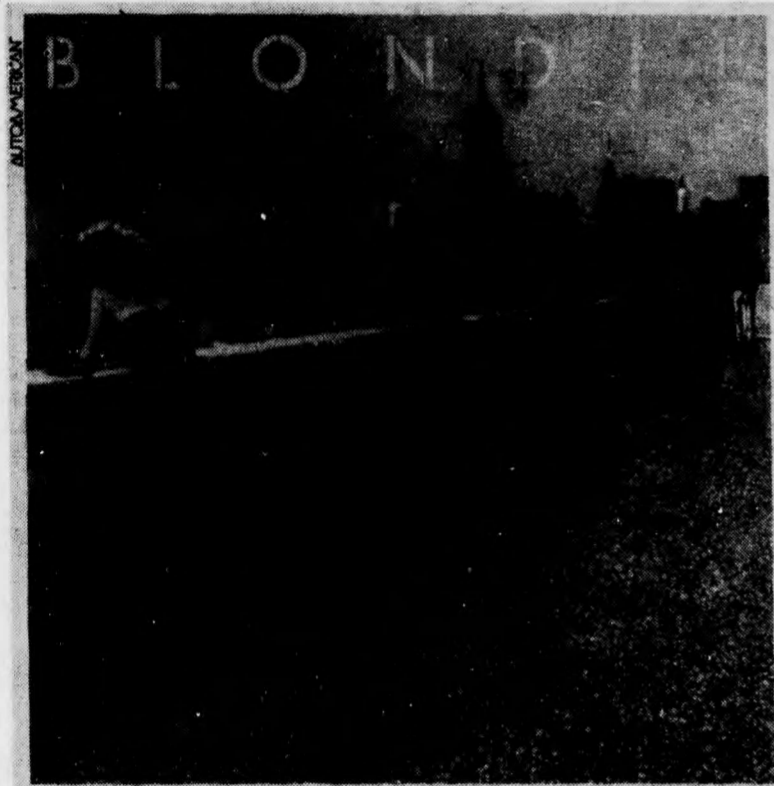


Blondie LP compels



By DARYL BARTON
Brunswickan Staff

Often a careful consideration of purpose is required to avoid needless error of perception in evaluating earnestness. Such is the case with Blondie's fifth album, which is as controversial musically as Don Rickles' jokes on racial humiliation are morally; once either is taken as being sincere, the whole intention becomes lost in hasty critical analysis.

Taken at face value, Blondie's attempt at intellectual seduction is pure crap. The first cut soothes with its repetition until Deborah Harry's voice, sounding as if it's been programmed to dictate some cosmic message to the world, breaks in with an uninterpretable speech. Trying to decipher what she is talking about is ludicrous; a song like "Europa" is meant to add to the mysterious complexity of her personality, an intricate web that egotistic males traditionally yearn for.

This inane uttering does not

Black to stay at TNB

Tom Crowther, Chairman of the Board of Governors of Theatre New Brunswick, announced in Fredericton today that Malcolm Black, Managing Director of Theatre New Brunswick has signed a one-year extension of his current contract. He will continue to direct the artistic endeavors of TNB until June 30, 1982.

In making this announcement, the Board of Governors of Theatre New

Brunswick is greatly encouraged to have one of North America's outstanding directors of live theatre with TNB for another year. Mr. Crowther stated, "We hope this is the first of many extensions to Malcolm's contract. Under his direction, TNB has enjoyed great success, as exemplified by the public response to A Christmas Carol, which was complete sell-out for every performance."

make the entire album an offensive farce because Harry makes no attempt to pretend it is of intrinsic worth. Her apparent stoicism has always been an occasional trademark ("Heart of Glass") and here, purposely set apart from the dogmatic vocals she uses through most of the album, this especially pays off. Scarcely ever flamboyant, Blondie's image all along has been one of mystery. Debbie Harry continues to be a figure of alienation, not only from group members as seen on the covers of *Autoamerican* and *Parallel Lines* but also because of her voice, prompting one to believe that we really shouldn't be quite so concerned with what she says as with how she says it. After all, it is the phrasing in songs like "Go Through It", "Do The Dark", and "Live It Up" that reveals Harry's greatest charm - the sexiness of her "sweet nothings."

What *Autoamerican* does is dramatize the carefree lifestyle that foreigners

often see as the epitome of American people. This album takes the values of the American culture and shows them off as highly romantic status symbols, playing the individualistic need for self-assertion and self importance. With *Autoamerican* Blondie not only exposes the American culture, they also display themselves as a band which fits comfortably into that society. "Rapture" is driven by a baseline characteristic of many black American rock bands (e.g. Chic). It employs a 'man from mars' to reflect the American night life to the ecstatic point of pleasure suggested by its title. An easy-going confidence is demonstrated in "The Tide Is High" when Harry declares, "Every girl wants you to be her man/But I'll wait my dear 'til it's my turn." and then laughs hysterically as the song fades, showing her total lack of concern. She continually identifies herself with symbols of high standing, as in the joyous pronouncements of self-esteem voice in "T-Bird."

