

REVIEWS

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rockers, Carrasco & Co. produce zany tex-mex dance music with panache and some degree of panic as well. On this disc, Joe "King" utilizes the party-perfect production skills of Go-Go's control board man Richard Gottehrer to achieve a forceful sound that has more bite, bounce and belly laughs than the previous "Synapse Gap (Mondo Total)" effort, and should do well on prog and new music-molded AOR outlets. Historical note: the LP features a re-recording of Carrasco's first independently released single, "Party Weekend," as well as another version of the King's classic "Buena" composition.

VIOLENT FEMMES — Slash 23845-1 — Producer: Mark Van Hecke — List: 8.98 — Bar Coded

Led by 19-year-old Gordon Gano, this Wisconsin-based trio's first appearance on vinyl is highly impressive, delivering unconventional, urgent and emotional discourses about young passion via sparse instrumentation that is positively chilling. For example, "Gone Daddy Gone," a tone poem about a lost love, is backed by a xylophone, and the effect sounds powerfully macabre, like bones clattering in a windy cemetery. "We are the next Bob Dylan," Gano once jokingly told an audience, but if songs like the acoustic rocker "Blister in the Sun" are any indication of things to come, he may not be too far off from the mark.

PING PONG OVER THE ABYSS — The Seventy Sevens — Exit/Word ER-0001 — Producer: Steven Sholes — List: 8.98

Marking the debut of the new Exit label, it's easy to understand why 250 college radio programmers signed up with this Waco-based record company for service during a recent Intercollegiate Broadcasting Society convention. The Seventy Sevens wield a brand of rock 'n' roll that molds several diverse influences, including Zeppelin, Springsteen and Talking Heads. The band plays ping pong with the various styles, bouncing back and forth between commercialism, the new wave and pure acid rock, while holding out essentially cerebral lyrical topics.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS — Sharon O'Neill — Epic BFE 38433 — Producer: John Boylan — List: None — Bar Coded

This New Zealand vocalist/keyboardist/composer is joined by members of the California pop mafia, including sax man Tom Scott, singer Karla Bonoff, guitarist Andrew Gold and former Eagles Don Henley and Timothy B. Schmit, so it's no surprise her songs have that kind of laid-back, MOR-rock attitude. Tales of suspicious lovers, teetering relationships and the breakdown of communication between friends comprises the majority of material on this U.S. first showing. Though the messages may be melancholy, the music is not; A/C and soft pop programmers should find plenty here to spin.

BLACK CONTEMPORARY LOOKING AT YOU, LOOKING AT ME — Narada Michael Walden — Atlantic 80058-1 — List: 8.98 — Bar Coded

Walden's seventh album for Atlantic sees him matched up again with angelic Angela Bofill on vocals for "Never Wanna Be Without Your Love," a duet bringing out the best soulful performance of both artists. Other high points on Walden's splendid self-produced LP include a masterful tribal/salsa/funk R&B-tinged cover of the Four Tops' Motown hit "Reach Out (I'll Be There)," the saucy ode to a streetwise flirt called "Tina," and the touching "Black Boy," based on the late Richard Wright's shattering novel about racism. Instrumental support is given here on many cuts by fusion pianist David Sancious, who adds

his magic keyboard touch.

STYLE — Cameo — Atlantic Artists/PolyGram 811 072-1 M1 — Producer: Larry Blackmon — List: 8.98 — Bar Coded

Cameo exploded in 1982 with its "Alligator Woman" mega-hit, and there's no reason why this year's entry into the rhythm 'n' wave sweepstakes shouldn't also capture the imagination of young audiences. "They say this music sounds funny, but we're making good money," exclaims lead member Larry Blackmon on "Let's Not Talk Slot" (which uses video game sounds as bridges), and he definitely has a point considering the band's successful Spike Jones-goes-funk groove. Describing its sound as "new age... 21st Century Bebop," Cameo scores with several B/C adds, among them "Aphrodisiac" and "Style."

