

work. But Rickie Lee Jones rarely strikes an imitative pose—she's listened to other people's records, but her best songs slither out with a natural, jazzy ease all her own. From the warmhearted "Chuck E.'s in Love" to the streetwise "Young Blood" to the garage mechanic metaphors for love of "Last Chance Texaco," Jones' relaxed, rangy vocals don't sound forced or affected—her singing is tough yet tender, variably erotic, womanly, childlike and demure.

The problem with the 24-year-old Jones' first album lies in its production. Jones' bar-room blues and cruising Chevrolet choruses call for a rougher, more spontaneous jazz combo assemblage—perhaps a semi-sloppy stand-up bass and funkier piano fills. That's a minor gripe, though, because the musician-ship—while a touch antiseptic—never intrudes. This is, as they say, an impressive debut.

Steven X. Rea

PATTI SMITH GROUP Wave (Arista)

Dionysian celebration has always been Patti Smith's forte—the ecstatic, overwhelming feeling of dynamic rock & roll that she brings to her music. She's still as much a fan as a performer.

But *Wave*, the follow-up to last year's breakthrough *Easter LP*, fails precisely because that sense of abandon is totally absent. For a band that openly admits to worshipping the Stones, the lack of those slashing rhythm guitar chords here is truly mystifying.

The material is uninspired, surprisingly lethargic and closer to pomp rock than classic rock & roll—"Citizen Ship" is built around a theme that sounds like an outtake from the first ELP album. "So You Wanna Be a Rock & Roll Star" may be a positively inspired choice for a cover song—Patti, if anyone, has lived that song—but it never really develops into the tour-de-force it ought to be.

Much of the blame goes to producer Todd Rundgren. *Wave's* sound is completely dominated by Richard Sohl's keyboards and the rhythm section, all but burying Smith's vocals and certainly making any flashes of lyrical brilliance impossible to discern.

What emerges is a more innocent and vulnerable Patti Smith, not the rock & roll general marshalling her forces to march on to final victory.

Wave is perhaps a misguided effort to consolidate the mainstream rock following Smith acquired with "Because the Night" or a flawed attempt to break new musical ground. But Patti and company have successfully rebounded from substandard efforts in the past and they'll probably do it again.

Don Snowden

GEORGE DUKE Follow the Rainbow (Epic)

Until last year when he scored his funky R&B hit "Reach for It," George Duke was something of an enigma. After years of touring with Frank Zappa and Billy Cobham, he had acquired qualifications in both the jazz and rock worlds, but his music was too funky to be called jazz-fusion. Thus Duke became a musical stylist in search of an audience—until "Reach for It" helped bring funk fans into the fold. His subsequent album, *Don't Let Go*, tried to follow the successful format he had finally established, but wasn't so strong and diverse as his previous effort. As a result, his name was finally recognized, but his music still seemed erratic.

His third Epic release, *Follow the Rainbow*, shows Duke coming to grips with the fusion he has created. Using the band he has toured with for the past two years, Duke takes a

CLASSICAL ONE-LINERS

BY ED CRAY

The inexorable rule of record reviewing holds that the greater the number of releases, the fewer the available column inches. Here, in a spasm of guilt, are one-line reviews of the more notable classical recordings of the past three months.

Baroque Masterpieces for Trumpet and Organ, Vol. III (Nonesuch) continues the survey by Edward Tarr and George Kent of little known gems sometimes stirring, sometimes sober.

Vivaldi's trio sonatas for violin(s) and supporting cast (Columbia Melodiya) are pleasurable entries in the chamber music catalogue. This is undemanding 18th Century Muzak, but stylishly rendered.

Trevor Pinnock demonstrates why J.S. Bach's early toccatas earned the younger composer a formidable reputation as a keyboard player (Archiv). Pinnock's bright recording of the Chromatic Fantasy here is especially good.

Music for Two Harpsichords by J.S. Bach and His Sons (Nonesuch) turns out to be a neat generational study. Bach's 14 newly discovered canons are pedantic curiosities; the sons outdo the father here.

Michael Debost and James Galway have at six of Telemann's sonatas for two flutes (Seraphim); tossing off this tuneful fluff in high style.

Flutist Paul Robison impresses more and more with each successive recording. Her version of Haydn's complete sonatas for flute and continuo (Vanguard) may not be as flashy as some, but it boasts pervasive musicianship, a rare commodity.

Meanwhile, Stern as conductor and Jean Pierre Rampal dash through Mozart's flute concertos (RCA) with the verve of Evel Knievel on a motorcycle—lots of varooms and speed.

Not so Artur Schnabel. That titan at nonogenarian age proves with his newest recording of the Beethoven third piano concerto (RCA) that nothing can replace taste and restraint in making music.

Beethoven's fourth symphony (four, an even number, means it is a happy one) often gets short shrift from conductors. Not from Eugene Jochum who leads the London Symphony in a loving performance, well recorded (Angel).

The Flowering of Vocal Music in America, Vol. I (New World) is an anthology of mostly Moravian music, very Mozartian, about half of it musical, about half historical curiosa.

Franz Schubert's symphonies range from charming, tuneful bon-bons to powerful, somber masterworks. Herbert von Karajan and the Berlin Philharmonic survey all nine with strengths more suited to the latter than the former (Angel).

