

RECORDS

The Pope finds roots



VATICAN II
POPE JOHN PAUL II
AND THE
IMMACULATE
CONCEPTIONS

Records for the
 Catholic Apostolate

★★★★

BY PARKE AVENUE

The Pope has done it again. He's proven that he can still turn blood into wine after leaving his old band, Karrrrroll and the Cardinals. Never straying from tradition, he's called his second album Vatican II, and like the first visitation, the music moves with divine inspiration. But the Pope has matured since he was a mere cardinal - he shows that he can do more than master a plethora of languages; he can tame even the most diverse styles of music.

The Pope has been criticized for being too much of a traditionalist, but the opening cut on Vatican II reveals another side of the artist. In "The Black Madonna," he pays homage to the new break-dancing craze that's sweeping St. Peter's Square. He reconciles sombre, profound lyrics with a spirited beat provided by natural, not artificial rhythm instruments.

The Pope is never afraid to cover classic material. He approaches the task with reverence. He rediscovers his roots in his rendition of David Bowie's "Warszawa." This 70 minute cut features the Warsaw Philharmonic conducted by guest artist Lech Walesa and is recorded live at an abandoned shipyard. He also

includes an inspiring solo on "Amazing Grace", recited by Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

There are also indications that the Pope may be moving in sexy new directions. Already, the lyric of "The Huzulen Song from the East Carpathians" has caused the biggest division in the Church since Moses: "First deep gleaming of the eyes - as if the Heart leapt for joy - I remember such a - Flashing glance that passed without an echo."

But the Sistine Chapel of the album is "(I Can't Get No) Absolution", a sacred part of his repertoire. The Pope gives the song the holy waterworks, featuring an all-star band including The Vienna Boys' Choir, the Akron Ohio chapter of the Catholic Women's League, Debby Boone on vocals and Bob Dylan wailing on the guitar. The centre of this divine mass is, of course, the voice of Pope John Paul II himself. It's been called the breath of life, and has never been more pure than when he sings the English translation repentance mix of "(I Can't Get No) Absolution". The holy piousness of the track is impossible to transform onto purely secular paper, but a reading of the lyric is a blessing:

chorus

*I can't get no - absolution
 I can't get no absolution
 'cause I pray
 and I pray
 and I pray
 and I pray
 I can't get no-ooo... a no-no-no!!
 Hey, hey, hey!*

*When I'm saying mass in church
 and a priest comes to me
 afterwards
 and he's telling me more and more
 about some Protestant religion
 supposed to grab my imagination
 how white my soul could be
 but he's Satan spawned cause he
 doesn't use
 the same liturgy as me
 I can't get no
 Absolution!*

So go forth to your nearest office of the Pontifical Mission Society and Souvenir Centre and pray they haven't run out of this piece of heaven. God Bless You.

**A crocodile smile,
 Cat's eyes,
 Bee's knees,
 Dog's breath,
 Death isn't good looking.**

Graham Reeper

*Pope, pope, pope,
 Pope of Rome,
 Pope, pope,
 Pope of Rome,
 Pope, pope ...*

