

own death.

"I'm the last Mannon," she says resolutely. "I've got to punish myself! Living here alone with the dead is a worse act of justice than death or prison! I'll never go out or see anyone! I'll have the shutters nailed close so no sunlight can ever get in. I'll live alone with the dead, and keep their secrets, and let them hound me, until the curse is paid out and the last Mannon is let die! I know they will see to it I live a long time! It takes the Mannons to punish themselves for being born!"

The concept of the play is outrageously ambitious. It may play now like florid melodrama, but it is still absorbing, stimulating, and compelling. *Mourning Becomes Electra* is a distinguished original.

However, its first revival in 40 years is a real disgrace. Of all the actors, only Jane Alexander has the ability to turn O'Neill's groping prose into an American equivalent of classic verse. The others struggle along, but they are in over their heads. Michael Kahn has directed the play as if it were a corpse that could never be brought back to life and William Rittman's set is a mess. The design finds the obvious parallels between classic architecture and its Nineteenth Century New England equivalent but it is cute about its insight. It seems to be saying,

right up until the mid-50's. Drugs, however, have never been the white man's private holding. And drugs have always been available to ghetto communities. Not by white design but by neglect and unconcern. Gave ghetto folk a lot of hope too.

Just above the Chemical Warfare passage Leary offers an incomplete history of "The Star Spangled Banner." He implies great and ugly significance to its drinking song origins. I don't see why. Seems to me people should enjoy sitting around hoisting a few while singing their anthems. I've never sung "The Star Spangled Banner" in a saloon. Among the songs I have joined in on are "Mr.

forever (and with a five hour play every minute counts) to get from one scene to the next.

As I've said before, *Mourning Becomes Electra* deserves better.

The Last Analysis was a flawed play when it was first produced in 1967; the flaws have not faded in the past four years. Its original production inspired a small but noisy cult; that cult is bound to grow during the play's present incarnation, despite the fact that the flaws in the current production at the Circle in the Square are even greater than the flaws in the play's text. Flaws don't seem to matter with plays like *The Last Analysis*. There are ideas and attitudes locked in the play that earn one's approval and that seems to be enough.

The play is the story of Philip Bummidge's last analysis. Bummidge is a faded television comedian (a disproportionate combination of Milton Berle and Professor Irwin Corey). He has always lamented the fact that his mindless work has received gales and gales of mindless laughter, but his spirit now demands that he do something mindful with his life. Bummidge wants to put people in touch with themselves, and he has invented his own psychoanalytic technique to further this end. His method consists of gathering together the friends and family of the patient to reenact incidents from the

trauma and the subject's literal rebirth. Edwards' "This Is Your Life" with Jan-ov's primal scream therapy before there was a primal scream therapy.)

Bummidge uses the technique on himself and projects it via closed circuit television to the Waldorf-Astoria where a group of show business and psychiatric experts wildly endorse Bummidge's method. The play ends as Bummidge envisions a Bummidge Institute dedicated to the cure of neurotics of all colors, creeds, religions, and ages, through the judicious use of the Bummidge Method.

Another creaking farce? Another parody of the thirties masquerading as the psychoanalysis? Another rewrite of *You Can't Take It With You*? What makes this peculiar play so appealing despite its tremendous faults?

The play works because it reflects the author's concern with the dignity of man coupled with one of Bellow's favorite characterizations, the Jew disguised as intellectual, one of contemporary America's favorite stereotypes, is finally invented with a sense of real exploration. Here, Bummidge attempts to duplicate the path of that greatest of Jewish Columbuses, Sigmund Freud, and gets into his Koshersized canoe to paddle into that thickest of all chicken soups, the

people are worth healing and life is worth the attempt to give it meaning. The distinguished novelist reinforces his basic humanism in his first play.

Unfortunately, director Theodore Mann has just tossed the script into the huge central playing area of his downtown theatre, and left the play to hunt up its own form. The play is farce and farce requires tremendous energy and speed. In its good moments, this production kicks the needle up to "lethargy." Joseph Wiseman's Bummidge (he played Dr. No in the James Bond flick) never convinces that he was a great comic or that he's stumbled on the cure for the world's ills. The text states that the dramatization of the last analysis causes an uproar but the performances and the direction defy you to believe it. Only David Margulies as Bummidge's rat-catcher buddy succeeds in creating the kind of individual performance that allows Bellow's well-intentioned stereotypes to come to life with individuality and purpose.

Active and intelligent minds attempt to fill the theatre with their visions of power and intensity. Scaled-down actors and directors, weaned on too much television, suffering from the prosaicness of their own sizes, shrink the plays to the size of everybody else. And the passive audience does not complain. For shame! *The Post must be served!*

the reader the way fine writing does on an earth a little more solid than when left.

The interesting essay is frustrating. It tells of a love-hate-violence episode between two cons in which Leary got himself involved. Gimmicky, sketchy, sentimental. There was something here wanting to be told. All spread out waiting to be had. The having, though, needed the talents of a good, tough novelist. An Algren. Or one of the MacDonaldis, Ross or John D.

The final line of the book is "And Venus was our guiding light and all that we beheld was love." To which, boys and girls, I add Aw Snucks.

Remember Captain Marvel? Whenever Billy Batson got threatened by the myopic scientist he summoned the wisdom of the ages by calling SHAZAM. Crippled newboys of the world unite.

Near the end of the book are three essays. One interesting, one excellent, one I just gave up on. The excellent doesn't really fit with the rest of *Jail Notes* and I suspect it was included to pad out the pages. A memory-travelogue piece which a hip Holiday might print. It soars, takes the reader on a flight through Morocco kif joints, glides onto the experience of listening to Arab musicians do their number, then lands

Tambourine Man" and "We Shall Overcome" and "Puff the Magic Dragon" and "This Land is Your Land." I've also dropped quarters into booth house juke boxes to hear hit parade-drug hypes.

Let's take one more. The obvious one. The one I first saw scrawled on the police-built wall blocking the ruins of a bombed building on 11th Street. Dope is hope. Come on, man. That's a graffiti goof. Say it can be fun. Like food sex talk thought movies music etc. But when you start digging it for hope you're in trouble. I mean, Lenny Bruce and Janis Joplin didn't ace out in car crashes.

half notes

Paul Kantner's "Blows Against the Empire" lp and the Firesign Theater's "Don't Crush that Dwarf, Hand Me the Pliers" have been nominated for the coveted Hugo Award, the science fiction field's top honor.

Kantner's album is the first musical production of any kind ever to be nominated for the Hugo. (named for Hugo Gurnsbeck "founder of Science Fiction") Five-time Hugo winner Harlan Ellison, offers this comment on Kantner's work: "No really avant garde science fiction writer considers his work up-to-date until he has listened to 'Blows Against the Empire.'" "Empire" and the Firesign Theater offering were both nominated in the "Best Dramatic Presentation" category. Hugo winners will be announced in September.

Doug Sahm is home in Texas after five years in the Bay area. His new album, "The Return of Doug Saidana," (that's what Chicanos call Doug), features long-time Sahm keyboarder Augie Meyer, drummer Jack Barber and Doug on fiddle and guitar. Sahm is also appearing in a new movie, "The Dealer," which stars Kris Kristofferson.



Doug Saidana

American International Pictures, the film company that has given us all those beach 'n biker films, not to mention ghoul 'n gore epics, has announced its schedule of releases for the second half of 1971. Among the titles: "The Return of Count Yorga"; "Chrome and Hot Leather"; "The Year of the Cannibals"; "Lizard in a Woman's Skin"; and the re-release of "Wild in the Streets" and "The Wild Angels."

In a column a couple weeks ago, William F. Buckley pronounced the end of Woodstock Nation. Commenting on the closing of the Filmores, Buckley wrote: "it is as if the Catholic Church closed down Lourdes. Woodstock Nation, R.I.P." Later in the column he observed that "The rock concert is definitely over." It is?

Motown has announced that Ricky Owens, former lead singer with the

Illustration has been selected from among 500 applicants to realize Erdős

OM A HUM

by Ro-Non-So-Te (Keith Lampe)

The sexual revolution is over. In its time it was thoroughly successful—a helpful tool in our efforts to drop out of the Occidental tradition of property, intellect and urban civilization. Now in the present phase of our efforts neurally is the key aspect. As we get clear with ourselves at neural levels we move on into the magnificent burgeoning renaissance . . .

Neural deconditioning, then, is what most of us now are going through. It's of course a much more intricate process than the verbal-behavioral preludes of which the sexual revolution had been such a significant part. Intricate mostly because we haven't yet been able to make our new neural knowledge conscious enough to verbalize them into categories. We're all still such children of the Occident that the absence of categories makes us nervous. (Without categories we must remember that we die: Occidental logic originated from a failure of nerve.) When we're nervous we can't make love deeply. Sometimes when we're nervous we can't or don't make love-fuck at all.

As Occidentals, we are victims of words. In the "beginning" was the seed-syllable, emphatically not the word or Word. No need to have words for our neural deconditioning. No need. Just go through. Just go through that tiny hole or narrow crack (cf. Castaneda's *The Teachings of Don Juan*).

To go through that hole is to "die." Fritz Peris says "To suffer one's death and to be reborn is not easy." In the last

neutrality—though exalted & exalting—is such an intricate thing that the making of two such intricate neural nets of sexuality is often a frustrating process doubly intricate. On the one side that neural sluggishness or estrangement whose pre-dying analog is frigidity or impotence; on the other side that high speed, anxious neurality whose oldtime analog is nymphomania-satyromania.

Neural pacing must become understood . . . Dying, we drop out of the Occident. Deconditioned, many of us turn to the Orient for neural reconditioning. How to combine good deep fucking with the new (Buddhist) neurality of detachment? How to no longer cling to (Occidentalesse: "be dependent on") the mate, yet get into his-her body to the last intimate ecstatic cell?

Peris provides a good secular verbalization of detachment:

I do my thing, and you do your thing.
I am not in this world to live up to
your expectations
And you are not in this world to live
up to mine.

You are you and I am I.
And if by chance we find each other,
it's beautiful

A fine renaissance statement. But how to combine this admirable freedom-loving scheme with the, almost universally felt desire in this period of incredible historic discontinuity for a continuous comprehensive intimacy with some one? Some one because such intimacy between adults takes so much energy it's strenuous to try it with many more. Those few who are enlightened to

FILMS

Happy Entrails to You: A Real Shocker

by Patrick Snyder



The Night of the Living Dead

directed by George Romero

I am addicted to horror movies and to satisfy my craving have watched thousands of hours of incredibly stupid films. Like most other late night fright junkies, I am attracted by the supernatural and totally fantastic elements of the genre and the direct visceral stimulation of fear that it promises but unfortunately rarely provides. More often than not, horror films are a source of unintentional, although admittedly macabre, humor rather than real fright. *Night of the Living Dead*, therefore, caught me by surprise. For the first time, a film terrified me so completely that the very thought of it sends my eyes darting around the room searching for a handy bludgeon and a quick escape route.

Made by a group of independent amateurs in Pittsburgh, of all places, for \$125,000, *Night of the Living Dead* has already grossed close to five million dollars without the benefit of the distributing and promoting facilities of a major company. It had a five month run in Paris but its distribution in the United States has been totally haphazard. Turning up as the third film at Halloween Fright-Night Specials and at obscure uptown theaters in New York playing second to an old Christopher Lee gore fest, it acquired a quickly multiplying coterie of fans that have made it the underground cult film of the year.

The purpose of a horror movie reads entirely in its effect; form, content, and technique should all serve the goal of frightening the audience, and in *Night of the Living Dead*, they are orchestrated to

(read with traditional Karloff flap) "They're coming to get you, Barbers"



cemetery sequence that follows was shot late on an overcast fall afternoon lending a flat, shadowless quality to the images which introduces an eerie sense of foreboding that is quickly justified. The house which is the setting for the bulk of the action is typically rural America. The mundane familiarity of its furnishings makes it an environment that the audience can easily identify with, greatly strengthening the impact of the events that happen within it. A device that even more effectively creates a sense of reality for the viewer is the use of television news casts reporting a wave of mass murder to the trapped occupants of the isolated house. We are conditioned to believe TV newscasters, and having one in his controlled professional voice explain to the characters and audience the cause of the ghastly events enveloping the house makes those events considerably more believable.

There are of course obvious flaws in the film. The dialogue, although minimal, is atrocious and the actors who deliver it, being unprofessionals, range in quality from mediocre to terrible. However, these faults are unimportant because they do not at all impinge on the major thrust of the film and its goal of unrelieved terror.

Night of the Living Dead is a film you should definitely see; first, because I've done so well at not giving the plot away; second, because it will become the standard to which all subsequent horror films will be compared; and third, because it will scare the living shit out of you. Good luck and, bring a friend—preferably a live one—whose hand you can hold.

at their living flesh with hopes of feeding it to once-dead mouths. The incalculable cultural taboos against cannibalism and desecration of the body are violated before their eyes as they helplessly watch two of their number literally torn apart and devoured. And later, the next-to-final horror of having one of themselves become possessed and turn on his fellows leaves most of the audience in a state of cardiac arrest.

The technique of the film is effective because of its straightforward simplicity. Shot in black and white in a semi-documentary style, the film goes without flashy technical effects or camera work that might remind you that you are watching a film. By never calling attention to itself, it focuses your awareness completely on the terrifying unfolding action.

The atmosphere developed is superficially normal in the beginning, but the

do so superbly. The plot is a relentless series of events building to a climactic crescendo of chilling shocks that will leave you cringing in your seat. The story is classic in its simplicity: a group of seven individuals are trapped in an isolated farm house and besieged by scores of animated corpses with a maniacal craving for human flesh. By no means could this be called a gothic horror film. There is no romanticization of the antagonists as is found in *Dracula* and *Frankenstein*. The evil here is irrational and plays on the deepest fears of the human psyche. A nightmarish quality pervades the film: the characters have barricaded themselves in a house none of them has ever been in before and are threatened by a most gruesome death they have done nothing to earn. The tension is nerve-shattering as rocks thud against the bolted doors and bands reach through boarded windows to clutch

WHISPERINGS

by Gypsy Louie



Goldy, Alice Cooper, Moe Austin, Ahmet Ertegun, at the party of the year,
extravaganza in honor of delightful Alice.

