



IAN HUNTER

You're Never Alone with a Schizophrenic (Chrysalis)

Mott the Hoople was one of the few great rock & roll bands to emerge during the early Seventies and a seminal influence—quite possibly the major one—on the British punk scene. The band's guiding light was Ian Hunter, whose highly personalized visions were filled with resignation but simultaneously possessed an inspirational quality, a sense of carrying on in spite of overwhelming odds.

After a brilliant debut album in collaboration with ex-Bowie guitarist Mick Ronson, Hunter's solo career slid downhill and he seemed fated for the obscurity reserved for those who are ahead of the times. But *You're Never Alone with a Schizophrenic* finds him reunited with Ronson on a new label and with a new lease on artistic life.

Schizophrenic doesn't break any new ground. Hunter instead has chosen to retrench on the fertile musical turf that made his first solo effort so memorable. Rather than the slashing guitars of yore, the sound here is firmly anchored by the E Street rhythm section and the focus on Hunter's evocative vocals.

"Just Another Night" and "Wild East" are characteristically incisive urban street travelogues while "When the Daylight Comes" is a gently effective re-write of the "Sweet Jane" riff.

"Cleveland Rocks" is the album's hardest rocker and a text-book example of Hunter's slyness (notice how the chorus almost imperceptibly shifts to "England Rocks" during one section). But the pinnacle is "Standin' in My Light," a haunting description of his internal struggles about returning to the performing arena marked by the kind of simple but majestic musical framework Hunter has always been so adept at creating.

Schizophrenic is a very solid, enjoyable album with few weak links. While it's true some of the punk bands have replaced him as spokesman for restless youth, Hunter proves here that he still has a finger on the emotional pulse of the times. It's great to see him back in command, and both of me heartily recommend the LP.

Don Snowden

TERRY ALLEN

Lubbock (on Everything) (Fate Records)

Now, I don't expect anyone to believe me when I say that this is the best country-rock album I've ever heard, but, then, a man's gotta do what a man's gotta do, so I hereby say that this is the best country-rock album I've ever heard, and I don't care if anyone believes me or not.

Allen's voice is modest but it never misses, never jars. It is folksy and wise-ass without ever getting tiresome. On piano he sounds like Leon Russell with seven fingers missing.

The real thing is the songs (this is a two-record set, and there are a lot of them—21 in all), mostly about growing up in Texas, being an artist and the continuity of relationships and discontinuity of love. They're full of humor and beautiful imagery and sometimes strikingly sad lines.

Writing of a football hero gone bad in "The Great Joe Bob (A Regional Tragedy)," Allen tells us, "First he lost his scholarship / To

Texas Tech / For drinking during training / An' breaking the coach's neck . . . / Then he got suspended for acting obscene / Around the Cum-Laudy Cum-Laudy / Daughter of the Dean." In "The Wolfman of Del Rio"—the kind of song Jackson Browne might have written if he'd spent more time with teenage Mexican hookers when he was a kid and less time with Nico—he writes, "She took her first release / On the back seat / Of a 1961 black V-8 Ford / An' she just give up all control / On that vinyl tuck-an'-roll . . ." In "The Girl Who Danced Oklahoma," his hero . . . met her at a party / For a painter / She was naked and sittin' in this chair / That comes from France . . ." In "My Amigo," he writes bluntly, "I need money / I need love / I need a Cadillac / To give me a shove . . . / Yeah cause I know / My ego / Ain't my amigo / Anymore."

Production (by "Everyone on this record") is neat and very imaginative in a quiet way. Musicians include the spectacular Joe Ely and various people from his band, and some stand-out guitar work on one track by Luis Martinez.

The only thing wrong with *Lubbock (on Everything)* is that it's very hard to find. Try writing to Fate Records, 63 West Ontario Street, Chicago 60610.

Colman Andrews

ON A MISTY NIGHT

John Coltrane (Prestige)

The two sessions represented on this double album package are from 1956 and feature Coltrane as a sideman on brief sabbatical from the Miles Davis band. We hear a hard-bopping Trane whose brief tenure with Miles has given him a professionalism and sharpened his improvising wits.

The first record was originally titled "Tenor Conclave" with Trane as one of four frontline tenor men. The others are Al Cohn, Hank Mobley and Zoot Simms—an interesting ensemble of "four brothers." Cohn and Simms are more cool, working out of the Lester Young tradition, while Mobley and Trane carve out rough-hewn statements. With Red Garland, Paul Chambers (also on leave from Miles), and drummer Art Taylor, this record cooks, notably so during Cohn's sexy first chorus on "How Deep Is the Ocean?"

Tadd Dameron was the consummate bebop arranger and an important composer in modern jazz. His recorded material, however, has been re-issued under everyone's name but his: Fats Navarro, Dizzy Gillespie, Miles, Gil Evans, and now Coltrane. This LP was titled *Mating Call* and Trane was the only horn player backed by Dameron on piano, bassist John Simmons and Philly Joe Jones. Dameron wasn't a great soloist and pretty much sticks to his "arranger's piano" here, allowing Coltrane plenty of room to stretch.

The title track is an easy-swing jaunt, "Romas" is a low-down blues, "Super Jet" is boppish and features a tough Philly Joe. All of the compositions are rife with Dameron's hallmark: beauty.

