



DON'T LET THE COVERS FOOL YOU

(***) A FAREWELL TO KINGS- RUSH (ANTHEM)

This is the first time Rush has succeeded in creating a decent album out of their limited repertoire of guitar riffs, melodies, and special effects. Even though all the music contained here can be heard on previous Rush albums, this time it's performed in a much more acceptable way. Musically, there is a glimmer of hope for the band.

But, as was the case ever since the second album, drummer Neil Peart continues to throw up a smoke-screen around the second-rate, repetitive music with supposedly thought-provoking lyrics. It appears Peart calculates that if you keep the listeners busy figuring out the lyrics, they'll miss the fact that the music is identical on every album.

Thus, A Farewell To Kings is another successful formula album for Rush.

(***) JAPAN TOUR LIVE! -BTO (MERCURY)

The excitement is there, but when you come right down to it, you've heard these songs just too many times before. The live setting is BTO's most natural setting, and this album does succeed in proving that point conclusively. With a more sounded selection of material, it could have been a super effort. As it stands, the only reason to buy it would be for historical reference.

(*****) HOPE - KLAATU (GRT)

This Canadian mystery band surprised everyone last year by achieving phenomenal success with 3:47 EST, a collection of their songs from 1972-76. The controversy regarding whether or not the band was really the Beatles didn't hurt their cause either. With Hope, the band certainly doesn't have to rely on the Beatles, for either sales or creative influence. Hope is an outstanding effort, ranging from Pink Floyd-like

"Madman" and "Long Live Politzania" to Queen influenced (a la "P hemian

Rhapsody") "The Loneliest of Creatures" to classically influenced pieces such as "Prelude". The Beatles aren't completely forgotten though, as "We're Off You Know" could easily have sprung from the Lennon/McCartney songbook. All these influences are blended into the distinctive Klaatu sound that makes Hope an enjoyable experience.

(**) AJA - STEELY DAN (ABC)

Steely Dan no longer play rock 'n roll. They have been retreating farther and farther from that stance ever since the release of Can't Buy A Thrill. Aja again exhibits fine musicianship but sadly little else.

The music is in somewhat the same vein as recent Doobie Brothers' material, namely R&B influenced. Most of the album is instantly forgotten, a disappointing effort by musicians who are capable of writing much better.

(***) GREATEST HITS, VOLUME II - ELTON JOHN (MCA)

Volume I sold five million copies so its a safe bet, with Christmas coming on, that this collection will do as well. Four songs are also not available on any Elton John album to date, the best of these John's version of "Pinball Wizard" from the movie, Tommy. Also featuring "Levon" and "Philadelphia Freedom", Volume II is far more satisfying than Volume I.

(***) BAD REPUTATION - THIN LIZZY (MERCURY)

Unfortunately, Thin Lizzy have hit the skids. Jailbreak and Johnny The Fox were classic rock recordings, combining Springsteen-like rockers with toned-down ballads.

Bad Reputation has a few cuts up to par with its predecessors, namely "Downtown Sundown" and "That Woman's Gonna Break Your Heart", but too many songs leave no impression whatsoever. Unless you are a devoted fan of Phil Lynott and Thin Lizzy, avoid it.

(*****) WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE? - ANDREW GOLD (ASYLUM)

There's plenty wrong with the picture on the album

jacket (I'm now up to 26) but absolutely nothing with the music. Andrew Gold is one of the most entertaining new singer/songwriters to come into his own this year. This, his second album, has established his solo career with such songs as "Passing Thing", "One Of Them Is Me" and "Lonely Boy", the worst cut to be found on this otherwise perfect set.

Other impressive tracks are "Stay" and his version of Manford Mann's "Do Wah Diddy".

What's Wrong With This Picture is simply a fine example of the Californian sound made popular by the Eagles.

(*****) THE BOOK OF INVASIONS...A CELTIC SYMPHONY - HORSLIPS (DJM RECORDS)

Don't let the cover or title fool you. Horslips is Ireland's answer to Jethro Tull and the Who; a band capable of rocking with the best of them while producing a ballad or two when needed. Add wailing violins and flutes to the standard rock group line-up and you have some innovative sounds from a promising "new" band. The Book Of Invasions is not an album to overlook.

(*****) FROM THE ATTIC '71 TO '77 - FLUDD (ATTIC)

Fludd is a prime example of a band which scored numerous Top 40 hits in Canada but failed everywhere else. Fludd's creative peak came early in their career, during 1972 and 1973. Three songs from

that period, "Get Up. Get Out, and Move On", "Always Be Thinking Of You" and "Yes" are classics the band have since failed to live up to. The only decent song from Fludd in the last

three years is "What An Animal", a song that was unsuccessfully followed up by numerous clinkers. The future of the band now appears to be in doubt (their last original album was released three years ago), but this collection of their greatest hits is well worth picking up.

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