WOULD YOU LIKE TO FLY — Ingram — Mirage/Atlantic 90075-1 — Producer: Steve Bernstein — List: 8.98 — Bar Coded

For over a dozen years, the dynamic Ingram family — bassman Butch, keyboardist/saxman James, axesmith Billy, drummer John and percussionist Robert — has entertained crowds at East Coast colleges and European concerts, and, like most blood-tied units, the music is perfectly in synch. Whether playing fusion-funk jazz ("D.J.'s Delight"), middle-of-the-road ballads ("Spoken Words"), dance club motivators ("Groovin' on a Groove"), or up-tempo R&B pop ("No One"), the Ingrams pull it off with a sense of style sure to enrapture B/C audiences.

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SINGLES

OUT OF THE BOX



FRIDA (Atlantic 7-89834)

Here We'll Stay (4:05) (ATV Music Corp., BMI) (T. Colton, J. Rousset) (Producer: P. Collins)

Frida shifts in theme and format in the follow-up to "I Know There's Something Going On." No doubt about the lover in this bright, straight pop outing. Producer Collins provides the appropriate sparkle with a horn section that emphasizes Frida's commitment.

FEATURE PICKS

POP

KENNY ROGERS (Liberty P-B-1495)

All My Life (3:49) (Warner House Of Music — BMI/WB Gold Music Corp — ASCAP) (V. Stephenson, D. Robbins, J. Silbar) (Producers: D. Foster, K. Rogers)

Rogers' first solo release from his "We've Got Tonight" album opens with an

NEW FACES TO WATCH



Falco

A&M recording artist Falco, the lively, dark-haired 25-year-old who has enjoyed international (read European) success with his cryptic dance cut, "Der Kommissar," makes two things perfectly clear during the course of the interview. First of all, he is Austrian, not German; born in Vienna, he sings, or raps, in his native tongue on "Der Kommissar" and the other songs from his recently released (in the U.S.) "Einzelhaft" ("Solitary Confinement") LP.

"It's Viennese, not German, that I use," said the former Vienna Conservatory jazz student. "(Viennese) is much softer than German."

Secondly, he doesn't think very much of the numerous cover versions of "Der Kommissar" currently in circulation, one of which has become a Top 10 hit in the U.S. while the original has just started making inroads on the Top 100 chart after substantial dance club action.

"I hate them all," snaps Falco. "They lost the words. There are now seven different stories."

While he admits that he "never thought 'Der Kommissar' would cross the Atlantic," Falco (whose real name is John DiFalco) pretty much writes the cover battle off as "a problem between the record companies." He's quick to point out that he will share the songwriter's royalties with his keyboardist and "Der Kommissar" co-author Robert Ponger in any case.

"For me, it is just funny, because I

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After The Fire

"We first heard 'Der Kommissar' at a German new wave nightclub while we were on tour opening for ELO," explained Andy Piercy, bassist and lead vocalist for Epic recording group After The Fire. "It wasn't a hit or anything at the time and we liked it, so we contacted the writers and they were really pleased that we did."

Piercy, during a recent coast to coast phone interview, was retracing the story of how his previously unknown British band came to the attention of the American public with a translated version of Falco's Austrian rap record.

"I did the lyrics and sent (Falco) a copy of it in Austria, asking him if it caught the spirit of the song well," Piercy continued. "I got a call (from him) saying, 'Yeah, that's great, go for it.' Well, we did, recording it in England right after the tour."

"Now, I read in a couple of the trade papers that he was a little bitter about it and I was really quite surprised. Of course, I'm really upset that we had the bigger hit in the U.S.," he said, with more than a trace of sarcasm.

Piercy acknowledges that the appeal of "Der Kommissar" has been primarily as a novelty dance tune, and not representative of ATF's own original material. He views it, rather, as a vehicle for greater exposure, something ATF has been getting a lot of recently, just having concluded a 3½ month tour opening for Van Halen.

