

Elton 'Moves' into a decline

By BOB FRICK
Collegian Staff Writer

BLUE MOVES
By Elton John
MCA-2-1104
\$12.98 list price

Elton John continues his decline into musical anonymity with his latest album, a two-record fiasco entitled "Blue Moves." M.C.A. Records tries hard to make "Blue Moves" sound good, but even accompaniments by two string sections, the London Symphony Orchestra, choirs and horn sections only raise the total album quality from drivel to high class drivel. With each successive album, Elton John seems to

be removing himself more and more from the actual musical production, leaving just a remnant of his talent, which, at its peak in "Yellow Brick Road," made him one of the most popular artists of the Seventies. Now the term artist must be used loosely when describing him.

record review

The lyrics in "Blue Moves" are sparse and meaningless. In order to stretch them to fit the length of the songs, Elton fills in syllables with oohs and aahs, and whole minutes with the banal repetition of

phrases or choruses. One gets the feeling that many of the melodies were matched with the lyrics by chance, that they're interchangeable.

The first cut of the album, "Your Starter For..." has probably the nicest melody on the album. It's written by Elton's guitarist Caleb Quaye.

In "Sorry Seems to be the Hardest Word," Elton attempts to borrow the tune of one of his early pieces from "Captain Fantastic" and vary it to avoid being redundant by mixing it with the theme from the television detective series, "Bronk."

While the music from sources outside Elton John's own band slightly improves

the overall quality of the album, it can in no way make up for his regular musicians. Kenny Passarelli's bass is incredibly dull, performing with nowhere near the vitality of Elton John Band's former bassist, Dee Murray. Rodger Pope's performance on the drums lacks the flair and creativity of another E.J.B. alumnus, Nigel Olsson.

Despite Elton's apparent lack of work in "Blue Moves," flashes of his former ability, especially keyboard skills, still appear. "Cage the Songbird" is a mellow tune, reminiscent of his earliest albums, "Tumbleweed Connection" and "Madman Across the Water."

"Tonight," with help from

the London Symphony, is a powerful, entertaining piece until Elton interrupts it with thin, screechy vocals. In other cuts, however, he surprises the listener with a more melodic, fuller style of singing.

In general, the melodies range from cocktail trash, such as "Idol," to the mildly pleasant "Cage the Songbird" spanning many different flavors of music, including exotic-eastern and reggae.

For the price of "Blue Moves" one could afford two or three of his earlier albums, which, while lacking a limitless budget, still offer a bargain of solid songs, played with style.

Kleiber conducts a fresh Fifth

By MARK MILLER
Special to the Collegian

BEETHOVEN'S SYMPHONY NO. 5, OP. 67
Vienna Philharmonic.
Carlos Kleiber, conductor.
Deutsche Grammophon
2530-516.

This record has been out for a while now but deserves a review, even if belatedly. Why even bother reviewing yet another of the world's most recorded and best known symphony?

To put it simply this performance is a revelation. Kleiber takes nothing for granted. He approaches the

work carefully almost as if it were a new or unfamiliar piece of music. A fresh, cliché-free and electrifying performance is achieved. People who have listened to this symphony over and over again would do well to hear this version. It truly seems as though you are hearing it for the first time.

record review

A listening comparison was made between this recording and the New York Philharmonic-Bernstein version on

Colombia. Bernstein is certainly one conductor who can't be accused of lack of drive and excitement in his performances and his Beethoven Fifth is no exception. But just put on Kleiber's version! It makes Bernstein's seem like it's dragging. The greatest difference is in the first movement.

Kleiber takes it at an incredibly fast, exciting pace but not at the expense of detail. Kleiber brings out even the smallest nuances not heard in many recordings.

The timing for the first movement in Bernstein's

version is 8:35 while Kleiber's driving tempo takes only 7:15.

The playing of the Vienna Philharmonic is exemplary. The crescendo at the beginning of the third movement is amazing. The horns are noble and overpowering and their sound has been caught in all their majesty by the Deutsche Grammophon engineers. The fast sections for the double basses, a test of an orchestra's virtuosity, are handled with great dexterity.

Another nice feature of the recording is that Kleiber chose to observe all of the repeats in every movement.

This is especially important in the last movement when the repeat of the opening exposition gives added impact to the entire symphony.

