

# KALEID

## ROCKLINES

by Todd McDermot

Well, boys and girls, the Christmas season is upon us. "What?" you say. "It's only Halloween!" Where have you been? In the record business, the twelve days of Christmas become the twelve weeks of Christmas, and we're already into the fifth week.

Anyway, as anybody who has stumbled into a record store or turned on the radio lately knows, almost everybody who's anybody has released an album in the hopes of becoming a winner in the "Christmas gift sweepstakes". Only major recording stars need apply and since so many new albums now glut the stores, what better way to ring in the Christmas season than glut this article with four of the more interesting, (if not completely satisfying) new albums.



—photo by Fran Matthews

Our first Christmas goody comes from exotic and romantic Paris. However, other than the occasional "merci beaucoup" (which if you remember your high school or last semester's French course means "Thank you for spending twelve dollars on a ticket and making me very

rich."), there's no French on this album. Surprise. It's Supertramp's double live album on A&M records called, amazingly enough, "Paris".

The album is destined to do absolutely nothing other than make these six old Englishmen a ton of money. However, it's a pleasant, entertaining rundown of their average stage show. Containing bits and pieces of each of their more recent albums. ("Breakfast in America", "Even on the Quietest Moments", "Crime of the Century" etc.), the album really isn't much of a deviation from their studio efforts. But, hey, why tamper with success.

There are a few highlights to this sixteen song set though. "Bloody Well Right" takes on more strength and evolves into a rousing vamping anthem. Also, "From Now On" becomes an urgent melo-dramatic plea with the saxophone backing up a repeating, emotion building chorus. Most of the difference between these songs and the previous versions comes from the "concert stretch", in which the tunes are strung out with a saxophone break in the middle or a few extra bars of the chorus at the end.

In fact, it's the saxophone of John Helliwell that provides the spectacular musical moments in a Supertramp concert. The special lyrical quality and passion his playing possesses really makes the Parisian crowd come alive. The only real problem with the entire set is a slightly under recorded piano. "Paris" will definitely be a perfect gift for anyone who may be only familiar with "Breakfast in America" or thought that Supertramp's last appearance here was a thrill.

The next live set on our Christmas list comes from our favorite pop-folk songstress gone jazzy, Joni Mitchell. Actually, it's interesting that Joni's other live double album, "Miles of Aisles" was recorded with sax player Tom Scott and the L.A. Express, some prominent jazz rockers of that time. On this one, called "Shadows and Lights" on Asylum records she hooks up with some of today's giants of jazz: guitarist Pat Metheny, Weather Report bassist Jaco Pastorius, and Brecker Brother Mike on saxophone.

Much was made of Mitchell's association with

jazz legend Charles Mingus, who wrote the music for her last album while terminally ill. The album, entitled "Mingus" raised the eyebrows of many who



—photo by Fran Matthews

thought a collaboration between a young white female pop star and an old black jazz musician to be quite a strange spectacle. However, Joni fooled them all. She always king of sang around a melody with that sing-song style of hers, so a little vocal improvisation wasn't too far out of line for her. On this live album recorded last summer in Santa Barbara, California, she swings back and forth between the jazz of Mingus' "Goodbye Pork Pie Hat" and rockers, (especially a cute little "Why Do Fools Fall in Love" with the original Persuasions, no less). In between there are some new arrangements of old Mitchell standards like "Free Man in Paris". Metheny and bassist Pastorius, whose work with Joni goes back to 1977's "Hejira", add some interesting jazz touches throughout.

Things go a little sour only when Joni tries to improvise too wildly (especially on Mingus' "Dry Cleaner from Des Moines") or goes bananas, like on

## Horror Film Typifies Halloween

by Phil Kowalski

The fall season has traditionally been signified by the onslaught of horror films and reasonable facsimiles of the like. And this year is no exception.

This year's fright-film season is

diabolical secret recipe of Farmer Vincent's smoked meats. His meats consist of a special concoction of ingredients which has fed the county for over thirty years. He also operates the motel where the action occurs. It is called the

jerky" delicacies.

The inevitable turnaround comes when his latest group of "ingredients" escape their earth domain and rebel. What ensues is a chillingly suspenseful and humorous (if you can imagine) rebellion of the "living beer snacks" (just picture the stupidity of it all).

The suspense climaxes with a chain saw duel, complete with shredded flesh and oozing blood. Also part of the finale is the scene in which the helpless, screaming girl is tied to the slowly-approaching meat-slicing machine. This is reminiscent of the bygone days of moviedom when the girl was hopelessly tied to the railroad tracks.

Enter — hero.

End — predictable.