..... good nostalgic times for New York club goers. The Bitter end featured Tom Paxton who, the evening I saw him, distinguished himself by singing one new song. The oldies, however, were a pleasure. If Paxton never writes another song, he'll be able to concertize on his past glories for years. His new Warner's album is a bit of a bummer, well, a bit of a bore. Appearing on the bill was an English lady, Marián Segal, who is pleasant but minor and who owes a great deal to Joni Mitchell, especially for her anti-church song "Saints on Tapestry," which is almost a complete steal of the opening melody line of "Woodstock."

Joni Mitchell's newest album *Blue* is superb, and heart-breaking. Bitter End followed Paxton with John Deever, who although fairly new as a star on the concert-club circuit drips nostalgia. Denver's been looking tired and

The Who are all set for two American tours later this year. They'll be playing mostly new material, including songs from their new album, *The Who's Next*, to be released simultaneously in the U.K. and U.S. at the end of July. The group will also be giving a major free concert at a venue to be announced later.

Material from the new album will replace "Tommy" as the basis of the band's act. They'll be playing a specially brief version of the rock opera, some of their old hits, and a number of new songs not included on the album. And of course, the group's new single "Won't Get Fooled Again."

Songs on the new album are "Baba," "O'Reilly," "Bargain," "My Wife," "Blue Eyes," "Love Ain't For Keepin'," "Gettin' in Tune," "Song is Over," "Going Mobile," and an extended version of "Won't Get Fooled Again." It's

goody for the hip. But he's a rator some times. "Take Me Home Country Roads." And—can you dig it!—has a top forty hit in "Take Me Home Country Roads." Co-writers of that monster hit as well as co-singers on the record are Fat City, which also shared the Bitter End bill with Denver. Fat City is Bill Danoff and Taffy Nivert. They are wonderful to see and should make it very big. Taffy Nivert is gorgeous and onstage is one of the funniest low-key people I've ever seen. They write some heavy songs and perform them wonderfully. Do catch them if you can. How long has it been since you've chucked.

Paul Stookey, as in Peter.....and Mary, ran an outdoor benefit at New Haven's Bowen field for the New Haven Children's Center. It was an all day into night affair. I got there around noon and left about five thirty. There were, unhappily, only a couple hundred on hand. Featured while I watched were Wildwinds, a local, good times boogie group who have an excellent album on Vanguard and were fun to see. Melanie came on a little after two o'clock and did almost an hour's concert. What a superb entertainer she is. And what incredibly good vibes she puts out. "Babe Rainbow" is a truly great song.

Melanie was followed by a delightful English group, Robin and Barry Dransfield, who sing, play fiddle and guitar, and featured English traditional ballads and a couple of rousing Irish jigs. The Dransfields were followed by John Denver, who was introduced by Clara Ward as "Bob" Denver, which goof he took with his customary good grace. Denver was accompanied by his usual back ups of Mike Taylor on excellent lead guitar (and funny faces while playing) and Dick Kniss the splendid and nice bass player who used to work with Peter Paul and Mary. Paul Prestopino of dobro and steel pedal fame was a guest sideman and Fat City were guest back-up singers. Nice all out effort for a free gig, wouldn't you say? Denver opened with "One Tote Over The Line," which he frequently does in his club sets but is notable here because the band had split from where they were sitting near the stage to "kill a roach," as manager Jerry Weintraub was heard to say by this eyesdropper. Denver also does, with Taffy Nivert, a very funny version of "Okie from Muskogee." He, like Melanie, did a full set of twelve or so songs.

Paul Stookey did a couple of numbers. And was followed by a local electric band, Jasper Rath, who sounded very interesting. I was beginning to get sun stroke and had to split before Clara Ward and her great singers came on.

Back in the big apple, caught Muddy Waters closing at the Gaslight. He had a fantastic, cooking band—as he usually does. I thought the flautist and the drummer were exceptional. The band did a couple of numbers; during the third song, which featured the most fantastically flittes greaser looking cat on harp, Muddy made his entrance from the audience and did a dynamite rendition of "Stormy Monday Blues." Good health and keep a chooglin' Mackinley Morgaunfield.

A reliable source tells me that Judy Collins visited Stephen Skills at his palatial digs in Miami a while back. Does this mean that we're going to have "Suite Judy Blue Eyes Revisited" and a continuing series of "Bluebird" songs. Well, he certainly does do his best writing when she has broken his heart (if he has one).

Then there was the guy from Canada who was coming to the States on a business trip, bringing with him something he shouldn't have taken out of Canada (not dope). So he breezed through Customs in a suit and tie, carrying an attache case, and once things were cool checked his suit in an airport locker XX and changed to tee shirt and jeans. There's more than one way to fight them.

Social event of mid July was Warner's party for Black Sabbath at The Sanctuary, which may be a deconsecrated church turned into discotheque (discotheque! are those things still around?). It was the usual hip New York press-underground party. Everyone making the scene to be seen and everyone putting down the gorup.

Ah well, keep your glow on, you gotta go on.

the scene of riots during the recent Jethro Tull concert. As The Who's pressman Keith Alton told us: "Last time The Who were in Denver they played the Marmoth Ballroom. The local paper ran an editorial saying it was a disgrace the city couldn't find a larger venue with decent acoustics for a group of such stature. It was because of this Red Rocks was opened as a rock and roll venue, and The Who were promised a date on their next tour. We'll be interested to see what happens."

Keith Moon



A Real Shlocker

by T.A. Zukowski



Assorted (disfigured, of course, and otherwise pasty-looking) zombies have just been cued out the door of an (isolated, of course) country house, save a couple still laying about with oozing craters in their skulls, the result of a brief encounter with a fire iron; suddenly our "hero", in a clear example of grace under a not everyday pressure, remarks: "We've gotta get outta here!"

Such sentiments must also reflect, quite acutely, the film-goer's attitude as he finds himself watching "Night of the Living Dead," a re-release apparently named after its entire production cast and crew. Even if one's a horror film freak, as I am, or perhaps especially if one's of that breed, the feeling that you've been had by the incorporation of the used-car dealers and Actor's Equity of greater Pittsburgh (!), from where this film originates, comes early—maybe as early as when Pittsburgh appears in the titles. Essentially a catalog of the genre's clichés, those mentioned already plus corpses brought back to "life" by—you guessed it—radiation, these creatures afraid of—right again—our old friend, fire, at least one useless female who'll inevitably stumble when running and one panicky male doing various "I don't wanna die" routines, one child-monster, one lights-out-where's-the-fusebox, one dead phone, one deafening soundtrack not by Bernard Herrmann etc., this film is an all-time, all-league loser, failing on all levels: It's not frightening, never erotic and only occasionally fascinating (the scenes with

vampire film—not in any sense of that word. From "Vampires of the Coast," a 1908 "vamp" film credited as being the very first vampire movie, to the current "Daughters of Darkness," a vampire has been portrayed on screen as everything from an expressionistic view of women by women to the supernatural extension of man's fascination with orgasm-death, the latter epitomized by Dracula—interpretations based on this character alone range from the insect-like Max Schreck in "Nosferatu" (1922) to the satanic, erotic dimensions of Christopher Lee in "Horror of Dracula" (1958). At any rate, a vampire has never been, and isn't, a corpse revived by radiation who, for reasons known only to quickie-film producers, subsequently feels compelled to devour human flesh. Within the film itself, these creatures are referred to as ghouls; even this is wrong, in that folklore regards ghouls as spirits or demons who'll rob graves to feed off the dead, not the other way around.

Taking "Night . . ." on its own terms—when initially released in 1969 it claimed to be the film which out-psychoed "Psycho"—it's obvious that the flacks have struck again (maybe they should have contracted alchemists); the film doesn't out-psycho anything. Even if such seemingly expendable factors as style, taste, literacy and a camera with more than one lens were utilized, it's doubtful that the metaphysical comedy of Norman Bates' view of life, something which was closer to "The Myth of Sisyphus" than to "Godzilla," would have been surpassed. As it is, we've another group of film-makers convinced that there's a sole path to terror, the one littered with intestines, and that about sums up what we get. This may be fine—scenes of animate corpses gnawing at various human entrails are as interesting and certainly as legitimate as any other form of exploitation (exploitation, not necessarily a negative word, in my opinion, seems merely to mark that point in "art" where one is really forced to stand up for one's own particular or peculiar tastes . . . and many won't), but the film is not another "Psycho," let alone a vampire tale, and this seems unclear to quite a few.

Which all brings us to the question, why bring it up in the first place; surely there



have been and will be many bomb horror films. Simply, because the status of this film has somehow managed to elevate itself to that of a "cult film." To me, definition of that phase invariably involves the attempt by some insecure intellects to make everyone within earshot feel guilty that they didn't see, or saw and didn't appreciate, a particular favorite of theirs. What happens thereafter, whether just bullshit overcocktails or the weed or an actual movement, will be propelled by the same sort of cultural tyranny which may have motivated you a few years back to purchase an LP of what you considered to be incredibly irritating electro-Near

Eastern hymns, or similar; though you couldn't stand it, those paragons of individuality otherwise known as your peer group, or more likely, the chick you wanted to ball, insisted, and once again you allowed your own taste (again, that problem of what you're willing to put up with) to be stamped — ironically perhaps, if by that time your sensibilities were too frayed for you to come through anyway. In this case however, considering the quality of the film, what we may actually be involved in is someone's clever parody of film cultism. This, in turn, would be the reason why, in spite of it all, seeing "Night . . ." can constitute a very entertaining evening. However,

the circumstances must be favorable; in other words, you must see it, as I did, in a special Midnight showing in the Village. With the type of crowd which lines up, all the way up to Fourth Street, at that hour for that type of film, what will happen inside is bound to be some sort of social event. It was.

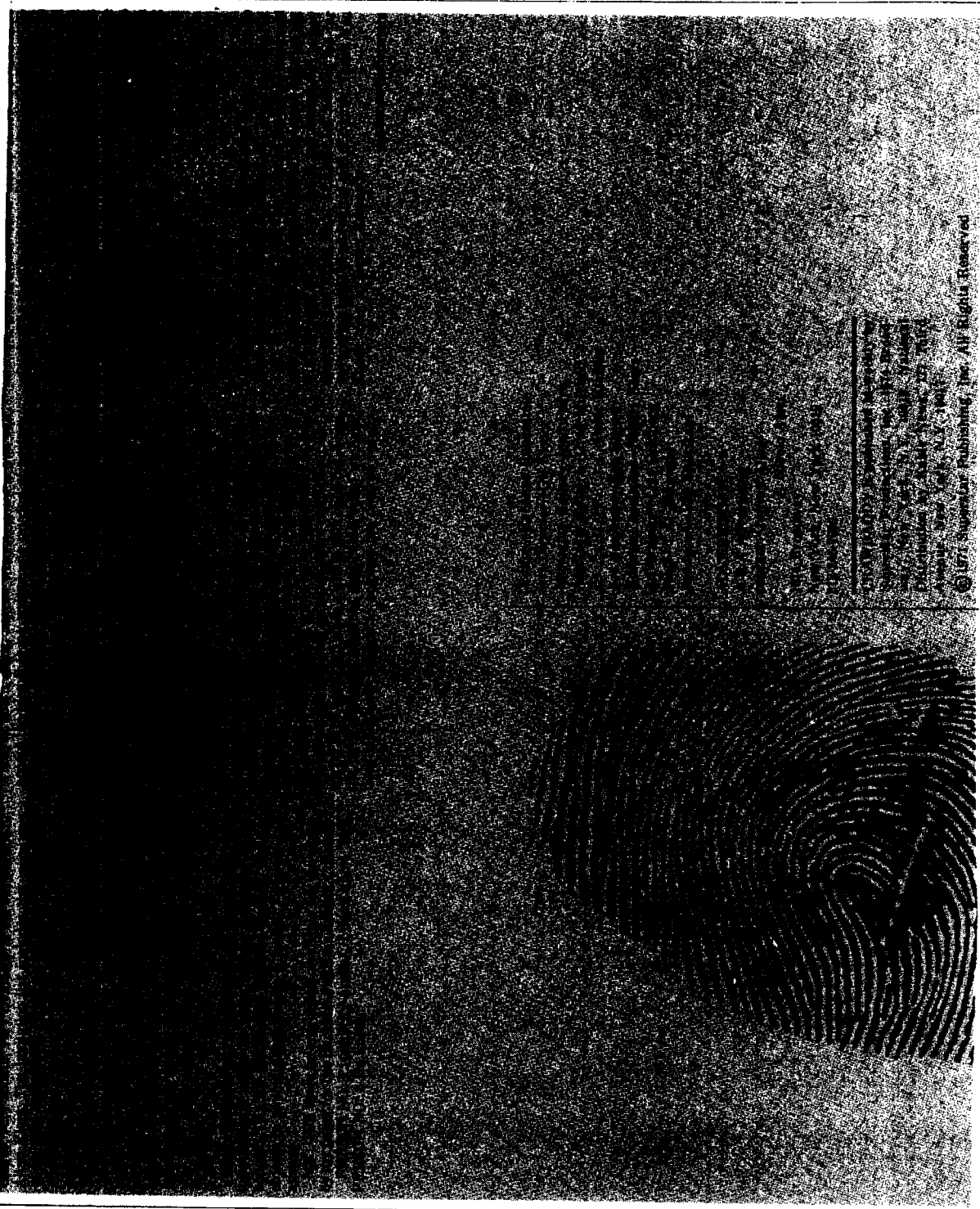
But what about all the folks back there in Pittsburgh, who are perhaps without the services of a freaky audience that'll applaud, cheer, talk back to the screen and even from time to time, frighten themselves? Are they destined to just sit there, chilled only by a realization that they've been passed a celluloid chain letter . . . for two bucks?

... primary and only source | to be increasingly irritating electro-Near | a very entertaining evening. However, | they've been passed a celluloid chain |
letter . . . for two bucks?

