

# ARTS and CULTURE

## DISCUSSIONS

**Infinity-Journey** (Columbia Records)

By Greg Hall

Infinity is a highly-refined version of seventies Hard Rock. Sporting a minimum of pretension, the album is firmly rooted in four-chord riffing, dynamics that rely on a heavy-handed bass end, and the technical finesse of a rock vocalist's range and appeal. By avoiding a handful of common pitfalls, namely exploitation of any or all of the above items, or even making a wealth of volume to cover a lack of skill, Journey has made one of the more pleasing albums in this genre.

On their first three albums, Journey had fallen into the same bag as at least a hundred struggling rock bands. They were raw and ripe, with all the potential for a magical combination. Gregg Rolie's earthy organ powerfully anchored the original Santana band. Lead guitarist Neal Schon was Carlos Santana's young protege in the same band, trading licks with Carlos. Ansley Dunbar had always been a prime underdog among rock drummers, and Ross Valory provided a solid bass foundation.

Still, they lacked cohesive direction, and consistently fallen short on their records. For Infinity, lead vocalist Steve Perry was added to the band, as a much-needed frontman and artistic contributor. Perry's performance on the album should rank him among the best rock vocalists. Former vocalist Rollie was shifted into the background for harmonies and occasional leads.

The finishing touches on the restructured band were provided by ace-producer Roy Thomas Baker, a veteran among the hard rock bands with an extraordinary success record. It was Baker's task to shape and texture Journey's sound to perfect their stylings, and to efficiently unleash their powerful musical potential. Baker sidestepped conventions, providing the band with form, command, and razor-sharp intensity.

Infinity works so well because it combines lyrical and romantic rock forms while exploring the full potential of the band members. Not once does Baker allow it to slip into cliché or overstatement. All the basic rock elements gel in much the same way as they did for Led Zeppelin on their magical fourth album. Journey has fulfilled their promise at last, and Infinity is a statement of their musical maturity.

Fotomaker[Atlantic Records]

By Randy Parrett

This is my first attempt at critically reviewing a record and the situation I find myself reminds me of a similar circumstance that Crosby, Stills and Nash experienced at Woodstock. It was the first time that they performed together before such a large audience. They were already established musicians, yet they stated collectively that they were "scared shitless" because it was their first gig. Needless to say, I feel the same way about this record review.

This is Fotomaker's first album. The band is composed of three former members of the Rascals and a former member of the Raspberries. Both the Rascals and the Raspberries achieved moderate fame during the sixties and early seventies, but neither band ever produced the quality of music that Fotomaker might be capable of producing.

Les Marchesi, one of the former Rascals and the lead guitarist for Fotomaker, did most of the song writing for this album. Marchesi is a very good guitarist. His leads are the high points of nearly every song.

"Where Have You Been All My Life," is the only song where the band backs up Marchesi's consistently good leads with some fine vocal work. The lyrics to this song are also a strong point, while

cont'd on pg. 4

## Grass News



By Bob Buckingham

The life of a bluegrass musician is tough. They are underpaid, overworked and open to calamity. Neal Allen died of pneumonia while on the road, but his brothers carry on. Sweet Rumors, Rounder 0079, is the Allen Brothers first release since Allengrass on Lemco. Even though Neal and their father Red are not present on the new lp, the sound remains much the same.

For all the apparent care put into the songs, the delivery lacks the flow and sureness that only hard work and a thorough knowledge of the material can provide. "Wildwood Flower Blues" is a gem, but suffers from a less than sure fire delivery.

On Jessi Colter's "Storms Never Last" they adapt the lyrics and drive them with a sureness that is not consistent throughout the album. The able assistance of Rick Skaggs of fiddle and mandolin and Jerry Douglas on the dobro add life to the album and really shine on "Bluegrass Bolero".

At times the boys evoke the same feeling from their music as their father, Red Allen. That cross of country and bluegrass with a melancholy edge, a glimpse into the darker side of life and the pain of living with uncertainty; that even spirited picking can't override.

J.D. Crowe and the New South, much like Earl Scruggs and his sons seem to be shirking their best talents for a more marketable commodity. You Can Share My Blanket, Rounder 0096, finds the New South sounding much like one of a thousand good country rock bands, sacrificing the driving banjo and high vocals for mellow songs, steel guitars and electric piano.

They do a nice job on Gram Parsons' "Hickory Wind" and even feature some banjo on Gordon Lightfoot's "Did She Mention My Name."

But why the pabulum of "As Tears Go By" or several other exercises in neurotic exorcism? Why take the fire out of a great band and great banjo player? The answer may be related to the fact that it does not pay to play straight bluegrass. Take away the hard edge, solid drive and cut of threatening emotion and there remains a mediocre, middle of the road syrup. If you like a little pancake with your syrup, then read no further.

Acid grass lives with Frank Wakefield and The Good Old Boys. At least that is what they have on their new lp on Flying Fish. The band lacks a strong vocalist and Wakefield is not up to his earlier efforts. Jon Glik pours on some powerful fiddle, cont'd on pg. 4

## Dates And Places

28-29 Offenbach's "Tales of Hoffman" presented by Lancaster Opera Workshop at Fulton Theatre, Lancaster.

28 Pure Prairie League/Robert Klein in concert at Lebanon College, 8 p.m.

28 David Bromberg/Maria Muldaur in concert at Hershey Community Theatre 7:30 and 10:30 p.m.

May

5 Renaissance in Concert-F & M College, Maysers Center, Lancaster 8 p.m.

April 27-May 6 Drama "Woyzeck" opens at F & M College, Green Room Theatre, Lancaster. Call for times, prices, and reservations.

April 28 Edward Albee's drama, "A Delicate Balance" opens at Performing Arts Workshop Theatre, 49 N. Market St., Lancaster 8 p.m.

April 28-May 21 "Promises, Promises" at Hbg. Comm. Theatre. Call for times, prices: 238-7381

April 28 & 30 Film "The Deep" at Millersville State College Student Memorial Center

April 28 "The Way We Were" HACC, Lehrman Arts Center, 8 p.m.

Music and Dance

April 27 American Ballet, at MSC [see article for details]

## Ballet To Perform At MSC Tonight

Fourteen "Stars of American Ballet" will dance at Millersville State College this Thursday, April 27, at 8 p.m. in Lyte Auditorium. The performance will be open to the public with admission at the door.

The international touring troupe is comprised of ballet artists who have formerly been members of ballet companies such as the New York City Ballet, Pennsylvania Ballet, American Ballet Theatre and the San Francisco Ballet.

Their repertoire consists of traditional and modern ballet styles and features dances choreographed by internationally-known choreographers such as George Balanchine and Paul Meija.

The program will include "Valse Fantasie" by Glinka, "Summer Rose" by Berlioz, "Brandenburg No. 2" by Bach, "Three Pieces" by Stravinsky and "Sylvia Variations" by Delibes.

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-Vincent Canby, N. Y. Times

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