

LPs

SANDINISTA! The Clash Epic E3X 37037

The Clash, having survived the challenge of sidestepping the "punk rock" pigeonhole and its accompanying restrictions, proved capable of creating the two-record set *London Calling* without a duff track.

Now, the group has attempted what, in its eyes, must be the logical next step: a self-produced, 36-track, three record set. And, in the process, they've proven that bigger isn't necessarily better.

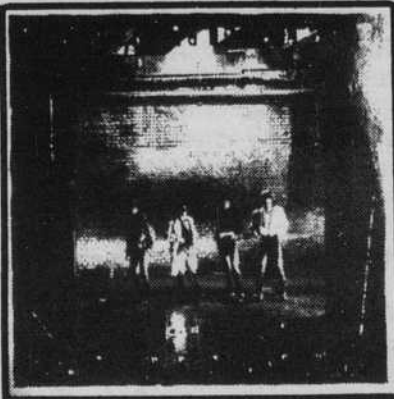
SANDINISTA! sounds like the work of a band that went into a studio with a group of friends and recorded everything that came into their heads. It would appear that when everyone ran out of ideas the Clash listened to what it had, and, to avoid hurting anyone's feelings, decided to lay aside considerations of quality and just put everything in.

Examined in this light, the Clash's efforts to obtain a lower list price (*SANDINISTA!* can be purchased for the average price of a two-record set) seems less a magnanimous gesture than a way to assuage guilt feelings.

The quality of the material

on *SANDINISTA!* ranges from superb to absolutely pathetic.

Among the highs are the rap-influenced "Magnificent Seven" and "Lightning Strikes Not Once But Twice," the gospel-oriented "Sound of the Sinners," and the world-politics-on-the-dance-floor vision of "Ivan Meets G.I. Joe."



One Timon Dogg contributes (and sings, in a snarl which sounds like a high-pitched Johnny Rotten) a tune called "Lose This Skin," which contains the most inspired use of violins in a rock and roll context since Sid Vicious' tender mauling of "My Way" several years ago. Mick Jones' "Somebody Got Murdered" also gains high marks, as does a powerful cover of Eddy Grant's "Police on my Back."

Sharing co-honors with "Mensforth Hill" in the

Lowest-of-the-Lows category is "The Crooked Beat." Bassist Paul Simonon, who couldn't lift a tune with a crane, is inexplicably allowed the lead vocals on this track. "Crooked Beat" and *London Calling's* "Guns of Brixton" demonstrate that Simonon should be restrained, by force if necessary, from getting within range of a microphone.

Also worthless are the last four tracks on Side Five, and all of Side Six, with the exception of a wonderful children's version of "Career Opportunities."

One of the key tasks of a producer is to decide what should and what shouldn't appear on any given release. The fact that *SANDINISTA!* is so overblown indicates that the Clash isn't up to the task itself. The strong material on *SANDINISTA!* would fit comfortably on four sides.

The group needs an outside producer, a Guy Stevens or even a Sandy Pearlman, to force them to separate the wheat from the proverbial chaff. The combination of both (which is *SANDINISTA!*) can be forgiven once, but listeners may not be so patient the next time.

Phil Bernstein

Take a break in Ashland

Over spring break you may want to take advantage of the Oregon Shakespearean Festival Association's special student matinees during March (and later in October).

Tickets are priced at \$3.50 and include a post-play discussion with the cast. There is also a three play for \$12.00 plan consisting of two evening plays

and one special matinee.

Student Rush begins one half hour before showtime. Students with a valid I.D. card may purchase any remaining tickets for \$3.50.

The plays include: *Twelfth Night*, *Wild Oats*, *Death of a Salesman*, *'Tis a Pity She's a Whore*, *Othello*, *Two Gentlemen*

of *Verona*, *Artichoke*, *The Birthday Party*, *The Island* and *Henry the IV, Part One*.

Contact the Festival Box Office in Ashland at 482-4331 for more information or reservations; or the EMU Main Desk at 686-4361.

Poet Kizer to visit coast

The Oregon Council for the Arts continues its 4th Winter Poets Reading Series with readings and workshops March 19-22 by Carolyn Kizer.

Former Director of the National Endowment for the Arts Literary Program and founding editor of *Poetry Northwest*, she has also written a book entitled *Knowck Upon Silence*.

Workshops will be held on March 19 and 20 in Newport from 2-5 p.m. in St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. Readings by Kizer are March 20 in Newport, March 21 in Astoria and March 22 in Brookings.

All readings are at 8 p.m. In Newport the reading is at Sacred Heart Catholic Church; in Astoria, Clatsop Community College Performing Arts Center; in Brookings at the Azalea School Library.

The workshops cost \$10; the readings cost \$3.

Contact the Council in Newport if you have questions at 265-9231.

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