It is certainly fitting that the orchestra of the city where Beethoven lived and where this symphony was first performed has made a recording of this great work which will set the standard for years to come. This is the one to get whether you don't own any or do own half a dozen versions of the Fifth.

Note: A Vienna-Kleiber version of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony will be released shortly.



Bottlecelli

Colin Pearson's "Bottle Form" is included in the "24 British Potters" exhibit showing at the Museum of Art through Dec. 22.

the daily Collegian arts

Lou Reed listenable again

'Heart' beats with more interest

By STEVE HALVONIK
Collegian Staff Writer

Rock and Roll Heart. By Lou Reed. Artista AL 4100.

In a world full of crazies, Lou Reed has shown the ability to stand out in a crowd. His former band, the Velvet Underground, was probably the first group to incorporate S & M into their stage act. After leaving the Underground, Reed became wardrobe consultant for MASH's Corporal Klinger, who graciously returned the favor by posing for Reed's "Transformer" cover. Reed's songs were indicative of his burgeoning career. Songs teeming with references to kinky sex and dope were commonplace.

album review

But "Rock and Roll Heart" is a different kind of album. There are no bizarre songs like "Make Up" or "Animal Language" here. Curiously, the album seems to be Reed's self-examination of his musical roots. Many of the songs appear to be snippets from various stages of his career. At any rate, the songs have a street quality to them that suggests Reed has returned to his old hunting ground for musical ideas. "I Believe in Love," "Chooser and the Chosen" and "Follow The Leader" have a tough, saxophone sound reminiscent of 1950s New York City street music.

"Rock and Roll Heart," "Claim To Fame" and Reed's ode

to masturbation, "Banging On My Drum," are basic rock and roll songs that showcase Reed's musical strengths: simple but powerful chord construction, with biting rhythm guitars, wailing saxes and aggressive drumming that really pounds out the beat. On the title cut, Reed explains his songwriting philosophy: "I guess I am dumb 'cause I know I ain't smart, but deep down inside I got a rock and roll heart."

But the most intriguing song on "Heart" is the one that most resembles the Velvet Underground — "Ladies Pay." The haunting piano line beguiles the listener, but Reed effectively uses his howling guitar as a tonal regulator, employing distorted guitar sounds to add tension to the music. The swirling images painted by the lyrics add the finishing touches to a very eerie song.

"A Sheltered Life" has a smoky, jazz club feel to it. The off-key saxes and Reed's confessions that he never used dope make this number a humorous put-on.

Unfortunately, "Heart" also contains several songs reminiscent of Reed's weaker solo album. "Vicious Circle" and "Temporary Thing" are senseless chord-pounding songs with little melody and even less lyrical significance. "Senselessly Cruel" is aptly titled. They are too poor to be called filler, so I would call them emptier.

"Rock and Roll Heart" is not the consummate rock album that Reed is capable of making. But the music at least is interesting again. With albums like "Rock and Roll Heart," Lou Reed won't be needing Corporal Klinger any more.

Sci-fi author new Heinlein

By TOM MARCINKO
Collegian Staff Writer

THE WIND'S TWELVE QUARTERS.

By Ursula K. LeGuin.
Bantam, \$1.75
MARTIAN TIME-SLIP.
By Philip K. Dick.
Ballantine, \$1.50

Those who know science fiction are starting to speak of Ursula LeGuin as being in the same class with Robert Heinlein, Isaac Asimov and Ray Bradbury. She became a major SF writer with "The Left Hand of Darkness," a finely detailed look at an androgynous world. Her "Earthsea" trilogy and "The Dispossessed" have repeated her success, which lies in showing believable imaginary worlds, avoiding clichés, and creating real characters.

"The Wind's Twelve Quarters," her first book of short stories, makes a good introduction to her work. "Nine Lives" uses genetic engineering to deal with love, loneliness, and acceptance. LeGuin imagines a group of clones — genetically identical humans — might share perfect rapport. Then all but

one are killed. Where does that leave the survivor, to whom normal humans are aliens?

"The Day Before the Revolution" and "The Stars Below" take up a common theme in her work: the alienation of a man or woman who stands above the crowd. Though LeGuin's characters are larger than life, she humanizes them without making them martyrs.

"Semley's Necklace" and "April in Paris" are early romantic fantasies using the old themes of time-space travel and conjuring spirits. They point the way to her more mature work, which explores standard SF-fantasy devices in new ways. LeGuin's work isn't barren of new ideas, though. "The Direction of the Road," for example, is told from the viewpoint of a tree.

