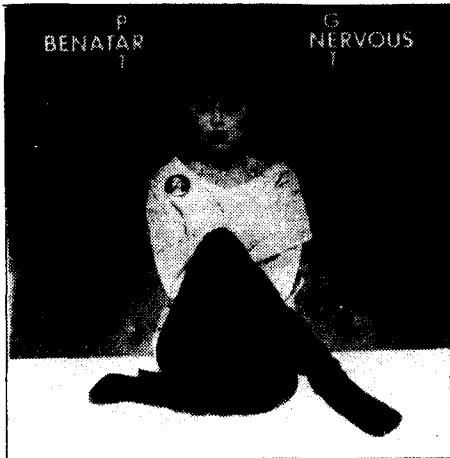


DISC - USSION

By Michael Markle



Get Nervous

The bad news about Pat Benetar's latest album "Get Nervous" (Chrysalis) is that the broadcast media will overkill it. The public can be assured of constantly hearing tunes from "Get Nervous" on top-40 radio for at least the next six months.

The good news is that the new album is excellent, catchy and listenable. Critics continually blast Benetar for the one-track nature of her subject matter—love lost and love found. These same critics can't deny that

Benetar is a very talented performer who has blazed a trail for women in rock.

"Get Nervous" was co-produced by Peter Coleman (along with Neil Geraldo), who also produced the hard-driving sound of Benetar's debut LP "In the Heat of the Night." Guitarist Scott St. Clair Sheets has been replaced by keyboardist Charlie Giordano whose virtuosity richly embellishes the ten tunes on "Get Nervous."

Side one opens with "Shadows of the Night" which, in case you've been living in a cultural void (or in Middletown), is the first top-ten hit selected from the many potential chart-busters on the album. The first few acappella lines of the song immediately confirm Benetar's status as the "First Lady of Rock." Guitarist Neil Geraldo's impending power chords add to the overall intensity of the initial vocals while Giordano's keyboards prevent Benetar from relying on familiar vocal intonations and phrasing.

Other obvious hits include "Little Too Late," (likely to be the next single), "Looking for a Stranger," and "Tell it to Her." Benetar delivers an especially impressive vocal performance on "Fight it Out"—balancing serene interludes and

vociferous discourses about love that is lost.

By using different vocal intonations and adding a keyboard player to the band, Benetar has broken out of previous routines to deliver an impressive album that sets her far apart from her peers.



Rio

Duran Duran's second album "Rio" (Capitol) continues the "New Romantic" style that Adam Ant originated in England in the late Seventies. The "New Romantic" bands contend that style and image are as equally important as talent.

Like their contemporaries (Haircut 100, Psychedelic Furs, The Fixx, etc.), Duran Duran stresses simple lyrical and instrumental melody over profound lyrics and complex rhythms. Such lines as "Her

name is Rio and she dances on the sand/Just like that river twisting through a dusty land" may not affect your outlook on life, but it sure does sound alluring when it comes out of the speakers.

Such choruses will stay in your mind long after the song is over—precisely what Duran Duran intended.

The title track "Rio" and "Hungry Like the Wolf" are both destined for airplay on progressive Album-Oriented-Rock (AOR) stations, while the colorful, exctic videos of both songs are currently shown on MTV.

"Rio" transcends the basic Duran Duran sound—relying heavily on melodic lyrics stretched out over arcane techno-synthesizer harmonies and clean, simple guitar work. The subject of the song is a woman named Rio whose description is as mysterious as the overall "sound" of the song.

"Hungry Like the Wolf" effectively uses a juvenile sing-along chorus as a "hook" to make a long-lasting impression in the listener's mind. It is difficult to forget the chorus after you've heard it—maybe these guys should write jingles for advertising agencies.

The remainder of the album continues in the same mystical vein of "Rio" and "Hungry Like the Wolf." Duran Duran's latest effort may not break any new ground in the music world, but it does provide a melodic form of escapism that is highly enjoyable after a rough day at school or work.

-The Dark Crystal -

Fantasy enthusiasts of all ages have waited with varying degrees of patience for the arrival of *The Dark Crystal*, our anticipation whetted by a remembrance of things past—Sesame Street, Yoda, and La Belle Piggy. When the long-expected wonder finally came to Harrisburg during the Christmas holidays, it proved to be, on the whole, a disappointment. There were some magic moments, but not enough to outweigh the heaviness of the story and the attempted symbolic devices.

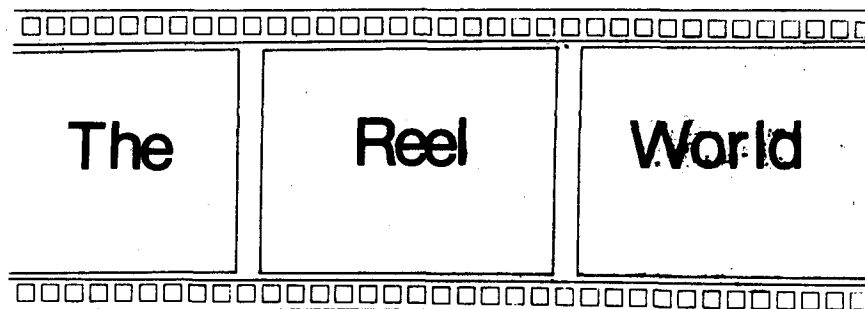
Somewhere, on a planet with three suns, a millenium approaches, when at the conjunction of the suns, a missing fragment is to be placed in the Dark Crystal—freeing the planet from the dominion of the evil Skexes and restoring the rule of the Gelflings. The crystal had been shattered at the previous conjunction, a thousand years before, at which time the Skexes, twelve evil bird-like creatures, and the Mystics,

twelve semi-reptilian four-armed creatures, had appeared. The Dark Crystal hangs in the tower of the Skexes, while the Mystics, in their desert retreat, have saved one young male Gelfling, who is ap-

and protected from the Skexes by the Podlings, to whose village she takes him. The Podlings throw a party, another of the rare moments of delight in the film (with music to start viewers dancing in the aisles), which is soon crushed by the destructive but stupid crustaceans, who carry off Podlings but let the

of these skills, but has been taught by the Podlings to communicate with animals and to know the ways of plants. (One also must assume the existence of other hidden Gelflings of both sexes to prevent second-generation incest in the new order.)

Some of the dissatisfaction felt at this undeniably happy—in fact, transcendent—ending might have been alleviated by the infusion of a bit more body to counteract the cold spirituality of the Skexes-Mystic fusion. It would have been a good time to have another Podling party, to bring some lightness into the light. As it was, there was something important missing from the ambience of the film—a lacking in life, echoed in the strangely inexpressive faces of the Gelflings, whose smooth placidity made them far less interesting than the ugly Aughra, the evilly complex Skexes, or the exuberantly lovable Podlings. Hopefully, the Podlings will get to be the heroes at the next millenium, perhaps simply by continuing to avoid pretentiousness.



parently the last of his kind and is the appointed saviour who must find and restore the shard.

His travels through the flora and fauna of the planet are all too brief, for it is in these scenes that the real magic of the film exists: the creation of original, imaginative life-forms. He soon encounters a girl-Gelfling, raised

Gelflings and her fluffy, toothy pet escape.

Random applause was heard throughout the theatre when it became known that only female Gelflings have wings. But old stereotypes threatened to continue in the new Eden where only the boy has been taught to read, calculate, and think rationally by the Mystics. The girl has none