Lovers of Wagner—this reviewer is not one—will treasure Pierre Boulez's reading with the New York Philharmonic of the bombastic "Love Feast of the Apostles." The velvet coupling, "Siegfried Idyll," makes one

forgive Boulez his excesses (Columbia).

Two versions of Bruckner's fifth symphony merit attention. Kurt Masur conducting the Leipzigers (Vanguard) is mystical; von Karajan and the Berliners (Angel) are monumental. The West Germans have the sonic edge. Take your pick.

John Knowles Paine is little performed now, though once this 19th Century Bostonian was a concert hall staple. A colleague believes the large-scale Mass in D (New World) could restore Paine to favor. It invites favorable comparison to the Verdi and Brahms requiems.

Manuel Barrueco is apparently one of the more talented of the crop of young guitarists, judging from his performance of transcribed Albeniz and Granados piano suites (Turnabout). An aficionado's prize.

New World Composers from the Old World (Vox) contains seven string quartets by as many composers written over a span of 53 years. Some of these are familiar but the prize is Hollywood-influenced Erich Korngold's frolicking contribution.

Himself "raised in Quaker silence, yet craving Catholic sound," Ned Rorem has composed what may well be the most profoundly religious piece of contemporary American music. As performed by organist Leonard Raver, "A Quaker Reader" overwhelms. Words are inadequate (CRI).

The Koussevitzky Legacy (CRI) is a slight anthology of works associated with the late conductor of the Boston Symphony, most notable for the melodic Henry Cowell Hymn and Fuging Tune No. 2. Larger concertos by Koussevitzky and Piston seem less inspired than dutiful.

middle road between jazz and funk, and this time he comes closest to pulling it off. The opening track, "Party Down," is more straight funk than fusion, but powered by a fiery rhythm track. The rest of the album strays between hot funk, romantic ballads, and keyboard-dominated jazzy instrumentals.

"I Am for Real" is another straightforward funkier that succeeds in a "Reach for It" chant vein, while "Funkin' for the Thrill" is underdeveloped rhythmically and clichéd lyrically. "Say That You Will" and "Sunrise" are love ballads that flow nicely but suffer from weak lyrics. Another ballad, "Straight from the Heart," has a sweet summer feel; and while the lyrics are thin they fit the mood Duke is striving for. Of the three instrumentals, only "Festival," a light, Latin-flavored tune, takes off behind guitarist Charles Johnson's solo and then jumps into a hot Duke solo.

While *Follow the Rainbow* finds Duke moving in a more compatible direction, his weakness as a lyricist is sorely evident. Though he's one of fusion's most exciting keyboard wizards, Duke's lyrics are half-baked word-plays to accompany the riffs.

Tom Vickers

MUDDY WATERS Muddy 'Mississippi' Waters Live (Blue Sky)

Muddy Waters' string of Johnny Winter-produced Blue Sky albums becomes a potent

trilogy with this release, featuring the fullness of support that made *Hard Again* and *I'm Ready* so complete—Winters on guitar, Pinetop Perkins on piano and James Cotton on harp among the contributors. The live format finds Waters and his players busting out more, revealing more of the boastful good nature behind Waters' art. Newcomers to the blues, both fans and musicians, sometimes believe self-pity and macho pride are the whole story. Waters, in his mesmerizing strong-heartedness, projects humanity more than vanity, however, lacing each phrase with both sexy insinuation and endurance-tested self-affirmation. The attitudes of an unstoppable vital person.

The Rolling Stones, who copped their name from a Waters tune, also lifted recently the arrangement of "Mannish Boy" featured on *Hard Again* and *Live*. Which, along with Waters' appearance in *The Last Waltz*—with Robbie Robertson's post-song exclamation, "Wasn't that a man! Muddy Waters!"—proves continuing vitality. So do *Live* and its companion albums, possibly the strongest recordings of his forty-nine year music career.

Byron Laursen

SUN RA Languidity (Philly Jazz)

Sun Ra's place in jazz history has been secure for quite some time now. He pioneered space music, unorthodox instrumentation and extramusical sounds since the mid-1950's, successfully applying free music to a big band

context. Perhaps his biggest achievement has been to retain three major horn players for more than twenty years of lean times: tenorist John Gilmore, altoist Marshall Allen and baritonist Pat Patrick.

Of late, Sun Ra's recorded work has caused his stock in the jazz community to take a tumble. With *Languidity*, the Sun King goes disco. It's ironic that after nearly thirty years as jazz's premier iconoclast Sun Ra should bow to fashion. Ralph Gleason, the late founder of *Rolling Stone*, said that Sun Ra deserved popularity, but Gleason hoped the public would rise to meet the artist, not that he would drop his standards.

This LP has none of the qualities of the great Sun Ra recordings: stirring arrangements, exotic instrumental voicings, inspired solos and riotous collective exchanges. Check *Pictures of Infinity*, *It's After the End of the World* or *The Solar-Myth Approach*, Vol. I and II for those attributes.

Languidity features a plodding beat with Marshall Allen's oboe over colorless horns. "There Are Other Worlds," this album's concession to Sun Ra's pamphlet poetry, comes off a little too cryptic. Some acoustic piano passages begin to provoke interest, but it's too little and too late.

John Gilmore is a vital tenor sax voice, an inspiration for John Coltrane's later work. Historically, Gilmore's role has been that of a free jazz Ben Webster to Sun Ra's Duke Ellington. Unfortunately, even Gilmore can't undo *Languidity's* basic torpor.

Kirk Silsbee