CRAWDADDY

PAGE 2

CRAWDADDY



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Published by Summit Publishing, Inc., 1000
Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10018
Printed in the United States of America

FILMS

Nicholson and Mr. Altman

by Jack Breschard

There is a new cult growing in cinema that is a conglomeration of many different influences and movements and which has defined a new brand of cultural hero. The influences include: the auteur theory; the counterculture; the remnants of the 1960's James Dean cult; and the nouveau riche hip who work with the industrialized movie system of Hollywood to make statements against that system and the establishment that supports it. The new culture heroes are people like Dennis Hopper, Peter Fonda, Donald Sutherland, Elliot Gould, Jane Fonda, Karen Black and Jack Nicholson. Nicholson has just taken a bold step in his already burgeoning career and has joined Hopper in the new superhero clique of the film director. His first film is called *Drive, He Said*.

Nicholson has already had experience as a screenwriter (*Head*) and of course as an actor in films like *Easy Rider*, *Five Easy Pieces*, and the new Mike Nichols film *Carnal Knowledge*, and it would not be too much to say that he is beginning to earn himself a reputation as a very hot commercial property. Perhaps all the publicity about his acting has turned people off to the possibility that Nicholson could also be a director of some note. Critics tend to tear down people who refuse to specialize, partly due to the critic's need for self-justification and partly because critics by and large, whether they are two-bit or big-time, are jealous of the people who do more than render the accomplishments

faces. Looking at it the other way, with a reverse perspective of background and foreground, it becomes quite clearly a picture of a vase. Only after a person has found both pictures can he appreciate the drawing. In *McCabe and Mrs. Miller* Altman does a similar thing with the characterization of John McCabe. We the audience gain our information about McCabe just like the townspeople of the town Presbyterian Church. McCabe rarely says anything about himself and he allows rumors to fly about randomly. From his actions we begin to fill in a persona. Only at the very end of the film are we given an omnipotent point of view which not only shows us a new John McCabe, but which calls into question all the information that we had used to make our initial evaluations. Anyone who forsakes serious contemplation of the film before the closing two minutes of action might easily miss Altman's hat trick. In 10 seconds the entire film falls into place and the director's artistic intention becomes quite clear. With this film Altman should no longer be considered a hot, up and coming director. McCabe proves that he is a very serious and a very successful cinema artist.

Simultaneously the film is a statement of a new film aesthetic that might come to rank in history with the Italian Neo-realistic Movement, the French New Wave and the science-fiction documentary school represented by films like Peter Watkins' *War Game*. Altman not only emphasizes his



+ & ? 1 1 - 7 1 , he said.

Robert Altman, after having created two very well-received films, *M.A.S.H.* and *Brewster McCLOUD*, both of which were placed on many ten best lists for 1970, has now created a very unusual As might be expected the coach tolerates beauty in basketball. His coach cares for the game, for the team, for the great athletic tradition, and he subjugates reality to the noble cause of basketball.

As might be expected the coach tolerates

cool refer only to weather conditions, you are not yet sure whether you are role or goal oriented, and you think a medium is a fortune teller, then you just won't dig *Drive, He Said*. Unfortunately, most of the overground critics writing about film today have their feet firmly planted in the journalistic tradition and their eyes set on McLuhan's rear-view mirror. That is why they write the way they do and that is why their publications hire them. That is also why they won't recognize *Drive, He Said* as the honest and relevant piece of contemporary cinema that it is. They seem to try to make themselves irrelevant on all but economic levels.

Nicholson has written one hell of a great script and in the hands of a really great director this could easily have been a great film. Now what we have is a very good film that has several minor weaknesses and some unresolved situations, but which is by and large well executed.

Surprisingly enough, Nicholson has a very good sense of detail and he fills his film full of visually interesting bits of business. The fluid camera work moves the film along quite nicely and it bridges the sequences visually rather than verbally.

Drive is a modern story, set on a college campus, with modern heroes, or anti-heroes. Hector Bloom is a star basketball player who is trying to face a future that could easily include professional basketball and all the appropriate affluence—if he can only improve his "attitude." Attitude is one of those nebulous things that jocks always have to get into shape when they are either smarter than or more independent and self-assured than their coach.

Gabriel is Hector's room-mate and it is he who is blamed for Hector's wayward demeanor. Gabriel is a revolutionary who is into disrupting televised college basketball games in the name of guerrilla theater, and he eventually freaks out completely after trying to break out just enough to fall his induction physical. Hector's lack of team spirit stems merely from his growing political and social consciousness and from his realization that he is a hero, the B.M.O.C., just because he "stays after school and runs around in his underwear."

Yet despite his coach and all that he stands for, Hector sees a need for and a

are we? A bunch of Surimex. A severe society!"

Next to the script the high points of the film are the performances which are consistently good. William Tepper as Hector and Michael Margotta as Gabriel both do very good jobs, with Margotta stealing large chunks of the film. Bruce Dern as the coach presents the other side of the political-cultural-social fence without weakening the movie, acting a characterization instead of a caricature.

Drive, He Said is a very cynical film. Unlike *Easy Rider* which treated its problem superficially, *Drive, He Said* probes deeply and reveals that a solution is not easily found in 1971 America. All of the characters deserve the twists of fate that afflict them and Nicholson doesn't cop-out at the end by going for a quick shot to our prejudices and our false sense of outrage.

I don't mean to make this film sound at all grim, though, because it is very funny, visually captivating and clever, often times witty, and most of all, very true and very entertaining.

New Yorker, *University*, who tear that the film is so good that they are obligated to wage a campaign to save it from public, critical and scholastic oblivion.

Altman's film is very complex but it has a very simple veneer. Unfortunately many critics are reviewing the surface qualities of the film and are missing the multilevel currents that surge throughout.

I believe the film is quite clearly a parable. As interesting and as real as the simple story of John McCabe may be, there can be no intelligent denial of the fact that Altman is examining the roots from which our current-day economic, social, political, moral, and mythical traditions have sprung. He has dealt on allegorical levels before, particularly in *Brewster McCLOUD*, but the bad taste and occasional heavyhandedness of *McCloud* are not to be found in *McCabe*.

The film is strangely like the famous drawing of the two faces and the vase, which is an example of disorientation in depth. Looking at the drawing one way, it is quite clear that it is a drawing of two

dialogue, which greatly increases the realism of the film, which back-handedly re-emphasizes the visuals, and unfortunately, which alienates many people in the audience, including some prominent critics, who were reared with a literary bias. He does not, however, obscure any dialogue that is important to the plot and character development. This is both a sign of technical mastery and of deliberate consideration of inbred conventions. Altman experiments very successfully with a new aesthetic theory rather than trying to force it upon the audience. Some people who refuse to be patient with the film on this point or who become aggressively agitated when they feel they are missing words and therefore are not getting their money's worth will do well to stow their lack of faith long enough for Altman to prove to them how valid his approach can be when done artistically and professionally.

As has been hinted at in some of the above comments on the film, *McCabe* and *Mrs. Miller* is a superior technical effort. On almost all levels, it is better executed than 90 percent of the films in the past two years that have been worthy of serious note. The acting is memorable with Warren Beatty and Julie Christie leading a large cast, all of whom seemed to glory in Altman's spontaneous, personal, and adaptable approach to screen acting. The camera work is direct and to the point while remaining unobtrusive and tasteful, with most camera moves being small but appropriate adjustments so as to achieve the best composition without revealing self-aggrandizement by the Director of Cinematography.

Most important of all, in my opinion, *McCabe* and *Mrs. Miller* is by far the best film released this year. It contains the seed of hope that many film critics and film freaks have been praying for from the American film industry. It proves that good, artistic and commercial films can be made in the United States. American films have always had the advantage of having the most professional and efficient film industry. Yet it has always been left up to European directors to show us how a film artist makes films. Robert Altman with *McCabe* and *Mrs. Miller* has blended form and content, art and entertainment, intelligence and sensitivity into an admirable and important motion picture.



McCabe and Mrs. Miller

CRAWDADDY

Section 1

Section 1

COLUMNS

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Section 2



YOKO ONO (and JOHN)

"And you know, Yoko is the world's most famous unknown artist:



TAJ MAHAL

"If you don't dig it, don't even fuckin' come. Make room for

CUMMENY

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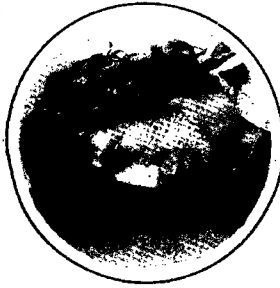
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(John)

"People must finally learn, once and for all, that they are beautiful." (Yoko)

Poster by Yoko Ono and John Lennon
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PETER TOWNSHEND

"Well, we've always been a very self-destructive group. And now we're in the most dangerous position in our career..."
by Steve Bradshaw
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by Peter Knobler
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BREWER & SHIPLEY

"They're for people who believe that the least possible number of moving parts produces the best possible machine. B & S have it all pared down to basics."
by Bud Scoppa
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CRAWDADDY

PAPER

60¢

YOKO

PETER TOWNSHEND
Taj Mahal
Brewer & Shipley
Living Theatre Bust





FOLKS, AN ODD DILEMMA IS NOW PERPLEXING THE HIP COMMUNITY! I'M TALKING ABOUT HANDSHAKES...



"... THE OLD ONE VS. THE NEW ONE AND THEIR APPLICATION THEREOF"



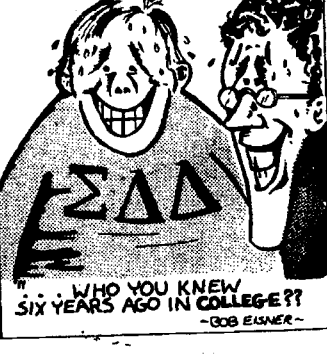
LIKE WHEN YOUR WIERD UNCLE RALPH SHOWS UP, NO PROBLEM, ... USE THE 'OLD ONE.'



"OR WHEN YOU BUMP INTO MILES' NEW DRUMMER, EASY, ... USE THE NEW ONE."



BUT WHAT ABOUT THIS GUY HERE? GOOD OLE LEON..."



"... WHO YOU KNEW SIX YEARS AGO IN COLLEGE?"

-BOB EISNER-

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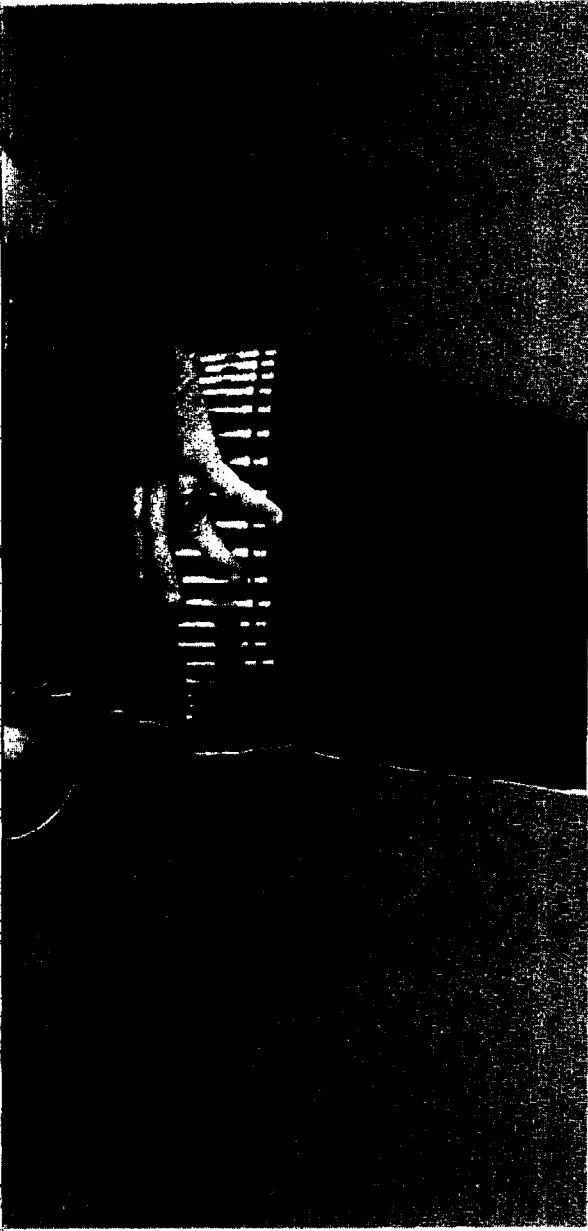
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Section 2

BRYAN

2000





YOKO

"And you know, Yoko is the world's most famous unknown artist. . . Everybody knows her name, but nobody knows what she does."
—John Lennon

Yoko Ono insists on being Yoko Ono. Her marriage may have made her one-half of one the most famous couples in contemporary pop history, but her vision remains the same even though the circumstances surrounding that vision have changed drastically since she married

by Henry Edwards
photographs by Raeanne Rubenstein

her famous husband.

She has always wanted to bring her form of concept art to the people. Now, however, there are a pair of helping hands named publicity and money to help her accomplish her task. Yoko realizes she now has the largest potential public a concept artist could wish for. But will that public respond?

She comes out of a tradition in which the Stockhausen forces battled for structure while the John Cage team screamed for more freedom. It was the daffy time of the early sixties in which the Jefferson Meat Market was declared

a work of art and a parade down Central Park West featured a topless cello player who floated over the crowd in a basket attached to a huge helium balloon. Only contemporary art's keepers of the record remember the names of the woman who staged the meat happening or the woman who had to bare her breasts to bow her cello. Was it all hopeless exhibitionism or meaningful communication? Yoko Ono knows that she has the opportunity of becoming the most famous practitioner of this very art that most people now consider a fad. She is determined to carry the torch forward.

© by Henry Edwards and Raeanne Rubenstein

Her art is to be lived. There is no gesture, attitude or action that can not be justified by it. Her lack of inhibition makes her impatient about the civilities that may preoccupy other people and she appears to be a brusque woman to those who meet her casually. However, to her, she is merely acting on her feelings and her feelings are what counts. She will listen to criticism but conventional value judgments mean nothing to her. I supply her with a list of conventional adjectives—self-indulgent, extravagant. She shakes her head. Words like this have no place in her value-system. She smokes too many cigarettes, drinks too many soft drinks, indulges her every whim, and it does not faze her. Everything she does is part of a benevolent grand design in which she is the energy source so that everybody else will finally become an energy source of his own.

