

# Kensington Market enjoys American success

by Herbert Hilderley

Toronto's Kensington Market has recently released their first LP, Avenue Road. It has all the credentials of a pop masterpiece. It was produced and arranged by Felix Pappalardi who was instrumental in attaining for the Cream the success they now enjoy. It was recorded at Warner Brothers Seven Arts studio in New York. From the cover it looked as if the Kensington Market could well be Canada's first group to enjoy international success.

Well, they should have sold the cover and saved the recording. Nothing is more tragic for a group with the versatility and musical potential of the Kensington Market than having a mediocre first album, and Avenue Road though seldom boring, is never captivatingly interesting.

As musicians, the members of the Kensington Market are accomplished and competent though none is exceptional. Instrumentally Avenue Road is a well produced and blended musical effort. It is very much a team composition. Bassist Alex Darou is barely audible making most songs seem too light and superficial, but this, I believe, is attributable to an error by the recording engineer rather than lack of talent. This blended musical output however makes the songs often uninteresting and terribly ordinary. Nothing stands out to capture interest.

Singer Keith McKie has a pleasant, versatile voice. 'Coming Home Soon', the Market's current single, feature McKie's soul voice which is augmented by the falling effect given by the lead guitarist as he goes down his guitar neck on the "E" string. This is an elementary but effective trick. You will notice McKie's voice is very much softer and higher in the chorus than in the rest of the song. This is a Pappalardi device which Jack Burns of the Cream uses in his 'White Room'. 'Coming Home Soon' is ruined however by a very amateur guitar interlude which I am sure even Leonard Cohen could have improved upon.

Two other cuts on the album are good, 'Aunt Violets Knee' which is McKie's effort at poetic lyrics (and a feeble one) has an enjoyable melody. McKie's voice which is excellent on this song loses its potential effect due to the loud overbearing orchestration. The song would have been more meaningful if it had been accompanied throughout by the acoustic guitar which began it. 'I Would Be the One' has a great deal of depth gained from the trumpet, spanish guitar and sitar accompaniment. McKie's voice is very rich and deep, but the effort the group makes at harmony sounds more like constipation than music.

The remainder of the album is hardly worthy of mention. Two songs, 'Beatrice' and 'Phoebe' besides being lyrically intolerable are musically similar to a sound track from a Walt Disney cartoon show. Their 'Presenting Myself Lightly' bears striking similarities to the Kink's 'Sunny Days'.

One other thing to note is Luke Gibson's voice. Luke (formerly of Luke and the Apostles) sounds very much too like Ritchie Furay of the late Buffalo Springfield.

## - RECORDS -

# Wheels of fire is Cream's best

by Pat Kutney

The majority of 'in' reviewers have applauded the live side and panned the studio side of the Cream's new double album **Wheels of Fire**. The critics took offence at the Cream's successful attempt at something inventive and original.

Unfortunately the Cream's **Fresh Cream** and **Disraeli Gears** were poor indications of their talents. Admittedly the songs were good, but not for the Cream. Jack Bruce, lead vocalist, never has been a good blues singer. Consequently the Cream's first two albums, and to a small

extent their **Wheels of Fire**, were considerably dragged down by Bruce's vocals.

On **Wheels of Fire**, due to the very good choice of material, bassist Bruce's singing seems to have improved. The studio album is still in the blues-rock tree, although it has branched out in a different vein from their previous albums. The only poor numbers are 'Politician', written by Jack Bruce and Peter Brown, and Chester (the Howlin' Wolf) Burnett's 'Sitting on Top of the World'. The latter is pure blues and Bruce's vocal can't handle it.

The studio album contains the 'A' side of the Cream's latest offering to the 'top 40' charts 'Pressed Rat and Warthog'. In it drummer, and sometimes vocalist, Baker gives a recitation reminiscent of the Moody Blues in 'Day of Future Passed'. 'As You Said' features Bruce on cello. You just can't go wrong by employing a cello in a song. The Cream have a rather good version of 'Born Under a Bad Sign', made famous by Albert King, half-brother of Eric Clapton's idol B. B. King.

Still on the studio album—it was produced by one of the best recording engineers in the United States, Felix Pappalardi, who did such a magnificent job producing the Youngblood's last album and who attempted to resurrect 'Disraeli Gears' for the Cream. Pappalardi adds some of his own musical talents on such varied instruments as the viola, tonette, swiss hand bells and organ pedals.

What can be said for the live album? It's fantastic. Drummer Ginger Baker lays down a heavy solid beat with a phantasmagora of variations. Baker comes at you in waves of sound and threatens to drown you. His amazing technique proves why he is the

best drummer in pop music today.

Eric Clapton is God. He has played with the best—the Yardbirds and John Mayall. He works unbelievable sounds out of the strings. Clapton can only be outdone by B. B. King.

Jimi Hendrix says, "All good bass players play lead on bass" and Jack Bruce does an excellent job of it on **Wheels of Fire**. He proves his versatility by wailing away on the harp in the number 'Traintime'. I wouldn't go so far as to say that he is the best bass player in the world... we shall see what Bill Wyman has to offer in the upcoming Stones' album **A Beggar's Banquet**.



