



on disc

As Ampersand rings out the end of this school year, we've asked some of our regular — and irregular — record reviewers to help us cover as many albums as possible in the relatively short space available. While these may not be the cream of recent releases, nor are they the whey. The list is meant to be representative, the format experimental. If you feel that this short shorts method of coverage is superior, inferior, or equal to our usual, lengthier format, we'd like to hear from you. If you don't care, and would rather see the space devoted to something else, tell us that, too. Happy vacation, and keep the wax out of your ears!

Issac Asimov:

The Mayors from Foundation (Caedmon).

Frank Herbert:

Dune — The Banquet Scene (Caedmon).

Most of us met up with Caedmon records in junior or senior high school when we were forced and occasionally inspired to listen to *The Canterbury Tales* in Middle English, or Richard Burton soliloquizing in Shakespeare. No doubt about it, Caedmon meant Culture.

These days Caedmon has pop culture too — science fiction, but you'll hear no *Star Wars* laser beeps, no whoosh of intergalactic commuters; damn few sound effects at all, just the authors reading their own words. This helps us know how to pronounce the mysterious names, but personally, I'd rather hear Richard Burton.

While *Dune* and *The Foundation Trilogy* are undeniably works of art and genius, they are books; they should be seen and not heard because Herbert and Asimov do not have stirring, or even interesting, voices; the drama and color of the pivotal scenes presented in these two albums is dissipated by droning.

Both authors have written nifty liner notes, which only enforces the conviction that they should keep their mouths shut and their typewriters clattering.

Judith Sims

Randy Bachman: Survivor

 (Polydor)

The first "solo" effort from the co-leader of the Guess Who during that band's best years and leader of Bachman-Turner-Overdrive during *its* is a perhaps surprisingly engaging affair, softer than hard but clearly rock and roll. There's a concept involved, dealing with Bachman's ability to have lived through sixteen years as a professional musician, most of them in the Big Time. If he keeps up with albums like this one, Bachman will be welcome for years to come. Rock gossips note the presence of Burton Cummings on several cuts.

Todd Everett

Mickey Baker:

Blues and Jazz Guitar (Kicking Mule)

A long-time New York studio session guitarist, Baker moved to Europe some years ago and has remained there, working steadily and held in as much reverence by

the natives as expatriate American jazzmen have been before him. Though Baker's work on electric guitar brought him his initial fame, the present album is totally acoustic — though there is sometimes extensive overdubbing from time to time. The program ranges from bluesy to jazzy and includes "Baby, Please Don't Go," "Spoonful," "Corrina, Corrina," and "Stack O'Lee." Stephan Grossman appears in a supporting role, also on guitar, on a couple of cuts. Aspiring Baker clones note that, as usual, a tab book is available through the label: Kicking Mule Records, Box 3233, Berkeley, CA 94703.

T.E.

Marcia Ball: Circuit Queen

 (Capitol)

If you're into Waylon and Willie, check out Marcia Ball — she's been Austin's top female singer for five years. This album is not contemporary bedroom country: the title cut is the finest rodeo ballad since Ian Tyson's "Someday Soon." There are a couple of rockin' toe-tappers, "Train to Dixie" and Johnny Cash's "Big River." Ball has a hauntingly beautiful voice. Except for two weak, pop-schlock tunes, the album is a winner.

Bill Oakey

Berlioz: Te Deum.

Jean Dupuoy, tenor; Daniel Barenboim, conductor (Columbia)

The French have a long tradition of bravura music for religious purposes, but never any-

Bachman survives, solos



thing so grand, grandiloquent, or grandiose as this. Barenboim, Dupuoy, and their orchestral and choral colleagues turn the work into a sonic tour de force.

Ed Cray

Dickey Betts and Great Southern:

Atlanta's Burning Down (Arista)

One of the great innovative guitarists of the Sixties, Betts brought country fiddle licks to the instrument for the first time in a popular rock context. For his second album with his own band, the Allman Bros.-like (same instrumentation) Great Southern, Betts extends himself further stylistically, and at the same time comes up with some catchy tunes. The addition of former Waylon Jennings crony Billy Ray Reynolds as co-writer has doubtless helped considerably in that respect. Now if Betts can just decide whether it's really "Dickie," "Richard," or the current "Dickey," we can all rest easier!

