

FLASHBACK

A LOOK AT THE U.P.B.I. STUDENT
NEWSPAPER OF 1982



The Music Beet



1981 Revisited

If nothing else, 1981 was evidence of an ever-widening gap between the British and American music scenes. It seems that if you want to hear a new band that shows any sign of life or originality, you will have to look to Britain. As one would expect, radio is the culprit. In comparing the yearly charts of the two countries, it is clear that Britons are willing to take risks in what they listen to. At the same time, U.S. radio "hits" are barely distinguishable from the stuff that is diffused through the nation's shopping malls.

There were, however, some very good albums released by North American artists in '81. The reason that A.M. radio ignored them is because they didn't conform to the formula of 3 minute homogenized hits (you know, those things you hear between commercials). The albums that sold well did so because of this same formula - Pat Benetar, (a balding) Christopher Cross, and Speedwagon's High Infidelity. The latter was the year's bestseller. Okay, so it sold over 6 million copies - it still isn't very good.

1981 was a year in which several major groups decided to call it quits, among them: The Eagles, Steely Dan, Wings, the Joe Jackson Band, Steeleye Span, and Rockpile. Meanwhile, Robert Plant and Jimmy Page joined ex-Yes members Alan White and Chris Squire, sparking rumours of a new super-group.

What follows is a list of what I believe were the best and worst albums of '81. Since ranking is impossible, the lists are in alphabetical order by performer.

THE BEST

CATHOLIC BOY	THE JIM CARROLL BAND
HUMANS	BRUCE COCKBURN
TRUST	ELVIS COSTELLO
MAKING MOVIES	DIRE STRAITS
TWANGIN'	DAVE EDMUNDS
DANGEROUS ACQUAINTANCES	MARIANNE FAITHFUL
FREEZE FRAME	THE J. GEILS BAND
PIRATES	RICKIE LEE JONES
LONG DISTANCE VOYAGER	THE MOODY BLUES
HARD PROMISES	TOM PETTY & THE HEARTBREAKERS
PRETENDERS 11	THE PRETENDERS
PLEASANT DREAMS	THE RAMONES
SECONDS OF PLEASURE	ROCKPILE
TATTOO YOU	THE ROLLING STONES
BOY	U2

THE WORST

SUPERTROUPER (SUPERSTUPOR?)	ABBA
THE ONE THAT YOU LOVE	AIR SUPPLY
RISING	JR. HOOK
AUDIO VISIONS	KANSAS
THE OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT	M
DEAD RINGER	MEATLOAF (MEATHEAD)
TELEKON	GARY NUMAN
NEW HOPE FOR THE WRETCHED	THE PLASMATICS
I'M NO HERO	CLIFF RICHARD
WIRED FOR SOUND	CLIFF RICHARD
PURITY OF ESSENCE	THE RUMOUR
BAD FOR GOOD	JIM STEINMAN
PARADISE THEATER	STYX
PARIS	SUPERTRAMP
FAIR WARNING	VAN HALEN

Song

SONG OF THE YEAR: "Too Drunk to F---" - the Dead Kennedys.

QUOTES OF THE YEAR:

"Seriously, my only ambition in the world is to go to Egypt, stand on top to the central pyramid, and piss all over it."

-Ozzy Osbourne, Blizzard of Oz

"My real name is Preliminary Drawing."

-Sketch

"The reason I haven't given interviews in recent years is simply because I've become very private. Also, to be honest, I really don't think I've got that much to say."

-David Bowie

"I haven't the first idea who this is, and the only reason I'd want to is so I could avoid future encounters."

-Elvis Costello, after hearing the new Styx single.

"English fans don't wait for a computer to tell them what to buy. In America, it's all statics. If Americans like something, it's probably crap."

-Stewart Copeland, the Police

"There isn't much difference between rock 'n' roll and teaching... you're entertaining delinquents."

-Sting, the Police

"Most people are too busy constructing stuff which is suitable for radio - and that's why there are so many dull groups, dull disc jockeys, dull records, dull everything."

-Nick Lowe

"I'm not a thick turd."

-Bob Geldof, the Boomtown Rats