It is typical to unimaginably conceive "Motel Hell" as a basic low-budget, 35mm home horror movie or a desperate second feature at a drive-in. In evidence of this is the appallingly poor acting of the Hollywood no-names and of the apparent fakeness of the grisly scenes (personally, I've seen more lifelike hands and feet on the mannequins at Twin Fair).

Although this is a primitive low-budget fright-flick, it cannot even approach the ranks of such B-grade terror classics as John

Carpenter's "Halloween" and Romero's "Night of the Living Dead."

Somehow, I couldn't help thinking that it probably was cheaper to produce "Motel Hell", an unreasonable facsimile of a horror movie, than it would be to purchase an entire jar of "beef

jerky" (Molson's included).

So, the next time you go into your favorite watering hole or house of brew to drench the ole tastebuds ask yourself: "I wonder how many fat Hermans it took Farmer Vincent to make one Slim Jim."

Then, chuckle and drink up!



Everyone comes out on Halloween.

marked by everything from fashionable murder-ala-chic to senseless slaughters on a locomotive to the gruesome killings at a senior prom.

One such film that does not even whet the appetite or make sweaty the palms of many a dihard fright fanatic is the new Halloween treat, "Motel Hell."

The film deals with the

Motel Hello. However, the final letter is about to flicker out. Hence, Motel Hell.

What Farmer Vincent does is capture unsuspecting passersby and bury them alive in his garden. There he, feeds and cares for them until harvest time.

Vincent then proceeds to cure, smoke, and prepare the bodies for use in his world-famous "beef



Don't go out alone.

# OSCOPE

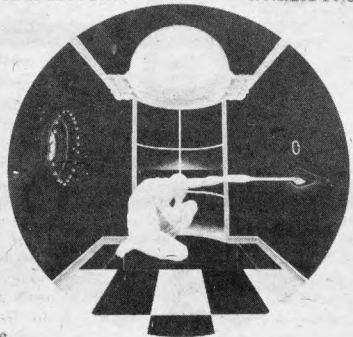
## Albums Arrive in Stores

the weird vocal over percussion accompaniment on "Dreamland". Unfortunately, she doesn't have the vocal range or musical background to succeed with these.

The diverse somewhat uneven performance here makes "Shadows and Light" an interesting, transitional record. Although what Mitchell is doing now is not popular with many of her old fans, it has opened her up to a whole new audience and record buying public. The music on this album may be a prototype of future pop music trends.

The word jazz is the only similarity between Joni Mitchell's latest and electric violinist Jean Luc Ponty's new album. His Atlantic Records album, "Civilized Evil" borrows heavily from the progressive rock and classical genres, leaving the jazz improvising solely to the violin master himself. Everything else is carefully written and orchestrated, making for a flawless, if some times

JEAN-LUC PONTY CIVILIZED EVIL



—photo by Fran Matthews

monotonous musical performance.

Many have argued that Ponty has taken on too much of late. There has been talk that his music, completely controlled by the Frenchman himself,

has become stagnant. With, "Civilized Evil", Jean Luc has made a conscious effort to fight just that. New personnel and a more varied outlook have helped Ponty create an instrumental album which succeeds in creating many moods and feelings for the listener.

Also, he has let a different side of himself show on the peaceful acoustic sound of "Once a Blue Plane". Although none of the tunes here seem destined for the AM-FM radio popularity of last year's "Beach Girl" from his "Taste of Passion" album, as a whole "Civilized Evil" is easily a superior album. The churning moog bass of "Demagomania", spritely melody of "Happy Robots" and the singing violin lines of "Shape Up Your Mind", engage one in a kind of aural picture painting defying description. This album should probably be on the top of every progressive rock or jazz-rock fan's list to Santa.

Finally, we have those titans of pop song, the Doobie Brothers and their new one "One Step Closer" on Warner Bros. Records, (which the Doobies probably own by now). This album, the followup to last year's platinum selling, top 40 hit laden "Minute by Minute" is more of the same, only a little less inspired.

Everyone knows the story of the Doobie Brothers. What was once a hard rocking Southern quartet became a group of pop superstars with the addition of leadsinger and keyboardist Michael McDonald and exit of good old boy Tom Johnston. It all started with "Takin' it to the Streets" and has reached epic proportions. McDonald's "gravel wrapped in silk" tenor voice and songwriting ability have made him one of the biggest and most recorded pop stars around. He even gets to sing backup on Chris Cross's albums!

