



SPINNING DISCS

By RICK BASTON

This week I have decided to review four albums in this column. These albums are "Bloodshot" - J. Geils Band, "Grand Hotel" - Procol Harum, "Killing Me Softly" - Roberta Flack and "We're An American Band" - Grand Funk Railroad.

"Bloodshot" is J. Geils fourth album and quite frankly it isn't as good as the previous three albums. This isn't to say it isn't a good album, in fact it's one of the best I've heard in many a moon, but it doesn't have as high a level of quality as the others. Perhaps it is the problem of suddenly becoming a popular act and being stretched thin.

Side one opens up with a good driving number called "House Party". It's a good dance song with an excellent blend of guitar and voice, with the bass and drums mixed into a heavy textured sound reminiscent of the old mono recorded R & B bands. The second song "Make Up Your Mind" sounds similar to Sam Cooke's "Chain Gang" with the piano dominating the sound, except for some excellent guitar work by J. Geils. The third song "Back To Get Ya" is a basic R & B sound with the bass mixed too deep. Yet, there is still some excellent harp playing by Magic Dick in which he manages to sound like a sax. "Strutlin With My Baby" is old standard R & B riff with too much bass, but some great harmonica playing by Magic Dick and good guitar by Geils. "Don't Try To Hide It" finishes side one.

Side two opens up with "Southside Shuffle", a good dance number with lots of piano and good vocals by Peter Wolf. The second song is "Hold Your Loving". It begins with a hand clapping reminiscent of the Beaumarks and falls into a good number with steady bass and a good harp solo by Magic Dick. "Start All Over Again" is a slow R & B cut with excellent vocals and a sound similar to the heyday of the Liverpool sound. "Give It To Me" is the current single from the album, somewhat cleaned up from the album version. The thing that gets you about this song is the repetition of the line "give it to me" about nine million times during the song, and the fact that each of them plays a solo part really means very little.

Procol Harum "Grand Hotel". This P.H.'s seventh album. It makes extensive use of strings and the classics along with all the other nuances that one has come to associate with this group. I'm undecided about this album, as I like it, but then, I don't like it and then I like it again.

Side one opens with the title song "Grand Hotel" which includes all kinds of classic themes and heavy string orchestration. The lyrics suggest that P.H. decided to write a song for those poor rich folks. The strings on this one cut will give your tweeters a real workout if nothing else. "Toujours L'amour" is a brooding love song about a lost love affair. It features rolling bass and melts into typical P.H. guitar riffs. "A Rum Tale" features slow organ, somewhat like "Whiter Shade of Pale" and has Keith Reid mourning a nagging wife. "TV Caesar" is a paranoid type of song bemoaning the coming of Big Brother and his spy devices. The bass is hard to compensate for and the rest is typical P.H. in content.

Side two begins with "A Souvenir of London" which is about an unwanted pregnancy and its dilemma. There is the excellent use of acoustic guitar and banjo. "Bringing Home The Bacon" begins with a heavy drum riff and piano and seems like a fairly decent number until the strings cut in and ruin the song. "For Liquorice John" is a slow mournful song that is somewhat similar to "Whiter Shade of Pale". The song is about the indifference of man toward others. "Fires" is about the end of the flower child movement. It expresses deep disillusionment with the whole thing and a desire to put an end to it. "Robert's Box" ends the album. It has a calypso beat.

Roberta Flack "Killing Me Softly". This is her third album for Atlantic records and is a fine, soft album, perfect for relaxing to. The only complaint I really have is that too much bass is mixed into the songs.

Side one begins with the hit single "Killing Me Softly". I'm a little turned off by this song as it has literally been killed by A.M. radio by too much airplay; yet it is an excellent clear song, with good vocals by Roberta. "Jesse" is a song about loneliness. It is quiet, subtle, soulful in feeling with an orchestra in the background. The vocals are restrained throughout, with a good control of emotion. "No Tears" is perhaps the finest song on the album, with many spots where Roberta could be another Aretha Franklyn if she chose, but she doesn't, and I'm glad because it makes the number superior to what you'd expect. "I'm The Girl" closes side one. It is a soft sappy song, the kind that you would expect to see in a movie like "Casablanca" where Bogart and Bergman are sitting in some smoky bar and there's a beat up old piano with a third rate piano player singing this song.

Side two begins with "River" a good song with a sitar type guitar and a clear vocal on the part of Miss Flack. "Conversation Love" is a soft, light, flowing song with beautiful orchestration and a gentle pace to it. "When You Smile" features a dixieland arrangement. The banjo is predominant and gives the song a bouncy air. This side concludes with a ten minute version of Leonard Cohen's "Suzanne". This I feel is the weakest song on the album because it is stretched out much too long. It should have only been about four or maybe five minutes long instead of the ten. It is cluttered with far too long a string part and the dramatic ending is unnecessary.

