

By Mike Markle

Warren Zevon—The Envoy

Listening to Warren Zevon's latest release "The Envoy" (Asylum) is the audio equivalent of reading the Sunday newspaper. It's all there in Zevon's songs—the hard news, editorials, comic strips, and advice to the lovelorn.

Zevon has overcome a drinking problem which flawed his previous efforts to concentrate on delivering his most consistent album to date. Zevon, the king of west coast album-oriented-rock, has surrounded himself with top-level Los Angeles session musicians—most notably Jeff Porcaro (of "Toto" fame), Leland Sklar, and Waddy Watchel.

The result is a highly articulate thirty-minute discourse on the world according to Zevon.

The most engaging track here is the title song—opening up with a haunting synthesizer and dense drum sound that sets the serious tone of the subject—world unrest. The envoy is, of course, Zevon. His job description:

Things got hot in El Salvador
C.I.A. got caught and couldn't do no more
He's got diplomatic immunity
Send the envoy

The strangest tune on the album is "Jesus Mentioned," a confirmation of Zevon's odd sense of morbid humor that he made nationally famous a few years ago with his novelty hit "Werewolves of London." "Jesus Mentioned" tells of Zevon's desire to travel to

Graceland to dig up Elvis and beg him "to sing about those heavenly mansions Jesus mentioned." (Maybe he wrote this one back in his drinking days.)

Zevon is uncharacteristically optimistic in "Let Nothing Come Between You"—a highly charged romp that surprisingly didn't break into the top-forty. It is a basic love song

containing a sing-along chorus that tends to stay in your mind all day.

Zevon's offbeat persona shines through on "Ain't That Pretty at All," stating that "I'm going to hurl myself against the wall/cause I'd rather feel bad than not feel anything at all."

On "The Envoy," Zevon exhibits his skill at taking a variety of subjects (love, politics, morbid humor, etc.) and crafting them into a highly consistent quality album—at this, he is without peer.

Peter Gabriel—Security

No one has ever accused art-rock Peter Gabriel of writing accessible "commercial" songs. The cover of his fourth and latest effort "Security" (a grainy video-still of an alien creature) symbolizes the alienating effects of the stark and obscure songs on the album.

"Security" appears to be more of an exercise in modern record production technology than an expression of artistic talent. The album was digitally recorded and mastered, pro-

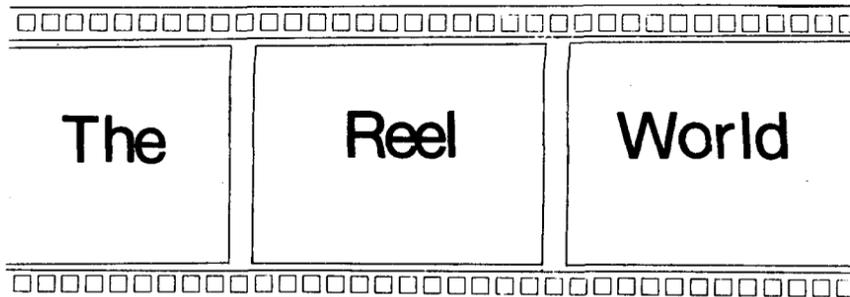
minently featuring many state-of-the-art musical instruments such as the Linn drum synthesizer.

Gabriel, an ex-member of Genesis, extensively uses African and Caribbean drum rhythms throughout the album, which often dominate the songs, strongly reducing the impact of the keyboards and vocals.

The album opener, "Shock the Monkey," is Gabriel's follow-up to last year's cult hit "Games Without Frontiers." The song has received some air time on progressive F.M. rock stations and is one of the more outrageous videos on Music Television (MTV).

"Shock the Monkey" employs the essential Gabriel studio techniques—computerlike drums, shouted vocals, and ethereal synthesizers. The remaining songs use the same basic technique in varying degrees, seldom straying from the avant-garde "techno" format.

"Security" is evidence that artistic expression and modern technology aren't always compatible.



By Marsha Larsen

Second chances don't often come along. If you didn't see **Time Bandits** the first time around, don't miss this re-released movie, again at area theatres.

In the film, six of the Supreme Being's dwarf helpers have stolen the master time map of the creation. They set out to rob every era of its wealth, with the aid of the map, and to make a killing. The Supreme Being chases them through one time warp after another. At one of their stops, they pick up Kevin, a 20th-century mini-genius armed with flashlight and Polaroid camera.

The dwarves have burst through the young boy's closet in an unsuccessful attempt to escape their master.

The seven drop together through time holes into various reinvented histories. They meet Napoleon at a castle in Castiglione after he has conquered and looted Italy. The mad emperor, obsessed with his diminutiveness (he's only 5'1"), loves "to see little things hitting each other." The slapstick dwarves a "hit" with him, and are declared Generals by Napoleon. The single-minded team, however, rob him of his loot and escape into the age of Robin Hood.

Mr. Hood in turn loots them. Surrounded by his comically fierce and dirty accomplices -- no merry men, these -- he "persuades" the midget marauders to turn over the goods to the poor.

Kevin is separated from the band of robber dwarves when the Evil One shows his hand. This arch-nemesis of the Supreme Being wants their map so that he can recreate the world in his image. During an effort to slip from his clutches, Kevin falls alone through time and lands on top of the bullsh

Enemy of the People, battling Agamemnon for control of his Mycenaean kingdom.

The runaway dwarves eventually rejoin Kevin and whisk him away through another bizarre series of adventures, peaking at their confrontation with the Evil One.

This is a fun, funny, fantastical movie. George Harrison produced it through his company, Handmade Films. The graphics and special effects show the influence of **Yellow Submarine**, a film Harrison made with the three other Beatles. Terry Gilliam and Michael Palin, Monty Pythoners, wrote the screenplay, and their zany humor dominates the movie.

Palin appears in a crazy cameo role, as does another Python player, John Cleese, a fastidious Robin Hood. Sean Connery is suitably hero-like as Agamemnon.

The movie parallels **The Wizard of Oz** in a warped way: Kevin instead of Dorothy; dwarves instead of Scarecrow, Tin Man, and Cowardly Lion; and a time map instead of ruby slippers. Both movies consist of episodes woven together by odysseys of homesick youths. The Python/Harrison version departs from its model, however, in the twisted surprise conclusion. **Time Bandits** seems to take a great delight in punching its fist through a happy ending.

For pure escapist pleasure, see it.



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