There is a public out there already and that public has substituted the myth of John and Yoko for the vacuum in their own lives. The Lennons are a mythic couple and they love it. They love having their pictures taken; they love publicity; they love success. But they will also open

"It taught me that nothing is permanent, and since nothing belongs to you, you need never worry about your possessions. You can move on and leave things behind you without worry."

their door to strangers and display their real selves. No reality can ever be the same as myth. They know it and they expect you to know it also. After all, the documentation of their every activity, from their meeting to their wedding through the bed-ins, and the Acorns for Peace, and the War Is Over billboards, is for them, part of a series of "concepts." And if that creates myth fine but then

BIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

Yoko Ono was born in Tokyo in 1933. Her father was a successful banker; her mother enjoyed her art. Yoko attended a fashionable dance school and crown prince Akihito was among her classmates. In 1944 she was evacuated to the countryside just as the United States began its air raids over Japan. She swapped family valuables for food during the war in order to ward off starvation. In 1952, the Ono family moved to New York City and Yoko attended Sarah Lawrence College for three years. She left school to join the New York avant-garde art scene. She maintained a loft and gave concerts and gallery shows. Her marriage to Japanese pianist, Tochii Ichihyomagi, ended in divorce, and she married independent film producer Antony Cox. They have a seven-year-old daughter, Kyoko. The Coxes moved to London where Miss Ono's film, *Bottoms*, a montage of 365 British backslides, created quite a stir. Miss Ono published at her own expense a limited edition of *Grapefruit*, her book of instructions. *"BURN THIS BOOK AFTER YOU'VE READ IT,"* she instructed from the fly-leaf. A friend took her at her word and burned 250 copies, half of the book's first printing. Simon and Schuster published the book officially in 1970 and will publish an up-to-date version in the fall. John Lennon met Yoko Ono at a gallery show of her works. They were married on March 20, 1969 in Gibraltar.

CRAWDADDY

thoughts. She invents concepts; her husband thinks up ways to merchandise them. Yoko discusses the art for her new book jacket. "A great idea for a T-shirt," John remarks. They come bounding into the studio for a photo session, and Yoko drops to her knees while John meticulously combs her hair. "He could be a great hair dresser," Yoko remarks. "He's so talented in so many ways."

It is late at night. Yoko and I have had a long, complicated, involved talk. It is over. She suddenly ushers me out of the hotel suite with so much rapidity, I almost forget my notes. I stand in the hall wondering for a long moment wondering how a discussion that intense could end so quickly. Inside, Yoko Ono, avant-garde missionary, has already thought up a half-dozen new concepts.

I refuse to make any judgments. Let time be the judge. Miss Ono and Mr. Lennon have opened the door to their lives and not attempted to disguise a thing. I respect their honesty. Let them be. Let them be.

something; their ear, their money, their approval, the promise to write a letter about them to Rolling Stone, their commitment to purchase a building in a certain section of Manhattan. Yoko said, "Beautiful," to everything; John agreed to every offer. And they moved on, wary, fickle, but always eager to find out what was going on.

Logic doesn't suit Miss Ono. We talked for almost nine hours and the transcript of our conversation was a remarkably unstructured collage of ideas and feelings and songs and opinions. I arranged the answers in some sort of logical order and edited out the repetitions so that traditional structure could have some sort of fighting chance and Yoko pencilled in additions.

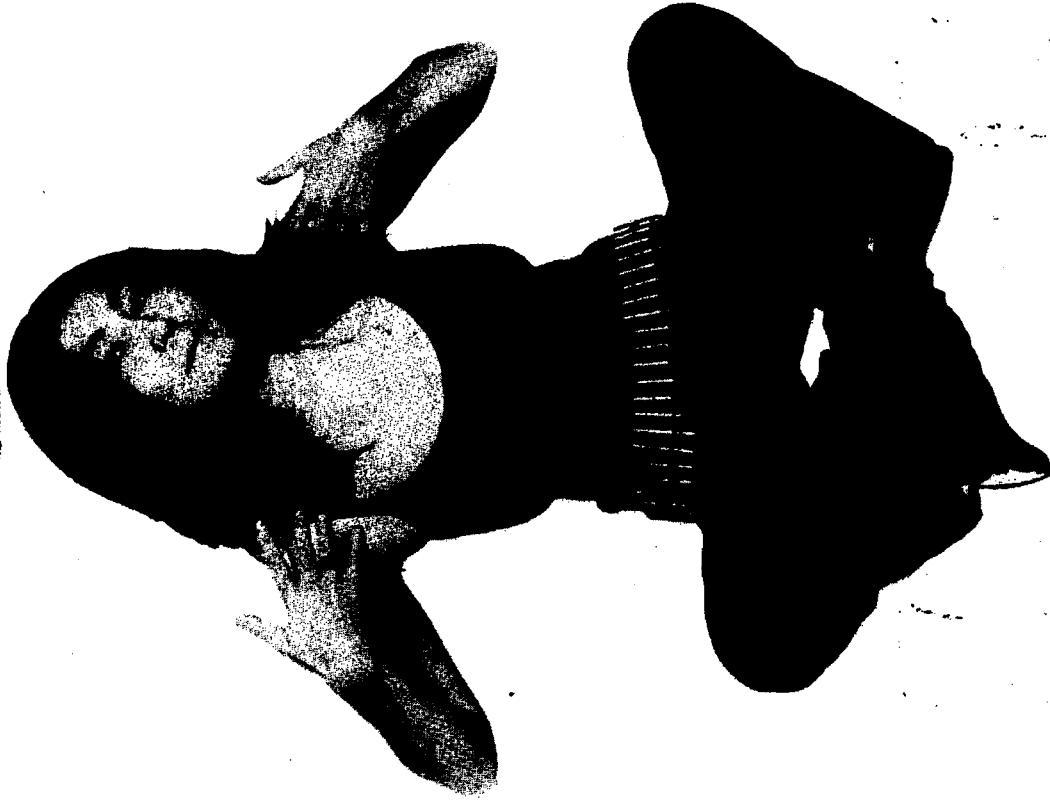
Through it all, John either slept or watched television in the bedroom. They have a complicated relationship, as complicated as Yoko's personality. They are affectionate and they are aloof. However, even when Yoko is at her most self-involved, she will murmur "Beautiful," to John's notions. She does not censor or disapprove of anyone's

our own people, they stubbornly insist on being their real selves at the root of it.

Their real selves will disillusion those who can't accept reality, those who are still addicted to the middle class virtues even though they profess that they are not, and those who feel threatened by an ambitious, self-involved woman. Those who can accept myths as myth and people as people will overcome the tendency to study their every gesture and deed as if they are paramedical under a microscope and accept them for their virtues and their flaws. Many people expect them, for example, to become a substitute for the Community Chest. They will, no doubt, help a great many people before they retire from public life, but at this moment they are preoccupied with themselves. And as each of us is our own greatest responsibility, they freely demonstrate that they are primarily concerned with themselves.

Dressed in a floor-length, black dressing gown, Yoko shuts off the air conditioner; its faint hum distracts her. She impulsively empties the ash trays and blows away the ashes on the coffee table. Her enormous energy subsides and she curls her tiny self up on the couch and chain smokes menthol cigarettes and talks of her work, her values, her marriage. She is thoroughly honest, remarkably objective, wryly amusing about her failures, pleased with her successes. She is much more beautiful than her photographs have ever suggested. An intelligent, attractive woman, she carefully reveals her complicated, difficult, topsy-turvy life for the listener. Her honesty arouses compassion and the meeting is warm and friendly. Her wariness of people's motives has been suspended for the time being, even though she is still eternally preoccupied with every detail being perfect and her preoccupation knows no limits.

She can also be a child. She has, the child's enthusiasm for meeting the people she considers important. She picks up the phone and calls the famed artist and recluse, Joseph Cornell, on the phone, and does not get off until she has convinced him to allow the Lennons to visit. In fact, she has the child's non-



"And if you picked wrong . . . you know; that was it. I actually ran out of one place in Oklahoma one time—Goodwill, Oklahoma. It was a private club this guy at the hotel had told us to go check out. So I stuck my head in and there were all these . . . country and western dudes with cowboy hats and dancin' to 'Please Release Me' on the jukebox. I stuck my head in and there was this whole barrage of whistles and hoots and cattle calls came up. I'd just gotten off crutches, man, and I did a Walter Brennan all the way out to the car, man, as fast as I could."

"Panhandle State Teachers' College in Goodwell, Oklahoma, which is still in the Dust Bowl."

"Agricultural school," Mike noted.

"They all wear big cowboy hats and giant mackinaws and neckerchiefs up there. And they all look like Glenn Ford—gettin' ready to stop a stampede."

Tom sounded almost nostalgic.

Someone asked if those experiences came into their songs.

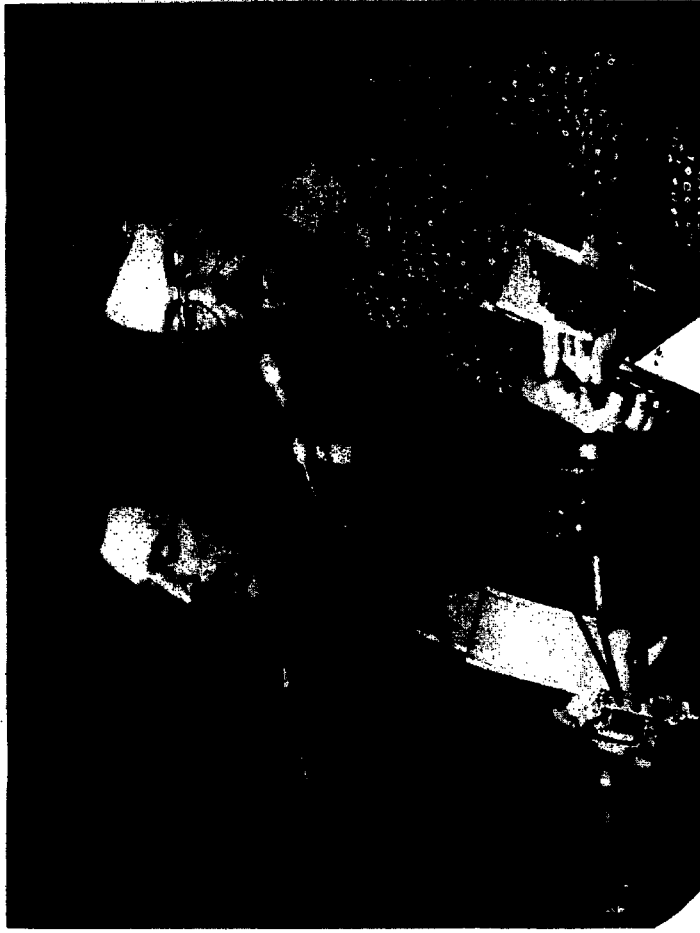
"Sure, yeah," Brewer answered.

"Tarkio is really an on-the-road album. Like Weeds, the one before—like I was sayin' earlier, our music is just a reflection of the changes we're goin' through—"

"Our first album, for A&M, was called Down in L.A.," Tom pointed out.

"And it was a very L.A.-oriented album," Mike continued. "At that time the whole mystic, East Indian thing was happening, and you really can see it in there. Weeds was done shortly after we got our place in Missouri; we were really into a rural country thing. And we were mellowing out just from being out of L.A., so it was a soft, mellow thing. Tarkio is pretty much of an on-the-road album. That's when we were drivin'. Tarkio is a small town in Missouri, actually—that was one of the places we played in."

"And I don't know what the new album is gonna be about," Tom said, "because I'm sure we haven't lived all of it yet . . . There's a lot of 'tears of rage' in



DAVID GARY

Two Guilds

guess. Finally, their melodies nicely bring out the crisp, ringing qualities of their voices. "One Tuke over the Line" (the single that's been mentioned too often in connection with the FCC semi-censorship memo to make it worth discussing here) and "Tarkio Road" move

"I don't listen to any duos," Brewer answered. "I listen to a lot of music, but no duos in particular. I used to listen to Simon and Garfunkel, you know. Whatever."

"If there's been an increase lately in the number of duos around," Mike con-

The two were performing singly when they met. They were in Kansas City, at the time, having been booked at the same time into a club owned by their present manager, Stan Plesser.

"They got together again in California and started writing," Plesser explained.

Mike agreed: "Yeah, right now most of the songs are just 'hold on.'"

The two musicians are opposite ends of the same coin. Both are loose and lanky as only natives of the American Middle can be. Both have strong rich tenor voices. But there the similarity ends.

Mike Brewer is from a dusty section of the southern Middle known as Oklahoma. He's red-skinned, blonde and moody. On this day, their two guitars had been left at the airport in Cincinnati, and Mike was taking the whole thing much harder than his partner was. Mike sings the high parts.

Tom Shipley is from a more northerly section of the Middle called Ohio. Tom's pale and black-haired—he looks rather rabbinical. He's even-tempered and quite personable. Tom sings the lower parts.

The long, parallel lines of their bodies plus the sharp contrasts of light-dark and bright-pale makes them a perfect combination on stage. Standing together, each looks better somehow than either of them looks separately. Hollywood couldn't have cast them more perfectly. And they're not your standard stooled-sitting-and-strumming folkies, either. They like to stand up when they sing, the better to power-strum those two acoustic Guilds—the better to get their bodies lined up behind their vocals.

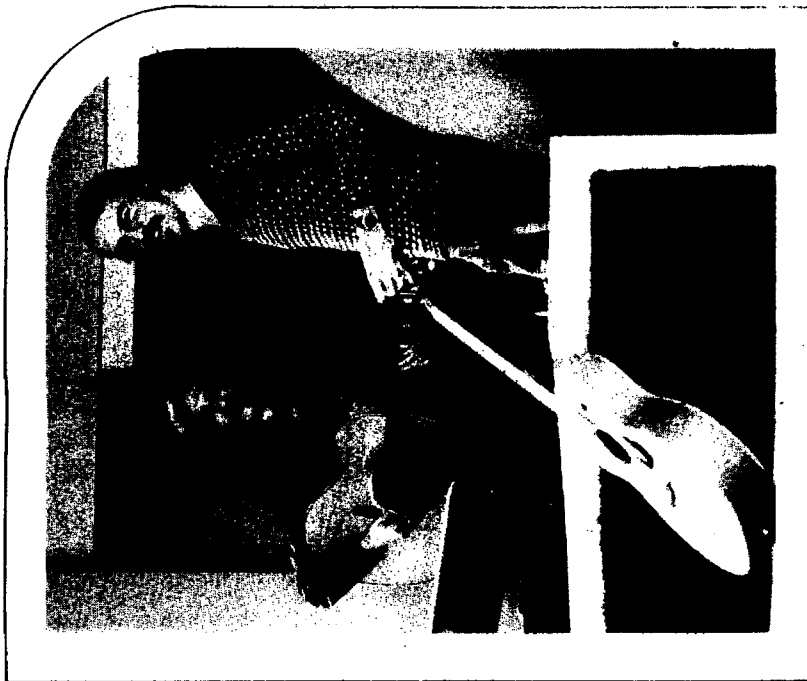
They sing well, with visible enthusiasm for the rich, clear mix of their two voices. Their style is straightforward, relying not on subtle harmonic shadings but on the unembellished timbres of their voices moving together. B&S spend as much time singing in unison as they do harmonizing; their voices are so clean that harmony isn't necessary to make their singing interesting—it's used instead for highlighting certain sections of their songs.

