

the Collegian arts

Esther dull, arranger shines

By KATHY CURNOW
Collegian Staff Writer
WHAT A DIFFERENCE
A DAY MAKES.
Esther Phillips w-Beck.
Kudu Records, P688, \$8.98.
Her songs may be playing
the dance floors, but it's
arranger and guitarist Joe
Beck, not Esther Phillips,
who shows the disco influence
on this album.
She instead looks to jazz for
her inspiration. Her raspy,
insinuating voice is frankly
imitative of the late Dinah
Washington's. But jazz singer
Washington's phrasing and
vocal quality have emerged

impaired because Phillips has
not been able to master them.
Punctuating her songs with
the requisite sighs and moans
— she could greatly improve
these by imitating Donna
Summers — Phillips seems
rather indifferent to her
material.

Review

Coming alive only for the
title cut, she wends her nasal
way through such other
secondhand material as
"Mister Magic," "Can
Stand a Little Rain" and

"Turn Around, Look at Me."
The songs, after Esther's
commonplace delivery, are
stale. Joe Beck steps in with a
disco beat and at least makes
them bearable.

His instrumental
arrangements update the
works and add some interest
to the vocal blandness. Beck
goes heavy on guitar and sax,
making a danceable first side
("One Night Affair"). Side
two is more R & B and doesn't
hold up as well. This,
however, may be due to the
song choices and to Miss
Phillips.



EDNA THAYER, who worked America's vaudeville stages as a child and young adult, is one of the many old performers interviewed and photographed in Marcia Keegan's "We Can Still Hear Them Clapping." Thayer sings in a New York City automat these days.

Vaudeville's performers tell life stories in book

By LEAH ROZEN
Collegian Staff Writer
WE CAN STILL HEAR THEM CLAPPING.
By Marcia Keegan.

Avon-Flare, 158 pages, \$6.95 list price.
"I'm 83 years old... I still want to be a
star," Strawberry, a vaudeville singer and
hooper tells photographer Marcia Keegan.
Strawberry is one of many old
vaudevillians, most of whom now live in the
ratty hotels of New York's Times Square
district, who were photographed and
interviewed by Keegan. Her book contains
pictures of the performers as they looked in
their heyday and now.
She has transcribed the tapes she made of
their reminiscences about the old days when
vaudeville was America's most popular form
of entertainment and every town had at least
one theatre.

The performers Keegan interviews were
never the top stars on the bill. Most made
good money while vaudeville was at its peak
and all express a love for the traveling and
show business life.

They tell long involved stories about their
lives and experiences as entertainers. These
stories are both amusing and nostalgic.
Harriet Waldron, a former Ziegfeld girl,

tells about a song she and her husband used
to perform called, "Last Time I'll Shake It
Under the Sheets with You."

Most express a love for the show business
of the past, some even saying that all they
live for is their memories.

"Vaudeville was lovely then. Everyone
was your friend then. We had shows every
night," Cleo Lewis, a singer, says. "Today
show business is crummy, it is vulgar, there
is nothing pretty about it."

Some of them still perform. Edna Thayer,
65, sings in one of New York's automats. She
has attracted other old vaudevillians and
they all perform there.

"I landed at the Automat here on Broad-
way and 46th Street where all the actors and
actresses all gather and reminisce about the
days of yore. And I was accepted, and then
there was a chance for me to do a little work
— volunteer work, and when I stepped on the
stage — when I got on those boards — oh,
baby, was that wonderful," Clarice Withers,
a French singer, says. "I think life can be
beautiful at any age, young or old."

Keegan has put together a lovely collection
of photographs and performers. "We Can
Still Hear Them Clapping" deserves ap-
plause.

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- If the toy has fabric on it, make sure the material has been fire-proofed. If the toy has painted surfaces, make sure the paint is non-toxic.
- Toys with sharp points or cutting edges, even if they are inside, are dangerous.
- All electric toys should bear the Underwriter's Seal of Approval on both the toy and the cord.
- Read all labels. Avoid those with long lists of cautions.

If you do run into any consumer or housing problems, stop by the OTIS office at 20 HUB or call 865-6851.