

ROUNDAABOUT



by Nate LaRoi

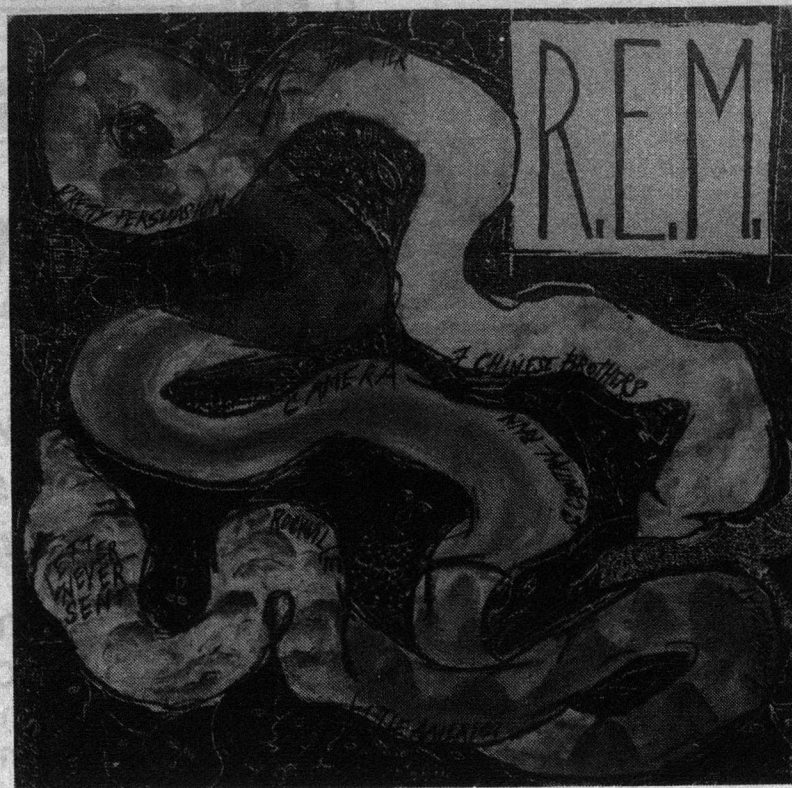
Well, no, it sure wasn't the summer of love: 1967 was long gone and pop music had fractured in a thousand different directions with little or no hope of achieving reconciliation. While England was becoming a point of intersection for global concerns, America had retreated into the glories of its own past. And while the testing of cruise missiles in Northern Alberta was proceeding on schedule, the youth of London were busy protesting the presence of American missiles in Western Europe.

No one captured the spirit of America as well as Bruce Springsteen who managed to make the past meaningful in the context of the present. Was America dancing in the dark? Could America keep dreaming about Pink Cadillacs or was it time to start thinking about Honda Civics? *Born in the USA* (*****)

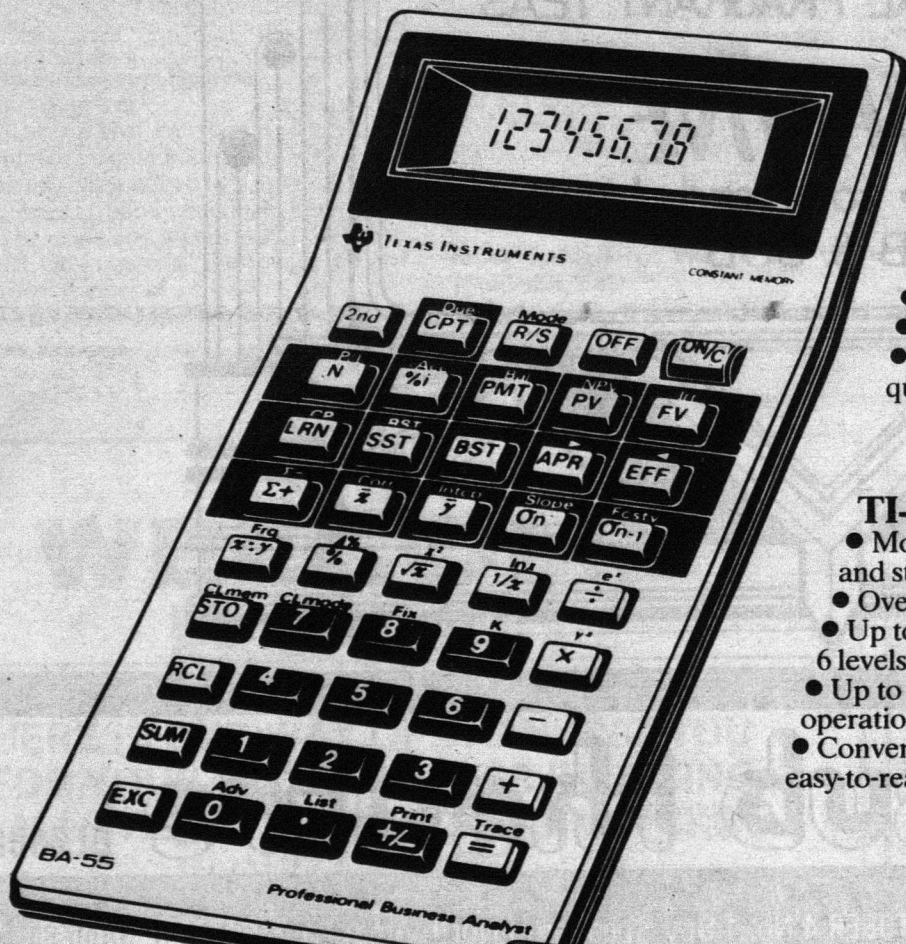
became the summer's biggest selling album, pleasing fans and critics to no end. The disco synthesizers of "Dancing in the Dark" were cause for concern, however, as snobby trendies noted that Bruce had committed the unpardonable sin of becoming popular. But clearly the main man was maturing, daring to admit that he first entered rock 'n' roll to "get girls and get filthy rich" (and you thought he was trying to play catcher in the rye!). On the cover of *People* magazine he looked like the Lou Reed of *Legendary Hearts*. One man's hero is another man's heroin...