Clapton tunes his custom made guitar



For the recent Cream concert in T.O., Jack Bruce tunes up in Massey Hall washroom.

## Sarge says--- Continued from page 7

mencing forthwith the story is again quite similar to that of the Korean Conflict as the intensity of the war would increase by the addition of the CHINCOM reinforcements. The war would eventually stalemate again, but now the North Vietnamese would have two new things to consider. One, thousands of foreign CHINCOM troops on their soil, and two, the Americans now being on the offensive without factual restrictions. At this point I believe they would be willing to consider peace terms as their

North Korean brothers did fourteen years ago. The Americans would be willing to restore their newly conquered areas to the North in return for a cessation of hostilities, an end to infiltration and a restoration and observation of the original boundary line set up by the Geneva Convention. There would be a large build up of South Vietnamese forces coupled with a gradual withdrawal of US forces leaving a situation quite similar to that of present day Korea. But then what after this?

## - DISCOTHEQUES AND CONCERTS -

# Blood, Sweat, and Tears opens the Rock Pile

by Uncle Pat & Ffeej

Blood, Sweat and Tears opened to a generally unenthusiastic audience at the Rock Pile. The group preceded their performance with a press conference held in the Chelsea Room of Sutton Place Hotel. There was an abundance of free booze. This put me in good spirits. One of the high points of the press conference was the record company executive who got an apple pie with whipped cream in the face and on his suit. Could this have possibly been a promotion stunt for the Apple Pie Motherhood, an upcoming group at the Rock Pile?

"Were you ever frightened by a chick in your youth?" Thus, I started the question period. I had the pleasure of talking with David Clayton Thomas, singer; Lewis Soloff, trumpeter; and Jerry Hymen, trombone player. They all appear to be serious musicians who know what they're talking about.

Soloff discussed the group's musical status. Blood, Sweat and Tears is trying to combine jazz and rock. They are the first group to attempt this. But the group has the capability of being more jazzy than it is now. Said Soloff, "Rock has more appeal to the masses of people, our music reflects the way people feel." He is sure that if the group gets a hit single, they can make it really big. Soloff is jazz-oriented but has had some classical training. He played with such jazz artists as Maynard Ferguson, Joe Henderson, and just recently arranged and played in Gil Evans' latest album.

Although five members of the group have joined in the last few months, B.S. and T have already diversified into a number of different musical areas. They now perform material ranging from Billie Holiday to the jazz-and-rock 'God Bless the Child' to a classical piece by Eric Satie.

In jazz you can only go so far. For instance, John Coltrane could only do jazz. Rock in the last few months has proved to be the freest form. Thus, B. S. and T can perform anything they desire. Jerry Hymen said that rock has to take from other forms, whereas jazz cannot and consequently is up against a wall.

David Clayton Thomas starred with such notables as the Shays and the Bossmen. He explained that his failure to get along with them was caused by their insistence on doing "garbage material" while he wanted to do original stuff like 'Brainwashed'. Indeed, Thomas' songs as 'Walk that Walk' were a few years before their time.

On to the much-publicized Rock Pile, which has as a home the Masonic Temple. This edifice was formerly Club 888. The light show, though incomplete, was a disappointment; the sound system is merely adequate. The soda pop, though warm, was quite inexpensive for the quantity provided. Despite these shortcomings, the owners have come up with an impressive array of talent. In the list that follows note the high percentage of fantastic groups: Sept. 27 and 28, Silver Apples; Sept. 29, Country Joe and the Fish; Oct. 4, Fever Tree; Oct. 5, Fever

Tree and Procol Harum; Oct. 11 and 12, The Kensington Market and The Apple Pie Motherhood; Oct. 18 and 19, Ars Nova; Oct. 25 and 26, Earth Opera and Graffiti; Oct. 27, Jeff Beck Group; Nov. 15 and 16, Canned Heat.

Also coming up are 'Spirit' and 'Ten Years After.'

With reasonable admission price of \$2.50 you are getting more than your money's worth for the majority of the shows. As a further inducement to the sexually frustrated males of York, there was a large number of wide-eyed luscious nymphets on opening night. The owners must also be commended for the free Rock Pile posters provided and the great press conference.

Transfusion, the house band at the Rock Pile, is fantastic. Unfortunately they have a singer and the less heard from him the better. Transfusion needs someone like Jimmy Livingstone singing for them. The lead guitarist is quite good, possibly, the best in Canada. The bass player plays chords, slides and constantly pounds away on his instrument. The drummer is heavy like Keef Hartley, but has infinitely more technique. He does the fastest bass drum rolls I have ever heard in my life, even faster than the guy in the Soft Machine. The guitarist and drummer tended to overshadow the organist. Together they make up one of 150 the very best animal bands in existence. If you are in doubt about whether you like the 'headline' band enough to warrant a night at the Rock Pile, let Transfusion be the deciding factor in making you go.