Kirk Silsbee

TONY WILLIAMS

The Joy of Flying (Columbia)

Greatness has never eluded Tony Williams, but it seems that public recognition and fame

have. Only 33, he has played major roles in the classic Miles Davis quintet of the mid-Sixties and more recently with Herbie Hancock's V.S.O.P. Quintet, yet his own career as a solo artist has not exactly been meteoric.

This is due mainly to two reasons. First, in this day of Guinness Book record-consciousness speedy drummers, Tony Williams plays what is necessary, not what is the most flashy. Secondly, and most important, is his sporadic recording output under his own name. *The Joy of Flying* is his first album in three years, but he more than makes up for lost time with it. This album could be the one that brings Williams his own legion of fans.

All the right ingredients are included. As John McLaughlin did on *Electric Guitarist*, Tony has assembled an all-star cast, with different groupings rather than one large blow-out jam band. The sound is commercial enough to generate airplay and gain a wide audience, yet even the most ardent critic of electronic jazz/rock will be hard put to come up with major criticisms against *Joy's* music. As with everything Tony lays his sticks to, *The Joy of Flying* has taste.

George Benson, Tom Scott, Herbie Hancock, Stanley Clarke and Jan Hammer all bring their unique identities to the music, and the results are never less than stirring. Benson especially cuts loose, attaining a clearer, harder tone than he has used in quite some time.

The most interesting cuts, however, are the two side-closers. Side one ends with "Open Fire," an all-out hard-rock guitar free-for-all featuring Ronnie Montrose and Brian Auger that was recorded very much alive in Tokyo, Japan. It proves that Tony can rock out when he wants.

Side two closes with what should prove to be the classic cut from this album. It's "Morgan's Motion," an aural travel through mountains and valleys of sound, created spontaneously by pianist Cecil Taylor and Tony. "Motion" is a *tour de force* (and short enough for airplay), and is reason alone to buy the album. If nothing else, *The Joy of Flying* should help Cecil Taylor reach a mass audience, along with Tony Williams. And that would be doubly nice.

Paul Andersen



JOHN McLAUGHLIN

Electric Dreams (Columbia)

A sepia-toned, sinister McLaughlin sits over a cup of coffee while ghostly images of electric appliances hover behind. Something different is cooking in Johnny's kitchen.

What is new on *Dreams* is a bold political statement as well as a fruitful merger of East-

ern and Western music, with blues and jazz influences predominating, representative of what McLaughlin calls "new jazz roots bubbling within."

Borrowing from mainstream fusion melodies that twist through sharp and mostly gentle turns, these new tunes are imbued with blues-inspired lyricism. "Miles Davis" is a funky fusion piece set in a Mahavishnu mode, propelled by the drumming of Tony Smith. Just when the music threatens to bury itself in an avalanche of percussion, it is resurrected by a carefully harmonized movement led by McLaughlin, who peels off bird-like cries of melody much like Miles himself. "Electric Dreams, Electric Signs" opens with a sublime impressionistic soundscape which draws inspiration from Roy Buchanan's "Messiah Comes Home Again." With L. Shankar's lyrical violin solo, however, the influence shifts from West to East.

The compelling rhythmic backdrop of "Desire and the Comforter"—with its upbeat Jeff Beck-ish tempo—is spirited by Smith who proves himself to be a polished drummer, hard-hitting yet able to shift through an array of percussive textures.

The new things brewing in Johnny's kitchen are most evident in "The Unknown Dissident," a highly emotive cut featuring spirited exchanges with seamless transitions between saxophone and guitar. In a startling break from "God-consciousness" tradition, McLaughlin ends this melancholy ballad with sounds of execution—the grating noise of a jail cell door, footsteps, and finally a gunshot in the distance. The juxtaposition of this political commentary against the expressive moans of the guitar—bluesy bending and serpentine phrases—makes this the most powerful cut on the album.

Gideon Bosker

ORLEANS

Forever (Infinity/MCA)

According to a recent advertisement in the record business trades, "The new Orleans sounds better than the old Orleans!" Well, the old Orleans sounded very good, notwithstanding the fact that the lyrics—by the group's since-departed leader John Hall—were the most vacuous scribbles this side of Toto. They were fun songs for driving along on a Sunday afternoon—infectious, upbeat and nourishing as a Twinkie.

The new Orleans is not nearly so bright-eyed and squeaky-clean in sound as was the old Orleans, but the band, as presented on *Forever*, still bounces along to a happy beat that would make Elvis Costello puke. Its latest songwriting honchos—Marilyn Mason with guitarist Larry Hoppen, pianist "Bald Man" Leinbach and organist R.A. Martin—have an acute ear for human pain, the agony of love and the torment of loss. After blather like "Still the One," which was best used as the theme for the past ABC season, it's good to see Orleans dealing with genuine sentiment and emotion. With any luck, their sound will follow obediently behind.

Merrill Shindler

RICKIE LEE JONES

Rickie Lee Jones (Warner Bros.)

It's probably annoying for a young singer/songwriter like Rickie Lee Jones to be compared to the leading lights in her field—particularly when her own work displays a singular sense of craft, of poetry, and an emotional, wry intelligence. Nonetheless, there are some readily apparent influences: the short-story scenarios of Randy Newman, the moody soul colorings of Laura Nyro, the rhythmic lyricism of Joni Mitchell and the scruffy lifestyle that pervades Tom Waits'