

# WRACK 'N ROLL

By ALEX VARTY

Well, the year nineteen-hundred-and-seventy-three has finally come to the top of the hill [and dropped over the edge], so it's time for reappraisal before starting work on seventy-four. I started work on this article with an extremely pessimistic outlook, mainly because the past year has been bad for modern music in general. The blues are returning to the cult status that they had in the early sixties, which is probably not bad artistically, but is disappointing. Jazz, while finally reaching a degree of popular acceptability, hasn't produced a major work in some time. Folk music is having a resurgence, but whether it will produce a crop of Dylans or a gaggle of people who can play three chords and throw rhymes together is yet to be seen. Modern "serious" music, like jazz, hasn't produced a significant work for years. And rock seemed to be stagnating in the wake of a couple of very promising trends started in seventy-two. This apparent lack of direction and energy set me up for a list of ten good albums, to be followed by a morbid analysis of the causes of the rock 'n roll morass. However, after going through my records, I decided that seventy-three wasn't such a bad year after all, even if a bit disappointing. [Aren't they all!] Anyway, I had some thirty albums which I could classify as excellent rock, so I'll just list my ten favorites, in no particular order.

1] Little Feat, Dixie Chicken, Warner Brothers BS2686

Each of the three albums that this band has issued has been an undiscovered masterpiece. Their songs are mostly three or four minute narratives of Kerouacian energy and realism, set over music which can only be described as combining the best of rock, soul, blues and country. Guitarist-vocalist Lowell George's arrangements are innovative and tasteful, and reveal great care and attention to detail, especially on this record, which is more soul-based than the previous two. I really don't understand why this album isn't on every turntable, radio and jukebox in North America. Little Feat are the best mainstream rock band on this continent, and this album is my personal Number One for the past year.

2] Pink Floyd, Dark Side Of The Moon, Harvest SMAS11163

The idea of taking several songs, joining them with narration or electronic sounds and producing a suite is not exactly new, but it hadn't really been pulled off successfully until the release of this album. Pink Floyd, like most of their audience, seem to have turned from acidulous fantasies to hash-fueled reveries. Fortunately, this shift hasn't taken the edge from their music [c.f. the guitar solo on "Time"], but has balanced it with a near-perfect production job that makes even my thrown-together set of components sound like a new quad system.

3] Captain Beefheart and his Magic Band, Clear Spot, Reprise MS2115

Please, please, please don't think I'm crazy, but anytime that I hear any of Beefheart's work I'm knocked right over by the sheer genius of the man [and his band]. A lot of people don't understand the Captain, and some even freak out and run away when they hear him, but anyone who knows his Delta blues will realize that CB's music is a direct continuation of that style. On Clear Spot he mixes in some California rock and some funky New Orleans horns, and emerges with a very accessible sound; fast and bulbous, tight also; and listen to those guitarists burn!!

4] The Grateful Dead, Europe '72, Warner Brothers 3WX2668, and Wake Of The Flood, Grateful Dead GD01

I know I'm cheating by including two albums as one pick, but all of the Dead's albums can be considered as part of an overall whole. Some rock critics have accused the Dead of just making mood music; I'd

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## A modern dance Co. to perform

On Friday, Jan. 18, the UNB-STU Creative Arts Committee will present the Judy Jarvis Dance and Theatre Company at 8:15 p.m. This group consists of well-known Canadian dancer and choreographer Judy Jarvis, American dancer Larry McCullough, and Debbie McLachlan and Elaine Rudnicki, both of Ottawa.

Judy Jarvis graduated from the Mary Wigman School of Dance in West Berlin. She has also studied modern dance, ballet and mime in Cologne, Paris, London, and New York after having graduated in Arts from the University of Toronto. In 1970 she was Director of the Judy Jarvis Dance Company

which performed in Ontario theatres and throughout Ontario Schools. In 1972 she met Larry McCullough in New York City and soon they began experimenting and creating new works together.

Larry McCullough grew up in Chicago and studied dance, theatre and music at the Oberlin Conservatory of Music and as a special student in Arts Education at the University of Massachusetts. While studying dance professionally in New York City at the Robert Joffery School of Ballet and the Paul Sanasardo School of Modern Dance, he met Judy Jarvis. In 1973 he performed with

Miss Jarvis at Ottawa's National Arts Centre, in London, England, and in West Berlin.