Their material resembles their voices in its directness. Tartito is actually a consciously prepared concept album, but it never gets bogged down in self-importance. It never draws attention to itself as any more than a bunch of thematically related songs. The words are distinguished by the casual ironies they point out; there's none of that Country Joe-ish calculated anger for the cheap applause. Being from the Midwest just makes you naturally understated. I

Since the duo is the most basic combination of elements possible, their sheer simplicity (and clarity) on every level is their appeal. They're for people who believe that the least possible number of moving parts produces the best possible machine. B&S have it all parred down to basics.

Photographer David Gahr asked Mike and Tom whether they listened to other

group. But it's also a drag to be performing by yourself and not to be able to do the harmonies—especially if you're writing your own music, you know—because you can't sing harmony with yourself. It's just an extension of your music to be working with somebody else. We both worked as singles for several years, and I was in a group for a while in L.A."



"And I don't know what the new album is gonna be about," Tom said, "because I'm sure we haven't lived all of it yet . . ."

people that are interested in that type of a lifestyle—away from what is normally considered the entertainers' lifestyle, we've offered an alternative. It's called Good Karma Productions. I was always kinda the businessman, but the other people are real close friends. And Tom and Mike had already made friends with the people who are now in Good Karma, so they decided to come back to Kansas City. It gives us a little perspective on both coasts, being here, because when you look at something from 1700 miles away, you see it that way, not 'that way.'"

"We didn't really 'pick' Kansas City," Brewer explained. "We had to make a living, and we knew we were never gonna go back and live in California—we weren't living anywhere, we were just back on the road again, with our families. Tom and his wife were living in a tent for like a couple months or so."

"I had all my possessions and everything that was dear to me strapped on top of my Volvo—I was like an anti-okie," Shipley laughed. "And Stan called us—we were in Wisconsin someplace, and he wanted to start Good Karma Productions and asked us if we wanted to get in on it. So we said sure, and formed Good Karma ourselves, and with those four guys and one other entertainer named Danny Cox. We just got together and decided it could be done a better way—you didn't have to live in New York or L.A. to do it. We been together two and a half years now, and it's working."

"The whole thing is based on lifestyle: What sense does money make if it doesn't add to your lifestyle—if it doesn't improve your lifestyle. You can accumulate gadgets all your life, but it doesn't mean anything—it doesn't make your life any better. And that's what it's all about."

"And then we fell into our place in the country, which was just super-fine, you know, I'm only paying \$45 a month rent, and Mike's only paying \$65. We got 20-some acres, a lake . . . Our houses are like 50 feet from the edge of the lake. And the important thing is, we're only 20 minutes away from the airport."

Like I said, they know how to keep it. —RS Sample

CRAWDADDY

PAGE 46



© GARY

Two or three over the line...

Brewer & Shipley: 30 Seconds Over Tarkio

by Bud Scoppa

"It gives us a little perspective on both coasts, being here, because when you look at something from 1700 miles away, you see it that way, not 'that' way."

The two accepted centers of "American civilization" have long been considered the East and West coasts. But that ain't really where it's at, as they say. Almost every significant aspect of America, from its politics to its religion to its geology, tends to roll from the outer limits toward the middle, eventually settling comfortably in the broad flat central area.

People who look out across the face of the country from their perches in New York and Los Angeles have a very narrow vista and a rather hazy view as well. But those who sit in the center have 360 degrees of unobstructed reality—sometimes it's frightening, but it's always in focus.

While their brothers were clambering their desperate ways from the center to the more glamorous fringes of the country (do some research: find out where the musicians and writers and artists and actors hail from—you may be surprised), Mike Brewer and Tom Shipley held on in the Great Middle. Oh, they spent some time out west—made some records out there—but they've endured for the most part among those amber waves of grain.

While they sat in their dressing room waiting to rehearse for their appearance on the David Frost Show, Brewer and Shipley talked about their lives in the Midwest with the show's producer. After discovering they lived in

Raytown, Missouri, just outside of Kansas City, she asked:

"Are there any rednecks in Missouri?" A sudden laugh caught in Mike Brewer's throat. "Uh, yeah," he answered, once he'd composed himself. "There's hardly anything but rednecks in Missouri."

"A couple years ago," Brewer continued, "we were spending a lot of time in that part of the country, driving—doing small college concerts."

"And it was Easy Rider," Tom Shipley added. "But, since we've had some success with records recently—at least in our immediate area—it's eased off, 'cause folks know us. And they know we have children so we're not faggots. They got kids, Martha, they must be virile. It gets hard to take; I try to ignore it as much as possible."

"Drivin' through that part of the country when we were doin' those college concerts," Tom remembered. "we had our sound system packed in the back of a little Ford station wagon. And we drove. And that's what our song, 'Tarkio Road,' was all about. Just the two of us, settin' up our own sound system, goin' in and doin' a college concert, packin' it up, goin' on to the next one."

"Road show," Mike grimaced.

Shipley continued. "And that got pretty hard to take, 'cause you'd have to literally pick the places you'd go into eat."

"Or sleep," Brewer added.

HELLO YOKO

With reference to you, John has been quoted as saying "She is a woman, and she's Japanese; there is racial prejudice against her and there is female prejudice against her. It's as simple as that." Have you ever experienced "female prejudice"?

The parents who raise children in modern society unfortunately have great complexes about women that they transmit to their children. When I was a little girl my mother told me that there was no female Beethoven. I looked around and discovered that she was right. There wasn't even a great woman crook. At the same time that my mother criticized me for being a woman she kept telling me, "Yoko, you're different; Yoko, you're special." My father told me that I was unusually precocious for my age. So I thought, "so, probably I'm special."

However, my mother also told me that I looked too strong and masculine. She'd say, "Yoko, you are going to have trouble because you look masculine and you're too intelligent for your own good. And men don't like that." These are my earliest memories of female prejudice.

Did you experience this prejudice in the art world?

understood that I was right. All the men and all the women around him were yes-men and he was getting tired of it, and he was lonely. So from the beginning he did not want me to be another yes-man.

Do you want to be even stronger than you are now?

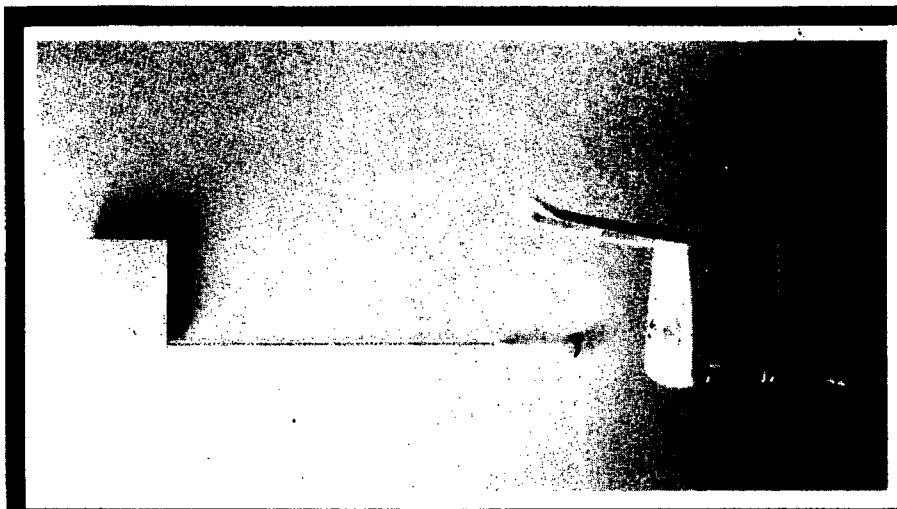
I've been very tough from the beginning. Now, I finally do not feel guilty or conflicted about the fact that I am a strong woman.

How do you feel about your appearance now?

It's taken me thirty-eight years to start to get used to my looks, to adjust to the kind of woman I am. I'm finally resigned to whatever I am. I don't brood anymore because I don't have long legs or long fingers. I suppose I've finally realized that I have my own kind of beauty. Let's put it that way.

More and more people are living together without getting married. How do you feel about marriage?

I think that people who do not get married have firm reasons for their decision. They suspect, for example, that marriage might hurt their relationship. John and I wanted to become more and



world is run by men or women who prefer men, or by homosexuals. However, the assumption that a woman does not stand a chance in the art world because of the homosexual dominance is not a correct one. Homosexuals are often good friends of women. It's just simply that the male artists and the male critics are always together and they never discuss the work of women artists. This is peculiarly similar to how the WASP oriented art world just simply never discussed black artists.

I take it you approve of Woman's Liberation.

Definitely! In 1968 in Nova Magazine I had said "Woman is the nigger of the world." I attended a Woman's Lib meeting yesterday and I discovered that all of the women seemed to have their own individual problems about finding their identities with people. Each woman must work out her problems with the man or woman she lives with. In our case, John and I had two difficult years trying to find the best way to cope with each other. The problems all dealt with role-playing. Society teaches men that they must always take the strong role. Men learn to fear a strong woman. John thought that he always had to be strong. I was afraid to express my strength. Now, John understands that he can be vulnerable. We are both very relaxed about our individual vulnerabilities and John is no longer afraid of my strength.

In other words there was a struggle for dominance in your relationship.

When I met John he was a typical male chauvinist. He had been in an all male group and he had come from a background where the men were all important. They were always having man-to-man talks and going to the pub together. Women were usually kept in the background, serving tea, keeping out of the men's talk. John never expected to meet a woman who would talk back, who would expect to share everything on an equal basis. But, you see, John is very quick to adapt to new situations. He comprehends things quickly and he

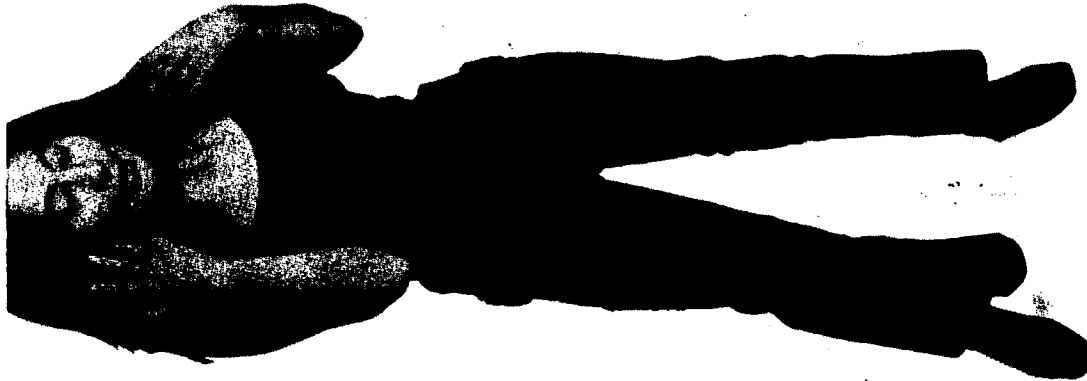
creasing this commitment. Marriage seemed to be another ritual to add to the rings and the flowers and the poems we'd exchanged. We are very sentimental people and we love rituals. When we make things we dedicate them to each other. We think up all sorts of ways to involve each other and make each other happy and marriage was another one of them. In our case, marriage works.

As co-producer of a series of record albums you are now involved in something that is traditionally man's work. How does it feel to be a record producer?

I have always done men's work so it does not surprise me to do something that men are doing. In the beginning, the engineers and the others who worked in the studio were kind of reluctant to take orders from me. John had to convince them that it was all right. He didn't say, "Now hear this!" or anything like that. He was very subtle and it worked.

"In my case, I am a small woman because people repressed me when I was young. My bones stopped growing because of the repression that surrounded me."

However, after I made my last album, the crew finally realized that I know my business and I know music. At first everyone had a smug, sneering attitude towards my work and me. When I started to shout and scream the engineers used to leave the studio because they couldn't bear it. But now, I think they accept me. Not only do they stay, but they know how to manage. So the artists allow other people to take over part of the process. But I work with them and I also keep my eye on everything. John and I just cannot allow anyone to do any part of our professional work for us. We even do the details ourselves, the finishing work, the





posters, the ads, the layouts. We have to take care of everything ourselves because no one else can satisfy us.

never tried to be consciously either in my work.

credibly distorted. Jonas Mekas commented that the culture of New York is

...over a most subtle form of racial prejudice. People were overly kind; they'd try to talk to me more than they'd talk to anyone else. Perhaps, however, they really were interested, curious to hear what a Japanese has to say. I was, in some way, always being forced to represent Japan.

Do the English and the Americans have different attitudes towards the Japanese?

In America there is more interest in the work of the Japanese. In the 1950's there was much interest in Japanese culture because of the reaction to World War II. In London, I never noticed a Japanese craze or fad. There will always be a certain amount of interest in Japanese art and that is only natural.

I can tell you what it's like to have a Jewish mother. What is it like to have a Japanese mother?

Someone made a movie about a man who went from country to country and discovered that every country had the same Hilton. The world is getting smaller and smaller. And my Japanese parents were probably no different from your Jewish parents. In fact, I'm sure that there were quite a few similarities. My parents were achievement-oriented and family-oriented. My mother was also basically a paradoxical woman which makes her similar to any other mother in the world.

Many people in this country are going through a renewal of their ethnic identities. Do you have a strong sense of being Japanese?

