, economical songs with a

very strong rhythmic basis. We have been very impressed by seeing Dr. Feelgood live. They are the best thing I have seen live, partly because they have that theatrical feel to them. There was great tension and excitement on the stage. That was an early influence.

We all listen to different things. Jan King and I both particularly liked The Band, the Velvet Underground and the Motown sound.

Excal: Do you have any bands that you consider your contemporaries?

Andrew: Well, there are bands doing similar things in music. The Talking Heads and, to a certain extent, Simple Minds but I think the basis of our band cannot be found anywhere else.

Excal: What do you think of the music scene in Britain, right now?

Andrew: It's a bit dull. The charts are full of Duran Duran. I can't see

much to it. ABC are good mainly because of the production. I found it exciting.

Excal: Do you have any heroes?

Andrew: Not really. I can't respect anyone who has achieved difficult things and had to work hard to get there. I don't really have anyone who is a hero.

Excal: There is an obvious anger and despair in your music. What sort of message are you trying to give your audience?

Andrew: I think what we are talking about is exploring the way people think and where their ideas come from; what people's ideas lead to; how various actions have various consequences. The microcosm of people's personal relationships and how they tend to expand into longer governmental action. That is the message or point to "I Love a Man in Uniform".

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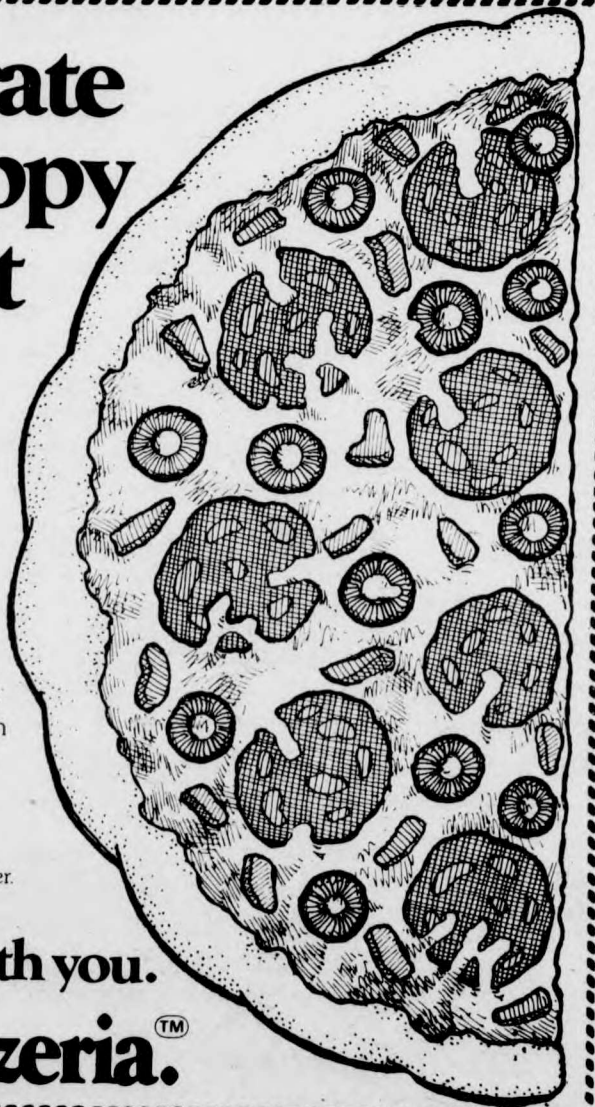
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