

Rock'n'roll with feeling - the Heartbeats

by Michael Brennan

The Heartbeats are one local rock'n'roll band who've never disappointed me and they certainly didn't last month at Zapatas. They're no wildly passionate rockers or heart-breaking country

wailers but they always have that unpolished edge to them; that sincerity of playing simply for the joy of it, which I have to admire.

That's just what they do; play great old (and some new) pop music they love with a real care and

understanding of the originals. By sticking to the guts of a song and giving it their heart and soul, the Heartbreakers always make it their own whether it's country, rock'n'roll or soul. They're true interpreters, not imitators.

The strength of The Heartbeats is in their musicianship. They're good - not merely technically but expressively and it's expression that makes music move. Mark MacMillan on lead guitar is their strongest force. He knows his instrument very well and plays it with restraint and a happiness and intensity that's wonderful to see. He'd make a great support guitarist for anyone, from George Jones to Joe Ely (and Minglewood, who he was with for three years and helped make some of his strongest music). MacMillan knows the real power behind the country-rock sound the Heartbeats have.

On lead vocals and guitar is Paul Smuts and, though he may not be as strong a musician as MacMillan, he loves the music every bit as much and it shows. His singing is restrained but rough, much like MacMillan's guitar playing. Smuts is no Jerry Lee Lewis but he's certainly got a piece of the Killer's soul. I like his occasional guitar solos a lot; simple and committed, they're Chuck Berry all over. Filling out the lineup is Gerald Theriault on drums, a fiery, snappy drummer, and bassist Charlie Phillips who is always competent and supportive.

MacMillan would call the Heartbeats country rock and, to define it in a category, it is, but only in the way the early Beatles

were country rock - rock with that wild country/rockabilly spark to it. The Heartbeats don't have that Beatles big beat (and just who ever did besides them), but their spirit is closest to Ringo's fabulous version of "Honey Don't". The majority of their material stems from this period - other Beatles' covers, some soul with Sam and Dave, Jerry Lee Lewis and Eddie Cochran rockabilly, and a few hard country songs. They have a few originals too - tight, older-styled rockers which move well - but don't stand up with the others. They're certainly not long though, and can be congratulated for that when I think of the mouse squeaks of originals I hear from other treasured local groups like - well, there's no need to go that far.

The Heartbeats play with a sense of what rock and roll is about - being able to wail freely from your heart and move your flesh any way you wish. And to add to that, what I liked best about the show I saw at Zapatas were the country numbers. Gerald Theriault did a great job singing "Louisiana Man". It was gutsy, raw, and impassioned as hell - straight from the mountains. The George Jones number they covered was as fabulous as the man himself. If Matt Minglewood had these guys with him I think he'd really make his mark then.

"the Fate of the Earth" -- message of hope in a nuclear age

by Ward McBurney

There is a new, important voice in our troubled times. It comes from Jonathan Schell's recent book **The Fate of the Earth**, the essence of which runs something like this: "We are indeed fated by our acquisition of the basic knowledge of physics to live for the rest of time with the knowledge of how to destroy ourselves. But we are not for that reason fated to destroy ourselves. We can choose to live."

What Schell successfully accomplishes is a passionately objective description of the nuclear arms situation. The awesome significance assumed by the book's title has certainly been done justice by the author, but in a form accessible (at last) to persons who are neither candidates for the presidency nor military chiefs of staff. **The Fate of the Earth** simply dedicates itself to initiating a broader, deeper awareness of our predicament in order to preserve the human race.

Big talk. It is hard, however, to speak indifferently about such a tremendous issue. And seeing as, understandably, most persons would prefer not to speak about nuclear arms at all, the book fulfills a crucial need. It clarifies; without 'peacenik' hype or nationalistic

lunacy. It is readable. And it's available in paperback.

Schell divides his work into three parts. "A Republic of Insects and Grass" deals primarily with the possibilities of destruction were a nuclear holocaust to occur. This gives the book a slow start, but as the author explains, "Such an account, which in its nature must be both technical and gruesome, cannot be other than hateful to dwell on, yet it may, be only by descending into this hell in imagination now that we can hope to escape descending into it in reality at some later time."