Not really. But when I returned to Japan recently I was amazed to find a strong connection between what I do and classic Japanese art. For example, I went to the Kabuki and I discovered a similarity in vocal technique. The Japanese, however, would be the last people to admit this connection. I now think that the difference between my Events and happenings and Alan Kaprow's, for example, may be the fact that I am a woman and Japanese even though I

impressions on you. The war was like that. It taught me that nothing is permanent, and since nothing belongs to you, you need never worry about your possessions. You can move on and leave things behind you without worry. You can easily walk away from your past life. Buried in my subconscious is the effort to try and not be obsessive or attached or sticky about things.

Are you especially concerned about peace because we're engaged in an Asian War?

It's so easy to say yes to that question. But every citizen of the world is responsible for everything that happens in the world. I can't imagine anyone not wanting peace.

I assume that John shares your social views.

John is basically a politically-minded person. One of the first things I noticed about him was that he receives all the newspapers each day and reads every one of them. Not many people do that but John keeps up with TV, books and everything else. Yes, we happen to share the same social views.

John has spoken a great deal about the pain in his life. Have you experienced a great deal of pain?

I believe that all pain is mental. We feel pain because the brain tells us to. People have discovered they can lower their own blood pressure through Yoga and meditation and things like the Janov Therapy. There was an experiment at Princeton University that proved that even laymen could use their wills to lower their blood pressure without the help of medication or therapies. The conclusion is obvious: the mind controls the body. In my case, I am a small woman because people repressed me when I was young. My bones stopped growing because of the repression that surrounded me. Did you ever realize that the great aggressors in the world, Napoleon, Hitler, are all physically small people who have been repressed? I made a movie of people's legs called "Up Your Legs Forever". All the legs in it are in-

...and their legs are ugly. Just by looking at them you can see the pain in their minds. I once made a piece entitled, "The Body is the Scar of Your Mind." When I performed it on stage I took off my clothes and showed my naked body because I realized that my body and its distortions were a reflection of my

"The culture of New York is almost entirely built on these ugly legs . . . Intellectuals ignore their legs."

mental pain. I also turned it into a song and the song says it all — "The Body Is The Scar of Your Mind."

The picture of you being busted on the album jacket of "Unfinished Music Number Two: Life With the Lions" shows your face filled with pain. Were you in great pain?

I was literally in pain. A girl had come up to me and banged my head with her fist. She had a sharp stone hidden in her hand. Another girl pulled my hair. I was also seven (7) months pregnant. I had a miscarriage right after the incident. Yes, I was in great pain.

How did you feel about being busted?

The bust was nothing really. It seemed to be just part of the topsyturvy life I had been living with John. What hurt me about the bust, however, was people's reactions to it. The Japanese society ignored me because I had been arrested and I was having an affair with a married man. Now that I'm respectably married, they all want to know me again. Their attitudes are very silly.

What are your feelings about the use of drugs?

There isn't a person in the world who doesn't take drugs. After all, anything you need after you've fulfilled the requirements for minimum survival can be regarded as a drug. Cigarettes, candy, the second steak, the second glass of water, coffee, tea — these are all drugs. Excessive talking can also be a drug as can laughing and telephone calling and

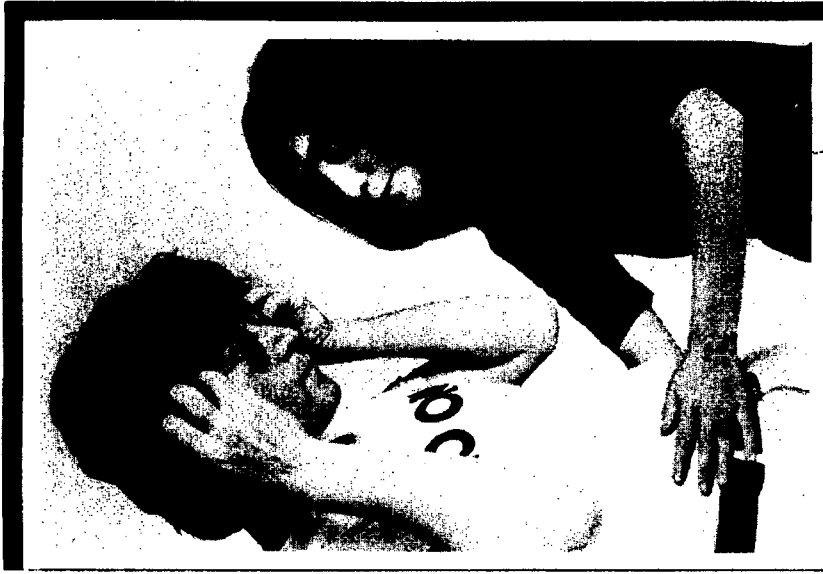
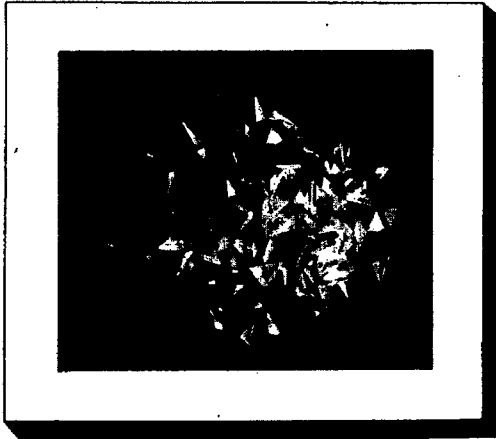
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The critics expected a lot
from the new Rascals album.

**The Rascals
Peaceful World**
including:
Love Me/Little Dove/Peaceful World
In And Out Of Love/Mother Nature Land



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letter writing and buying too many clothes. Life would be boring if you had only one thing to wear and you didn't eat candy when you really wanted to. Drugs

Janov claims that under LSD, if you are really connected to reality, you don't hallucinate. Hallucinations under LSD is in fact pain which if correctly channeled

therapy?

There was a psychologist at Sarah Lawrence but that was nothing. You did attend college for three years.

Your belief in something can cure you of anything. All therapies lead to Rome. Did you know that some people have been cured of cancer just by taking aspirin? If I believed completely in Janov's therapy, or in any theory for that matter, I would have made it. "Making it" means to be cured of all physical and mental sicknesses and be freed of all physical and mental limitations; that is, in its final stage, to become saintly. "Making it" happens when you believe in something so strongly, you finally hypnotize yourself into becoming anything, and everything in physical reality. You become free of any fear and inhibitions. That's to become "God." That is what all the Saints and the Gods were talking about in their books; that you have to be innocent as a child to "make it". -- That it is the hardest thing for the rich to go to heaven. Rich, in this case, means mental richness since physical richness in itself does not harm you unless it hangs you up mentally. I went through a stage where I was impressed with Janov's theory, to the point where I was able to hypnotize myself into making myself stop smoking. But it lasts as long as you make it last. Janov says that you must face reality; that you must go back to your childhood and see everything that happened to you clearly and finally get connected to yourself for the first time. But what is my childhood, my past that I go back to now? I think the past that I remember is the past that I create now because of the necessity of the present. And that is so different from really going back to my past.

Many people in Janov's primal scream therapy claimed that they went back to their past, sometimes even to when they were in their mother's womb. How do we know that the experience was not just another hallucination induced by self-hypnosis? A woman who gave a very swift and painless childbirth with no labor to speak of thought it was due to the primal therapy. Janov explained it as primal birth. How do we know that it wasn't just because it was her second childbirth and she had an easy time compared to her first? How do we know that it was not self-hypnosis that did it?

being liberal makes the kids turn out another way. Children should be whatever they want to be.
How do you think the American public perceives you?
I don't know. In Look Magazine, an old

"You must follow your intuition, moment to moment, with as much devotion as you can."

schoolmate wrote an article about me and said that I looked like Ernest Borgnine. Personally, I liked Ernest Borgnine's acting in Marty, but I never thought I resembled him. But that article was the one that helped formulate my image in this country. She also wrote that I was really fat. It also happens that I was seven months pregnant so I wasn't slim for good reasons.

How do you think the Beatles' fans perceive you?

We got all sorts of threatening letters from people advising John that he might have his throat slit for marrying a Japanese. When I was pregnant a girl bent me a little rubber doll filled with pins. You see there was a strong nostalgic feeling for John's previous wife and that had a lot to do with people's feelings for me. Since we were both married before and we suddenly left our previous engagements—people became uptight. For them, our marriage was a moral issue.

Do you suppose that the post-Beatles audience resents the special nature of your work as compared to a relatively easy-to-digest pop songs?

When one uses the word "special" one imagines something freaky or intellectual. My things aren't intellectual; they're emotional. In Grapefruit I wrote, "Imagine the clouds dripping-Dig a hole in your garden to put them in."

That's childlike, not intellectual. Where music is concerned, I had reached the point where I was performing soundless music—music of the mind. And

scream where they "think" and "feel" that they went back to their mother's womb? Is there any difference between the acid freak's hallucinations and the primal scream freak's visions which they call reality? That is why I couldn't "make it." In primal scream therapy Janov says that you cannot regress even if you want to; you only continue to be more cured. However, we are smoking again. If there is such a thing as a real cure, as Janov claims, shouldn't it be impossible to regress? If Janov claims progressive symptoms such as the cause of painless childbirth to be the result of primal scream, he will have to consider all regressive symptoms as equally the result of primal scream. I think, in primal scream they experience and feel the need of the present in the form of "going back to the past." This, of course, has nothing to do with really going back to the past and facing it, since you will never face anything other than that which you want to face.

So I couldn't make it. Yet again, John and I failed to hypnotize ourselves. So probably we will live, age and die. In primal scream, they say that you become younger, which makes sense... since if you really believe in something and "make it," you will be freed of all illnesses, including aging.

Many people try to make a God out of John and make it through him. Good luck to them. There was one kid who lived in the park next to our home in Ascot for three weeks he had to see John. John finally decided that we should see him. He came into our house and because he'd spent all his time thinking about John rather than himself he was smelly and dirty. I told him that he had to start taking care of himself, and that there was nothing more important than himself.

How long were you with Janov?
Half a year, about two hours a day. When you go home however, you have to keep working at it. It certainly isn't the answer to everything and I don't want to start a new religion. But in many ways the experience helped John and I to further clarify our minds.
Were you ever in any other kind of

something that's so interesting to everybody? What made it interesting, he corrected himself, "What makes it interesting is the fact that people don't know all the roots that lead in to making people."

"Have you spent years eating collard greens and pig's knuckles, and hanging around talking about what's even further back than that? Not at all, because it's not a part of your culture. I mean, you can superficially dig it. I'm like coming into this thing where I'm trying to like explain to people, man: If you don't dig it don't even fuckin' come. Make room for someone who really wants to be there."

"What kind of people show up if they don't want to be there?"

"Oh, lots of people, man. They don't know what the fuck they want," he said. Then added incredulously, "Do you think the audience knows what they want?"

I started to say something about a rock 'n' roll audience.

"What do they know about rock 'n' roll?" he said angrily. "They can't even fuckin' move. They don't even move, that's rock 'n' roll?" He'd been hanging out with somebody from across the tracks, you could tell by the inflection. "The fuckin' rock 'n' roll audience of the 50s, man, would have laughed these fuckin' kids down. Man, there was some shit going on at those shows with the motherfuckin' Coasters, man, and Bill Haley, man. Shit, it was crazed, man. Fuckin' people were kickin' ass, man. All the way down the line. These motherfuckers and turds here, man, sit there all night and look at you and walk out."

"They're voyeurs, man. It's too bad, because that takes away from a lot more of what they could have."

The Fillmore crowd began to stand up after a while. Too late, though. Howard Johnson, tuba player behind Taj, danced with his horn like it was a 200-pound woman, wheeled her around the stage like a chummy tug-boat grabs a funky freighter. Ooom-pah, ooom-pah, and finally people began to rise. Once standing though, they stood still, eyes

really funny to me." He spoke slowly, hardly looking up. "Sometimes they're sad, sometimes they're tragic, so tragic it's a shame." The depth of thought was undercut by a mockery in his tone, a voice which knew its own words and wasn't satisfied with the paths they took.

"The language that I speak, the verbal English language, is not the language of my inner self," he said. It didn't sound pedantic as he spoke. "That's the English language, and I do the best with it that I can." He didn't speak for quite some time. "I've kind of stopped having things to say."

"Is that true?" The man thought, that was clear, and he had to have some things he valued. "There's got to be some things you think about."

"Yeah," he said, "my music." Again there was a silence. This time he broke it, bringing to the surface a theme he'd resisted.

"The main thing is that the audience should start getting hip to the fact that they have a lot to do with what they see and what they are because of what they see."

"Because of what they see?" I asked.

"Yeah, right. They're the television generation, they feel through their eyes."

"I don't see it changing," I said.

"I know it ain't changing," he answered rapidly. "I say that's a possible start if they want to get involved. But they don't." He halted again. His voice dropped. "There's not very much I can say about it anymore. I used to be able to talk reams about it."

He took another tack: "I'm a musician, not a fuckin' rock star. Rock stars come from this fuckin' bullshit . . ." He pointed to one of the music industry trade papers. "That's what's written by people who want to make money off of you, man, going to see me: I don't know about money, man. Black people don't have the money. They got enough to do keeping care of the fuckin' land that they sit on. Don't you think Standard Oil would like to be right in the middle of fuckin' Nigeria? . . . They'd love it."

"They probably are," I said.



"Sometimes people are so tragic it's a shame."

you know . . . because I stopped many years ago worrying about what they're up to and started worrying about what I was up to. Cause that's what everybody else was doing, worrying about what they

were up to." It had a touch of the formula to it, a line that was just a bit too pat.

There were muted pride and a newly free man's bravado to the words.

"I really like people, man. They're



like psychic voyage of a fancy circuit. Some people danced freely, but most stood and watched.

"I was in another country for X amount of months," Taj continued, "where I didn't speak the language. And I communicated with people on a whole other level that most people don't even get into because they're so busy fuckin' talking the language."

He took the lesson to music: "There's a point where people can really touch because they've been fed just the edge of it from the white blues musicians. And there's the depth which if you're living on the surface you can't get into no matter how hard you try. You can dig all the vibes that reel off the top, but the real deep down shit, man . . . you can only sit and marvel at it. It's not yours. That's just the fact of it. It took me a long time to realize that."