FEBRUARY 6, 1981

THE BRUNSWICKAN- 15

Regional sensitivity in "Therese's Creed"

By PETER BENN
Brunswickan Staff

Wet weather Monday seemed appropriate to Rising Tide Theatre's "Therese's Creed" but didn't discourage an appreciative audience of some seventy-five strong who abandoned their lunch hours to fill Marshall d'Avray Auditorium.

The one-woman play starred Donna Butt as a spirited outport widow doing her laundry and reminiscing about sexuality and childbearing, sin and the Church, forward boys at Saturday night dances and fishermen husbands lost at sea.

Michael Cook wrote the fifty-minute play which was set in Therese's kitchen a homey, authentic environ-

ment, which focussed on a decrepit wringer washer, a chaotic kitchen table and a telephone.

For the first three-quarters of the play Therese did her wash, talking about hardship and joy, childbirth and morality in her isolated community. The play climaxed with the revelation of a multiple death at sea. The final quarter-hour denouement was effectively signalled by the rolling away of the washer.

Therese cleaned up her messy table as her narrative built to an affirmation of strength and courage in the face of an imperfect world. Fittingly, she closed the play by hanging out her wash in spite of the rain.

Newfoundland dialect is

central to the appeal of "Therese's Creed" as are images of wetness and poverty, and slow and continual contrasts between tragedy and mirth, like a revolving wheel coiling in an anchor rope.

Monday's audience found the eddies of Therese's narrative occasionally lacking clear progression and one earthier moment a bit gratuitous, but regained faith in her drama before the climax.

Overall, Butt's portrayal complimented nicely the effective regionalism of Rising Tide's production and it is a safe bet that future Newfoundland culture will provoke more positive response in the Fredericton area, no matter what the weather.

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An easy-going confidence is demonstrated in "The Tide Is High" when Harry declares, "Every girl wants you to be her man/But I'll wait my dear 'til it's my turn." and then laughs hysterically as the song fades, showing her total lack of concern. She continually identifies herself with symbols of high standing, as in the joyous pronouncements of self-esteem voice in "T-Bird."

The implement of string and horn sections makes *Autoamerican* more of a "studio album" than any of Blondie's previous exploits. Songs like "60 Through It" take full advantage of these orchestral features. The horns humorously taunt the subject in his haste to "break through that roadblock" to please his girl. Yet the last notes are triumphant when, realizing that his efforts are not really appreciated he decides that passive charm is


preferable to commitment, or as Deborah Harry puts it, "I love you honey/gimme a beer."

If you're looking for serious overtones in *Autoamerican* you're looking in the wrong place. The abundantly capable band members have combined with Mike Chapman to produce a very light-hearted, romantic record. Lyrically, the role-playing of self-actualizing Americans is humored. Nevertheless, this concept is not explored satirically; actually, these guys love the American way and Debbie Harry is a natural, even at her coyest.

Former Blondie fans may find the shift in style, rather difficult to identify with, especially since two recent

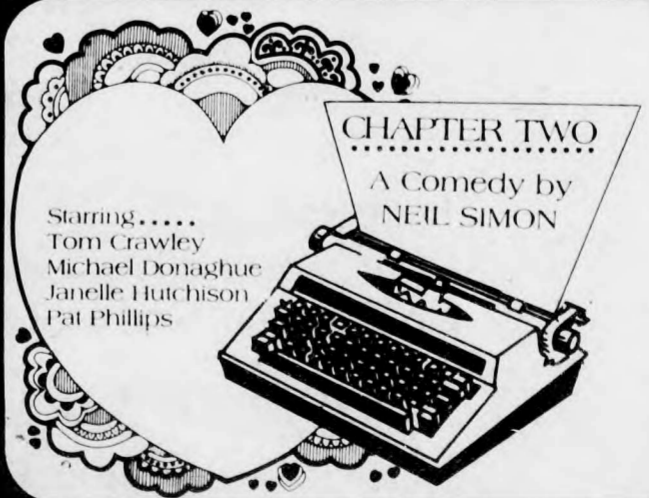
45s were No. 1 smashes, both of the disco-related genre. This musical departure is most evident as the album ends, mystically captivating its listeners as Harry's chant of the song's title, "Follow Me," lowers into a soft, seductive whisper.

Personally I found Harry much more desirable as the fluttering sexual commodity we got in "Call Me" than with her present demeanor that compels us to have to comprehend her intellectual assertiveness as a double-entendre. Still, as long as we can perceive its content as being as laid back as the band itself, *Autoamerican* can be one of the more seemingly satisfying albums of the year.



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