

# Traffic's 'John Barleycorn' LP still a rock classic

By GEORGE OSGOOD  
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Editor's note: This is the first in a series of reviews appearing occasionally of "classic" record albums — those outstanding records that remain viable through time and through changing musical trends.

In January, 1969, after two successful albums, Traffic split up and its four members went their separate ways.

Steve Winwood went to short-lived Blind Faith, then on to Ginger Baker's Air Force with Eric Clapton. Dave Mason set out on his own and took Summer Jim Capaldi with him. Chris Wood worked for a time as a session musician, toured with Dr. John and finally joined Winwood on Air Force.

Eighteen months later Traffic was back together, minus Mason, and a new album heralded their reunion, a truly unique album that in six years sold more than four million copies. "John Barleycorn Must Die" came on the audio scene with a lot of promotional hype in front of it, and for once the record company's claims were substantiated by an album that is truly a classic.

The album's lead song is the pleasant, occasionally brilliant "Glad," an instrumental track that has been used for everything from background for high-class skinflicks to the theme for the Hallmark Hall of Fame productions. It can't really be called rock; it's an unclassified piece highlighting Winwood's piano and a beautiful saxophone arrangement performed by Chris Wood. It's an easy-going, gently-paced tune

with a mild jam between Wood and Capaldi midway through.

"Glad" spirals into what may be the best song on an album of great ones. "Freedom Rider" begins with a stunning electric sax piece by Wood, certainly the finest rock woodwind player ever. Wood moves on to the flute, where he is no less outstanding and Winwood, moving between piano and organ, provides a secure, polished rhythm line.

## record review

Winwood's unstrained, careful vocal lead grabs at the listener and leads him through the song's intricate melodies, through the mini-jams and out again. As on all early Traffic songs, no single instrument dominates; instead, percussion, flute, saxophone, piano and organ come together in a beautiful blend of complimentary sounds. The result is a rock standard — a piece that sounds every bit as good now as it did six years ago.

"Empty Pages" fills out side one in fine style. Wood's fluffy, fluttery flute piece is one of the best on the album, and Capaldi, the group's leader, is in the background as always, never greedy and never failing to provide technically perfect and occasionally innovative drum rhythms. Winwood's vocal lead is above par; sensitive, earnest and appealing.