The middle section, entitled "The Second Death", mostly thinks the 'unthinkable' and examines how "the spectre of extinction hovers over our world and shapes our lives with its invisible but terrible pressure." Here especially, the book's vast scope combines with Schell's

sensitivity in dealing with the human side of a fully human problem.

Though the remarkable conclusion, "The Choice", is not a 'Save-the-world-insta-kit', it may lay the foundation for revolutionizing how we run the earth. However, this shouldn't be mistaken for some utopian dream-concept. Present day politics are "fully struck with the glaring absurdity that with one hand they build for a future that with the other hand they prepare to destroy". Schell thus urges that "the goals of the political revolution are defined by those of the nuclear revolution". The latter has already irrevocably occurred and altered humanity's condition. Therefore, the idea of political revolution is actually a moderate appeal for balance in a dangerously imbalanced world.

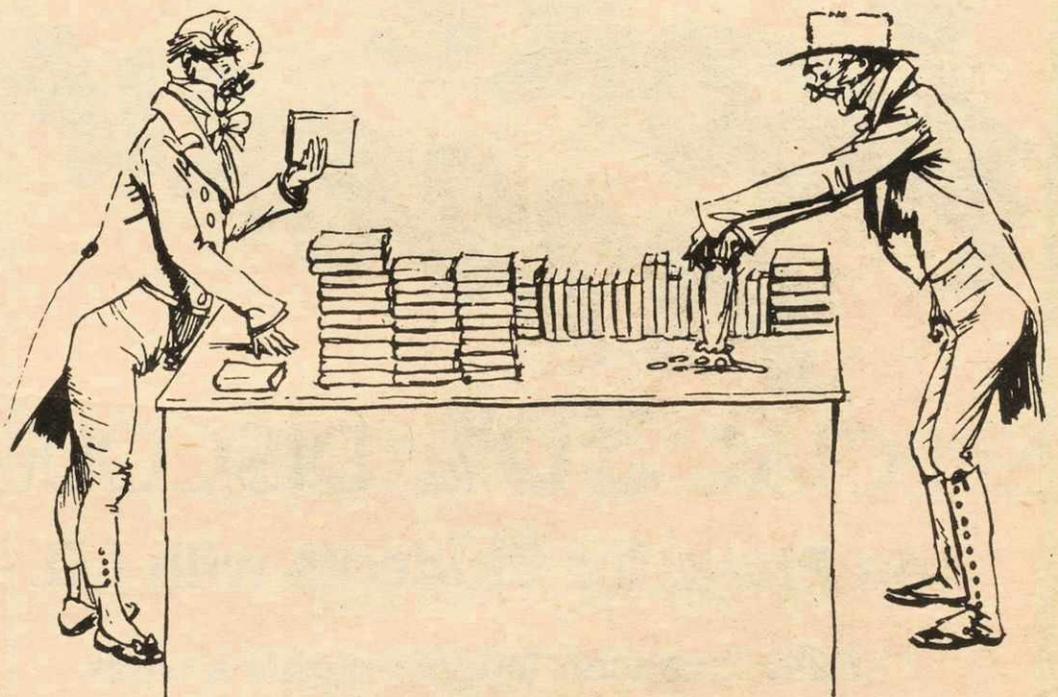
Of course, **The Fate of the Earth** contains far more than this. The only real argument on the book's behalf lies in its reading. Granted, this is no happy topic, but Jonathan Schell has nevertheless cast a constructive, life-affirming light into the heart of our nuclear darkness.

"Is there nothing we can do? I do not believe so...."

Last week's answers:

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|--|--|---------------------|-----------------|------|--|
| 1. Yul Brynner (Chris), Steve McQueen (Vin), James Coburn (Britt), Charles Bronson (Bernardo), Brad Hexter (Harry), Robert Vaughn (Lee), Horst Bucholz (Chico) | 2. Lindsay Wagner | 3. Mining disasters | 4. Mars Bonfire | 5. 4 | 6. Napoleon Solo (The Man from U.N.C.L.E.) |
| 7. The Prisoner | 8. Farrell and Goldstein, sung by Every Mother's Son | 9. Asta | 10. ZaSu Pitts | | |

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