Most of Taj's audience being white and middle-class, it must be difficult to believe that and face them night after night.

"You can know it's there but you can't get at it," I paraphrased.

"That's right," he affirmed. "At all, or to any degree!" His ab-soluteness was interesting, if a little strained.

"Certain people can," he answered. "Mose Allison has managed to get into the depth of it. A lot of cats do some good work, but it's definitely based on what was done."

"Does Mose's being brought up in the South have something to do with it?" I asked.

"No, man," he said sternly. "Mose has got it because he's a sensitive human being. The man is alive, that's all. A-live."

Which contradicted the statement that culture was the determining factor.

"But there are some living white people," I said.

"Man, there are," he emphasized, "but they live for things, not within cultures and ways of living." There was a long pause. Taj tapped a pencil on the desktop, the beat quickening until he spoke. "I don't know what they're up to,

shit that's on my mind. That's what I'll be thinking about.

"It's a drag, man. So I go out there and I don't play no bullshit, man, because the shit that I'll be playing, man, you know, any motherfucker in the balcony can tell whether I'm bullshittin or playin'. But them motherfuckers could never know, man." He was speaking quickly now, words coming with no pause. "So I'm putting my shit out there cold as it could be, man, right out there. And what do they do? I'm so fucked up on reds I can't do nothing." He mocked a white street accent. "Fuck off, kid. Go away and have your hang ups somewhere else."

"I don't know what it is. It's the nature of being ignorant; it's the nature of being unfeeling; it's the nature of being ex-pertenceless."

"It must be tough to have to deal with those people," I said.

"Aah," he moaned. "It's un-believable!"

Taj defines himself by his music. "The music is what I'm all about," he says. "It's happening. It isn't like we sit up and play for months and then come out and . . ." his voice turned mock sultry, a tinge of disgust seeping through the scorn. "Now you can see my body, No, man. The music is what I'm about. Every fuckin' note. Just listen to it."

But it isn't quite that easy. His music is apolitical, and he isn't. He would argue the liberating nature of his music, but admits most people miss it, can't touch it at all. His music is joyful, but also a little desperate. He sees himself performing before largely uncomprehending crowds (he hasn't played to many black audiences, though he plans to) and must sorely miss the warmth of the response he so (seemingly) firmly believes cannot be mustered.

Taj's music can get the adrenalin flowing in an instant. Four tubas and his own up-beat voice combine to soothe and scratch simultaneously. He says it's black music, by definition alienated. I'm not crazy about collard greens, but I dig the blues. You have to be alive to dig what Taj does with music; I hope there are more living people than he believes. It would be a shame to miss it.



"I'm a musician, not a fucking rock star."



now my new album is an attempt to communicate with people in an easier way. Language is a very formal means of communication and it's also an oversimplification of reality. One's emotional reality is much more complex than what the usual form of music can express. I had to break the melodic and rhythmic pattern to say anything real—and so you hear my music stuttering. And that's all it's doing, stuttering to be real. And some people say it's not easy. But this is the most honest way I can communicate. And I think the audience or the reader deserves it. After all, everyone is basically beautiful. Living is such a difficult experience and I respect everyone just for being alive. To live is to suffer and I know all about the suffering people are going through because I've had a tough life of my own. Therefore, I respect people too much to give them something casual. So if anything, my work used to be too heavy, a common characteristic of woman artists. I like the

"We tell each other, it's been four years since we've met, two years since we've married, why do we love each other so endlessly?"

idea of including a little humor or wit in my work, even though I lean towards cynicism.

Many people however, think I'm just a freak and that all I do is scream. They laugh when I say I'm a perfectionist about producing and engineering my work in the studio. They laugh when I say that I am particular about the rhythm and the sound and the balance. They think what the hell, who can be particular about screaming? But if you listen carefully to my records you will see that all these elements are used very carefully.

Therese Leary has been quoted as

Could you think about it now?

Even now, it would never cross my mind. That's how uninterested I am. I have better things to do.

It was all over the TV.

Somehow I very wisely avoided it.

You didn't watch television yesterday? I watched TV but intuitively I avoided the wedding and it avoided my vision. All I can say with reference to the wedding is people create their own fate.

There have been quite a few stories written about you since you've come to New York. What has been your reaction to your press?

We have been receiving, for the most part, favorable reviews recently. But when you get good reviews, they are usually balanced by the bad. For instance, there was a piece in the Daily News which I suppose would be considered very unfavorable. However, it was an emotional piece written by somebody who doesn't know us.

There was a tape made of John and you having dinner with friends. This tape has circulated through a segment of the New York underground and it also has been publicly written about. Do you have a reaction about that?

We were just being natural. We didn't think it was bad to be taped at dinner. If you listen to it you'll see that John was being very humorous and he was camping it up. The journalist who wrote about that tape took it much too seriously. I understand that the tape is for sale. I'll give you the money, buy it for me, and we'll listen to it together. You'll see that the criticism of us was unjustified.

How do you feel about the fact that this tape may be for sale?

It's ridiculous. It's like selling a hotel sheet just because John Lennon slept on it.

There was a national magazine piece this month about Linda Eastman and you entitled, "The Two Girls Who Broke Up the Beatles." What is your reaction to this kind of publicity?

It's a shining job — people write

pay for services because other people need to earn money too. But when I didn't have money I could work very cheaply. Now because I have more money, everything costs more to do. So in a way life can be very fair. You see, having money is not the greatest thing in the world.

Are taxes your only gripe against capitalism?

I'm suspicious of any "ism." "Ism's" create an establishment. Even though I like the idea of free enterprise, I'd like to see a society where everyone has plenty of opportunity and nobody starves. I like the idea of capital being balanced but I don't believe in financial equality in a naive sense. I don't care for any social system that sets down rules that everyone has to fit into. When John belonged to the Beatles, everyone thought he was on top of the world and had all the freedom that went with it. But he had to cut himself down to the size of the group and he was deprived of a great deal of his personal freedom. I'm for a society where everybody has freedom and can develop to the fullest his own unique potential.

There is a great deal of interest in organic foods. Are you a natural foods fan?

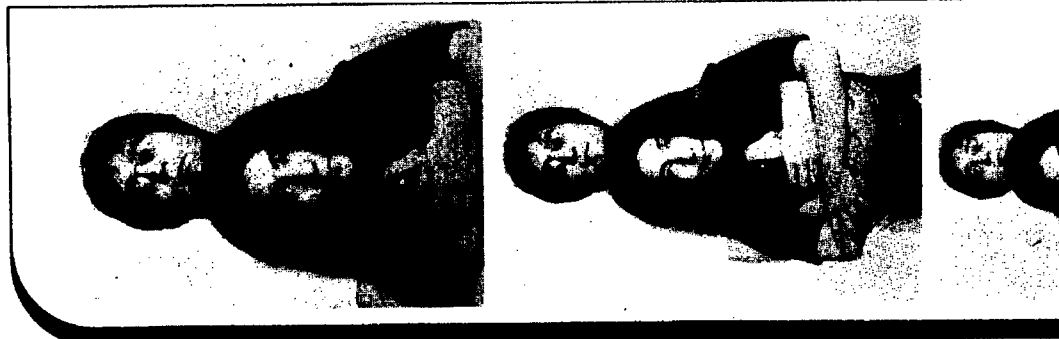
The body is stronger than you think. Drinking a bottle of coke can't hurt you. The body constantly balances itself out. We inhale and we exhale and there is balance. If you drink a bottle of coke, in two days the poisons will be gone because the body will balance itself out. Your eating habits will be in good balance if you follow your intuition and eat exactly what you want. We've been through the macrobiotic, vegetarian, and fasting trip and found being intuitive is better.

Do you take vitamins?

No, I'm not a vitamin freak. I eat and drink exactly what I want at the moment I want it. And it works out very well.

Do you cook?

Once in a while. And when I feel like doing it I put my soul into it. I'd go crazy if I had to cook three times a day because I was unaccused to. When I do, it really



up of the two-particle union?" Do you feel like one-half of the symbol of the new religion?

I thank him for saying it and John does too but we are not the only couple like this. Let's say that we are the normal couple of the future and there are many more couples like us. We happen to get more publicity than most people and that's why our ideas are becoming known.

Did the other Beatles understand your ideas?

I don't know. John understands and that is enough for me. He told me he could sum up my message in three lines and he did. He said "Woman creates... Man destroys... Artist reveals." And John suggested that we put these three lines on our film catalogue because he thought it would help people understand what we're trying to do with our films.

I understand you attended a performance of "Vain Victory." Did you like it?

We didn't choose to go. Andy (Warhol) took us, and we went. It was funny and we liked it.

Do you like plays?

I'm not particular about the medium. I like all mediums the way I like all forms of music. At this very moment I'm thinking about a minuet. Many rebels would say, "Minuet? Forget it!" But if you handled the form of a minuet using pieces of glass, water, bells, lead, the sounds of paper rustling and people breathing — it would be beautiful! How about snoring?

John and you have met with the Canadian prime minister. What have you learned from world leaders?

We meet a great many people and I like to meet people who are honest and who are attempting to do something interesting. I prefer not to meet people who are spiritually lazy and not going anywhere or people who are pedantic.

Yesterday Tricia Nixon was married. Would you like to have been invited to the wedding?

I never even thought about it. That answers it, I suppose.

... I understand that a nice name I must have everything and therefore, deserve a little hammering. But I'm human too. If you meet me, you know that I'm as vulnerable as everybody else and that I also have my problems. You realize that I'm not the superhuman monster with a lot of luck that you read about in magazine stories.

How do you feel about publicity in general?

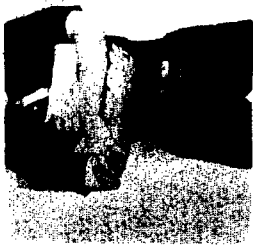
When I get publicity for the wrong reasons I'm not happy. My publicity usually is false publicity because it deals with the fact that I'm Mrs. Lennon—the world's most famous unknown artist. I know a woman who dyed her hair blonde, when it was actually brown. People kept complimenting her but she couldn't be happy because she knew she was being complimented for something she was not. I don't mind publicity when people communicate with me and I can communicate with them on an honest level about my work.

How important is money to you?

When people pay money to get something I've made, I'm flattered. And if I have money, it's better than the establishment having it because I have no relatives to support and most of my money would be used to help people. I haven't helped many people yet because I haven't earned a great deal of money. Unfortunately English law puts me in the same tax bracket as my husband. But I'm starting to help some people. I'd like to help starving children, gypsy children who need schooling — instead of giving it to other artists. When I was poor, I prided myself on being an artist who could make things cheaply and use ready-made materials to discover new ways of doing things that didn't cost much. So I expect the same from other artists.

Has the increase in your wealth made life easier?

In some ways, money helps but life is very strange. When I didn't have any money people would lend me a camera and allow me to use their studio if I wanted to make a film. People would offer to help in any way they could. Now, nobody is willing to help me. I understand that and I realize I now have to



from?

I was very surprised to find that John is just as energetic as I am. We're both amazed at that. Many people use all their energy to cut themselves into a size that is socially acceptable. People don't say what they want to say because they're trained to be proper. They use most of their energies to lie to themselves. John and I are not very inhibited and we just don't waste our energy.



Taj Mahal

'I'm Tired of Playing Cul de Sac City'

by Peter Knobler

Taj Mahal sat behind a corporate desk his face offering yawn, grimace, scowl and an occasional sardonic smile. He's a large man, and his green patterned dashiki gave him the appearance of a restless prince on an idle battlefield. But this prince was pissed.

There may have been a specific cause—he was angry at an especially patronizing ad for his new record which had been run without his seeing it—but there was a deep-seated displeasure which fed his anger long after any concrete reason could sustain it.

Onstage, Taj is all enthusiasm. His 10-piece band just whomps up a storm, producing the kind of grin you don't volunteer just let on through. It's gut music that borders on adjacent sides of delight and desperation. He has four tubas in the band and they can bring a "whoosh" explosion of energy—"Kind of a hook for people to grab onto," Taj said—while Taj himself, stuttering out phrases as no one has quite done like that before, conjures an energy which is at once driving and driven.

"I get off playing music," he said. It was a homily and he was bored saying it. He'd said it many times before and though it meant something special and unique to him, he implicitly doubted it could be transmitted in words. He continued anyway. "I always wanted to make good music, have fun, man. Just get in there and do it. Laugh and giggle and crack up, man. You know, have a good time. To me, the greatest thing musicians could get involved in while they're playing music, man, is improvisation. And I'm constantly improvising."

This moment of four tubas in a 10-piece



to expound on it ever since he brought his band onstage over six months ago. "I wanted to get into something new, something exciting, man." He stressed the words as if to instill new life in them, 400. "Something happy." His voice is a rasping kind of hoarse whisper which can switch in a moment to piercing depth or funky mockery. "Once in a while people start laughing immediately, but that he-be-he shit don't last too long. It goes from a laugh to . . . I mean like people who've never seen those horns before, they don't know what to do. They just don't know what to do."

As introduction, only a few minutes on the stage, Taj had told the Fillmore East audience he wanted us all to "share a common space" for the evening. The Fillmore crowd, not noted for its conviviality, did little more than murmur and demand more. It didn't seem to affect Taj then, but thinking back on it he began to raise his voice.

"What can you say, man. They've been fed television. They've had plastic tits put in their mouths when they were kids, man, what do you want. You want them close to what's going on? Look at me, man. I was a breast-nursed baby. I'm the eldest son in the family, right; I'm the one that had the most amount of space, everybody else got the rush. They got the television, man. You know, the quick ride. What can I say? Then I try and play some music to them, man, and since everything's been laid out so poor, man . . . I mean they came through Search for Tomorrow. That kind of shit is really crazy, you know what I mean. It'll drive you nuts."

"But you're playing to them," I said, "they must give you something back."

"Not very much," he answered quickly. "That's why I'm stopping playing for them."

