

THE PRETENDER — Jackson Browne — Asylum — Producer: Jon Landau — List: 6.98

Jackson Browne's long-awaited LP is finally here, and it's a good one. With all the talk about this record, we expected Jon Landau's production to be a startling affair; rather, with the exception of a few well-placed backing vocals, it's fairly straightforward, and presents Browne in an accessibly sensitive light. FM programmers will hit on every cut, particularly the title track and "Your Bright Baby Blues," which features some fine Lowell George slide guitar and singing.



ROCK AND ROLL OVER — Kiss — Casablanca NBLP 7037 — Producer: Eddie Kramer — List: 6.98

The champions of the heavy-metal division are back with an album with no surprises, just more solid rock 'n' roll. With the recent success of "Beth," there's a softer edge to this LP, but the hard stuff has not been neglected. "I Want You" should be a progressive radio favorite, along with "Calling Dr. Love" and "Baby Driver." Eddie Kramer's production is good, highlighting the driving underlying rhythms.

THE BEST OF GEORGE HARRISON — George Harrison — Capitol ST-11578 — Producers: Various — List: 6.98

This album is broken up into two complete sets. The first side comprises Harrison-composed Beatle tunes; side two is Harrison out on his own. The first set is the more interesting (tunes like "Taxman" and "Think For Yourself" are included); as a whole, however, this is an important historical document that's sure to stir up heavy Christmas sales, especially with the imminent release of new Harrison product.



UNFINISHED BUSINESS — The Blackbyrds — Fantasy F-9518 — Producer: Donald Byrd — List: 6.98

The Blackbyrds are right in the groove with this one. Donald Byrd's production is crystal clear, and the highly stylized funk is there, with plenty of variety. "You've Got That Something" has the sweet AM sound of this year's "Happy Music," and "Time Is Movin'" is just right for disco play. A slick LP, this should appeal strongly to pop and R&B audiences alike.

HIGH LONESOME — The Charlie Daniels Band — Epic PE 34377 — Producer: Paul Hornsby — List: 6.98

Charlie Daniels Band's latest studio album is a collection of nine new tunes that exemplify the best of southern rock. A couple of friends lend support: Toy Caldwell plays a terrific steel guitar on two songs and George McCorkle adds a lonesome acoustic guitar on "Billy The Kid," one of the album's finest tracks. The rocking "Tennessee" looks to be an FM favorite, and AOR outlets are already picking up on the whole package.



HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS — Bobby Womack — Columbia PC 34384 — Producers: Bobby Womack and Muscle Shoals Rhythm Section — List: 6.98

Womack's terrifically expressive voice wraps itself around a couple of self-penned tunes as well as some that could be considered standards. His cover of Sam Cooke's "A Change Is Gonna Come" is nothing short of beautiful, with his phrasing punching up an already dynamic melody line. He sings a duet with a great female voice on "We've Only Just Begun." Many of these tunes will immediately be played as album cuts on R&B outlets, and the whole package has a good chance to cross pop.

THE JACKSONS — The Jacksons — Epic PE 34229 — Producers: Various — List: 6.98

Under the executive production eyes of Gamble and Huff, The Jacksons have turned out what looks to be their finest record to date. The single "Enjoy Yourself" is currently climbing fast on the R&B charts, and there are a lot more possibilities here for that kind of action. "Blues Away" is an energized cut that makes full use of the band's harmonic capabilities, and "Keep On Dancing" should get a lot of disco play. This could be their biggest selling LP to date.



PHOTOGRAPH — Melanie — Atlantic SD 18190 — Producers: Peter Schekeryk, Marty & David Palch — List: 6.98

The first album from Melanie in some time, this is a collection of new songs from one of our best folk-rock stylists. The producers have surrounded the tunes with excellent instrumental tracks that are never distracting. "I'm So Blue" is a beautiful ballad that has a well-placed sax solo, and Richard Greene lends a capable hand on violin. There's not a weak song in the package; all tunes are suited for FM play.