Grand Funk — "We're An American Band". This is their eighth album, if anyone really cares. The best thing about the album is the LP itself, it's gold in colour and when you play it has the effect of a light show, if you watch long enough you can get off on it. The title cut is the best song on the album. After that it's all down hill back to the old style. They do, however, to their credit, ripoff a couple of Deep Purple riffs, but these are the only bright spots of the album. It's amazing but after the promise of "Phoenix", I thought these guys might actually be shaping up into a decent band. Guess they fooled all of us.

The J. Geils, Procol Harum and Roberta Flack albums are courtesy of RADIOLAND in the Fredericton Mall, and Grand Funk courtesy of the UNB BOOKSTORE.

LIVE AND LET DIE

By DANIELLE THIBEAULT

The latest (and not least) episode in the (not so) secret-agent life of our ever-changing British hero has finally found its way to the Capital City (would you believe it's still playing in Toronto?) bringing with it a long lineup of entertainment-hungry, fun-loving people (students, for the most part). Roger Moore's interpretation of dear 'old' agent 007 is the 3rd attempt at impersonating Ian Fleming's distinguished, if not highly unrealistic, James Bond (you will, of course, remember George Lazenby and his portrayal of James Bond no. 2, in "Our Majesty's Secret Service").

The latest 'bad guys' are Negroes (we've already gone through the Russians, the Chinese and Dr. No, Goldfinger and Pussy Galore's Pussy Cats) from some obscure little island in the Caribbean called San Monique. What Mister Big of Harlem, the head man of anything that's crooked and makes money, and the ambassador of San Monique want

with each other, is exactly what the British Secret Service would like to know. And so 007's boss, Mister 'M' is sent to rescue the resourceful lover from the passionate arms of his latest bed-warmer ("...just one more time, James...") and set him free in an adventure of voodoo curses, Tarot cards, death rituals, a virgin High Priestess, endless 'good guys being chased by bad guys' thrillers and the newest and most generous Welfare scheme ever devised.

Nobody but 007 could come out of such an adventure with clothes unruffled, every single hair in place and with only a couple of slashes on one arm to show for his heroics. Notice how he manages to escape consecutively: from a car 'accident', ridicule in a Harlem night-club, a death sentence (twice, at that), a poisonous snake in his bathroom, a voodoo death curse, a swamp swarming with hungry crocodiles and alligators (there is a difference, as you will find out) a tank full of blood-thirsty sharks, an irate sherrif with

murder in his eyes and a 'friend' with a cold handshake. And he still manages to find time to acquire a Negro 'wife', give Mrs. Bell a flying lesson and deflower a virgin twice in the same night. Now that's what you call COOL. I guess you have to be if you follow somebody (supposedly secretly) into a night-club only to find out you're the 'only 'white man' around for miles. You probably NEED the straight scotch you just ordered but make sure you drink it real 'cool-like'.

If you can stand the 'male-chauvinist-pig' attitude that reeks from this tale of super-stud exploits, you will probably spend an enjoyable evening as it comes across as the funniest and least gadgeted James Bond flick ever produced. Make sure to notice the intro as it contains some good artistic cine-effects and a well-balanced display of female forms.

Make no mistake about, it is as good as your friends have told you it is.

Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris

By JOHN LUNSDEN

Jacques Brel is an immensely popular French composer-singer, whose biting lyrics and haunting music has largely escaped English audiences up till now. His impressions have been freely translated into a fast-moving, biting musical called "Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris." Instead, as one suspects of most musicals, the dialogue being designed to fit a paltry set of songs, the music and choreography were fitted to Brel's extremely moving commentary.

The cast is four excellent singer actors ranging from a wisp of a girl, Lora Farrel, to the gutsy, bawdy characters of Bill Cole and Barry Van Elen. An excellent background orchestra is residing,

whose talents range from piano, celeste, guitar to bass. The blending and technical aspects of the arranging is excellent for a touring company. The success of this musical is in no small part due to its music director, Peter Yakimovitch.

One enters the theatre to the strains of an excellent overture, which was set, I imagine, to keep the audience's marvel at the technical proficiency of the orchestra from detracting from the lines, which are indeed, the play. The audience is treated to biting satire, to personal accounts of experiences most of us would rather forget. Indeed, in some of the sensitive moments of the play, one could hear a member's of the

audience uncomfortable squirming, as a particularly personal sequence struck home. Yet one was not left to discomfort for long, as raucous laughter or just plain rapture overtook the audience again.

What can one say? A brilliant marriage of thoughts and song, a fitting tribute to Jacques Brel, all of these could not do justice to the play, except an honest urging to anyone who has the chance of seeing it to do so. The tour is playing Sussex, Woodstock, Campbellton, Bathurst and Chatham this following week, a trip home, or even abroad would certainly be worth seeing one of the finer productions to hit New Brunswick this year.

This is a PLEA
for poetry
there's space, you see
much vacancy
also short story

*** THANKEE ***