Del Porter

The Carla Bley Band:

European Tour 1977 (Watt)

Contemporary jazz without a trace of disco, played on acoustic instruments; this music's both more adventurous and funnier than Frank Zappa's, and doesn't need vocals to make its point. Roswell Rudd's boozy trombone playing is a special delight, but the entire combination of world-class musicians (Elton Dean, Hugh Hopper, Michael Mantler, NRBQ's Terry Adams, etc.) is wonderful. The album, though hard to find, is worth the search. (Order from New Music Distribution Service, 6 West 9th Street, New York, N.Y. 10025).

Ray C. Robinson

Fiddlin' Frenchie Bourke:

Big Mamou (Crazy Cajun)

This is the type of music you could expect to hear in a Texas dance hall. It leans more towards Bob Wills than Cajun, although there are a few French tunes, including "Jolie Blonde." The production is not as clean as it could be, but one could argue that the result is a natural, authentic sound. Among the collection of standards are "Cotton Eyed Joe," "Faded Love," "San Antonio Rose," "Cowtown" and "White Lightning." There is some duplication with Bourke's album on the 20th Century label, released in 1975.

B.O.

Brahms: Ein Deutsches Requiem.

Lorin Maazel, conductor (Columbia)

This is surely the greatest choral work of the Romantic era, noble and ennobling. Maazel, who suffers too many critics' carps, brings it all out with the aid of Illeana Cotrubas, Hermann Prey, Yvonne Minton, and the superb Ambrosian Singers. Particularly recommended.

E.C.

Brahms: Piano Quartets (complete)

Alexander Schneider, violin; Walter Trampler, viola; Leslie Parnas, cello; Stephanie Brown, piano (Vanguard)

Felicitous musicmaking by veterans of the Marlboro Music Festival. One has the feeling of having dropped in on four talented friends who just got together to play some music that they happen to like.

E.C.

Lisa Burns (MCA)

If it isn't enough to tell you that this is the best consistent Phil Spector imitation since Dave Edmunds' *Subtle as a Flying Mallet*, let me continue: Burns is among the best "new wave" acts I've heard — smashing Blondie and all of the other girls, and right up there with the Ramones and Plastic Bertrand. The original songs, by Burns and collaborators plus John "Moon" Martin, are in a class with the standards including "When

You Walk in the Room" and a version of the Box Tops' "Soul Deep" that sounds filtered through "You've Lost That Loving' Feeling."

Lynne Manor



Kate Bush: The Kick Inside

 (Harvest)

Sounding something like Renaissance's Annie Haslam and a bit like Phoebe Snow, the nineteen-year-old protégée of Pink Floyd's David Gilmour is backed by a full orchestra for this impressive debut album of original folk-art material. "Wuthering Heights" was recently a #1 record in England, so the album must be judged "commercial" in some respect. But generally, it's probably too sophisticated for popular tastes. Come on, prove me wrong — any example of something as arcane in its appeal as this would make a welcome replacement for airplay given the like of anything from James Taylor and his relatives to today's flabby metal bands.

L.M.

Carillo: Rings Around the Moon

 (Atlantic)

Leader Frank Carillo is a Phantom of the Studio, familiar only to those who read the small type on the backliners and innersleeves of albums. An American living in England and working with folk like Peter Frampton (with whom he recorded three albums), he's returned to form a strong band and record his own long-player. Much of the writing, singing and playing is in the pre-psychedelic early-mid-Sixties vein that's making a (to these ears) welcome resurgence. A familiar song would have strengthened proceedings a bit, but overall, the album is an interesting and worthy "debut."

T.E.

Ron Carter: Peg Leg

 (Milestone).

Ron Carter is a superb bassist — fast and clean and fluid and full of beautiful, sophisticated musical ideas. Here, he has augmented his regular quartet (Ben Riley, Buster Williams, and Kenny Barron) with a quartet of woodwinds arranged and conducted by Robert M. Freedman, and the results are wonderful. Carter is always the star, but he is never overbearing about it. He is modest, even when he's carrying solo lines. He lets you know so firmly that he doesn't have to show off, that in fact, he really *doesn't* have to show off. He's also very funny sometimes, as when he quotes a standard disco bass line ever so briefly on "My Ship," or floats a bit of "S'Wonderful" through his solo on "Epistrophe," only to be echoed almost tauntingly by the woodwinds. A most appealing album.

Colman Andrews