

ARTS and CULTURE

DISCussions

(editor's note: The child of the seventies needs no introduction: his style is one that has been homogenized, parasited, and imitated from two preceding generations of a cultural phenomenon. The State of the Rock can not be termed "bland" by default, but because the product represents the minimal demands of its audience. There are possibly a few contrived or manufactured "uprisings," but generally no real rebellion. What follows is only a matter of logically tried formulas encouraging one-shot success stories - much like the State of the Rock in the late fifties and early sixties. As the seventies close upon us, the cultural voice has been absorbed into an apathetic mainstream. The State can be editorialized, the future left open-ended, and the multiple speculations left to the test of time.)

The rock music of the seventies lacks vision and few attempts are made to promote the growth of the form. Those artists who do try to make interesting music are unable to achieve popularity because of the stations. Most rock music is boring because it offers

FREE

Color Portraits for all students graduating in Mch and June will be taken on Tuesday, January 31, and Wednesday, February 1. There is no sitting fee for this photographic session.

Sign-up sheets are available by the round table, next to the records office, or in Room W-129, the yearbook office. There is an evening time slot available on January 31 for those who cannot attend the day sessions.

All graduating students should receive instructions for the sittings (clothing, make-up, etc.) from Davor Photo, Inc. in the mail. IF YOU DON'T RECEIVE SUCH A NOTICE STOP BY Room W-129 between 3-5 p.m. and a Capitollite 1978 staff member can supply you with the instructions.

Remember, if you want your yearbook photo taken, IT IS MOST IMPORTANT THAT YOU SIGN UP FOR AN APPOINTMENT AND KEEP IT.

An Editorial Comment

By Joe Taylor

nothing of interest to the listener. In its attempts to become universally acceptable it has sacrificed individuality. Top forty radio takes no chances - Hit singles are created by the use of formulas from the result of past hit singles. The result is repetitiveness, and for the rock "purist" this is disappointing. It is the introduction of new and challenging artists that makes music important, energetic, and vital.

In the sixties, rock music was constantly growing and changing. The Beatles were capable of improving their musical ability, thereby improving their recorded output. In 1967 the group made an album, *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*, that was more ambitious and serious than any other rock album of the period. Later they made *The White Album*, and their increased musical knowledge was obvious. The next year they made *Abbey Road*, which still may be the best rock album ever recorded. With each album they changed and became better musicians. It was definitely still the Beatles, but a new ever-improving Beatles. Each album was totally

different from the album that preceded it.

Rock bands today, take the opposite approach. If a band has a successful album, one year later they will release a different version of the same album. Recycling the cliches and using similar melodies. The band might as well be re-recording the previous successful album. Not a single album was released last year that was as good as *Abbey Road*, which was released almost ten years ago.

Last year a new movement in rock music called Punk rock made its first big push. A lot of Punk rock albums were released, and the Punk bands received much publicity. This "New Wave" is rock's version of primitivism. It is simple, three chord rock music. Angry, defiant young men comprise punk rock bands, whose ultimate purpose is the destruction of the safety that current rock music exudes.

Rock music of today surely lacks two things: commitment and purpose. This lack is in abundance in punk rock-unfortunately, so is the lack of talent. Punk rock is so simple and raw

that it is a musical assault. It is hoped that these bands will eventually learn how to play their instruments. Their enthusiasm is laudable; their music is not.

If rock music is to survive as creative music, it has to have several important elements. The most important of these is conviction. An album of relatively simplistic intentions, both musically and lyrically, can still be good if those involved care about what they are doing and transfer that care to the album. Conviction does not transcend limitation; that point is proved by "punk" rock. But it can introduce excitement into an otherwise mediocre record.

The second important element is the dedication by a band to learn as much as it can about music and use that knowledge to the benefit of its music. Very few current bands do this, but there are exceptions. *Steely Dan*, *Randy Newman*, *The Wallers*, *Graham Parker*, *Bruce Springsteen*, and *Earth Wind and Fire* are each dedicated to their growth as musicians and are using that growth to redefine their own music.

The final important element is the refusal by rock

bands to conform to trends. That the majority of rock bands don't do this is evident in the fact that most rock music is stagnant and boring. Rock bands must refuse to conform even to their own work. They should try to improve and progress, regardless of the popularity of a previous album.

Rock music is not dead, but if it continues to move in the direction that it has, it surely will die. *Fleetwood Mac*, *Boz Scaggs*, and *Peter Dinklage* each became phenomenally successful with albums that were their least ambitious efforts. *Fleetwood Mac's Bare Trees* and *Future Games*, which were released five years ago, are so much more exciting and vital to rock and roll than *Rumors* that it makes one wonder why the latter sold about eight million copies while the others sold about a quarter of a million.

There is nothing wrong with success, but why should a mediocre album be such a huge seller and a really good album be a flop?

Why does a good rock band reduce itself to making boring music in the interest of success? The difference between *Randy Newman* and *Fleetwood Mac* is that *Randy Newman* doesn't want to be a millionaire. The difference between *Fleetwood Mac* and *Steely Dan* is that the members of *Steely Dan* don't want to be millionaires. They would rather play good music. A true artist should exist to create, not create to exist.

Blue Grass News

By Bob Buckingham
Guest Columnist

The Carroll County Ramblers Appeared at Dante's upstairs last Thursday evening, minus fiddle. Joe Allison, former fiddler with the Ramblers, recently left the group leaving Chris Warner their banjo player with most of the lead work. Leroy Eyer, the mandolinist, is a man of few notes unless he is singing and then he's at his best.

A rather apathetic crowd requested well worn standards, but the Ramblers played with verve. Especially as the evening progressed and the hard core fans soaked in proper amounts of beer. Warner provided most of the highlights with powerful versions of classics like "Train 45" and "Orange Blossom Special." This Thursday, What

Stone Run from State College, will be appearing at Dante's. Their approach is more diversified and reflects a less adherent attitude to the classic precepts of the bluegrass form. In other words they are a lot looser.

The Bluegrass Cardinals will be at the Open Hearth on Friday night and on Saturday night will be up at the Halifax Hotel. These boys truly are the song birds of bluegrass.

The Rambler's fourth album, "Merchants Lunch Flying Fish 0055" finds them sounding fresher all the time. Good production lends a presence to this lp formerly lacking in earlier efforts. The Ramblers drive hard on the fiddle tunes, "Forked Deer", and "Polly Put the Kettle On"; and swing through "Merchants Lunch" and "Beefalo Special". Uncle

Dave McCon, the early (1920's) star of The Grand Ole Opry is represented with "Rabbit in a Pea Patch", as is the incomparable Fats Waller with "Sweet and Slow".

Pianist Me Craver turns in a fine solo performance on "Melanoly" "I've Got Plans" is for all you seniors graduating into the void of the jobless welfare state. The refrain goes, "When I grow up I'm gonna settle down, make my livin' from planting things in the ground"...(or) "take a course in business at the night school in town."

Funny or not it remains the reality before each humanities student for which the only viable alternative to worry is, this album and a 1/4 keg of your favorite life sustainer. Well, until then, get into some grass.

Crassified

THE EDITORS OF THE CAPITOL CAMUS READER WOULD LIKE TO APOLOGIZE FOR THE TYPOGRAPHICAL ERRORS. OUR TYPESETTING MACHINE IS HAYWIRE.

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