The Folk Fest aside, there was no greater celebration of tradition as the Compulsion triple-header Rank and File/K.D. Lange/Jerry Jerry. Rank and File's "new country" cut across all the normally accepted "critical categories", bringing together fans that normally wouldn't be caught dead in the same room. *Long Gone Dead* (***), their second album, came closer to the free wheeling spirit of their live show but otherwise fell well short of *Sundown* (****), their spectacular debut album. Then there was Blood on the Saddle, who offered a more literal version of "cow punk". The single "Blood on the Saddle" sounded like a Rank and File album played at 45 RPM.

As the Byrds represented America's



Calculated Genius



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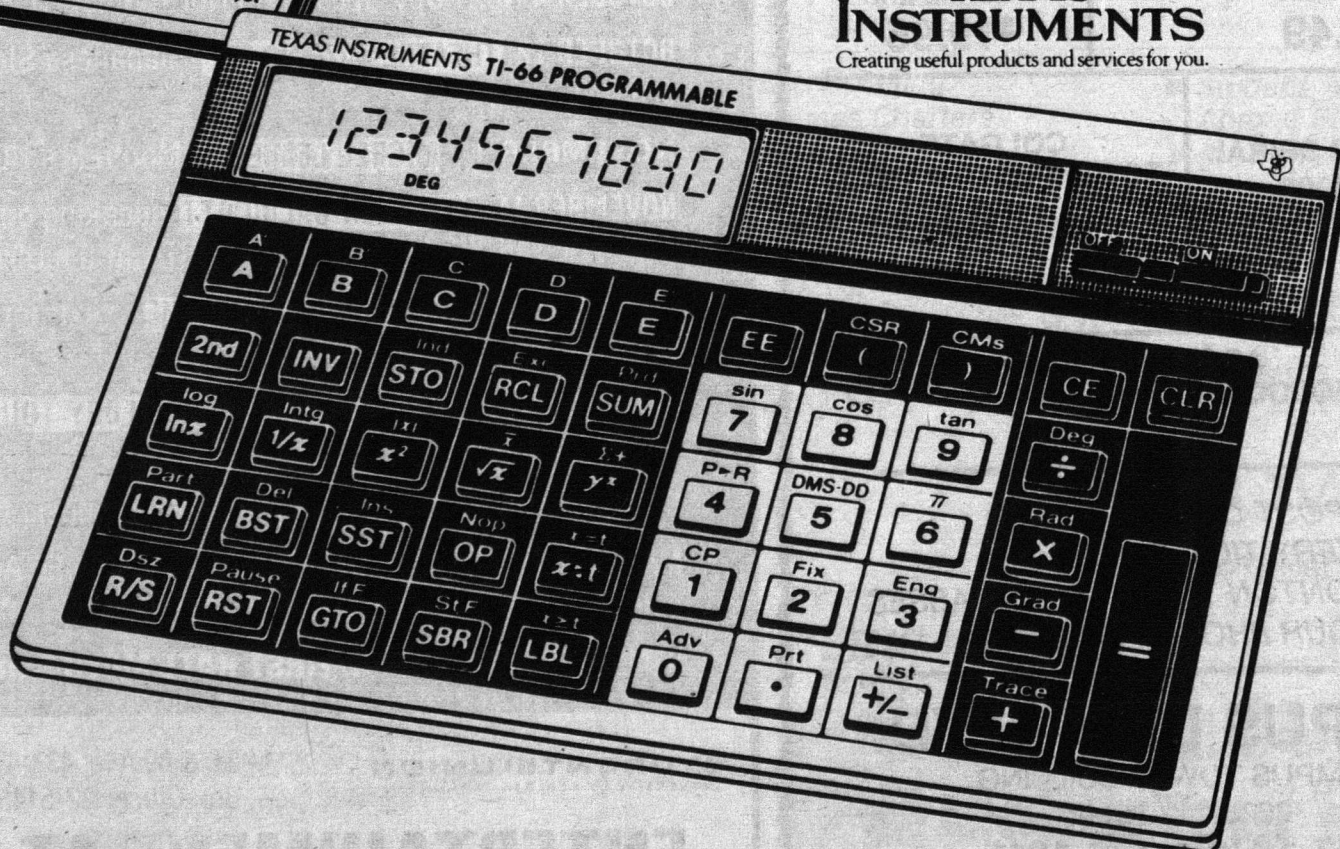
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