Debbie McLachlan and Elaine Rudnicki have studied modern dance and ballet extensively in Ottawa. During the summer of '73 they studied in Miss Jarvis' Summer Dance Course, Ottawa, and are presently studying and performing with Miss Jarvis in Toronto.

Judy Jarvis and Co. will also be holding a Dance-Theatre Workshop in the Lady Beaverbrook Gymnasium on Saturday, Jan. 19, 10 a.m. to 12 noon and 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

## Ryan's

## Daughter reviewed

By JOHN TIMMINS

The last film at St. Thomas' cinema before the Christmas vacation was David Lean's interminable "Ryan's Daughter" an enormous, rapid quite awful movie in the best tradition of his equally bad, Oscar winning "Dr. Zhivago". Allen McKee described them both as "wooly mammoths trapped in the sludge of their own weight." Quite right, that.

Irish lass Rosy Ryan (Sarah Miles) is romantically inclined - constantly. Hoping that the awed respect she has for her school-teacher, Charles Shaughnessy, (Robert Mitchum) will suffice her, she persuades him to marry her. However, he doesn't turn out to be exactly what her dreams had prepared her for, romantically or sexually. So when Major Doryan, (Christopher Jones) a wounded British war hero limps into her life, it isn't long before they are gasping orgasmically in the long Irish grass. Stalwart silent Charles still remains stalwart and silent after he discovers why Rosy isn't so nervous and irritated of late, but the Irish villagers aren't about to be so patient when learning of an affair between Rosy and "an oppressor". Their hatred builds, bubbling over in small squabbles until finally it erupts, and the town as a whole strip her and shave her head, interrupted only by Father Collins (Trevor Howard). Doryan dies (before a sunset, of course) and Ryan's Daughter leaves for a new life with Charles.

Intermittently during this sticky Irish taffy of a movie, it rises to a certain level of competence: Christopher Jones' first few scenes

are effective and his entrance, like the magnificent storm scenes later are the film's best - and best photographed, by Freddie Young. Likewise, the last scene is underplayed and succeeds quietly without becoming too maudlin. But just about everywhere else, the film turns horribly soft. Far too sugary photography (Young also photographed "A Man For All Seasons" but his imagery there was more pointed, clearer, and less egocentric than his juicy, overripe work in "Ryan") burdens the story with heavy, Gothic feeling its simplicity can't sustain, and underlines the pretensions to greatness it can't achieve. Robert Boet's screenplay practically oozes triteness and sentimentality, such as his treatment of the reaction of the villagers to Rosy's affair (Mrs. McCardle, as played by Marie Kean, reminds one of Margaret Hamilton screeching on her broomstick in "The Wizard of Oz", back in 1939). The love plot is pure, adulterated melodrama, immeasurably crippled by David Lean's "epic director" bit, squashing an already simple plot and thus showing up all the more its treachery base. It's impossible to believe the same man who did such magnificent justice to Charles Dickens in the British film of "Great Expectations" could have thirty years later, turned out this vacuity - a cape full of hot air and smothered in chocolate fudge icing.

And the staggering thing is that he's been able to manage this feat while including one of the more explicit sex scenes in recent years - in Fredericton, anyway. Apparently Lean was stung by the

(correct) reception of "Doctor Zhivago" as, to put it mildly, over-sentimental (Zhivago and Lara cuddling in bed, blanketed to the teeth because it's conveniently winter). This time around with "Ryan's Daughter", he has reacted against those critics by shoving Sarah Miles breasts at us and having her whimper in sexual delight. But he has merely gone from the ridiculous to the more ridiculous; there is absolutely no interaction between the "lovers"... only fornication, and that's just as silly as the cutesy cuddling in "Zhivago".

Sarah Miles is too weak for the central character of this dinosaur of a movie. Her mannered style of acting - all jitters, trembles and gasps - can get bothersome after two and a half hours. Robert Mitchum (despite the improbable circumstances for one of Hollywood's oldest heavies) is exactly right for Charles Shaughnessy: strong, silent secretive. It isn't that he does anything much here, or that he hasn't done this thing many times before (and since); what he does do is just what's needed. Christopher Jones fares well as Major Doryan, suggesting much of the physical and mental pain of the shell shocked soldier, and both Trevor Howard and Leo McKern do well at supporting the others, creating believable characters simply. As the village idiot Michael, however, John Mills is just a joke. I'm still not sure if the role is supposed to be taken seriously; I know I don't take his performance seriously, which won him the Best Supporting Actor Oscar of 1971.

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