

The best from The Joker

by Marcus Parmegiani

In a world where bands come and go faster than your average big ol' jet airliner, the Steve Miller Band's quarter century of existence qualifies its members as significant veterans. If you're into psychedelic-era rock and roll, their recent compilation *The Best of 1968-1973* presents a lesser known side of the Steve Miller Band that's well worth discovering.

With 19 songs, the CD is chock full of auditory delights from the band's first eight albums. Opening with the hit single "The Joker," the familiarity quickly fades as the compilation brings you the songs which

MUSIC

**The Steve Miller Band
The Best of 1968-1973
Capitol Records**

first earned the band its fame.

Tunes like "Going To Mexico," the seriously psychedelic "Song for Our Ancestors" and the bluesy "Little Girl" display the roots of Miller's present, more popular music.

Although the title is somewhat bland and unoriginal, the album does contain the band's best, which fortunately was compiled by Miller himself. The songs are easily placed in their era, providing a glimpse of the Steve Miller Band's broad range of

musical influences.

The booklet provided with the CD gives an extensive history of the band, naming the albums which have been released since 1967 — yet the specific albums each track came from are mysteriously missing. If the purpose of a greatest hits album is to provide a base from which to indulge in a band's music, details like these are essential.

Nonetheless, for third-generation psychedelic rock listeners and baby boomers alike, *The Best of 1968-1973* gives us the Steve Miller Band in its down-to-earth, unpretentious glory, a refreshing contrast to today's largely prefabricated pop music.

Siouxsie decides she loves Toronto

by Eric Alper

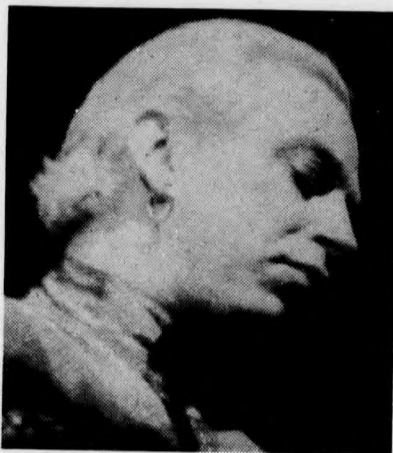
In 1976 in London, singer Susan Dallon and drummer Sid Vicious began touring as Siouxsie and the Banshees. They began as Sex Pistols fans; shortly after the band's formation, Vicious became a Pistol himself. Fuck you, he probably said, needle in hand.

In the end, the Banshees outlived their fandom and the Pistols, going on to spend a few years in the avant-punk forefront of British rock. Fuck you, Siouxsie might have said, swastika armband in hand.

Performing in 1992 at the Concert Hall, Siouxsie hasn't changed. Part glam (fetish clothing and fishnet with peek-a-boo plastic bra), she is still the role model for a thousand bored middle-class girls who want to rebel.

Supported by the Wonder Stuff, this looked to be one of the biggest "alternative" concerts of the year. Hopefully, it won't, because that'll mean a long 10 months ahead.

Coming on just before 11 o'clock, The Wonder Stuff heated the crowd with their quirky lyrics and guitar riffs intact. At one point, singer Miles Hunt used a megaphone, a la REM's Michael Stipe. As if he needed to be



How does a grown man get a name like Budgie? He joins Siouxsie and becomes a Banshee. • photo by Eric Alper

heard! The Stuff are always fun to see in concert — they are so attracted to North American audiences that we could probably piss on them and they'd laugh it off.

So now I'm down in the pit to take pictures for my *Excal* photographing debut. Someone offers me \$25 for the press pass I have on my jacket. The girl beside him offers me \$50. They both look like Siouxsie, which should do wonders for their love life. The haggling stops with one dirty look from security. That was the most en-

CONCERT

**Siouxsie and the Banshees
The Concert Hall
Thursday, February 25**

joyable part of the evening, which should tell you something.

It wasn't that it was a horrible show. It's just that...man, the band looked so old. Where was the young, vibrant, "you don't like it, there's the exit — fuck off" attitude from 1977 I hear so much of?

The first 15 minutes of being sandwiched between the stage and the audience gave me an overwhelming sense of fear — which I liked. Kids were being crushed and security were doing "waterfalls" with plastic bottles to keep them from dehydrating.

When it all settled down, the excitement turned into an uninterested response from band and audience. After the opening instrumental, I took a spot on the side, watching guitarist Budgie and original member Steve Severin pose heavy-metal like onstage while Siouxsie tried to wring any emotion out of the audience. However, the audience was left standing like pillars in the rock and roll sands of time. Cliche city, hunh?

I could write "the audience stared at the band the entire night," but that would give the mistaken impression they were mystified or enthralled. The fact is, they looked bored, like they were thinking "I paid \$25 for this?"

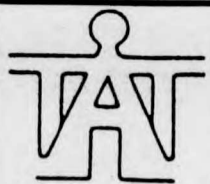
Neither danceable nor lyrically interesting, the Banshees walked through the self-indulgent, monotonous set like they hated Toronto or something. "Take The Money and Run" comes to mind, doesn't it?

"Peek-a-Boo" got people up and dancing, as cuts from *A Kiss In The Dreamhouse* and *Juju* didn't. Oh well, you can't win them all.

Yes, she did "Kiss Them For Me" and "Fear (Of The Unknown)," both off her latest album, *Superstition*, but they sounded remarkably like the originals. I think the taped drums and background vocals had something to do with it. The eerie "Israel" was the band's finest moment. Still, two encores and an hour-long set did not convey the brooding and fantastical world-views the bands' history would lead you to expect.

Siouxsie's tale on record is a remarkable evolution which serves as a reminder that punk was always more a question of daring than a set of conventions. However, on this night, song after song with one or two chirpy lines from her were too much to handle.

Yes, she spoke to us, and didn't slag us off either. We're obviously on her good side now. The problem is, she was more interesting when she told us all to fuck right off.



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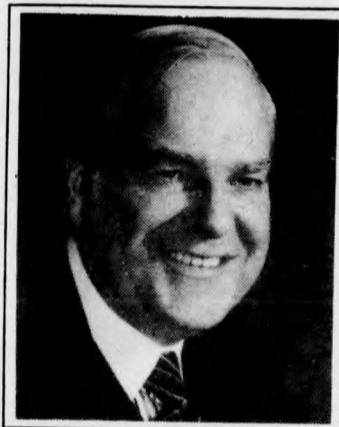
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Siouxsie Sioux struts her stuff on a stage not entirely unlike the one on which she recently performed in Toronto. The good news was she doesn't seem to hate the city any more. The bad news was it didn't help her performance.