

**A ticket to success:
Dennis Smith's
"Excursion Fare."
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THE Friday EDITION

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Photo by Karen Stallwood

Our picks for new music

Friday morning: You stretch and yawn when the alarm clock blares, trying hard to convince yourself that chemistry is important enough to get out of bed for. You rub your eyes and notice the sky, which is not gray as it has been for the past month, but is instead a clear, pale blue.

You smile in spite of yourself. Springtime is exhilarating. Spring, you think, is the best of all seasons. You dig through your trunk in search of last year's hiking shorts. You put away your sweaters and boots. Spring, with its characteristic newness, is a good time for you to take up a new sport, wash your old car, have a fling.

And listen to new music. We music-lovers at *The Friday Edition* had time over spr-

ing break to listen to a few new albums and are offering our impressions. The rest is up to you.

**Richard Thompson
"Across A Crowded Room"
PolyGram Records
Review by Kim Carlson**

Solo guitarist and vocalist Richard Thompson, who began performing in the late '60s, is hailed as a musician's musician. Although he has a devoted cult following (*Rolling Stone's* Kurt Loder calls him "one of the great buried treasures of British rock"), the mass public has not yet become attached to him.

Perhaps the anonymity strengthens Thompson's

music, a blend of modern folk and rock'n'roll with Celtic roots — definitely not trendy or compromising. However, if everyone who listens to it likes his new album as much as I do, Thompson may soon be heard on AM.

Most of the cuts on "Across a Crowded Room" are excellent; many reflect a love gone bad. Loneliness, jealousy and despair reign, yet we never feel abandoned by hope. Thompson, we know, has suffered through a recent divorce, and yet he's come out with his humor intact, as evident in "Little Blue Number."

The upbeat "She Twists the Knife Again" contrasts with the moody "Ghost in the Wind," a slow song complete with far-off bagpipes. And in all the songs, Thompson's

vocals are earnest and strong. I sense a very together human being behind his music — a rare talent in modern rock'n'roll.

**Animation
"Animation"
PolyGram Records
Review by Mike Duncan**

A Syn-Pop, new wave-influenced band from New York, Animation has been getting airwave exposure with "Obsession," a song written by lead vocalist and guitarist Bill Wadhams. In the new music genre, Animation's sound is heavy guitar backed with punchy keyboards and an equally complementary vocal track by lead vocalist Astrid Plane. The rest of the music on

the album becomes very slick and commercial; not consistent with the innovative hit receiving much airplay on both pop radio and special new music programs.

Overall, the effort is a bit on the weak side. The rest of the album acts as filler for the expected hit "Obsession."

**The Vels
"Velocity"
PolyGram Records
Review by Mike Duncan**

Clean, bright and contemporary are just a few of the adjectives that come to mind while listening to The Vels, a three-member band whose members perform vocals.

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