

# I LOVED MUSIC

by Callum Beck

The period of time from around 1965 till the end of the decade was undoubtedly the period in which the most original, creative, and the highest quality music was being recorded in the field of rock music. Never have rock musicians spent so much time, effort and money in the recording studio trying to perfect their music, as they did during this period.

But today, rock music has basically just become another big business. One records because that is their job, and to put bread on the table (and a swimming pool in the back yard). One has to make a nice, sellable, commercial product. That is one of the main reasons the recent Rolling Stones's records sound so lifeless and drab compared to their earlier recordings, like "Satisfaction," and "As Tears Go By." It also explains why Steve Miller's are basically blase instead of approximating greatness as they should; his albums have the solid technical production and sound that comes with money, but they lack the intense feeling essential to great music; that which comes from within.

Of course there has been much excellent music recorded since 1969, most notably by Bob Dylan, Stevie Wonder, and Paul Simon, but generally the quality of rock music is lower than it was in the sixties, both in the level of musicianship, and in the sincerity and feeling underlying the music.

Probably the main factor that caused this change in music quality has been the change in the basic philosophy and attitude of the youth of western society; we have gone from the revolutionary spirit of the sixties to the secure apathy of the seventies. But why has there been this change of outlook on life?

In the latter part of the sixties kids were saying "Our parent's society is plastic; their institutions and religions, social lives, and their attitudes are superficial", and they rebelled against this. But they not only rebelled, they also offered what they believed to be the way out of the mess, the way out of the plastic one-dimensional society of their parents. Their solution lay in their 'free love', 'do your own thing', and 'hang loose' philosophy, and

in the mind-bending drugs (especially L.S.D.), in communal living, and in their new music.

The record critics, the musicians, and the kids of the late sixties, especially those in Southern California sincerely believed that their music was integral to the salvation of mankind. David Crosby said "Music is love." Paul Williams, the top rock music critic of the day (not the singer), believed that if people only heard that the new Beatles album, 'Sgt. Peppers', they would become happier, kinder, and more loving people. And he was dumb-founded when he realized that the hippies of Haight weren't being improved one bit by this music. It is mainly because of this belief, along with a little bit of peer pressure that the musicians of this time spent so many months and dollars perfecting their music, and on trying to create albums of epic proportions.

But then things started to happen, both little things to individuals who started to realize the misery and selfishness associated with the new lifestyle, and major social catastrophes like Altamont, where everyone started to realize that the optimistic answers given by the kids had failed. Their critique of society may have been accurate but their solution failed miserably.

And with the failure of the solution an amazing thing has happened, the kids have become like their parents that were so harshly criticized in the sixties, and our concerned basically with the same things that concerned them, our own personal comfort, happiness, and affluence. The only difference is that we do dif-

ferent things to meet these goals.

I think this change in attitude towards life is why most of the music today is so ordinary and blase, and why it lacks the sincerity and depth of feeling that both the early rock n' roll, and the rock of the late sixties had. It also explains why so many lyrics today are just your basic love songs. The music today is made to feed the simplistic (not simple) tastes of the public, not to edify them. It is a music that is easy for the musicians to record and to make money from, and it is a music that doesn't challenge people to think, or to act for other people's good. It is nice and comfortable.

The purpose of this column in future issues will be to bring to your attention (for your listening pleasure) what I consider to be among the best albums ever made in the history of rock, but which for the most part are not very widely known. The reason for giving this brief critique on the differences and the reasons for the differences, between the music of the late sixties, and the music of today, is because most of the records I will talk about come from this period, and this background should help you to understand what they're about.

My purpose in pointing these albums out is not because I agree with their philosophy but because they contain excellent music (just as Tchaikovsky's music is excellent), and unfortunately excellent music is in rare supply on the rock music scene today. Hopefully you'll give a few of my suggestions a listen, I don't think you'll be disappointed.

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