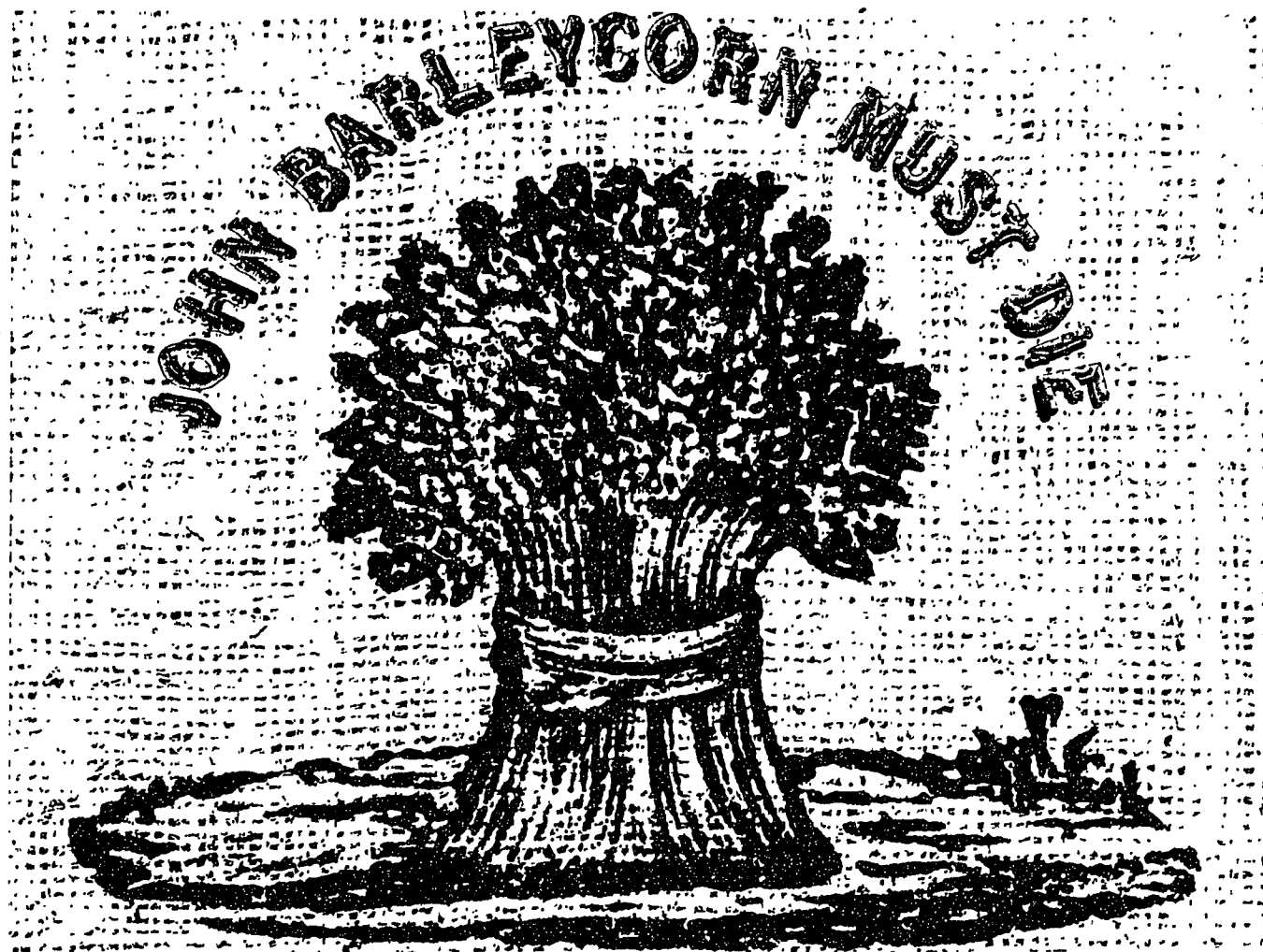
The second side features two virtuoso

cuts by Winwood. On "Stranger to Himself" and "Every Mother's Son," Winwood, through overdubbing, plays all instruments (except drums) and provides vocals as well. Both songs are good but the former is slightly better than the latter, a cut on which the instruments don't quite mesh as they should.

The title song is a traditional English ballad about "corn and earth and what is goes through" arranged by Winwood for flute and acoustic guitar. Traffic's rendition is flawless, with admirable self-restraint in vocals and accompaniment that allow the song a modern viability without sacrificing authenticity. It's pleasing, well executed and unique this side of Steeleye Span.

The album in sum is nothing short of superior. It's outstanding not only for the quality of its compositions and performances, but because the guitar, the instrument that shaped and defined the rock idiom more than any other, is present on only two songs and on one of these it's an almost inaudible bass line. And the album works magnificently despite this "shortcoming."

From here, Traffic has gone on to produce several more high-quality albums, sometimes in other musical directions, and has added more members, including Rick Grech. But although their subsequent albums have been generally excellent, (especially "The Low Spark of High-Heeled Boys") none approaches what the newly-reunited Traffic produced during the spring and summer of 1970.

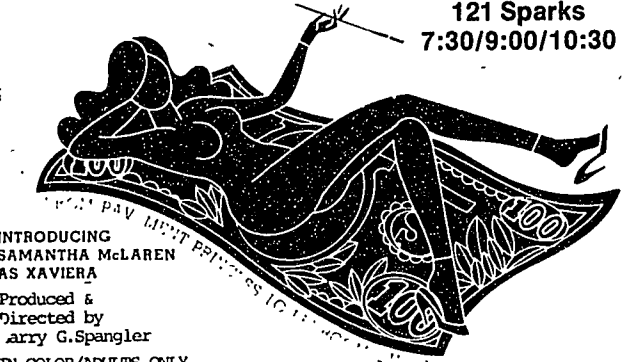


'John Barleycorn Must Die' is a classic rock album by Traffic.

"IF YOU HAVEN'T SEEN A PORNO MOVIE BEFORE, OR IF YOU HAVE ONLY ONE EROTIC MOVIE TO CATCH THIS YEAR — THIS IS THE ONE."  
—Al Goldstein

## THE LIFE & TIMES OF XAVIERA HOLLANDER

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Dec. 16-19, 1976  
121 Sparks  
7:30/9:00/10:30



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By Harry Zimler  
DECEMBER 15, 16, 17

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FREE TICKETS AT PLAYHOUSE BOX OFFICE  
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University Theatre and the Dept. of Theatre and Film present

## 5 O'clock playwrights' Theatre

### International Film Series

## INGMAR BERGMAN's THE SEVENTH SEAL

Thurs., Dec. 16 HUB Ballroom  
7:30 & 9:30 Admission \$1.00

**Third Annual Invitational Film Festival**  
University Auditorium  
December 15, 16, 17, 1976  
8:00 p.m.  
Films from Seven Eastern States  
Experimental, Dramatic, and Documentaries  
**THE BEST of Student-Made Films**

## AVOID RIP-OFFS

Term breaks and holiday vacations mean that empty student apartments are vulnerable to burglary. Here are some suggestions avoiding rip-offs:

1. Prepare a list of valuables recording all serial numbers. Articles SHOULD ALSO be inscribed with your driver license number and state, NOT, REPEAT not, with your Social Security Number. An etching tool for this purpose can be borrowed from many places including Police Services & the HUB Desk on campus and from the Police and Chamber of Commerce in town.
2. Secure your sliding glass doors and windows by placing a long piece of wood in the track behind the sliding portion of the door. Make sure ALL doors are in good working order, and USE THEM!!
3. Arrange to have your mail held, newspapers stopped, or have someone pick them up.
4. Beware of suspicious phone calls — people calling and hanging up as soon as the phone is answered — especially before term break.
5. Take valuables with you if you will be gone for a long time.
6. Have a close trustworthy friend stay in the apartment, or check it periodically.
7. Become familiar with your neighbors and take special notice of strangers, reporting strange behavior to the police.

If you run into any problems, come to the OTIS office in 20 HUB or call 865-6851.



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Directed and Co. Produced by MICHAEL WINNER  
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Fri. & Sat.	7:00, 9:00, 11:00
Sunday	7:00, 9:00

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Sunday	7:30, 9:30

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7:30 & 10:00

108 Forum  
\$1.00

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Centre - Butch Cassidy & the Sundance Kid	East - Lenny
West - Murder on the Orient Express	South - Bananas

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at room 101 Kern Bldg., 7:30, Wednesday, Dec. 15th

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