RADIO ETHIOPIA — Patti Smith Group — Arista AL 4097 — Producer: Jack Douglas — List: 6.98

Patti Smith's second LP shows some serious artistic maturation. Her vocals are much more upfront in the mix, and it sounds good. While some will still complain of the lack of melodies, it's clear that the tunes are there, although they surface through implication rather than direct statement. FM programmers will wear out "Ask The Angels" which, besides capturing much of the spirit of rock 'n' roll, is familiar to Smith concertgoers. A four-page booklet of lyrics and poetry is included.



THE BEST OF THE POINTER SISTERS — The Pointer Sisters — Blue Thumb/ABC BTSY 6026/2 — Producer: David Rubinson — List 7.98

A two-record set, this comprises 17 classy Pointer Sisters tracks. The singles are all there, along with some album cuts that were foolishly overlooked in initial release. The harmonies, of course, are right on target: that renowned forties sound is all over this record; it really swings. With the proper marketing push, this could be a great Christmas seller. The bargain price is worth it just for "Yes We Can Can" and "Cloudburst."

IMAGINARY VOYAGE — Jean-Luc Ponty — Atlantic SD 18195 — Producer: Jean-Luc Ponty — List: 6.98

Jean-Luc Ponty continues to break new ground as one of the finest instrumentalists since Stephane Grappelli's heyday. His violin work here, particularly on side 2 (a four-part tour de force called "Imaginary Voyage") is stimulating, inventive, and at once accessible. "New Country," a tune he debuted on his last American tour, has melody lines that will appeal to rock and jazz programmers alike.



HUTSON II — Leroy Hutson — Curtom/WB CU 5011 — Producer: LeRoy Hutson — List: 6.98

LeRoy Hutson, with this LP, shows why he is considered to be one of the best R&B artists around. Self-produced, "Hutson II" features tight arrangements, yet ones that avoid any kind of constriction. Hutson obviously is open to influence, and he incorporates jazz and funk chording and melody lines into a bunch of extremely listenable tunes, like "Love The Feeling" (good for disco) and "Situations," an instrumental that could wind up on many jazz lists.

DO I LOVE YOU — Peter Lemongello — Private Stock PS 2018 — Producer: Jay Senter — List: 6.98

Lemongello, now that he doesn't have to sell his own records, is concentrating on his considerable MOR talents, and has turned out quite a pleasing package. Studio ace Michael Melvoin produced with care, and Lemongello chose his material from the best pop songwriters around: Sedaka, Randy Edelman, David Pomeranz and Paul Anka. Look for the title track to get heavy spins on easy listening formats, as well as "Where Did We Go Wrong."

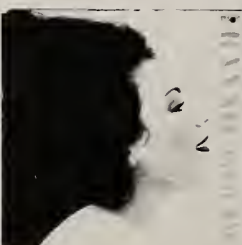


ROGER TROY — Roger Troy — RCA APL 1-1910 — Producer: Mike Lipskin — List: 6.98

Roger Troy's debut solo LP is a fine effort. Many of the songs sound like some of Boz Scaggs' basic tracks — they've got that smoothed-over R&B feel to them. Not without experience, Troy was a part of the recently regrouped Electric Flag, and is a proficient songwriter. His own "Don't Put The Blame On Me Baby" has across-the-board appeal, and throughout Mike Lipskin's production has a lot of class. In-store play could break this artist in a big way.

LET'S STEAL AWAY TO THE HIDEAWAY — Luther Ingram — Koko KOA 1300 — Producer: Johnny Baylor — List: 6.98

Luther Ingram has a sweet tenor, expressive, as he handles these R&B-oriented numbers with an easy style. The title cut is a killer, with one of the best ballad hooks we've heard in some time. A flute introduction adds a touch of class. Other cuts would be fine for radio: "It's Too Much" and "Your Love Is Something Special." Great rhythm tracks by the Muscle Shoals Sound Rhythm Section.



FRANNIE GOLDE — Frannie Golde — Atlantic SD 18196 — Producers: Various — List: 6.98

A good songwriter, Frannie Golde takes her own material and a tune from Lennon and McCartney and comes up with a pleasing LP. In the Melissa Manchester style (indeed, she often writes with Carol Bayer Seger), the tunes run the gamut from ballads to MOR pop rock. Look for "Love Is" and "As Long As There's Music" to get a lot of AOR play. The production was handled well by two teams: Bert DeCoteaux & Tony Silvester and Michael DeLugg & Charlie Calello.