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Led Zepp do it again:

"always bad, now pretentious"

LED ZEPPELIN +\$%& (Atlantic SD 7208)

It seems that LZ is not only as bad as they've ever been but also that they have seen fit to become pretentious. The album is supposedly a none entity on the market with no title only four symbols, each representing one member's musical meditation and inner self. Big

The LP opens with Black Dog which features Robert Plant's strained and unconvincing shouting. He seems to be a minor Rod Stewart but nowhere near as exciting especially in the higher registars. Also present are inane lyrics such as:

Silly woman gonna hold my hand, Tellin' lies makes me a heavy

Tellin' lies makes me a heavy man

There is also a Page break here (what else is new?) which doesn't break any new ground but only rehashes old LZ dirt. The percussion here is as sluggish as ever with John Bohnam really limiting the band. Page, who produced the album, saw fit to give Bohnam top billing by recording the drums way out front which was a definite error. The next song is called Rock And Roll and is as the name implies. This tune is so familiar, though, that it must be stolen. This is nothing new for LZ since they've stolen from such people as The Small Faces, Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Little Walter and Sonny Boy Williamson - to name a few.

The Battle of Evermore follows and has our boys attempting to sound like a Ukrainian folk song. It's not that I'm making fun of Ukrainians, it's just that LZ should remain within their own capabilities. The song features Sandy Denny, formerely of Fairport Convention and Fotheringay, on vocals. Any help she might have given, though, is all for naught since her voice is completely dissolved with a muddy mix.

The side ends with probably the most decent tune on the LP-Stairway to Heaven It demonstrates that Page is at his best when he goes acoustic. If only he'd quit attempting to be the heaviest quitarist under 5'6" and instead do more subtle ballads such as this LZ would be a much better band.

Side 2 opens with a little ditty called *Misty Mountain Hop*. It only illustrates that Page can be one of the worst writers in rockdom but also that he has no

excuse being a producer. The entire song has the air of being recorded in a trash can then strained through a sock. There are only three cords present which not only bores but irritates. Since Page prides himself on being a great blues guitarist we get Four Sticks next, sort of a pseudo-blues number, just to keep in touch. This is followed by Going to California which is quite nice simply for the fact that it's acoustic, shy ,poetic and a welcome relief to the two previous disasters. The album ends (finally) with a chord progression entitled When the Levee Breaks which contains the most uninspired drumming by Bohnam ever. The only reason I put up with this for seven minutes was the presence, every now and again, of a ring modulator.

All things considered, this a typical piece of wax by LZ fit to melt down and used as avante garde conversation pieces.

RANDY BURNS (EPS-2007)

About three or four years ago, Randy Burns entered the scene with this obscure, but very fine LP. He was backed by a band called the Shy Dog, probably one of the better bands around New York at the time. Randy Burns and the Shy Dog Band were into more or less a folk vein reminiscient of the Byrds and the Youngbloods. Because of their subsequent popularity they were discovered and signed by Mercury. The album released was simply titled Randy Burns and the Shy Dog Band and became a success through exposure in such publications as Rolling Stone and the New Haven Rock Press As a result ELP records has seen fit to release this, Randy Burns' earliest recording.

Randy Burns' style of song writing is quite consistent. Through the verses he employs a low-key subtle style while through the chorus he unleases a more powerful statement. This may vary but usually always sticks to the same pattern. This is not unlike Vivaldi who appeared here a few months ago with Bruce Cockburn.

Randy Burns is not only a pleasant piece of music but a day brightener as well. It may not be home of the heavies but who wants all that type anyway?

by Lawerence Wilkie

portraits, graduations,

application photos



SUB 9:30-5:00