A few stories, like "Things," don't work — there are such things as too much symbolism and obscurity — but the collection as a whole is worth even \$1.75. LeGuin may be the best writer in SF since Heinlein, and that should be recommendation enough.

Philip K. Dick's very best

novels, "The Man in the High Castle" and "Ubik," are out of print, but the publication of "Martian Time-Slip" (1964) partly atones for that. If LeGuin's main strength is background, Dick's is character. His books are full of well-drawn average people caught up in strange situations.

recurring Dick nightmare: stranded in an alternate reality where another person has complete control. Philip Dick has been compared to Kurt Vonnegut, with some reason. His plots and subplots are at least as convoluted as "The Sirens of Titan," and things aren't always what they seem. The Viking probes may have dated Dick's setting — there are Martians and canals here — but like Bradbury's "Martian Chronicles," the entertainment value lives on.

book review

Few of his situations are stranger than that in "Time-Slip." The plumber's union has a strugglehold on Mars because water is so scarce. Arnie Kott, the union leader, wants to keep the United Nations from taking control of colonists from Earth away from him.

Since the educational system of the day produces a lot of schizophrenics and catatonics, and theory has it that they experience disorientation in time, Kott tries to cure a young catatonic and get a look into the future.

Like the hero of "The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch," Kott gets trapped in a

recurring Dick nightmare: stranded in an alternate reality where another person has complete control.

Philip Dick has been compared to Kurt Vonnegut, with some reason. His plots and subplots are at least as convoluted as "The Sirens of Titan," and things aren't always what they seem. The Viking probes may have dated Dick's setting — there are Martians and canals here — but like Bradbury's "Martian Chronicles," the entertainment value lives on.

Movie tonight

Francois-Truffaut's film "Jules and Jim" will be shown at 8 tonight in the University Auditorium under the auspices of the Artists Series.

The film tells the story of a friendship between a German and a Frenchman and their 20 year love for the same woman.

Tickets will be available at the box office beginning at 7:15 p.m.

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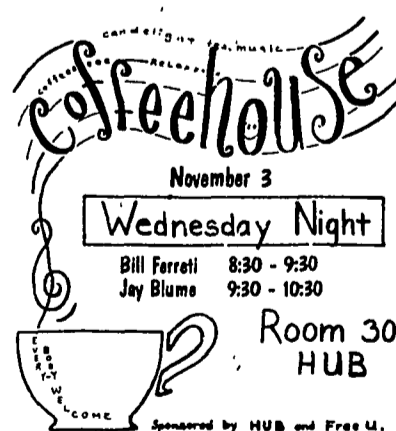
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UNIVERSITY CALENDAR

Wednesday, November 3

SPECIAL EVENTS

Alpha Phi Omega Bloodmobile, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., HUB ballroom.
HUB Video Tape, "World Series of Jazz," 12 noon, HUB reading room.
FSHA 410 dinner, "Pennsylvania Dutch Meal," 5:30 p.m., Maple Room. Reservations: 865-7441.
HUB Football film, "Penn State vs. Temple," 7 p.m., HUB assembly room.
University Theatre, "Cradle of the Hero," 8 p.m., Playhouse Theatre.
GSA Photography Workshop, 8 p.m., Room 101 Kern.
HUB "Coffee House," 8:30 p.m., Room 301 HUB.

SEMINARS

Earth and Mineral Sciences Student Council, 7:30 p.m., Room 26 Mineral Sciences.
Dean Charles Hosler on "Science, Society, and Other Natural Disasters." Fuel Science will meet in 62 Willard.

FILM

South Cinema Musical, "Gay Divorcee," 7 and 9:30 p.m., Room 121 Sparks.

MEETINGS

Chess Club, 7 p.m., HUB gameroom.
PSOC Ski Division, 7 p.m., HUB ballroom. Organizational meeting.
Alpha Tau Alpha, 7 p.m., Room 317 HUB.
Alliance Student Fellowship, 7 p.m., Rooms 320, 321 HUB.
USG Academic Assembly, 7:30 p.m., Room 225 HUB.
Penn State Magazine Club, 8 p.m., Rooms 323, 324 HUB.

EXHIBITS

Museum of Art: Antwerp Drawings from the 16th and 17th Centuries. Twenty-four British Potters.
Zoller Gallery: "Super Mud," Student Invitational.

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