Anyway, "One Step Closer" is more of the current Doobie sound, only somehow lacking the spark of their last few albums. There's still the definite latin-jazz overtones, the instrumental (this one is nothing compared to the "Minute by Minute" "Steamer Lane Breakdown" country rock headdown), and those nice background vocal harmonies. The addition of three new members,

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guitarist John McFee, drummer Chet McCracken and Cornelius Bumpus, who doubles on saxophone and organ hasn't made the Doobies miss a beat,



—photo by Fran Matthews

either. The only real difference is a few more sax solos and an occasional sound of the vibes. Anyway, the critics panned the last one, and they'll probably destroy this one, but why bother? The Doobies are a laid-back pop group now and they're sure to score a couple of singles successes with this effort. Michael McDonald even wrote "Dedicate This Heart" with Paul Anka. It's already most wanted among the teeny boppers and hip pop music fans alike. You could even give one to Grandma.

So there's a start on the Christmas music rush. I'm sure there's more to come, which we'll try to cover in the weeks leading up to the big day. Hey, better hurry though, only fifty-five shopping days left!

## Viewing Disasters Is Heartless Spectator Sport

by Dino Murphy

My friend Stephen and I were walking down Elmwood Avenue the other day and we saw huge clouds of black billowing smoke drifting off in the distance. This, coupled with the loud blaring of sirens and the scurrying about of people on the street meant only one thing: Fire. Stephen looked at me and said, "Wanna go see the fire?" "Yeah!", I replied, and we both ran off at a very quick pace. Many things were going through my mind while we were running to the fire. First, I wasn't sure if I could keep up with Stephen because his strides are much longer than mine. Secondly, I had this strange sense of Deja Vu. Running at breakneck speed with a best friend to see a disaster reminded me of my younger days. I distinctly remember running up to the corner of our street to see the wreckage of a car accident and milling about with all the kids in the neighborhood. It is a giddy, mischievous feeling; a sense of anticipation to see how bad the situation really was. We stopped about two blocks short of our destination and walked the rest of the way. The following is a record, more or less, of what I saw and felt that afternoon.

I must say that I had never seen a house on fire before, so my description might be a bit wide-eyed and naive. What struck me most initially was the hum of activity going on around Stephen and I. Firemen were everywhere, it seemed. They were hooking up hoses, directing traffic, positioning pumper trucks, and keeping the crowds away from the house. The scene seemed to be the epitome of chaos, yet in fact, it was incredibly orderly. These firemen have been in this position hundreds of times and they know exactly what they are doing. It sounds like such a hackned old phrase, but firemen are some of the most amazing dedicated men on the face of the earth. I have always had a conception of

firemen and their role, but I had never seen them in "action" before. These men do risk their lives for others. I saw one fireman straddling the roof of the building, engulfed in flame and smoke. He was swinging his axe like a character right out of the Nibelungenlied. Others were breaking down burning doors and smashing windows so that they could gain easier access to this building. I could sense the disdain and disgust the firemen had towards all the "spectators" who had gathered. At fires, people only get in the way. I sort of abstracted myself and Stephen from the rest of the people milling about; but in reality, we were there for the same reasons as the rest.



Most of the crowd came from the immediate neighborhood for one could see them coming out of the adjoining houses. I can understand their interest in being there for it was their neighborhood and their house and families were being affected by this fire. Yet, what I cannot understand, and yet, never really occurred to me until now, are the people who came from off the street to watch another person's house

burn. There seems to be a morbid fascination about fires. People are drawn to them because it is someone else's house burning, not their own. It is not an inherently bad trait, just a fact of life that people gain solace in seeing other's misfortunes. I was almost caught up in this "group consciousness" when I saw something I will never forget. It is a scene that has been played hundreds of times before, yet one that greatly affected me.

The house adjacent to the burning one housed, I presume, college age girls and some elderly people. I saw an old woman, on the front porch, cradling her dog and pacing back and forth. She kept repeating over and over "My God, My God." She was cradling the dog as if it were one of her own children, and the look of anguish on her face was accentuated by the black soot that had gathered on her cheeks and lips. A young girl who was on crutches (I couldn't discern what her handicap was) was attempting to console the old woman. This shook me up so much that I was quite literally, speechless. This is what a fire does to people. In a few short moments it can wipe out what one has accumulated in a life-time. The losses suffered are not purely material for a lot of memories are stored within the walls of a home. After that, I had to leave.

I felt so cheap like some voyeur. When I look back, I cannot believe that I actually ran to see someone's house burn down. One must abstract oneself and put yourself in the place of the victim. If it had been me on that porch, consoling that elderly woman I would have sent a string of expletives at all those who stood there gawking at me. It is difficult to relate the experience on paper, but I'm sure a lot of you know what I am trying to say. It is an experience I will never forget, and one which I hope never to experience again. Needless to say, the walk home was a very quiet one for Stephen and I.