"We'd been really keen to get to the

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orchestral pop combination of piano and thickly textured strings before breaking into the singer's raspy, vibrato vocal style. Sensitive lyrics capped with cymbal crashes and soaring lead guitar complete the ingredients to this sure-fire hit confection.

DOLLY PARTON (RCA JK 13514)

Potential New Boyfriend (3:15) (April Music — ASCAP/ATV Music — BMI) (S. Kipner, J.L. Parker) (Producer: G. Perry)

Dolly Parton offers an uncharacteristic slick R&B-flavored number, complete with stinging lead guitar, disco-ish bass fills and Raelettes-style backing vocals. Underpinned by a hypnotic rhythm fill in the verses and a more typical crossover sound for the chorus, this may be the strongest dance tune yet from Parton.

PAT BENATAR (Chrysalis VS4 42688)

Looking For A Stranger (3:24) (Franne Golde Music/Kightsong Music, Inc. — BMI/Mac's Million Music — ASCAP) (F. Golde, P. McIn) (Producers: N. Geraldo, P. Coleman)

The latest entry from Benatar finds a poor woman bored, itching to be let loose. While the multi-keyboards and boogie guitar may not provide the "danger" she's looking for, her impassioned vocal surely will find plenty of takers.

JOAN ARMATRADING (A&M AM-2538)

Drop The Pilot (3:44) (Rondor Music (London) Ltd. Administered in the U.S. and Canada by Irving Music, Inc. — BMI) (J. Armatrading) (Producer: V. Garay)

Long plagued by an inability of radio to categorize her music, Joan Armatrading still awaits the airplay to lift her beyond a large and devoted following. "Drop The Pilot," off her new "The Key" LP, provide a forceful rock statement that should do the trick. Like the artist, the tune is "right on target" and spells out who she is in no uncertain terms.

RITA COOLIDGE (A&M AM-2541)

I'll Never Let You Go (3:56) (Casa Flambe Music/Barracuda Music/Moon and Stars Music/Cotillion Music/Stalker Music — BMI) (J. House, W. Waldman) (Producer: D. Anderle)

Rita Coolidge claims to be a different type of woman than the other "wolves at bay" ignored by the subject of her latest single. What's certain is that she is a different type of vocalist indeed. A standout production combining '60s organ and guitar and Southern rock guitar sounds firmly backs her confident sultriness.

UTOPIA (Network 7-69830)

Hammer In My Heart (4:10) (Unearthly Music, Inc./Fiction Music, Inc. — BMI, Terrestrial Music, Inc./Fourth Floor Music, Inc. — ASCAP) (Utopia) (Producers: T. Rundgren, Utopia)

These guys got a problem, what with a non-stop audible pounding in the chest causing insomnia and a host of other mental and physical ills. Let's hope it's all psychosomatic, since the ticker in this pop-rock mover with a Beatle-ish break sounds perfectly healthy.

BLACK CONTEMPORARY

CARL CARLTON (RCA JH-13496)

Foiled Myself Again (3:36) (Snow Music, BMI/April Music/Kay Music Co., — ASCAP) (T. Snow, E. Kaz) (Producer: N. M. Walden)

Finding that he's "just another friend," Carlton spends this song wondering why. The sorrowful soul crooner lets his singing wander with his thoughts, but a solid chorus pulls him back before he gets too carried away.

SISTER SLEDGE (Cotillion 7-99885)

B.Y.O.B. (Bring Your Own Baby) (3:48) (O'Lyric Music/Tree Publishing Co. — BMI) (T. Shapiro, M. Garvin) (Producer: G. Duke)

Kathie Sledge is combative and with good reason. Someone didn't realize that it's "Baby," not "Beer" requested at her B.Y.O.B. party. An accusing guitar riff backs up her scoldings, but the other

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