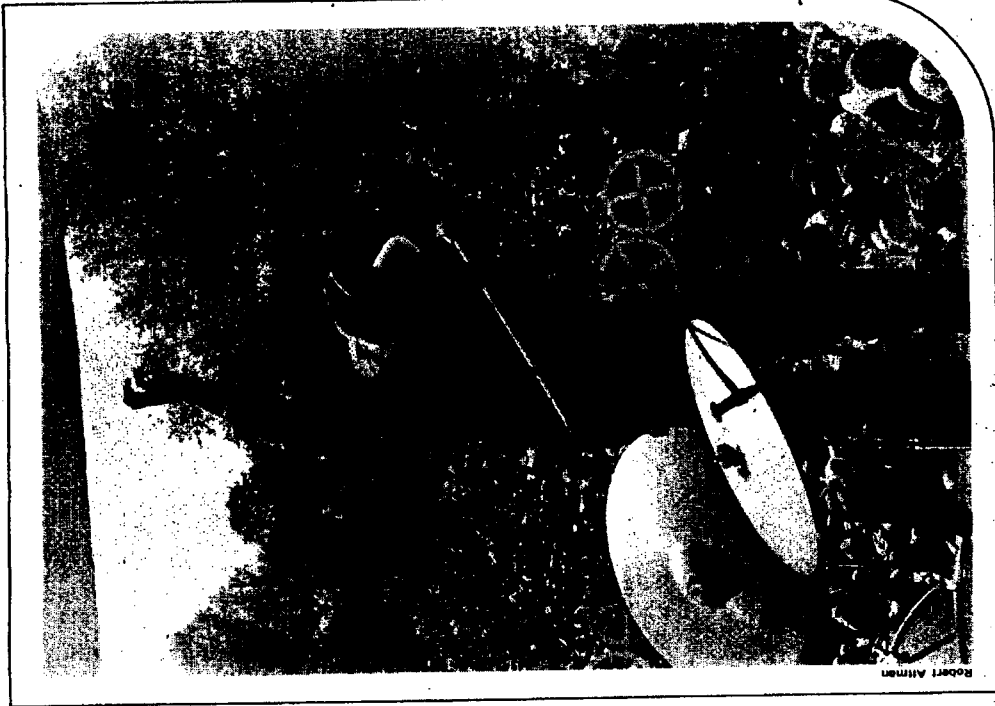
Taj had taken an extended leave of absence, going "overseas" to get away from where he had been. "Who are you going to play for?" I asked.

"Who knows, man." Taj was unwilling to be specific, as if the question itself implied a transcendent and eternal lack of its answer. "Whoever's really there."

"And how do you control that?"

"You don't control it, you know it. You

Robert Altman



Robert Altman

don't play . . . You don't want to be jumbled by thoughts, paused and rephrased himself. "Look," he said, "I'm tired of playing Cui de Sac city man. My music is black music, it's black music, you dig? And I'm tired of playing to a bunch of people who say 'We really dig it but we can't relate to it. I'm tired.' His voice used the repetition dramatically. "If someone would say 'well, you're gonna have to play so it sounds like me' I would be able to deal with that. But they ask you to come and play, then they don't know what to do. They can't fuck with you," his voice rose almost desperately. "They can't fuck with you, man, they don't give you anything back." And just as suddenly he grabbed some calm, like a sailor who'd leaped a little too far righting himself after a frozen moment's stillness.

"That's what's happening," he said, saying nothing. "So I'm just going to move along to where an audience is aware and awake."

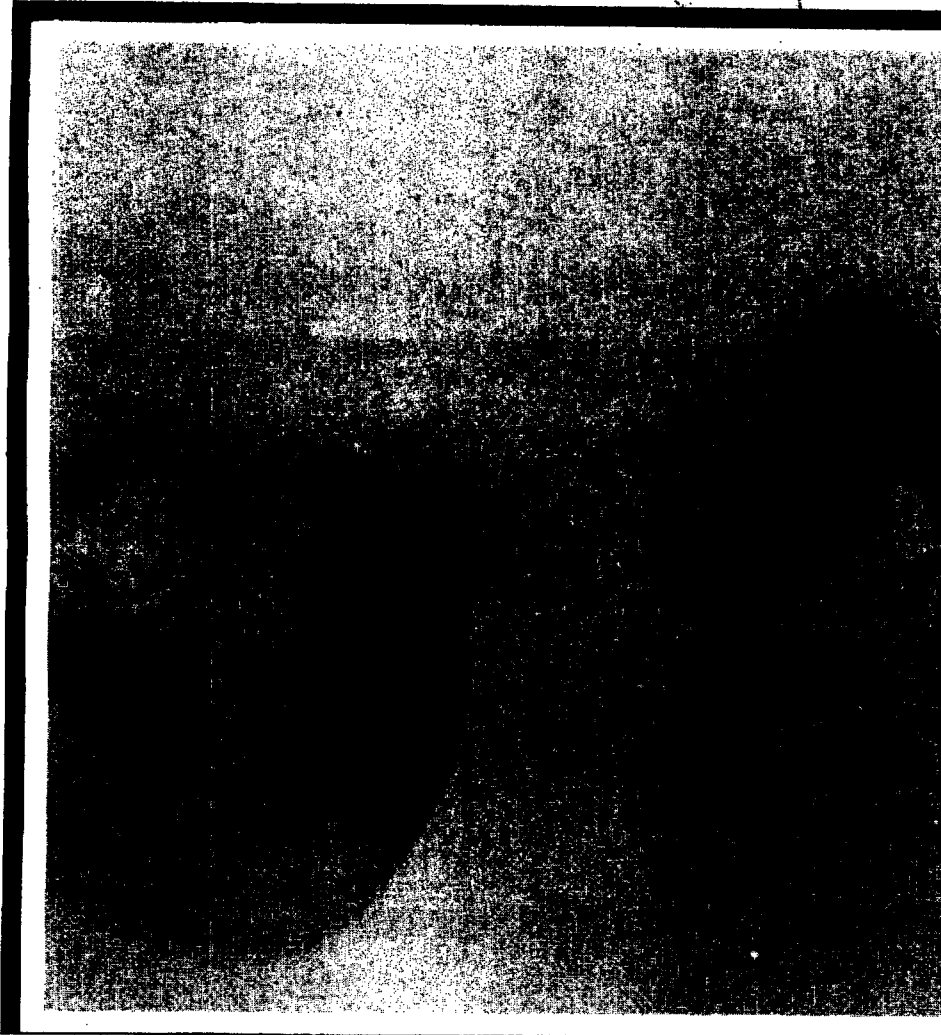
"I don't know if that's possible," I offered. Taj had appeared from behind his mask for a brief moment and I tried to pursue him. "You can play to the element in the audience that's aware and awake . . ."

"That's difficult," he replied, "that's difficult. Also, you can play very detached. But I'm not going to sacrifice my life, the way I live—because the way I play is the way I live—I'm not going to sacrifice my life and my life style for a bunch of kids who it don't make any difference to anyway."

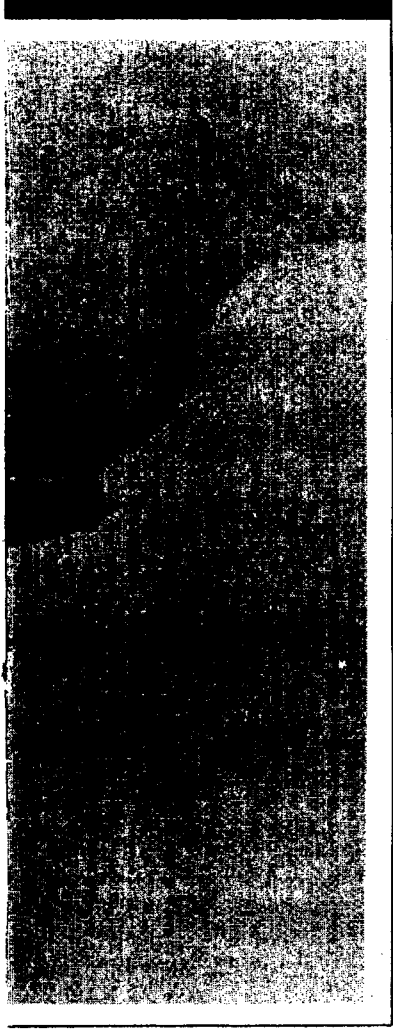
"It must be hard to do this shit," I said. "I won't be doing it a whole lot. Let me get that straight with you now." He took the street rhythm for that line. His singer's phrasing is a natural extension of his own speech. "I won't be spending nights with it."

"There's an awful lot of this life that . . ." he stopped mid-sentence as another thought struck. "I mean, how can I come out of nowhere and have

and fly out of the window.



FLY by Yoko Ono copyright '68
FILM NO. 13
Let a fly walk on a woman's body from toe to



YOKO THE FILM MAKER

Why did you turn to films?

I just wanted to make films. But then I discovered that in the very nature and structure of my films there is the idea that they are only finished when many different people in many different countries make different versions of them. Real events occur when many people participate. The more the merrier, I say. An entire family can make a family bottoms film. Everyone can make one of my films because the instructions are so simple. I don't consider myself a director but a film maker who makes instructions. With most films there is only one version, the director's choice because he thinks it's the best version. But my films are only completed when people make their own variations of my work.

How did you get the idea for "Bottoms"?

I was in my house in Japan. A maid was scrubbing the floor and her bottom was sticking up. Then afterwards I saw a film — a corny film about cowboys — and a cowboy had his back to the screen and he was talking to another guy and a girl and his shoulders occupied about two-thirds of the screen. I thought this was an interesting composition and I liked it. I thought that a film in which an object covers the whole screen and prohibits the filming of a background might be interesting. The audience would look at the screen and not be able to identify the object because there would be no background. Perhaps, they'd think it was just a dark screen. The screen would move

and they would not be able to tell if it was a flat surface or a surface with dimension. It could all be subtle and beautiful.

What is your reaction to pornographic films?

I approve of anything that is liberating. It's sad that so many people use a large portion of their energy to inhibit themselves. Ninety percent of someone's energy could be devoted to taking his mind away from his fantasies of committing rape or to censoring his own obscene thoughts, when instead you could use your thoughts to free yourself rather than to inhibit yourself. Erotic thoughts are only the results of repression. If you allowed yourself to be free, you could devote your energies to something else.

Do you think the public is ready to un-

derstand your films?

Let's put it this way. You can walk down the street and after you've walked a block, someone could say, "What did you see?" and you could answer, "I saw nothing." But your eye saw everything that was happening. It didn't miss a thing even if you don't remember what you saw. Let people's eyes look at my films; their minds will catch up later. Just the other day I saw an experiment on television that made a very interesting point. There was a coin hanging from a string. It could swing in a direction marked "yes" or in a direction marked "no." Someone started a card but didn't tell which one is marked. You could go through the pile of cards and you would know which one is marked. But the coin

Looking back now on your early 'angry' years, when you used to smash up guitars & tv sets on stage—even each other sometimes—when you wrote 'Substitute' and 'My Generation,' and first used full-volume feedback and so on. . . . how do you relate to all that now?

Well . . . rock's an amazing thing because the audience is in a position to react at face value. It reacts in a pure and honest way, so you get a truly reflective situation. In other words, I am an individual, right, but because rock is essentially honest, people can identify with things I say without getting hung up in any way, just like I can identify with things other people sing and not get caught up in someone else's ego trip. Now I never sang "Hope I die before I get old" or "Why don't you all fade away" because I felt all old people should disappear, or they didn't understand me, or there was a lot of capitalist bullshit going on. It was just a reaction to personal things like getting hung-up over American business matters. So instantly, despite the fact that other kids might not have had such severe trouble because they hadn't gone looking for it, they could identify personally, directly. And it's exactly the same with the new single. It's got the same vehemency. We still mean what we say.

You're still frustrated about the same things?

I think the guy who says the most in this area is Steve Stills, in his words, which are always incredibly sad and confused. He says I've got the same problems, still, but in a different way. Look, with 'My Generation,' I was young, I wanted to make it in a rock group, I wanted to be in the biggest rock group and not have to walk around in the shadow of the Stones and the Beatles. I wanted to be loved by beautiful women, right, and these were the frustrations I felt then. Now they're a bit different but it's the same feeling. I've got a problem for example in that I want to give you a share of what I've done, but I know that I can't because my life is my life, and I'm involved with the people I'm involved with and that's the end of it. I'm not going to go looking for trouble, I've

down. I could see the finished product, but I couldn't explain how I thought we could get there. We did give the performers . . . that's the wrong word really . . . and Universal Pictures promised me a million dollars on the strength of a conversation. But The Who—and this includes me, because I need direction and production as much as anyone else—got more and more confused and tied up in technicalities like quadrophonic PA systems, and we just forgot how to play.

How do you go about explaining ideas of your own to the group?

With songs, I outline the ideas to them and then make a demo. That's where this experiment fell down. You can't make a demo of a film. I wrote a script, but I'm not a scriptwriter so that wasn't overly well received. We got very very close to what would have been a revolution in rock and roll, but we didn't really have the fodder to carry it off. We had to stop being The Who for so long we realized it was going to take months to rebuild ourselves. So here we are, with no film. And I want to get a film done more than anything else. But we did get a lot of good material for the album.

Have you read this new book out in England on The Who?

Never heard of it.

By Gary Herrman

Well, there's an interview with Roger Daltrey where he says touring America was what brought The Who together in the first place because you felt isolated.

Oh dear. It's a personal opinion, it's perfectly valid. Probably he's thinking about the Hermans' Hermits tour. I think what got me together far more in the States was Monterey and the week we did on the Murray the K show. Our debut in the States was the best rock festival that's ever happened, it was just incredible. Everybody was marvellous, the kids, the artists, the police and the locals . . . I thought America was a dream-land. Now I know it's a piss-ole. No, the Americans are the greatest race on earth, no bullshit, I mean I love England and the English but as far as



Entwistle and Moon

So that's what it's all about. Well, a better way of saying it in the song might have been: "No one's going to get on our stage and live." Which has caused us a lot of trouble in the past. We've had problems like that because we regard the stage as a sacred place.

Are you thinking of the Abbie Hoffman incident?

No, I was thinking of when I got hurt at Leicester. The Hell's Angels got on the

Maybe it's a paradox. . . . it's reflective of the audience, but you're trying to express something of your own aren't you.

Oh, sure . . . that's how it works. People identify with your frustrations, and everybody's frustrated. And the most frustrated people on the planet are always the youngest. The point is, you know things in life aren't right but at the same time you know that rock in itself is