

## Pop

**PAUL WILLIAMS—A Little Bit Of Love**, A&M SP-3655. One of the premier songwriters of the pop world demonstrates his increasing talents as a singer here, with a set of lushly arranged, superbly produced tunes. Lots of ballads here but also some well done uptempo things. The highlights here, however, are the songs themselves—all but one penned or co-penned by the artist—and the surprisingly good singing. Lots of possibilities here for Top 40 play and almost certain MOR play. Production of Kenny Ascher works well around Williams' vocals, spotlighting but not overextending. Surely the best album yet for Williams and the kind of blend of fun and romanticism that any music fan should enjoy.

**Best cuts:** "A Little Bit Of Love," "Margarita," "Sunday," "The Family Of Man," "California Roses," "Sad Song."

**Dealers:** With frequent TV appearances on variety and talk shows, and his already strong writing reputation, Williams is hotter than ever.

**THE ELECTRIC FLAG—The Band Kept Playing**, Atlantic SD 18112. Long awaited reunion LP of one of rock's more popular bands proves well worth waiting for, with Michael Bloomfield's fine guitars, Buddy Miles' drums and vocals, Nick Gravenites guitars and vocals, Barry Goldberg's keyboards and the fine lead vocals and bass of Roger Troy. The band runs through the tasteful blues cuts that helped make them such a popular entity several years back, but have also added a more commercial, rock approach to their repertoire. Highlights are the fine, tasteful guitar solos of Bloomfield and the excellent lead vocals of the three singers. Certain FM play and possible AM action.

**Best cuts:** "Sweet Soul Music," "Earthquake Country," "Inside Information," "The Band Kept Playing."

**Dealers:** Band has a loyal following and Atlantic is mounting a strong push on this one.

**GOOSE CREEK SYMPHONY—Do Your Thing, But Don't Touch Mine**, Columbia RC 32918. Veteran group is back with a mix of rock, country and some good old hoedown sounds speckled with fine harmony vocals and some tasty fiddle and sax work. Enough variety here to appeal to both rock and country crowds but there is no obvious attempt at crossover. Rather, the set sounds like seven guys having a good time and passing it on to the listener. Should be strong FM action here on the kind of set where the singing and instrumentation compliment each other perfectly.

**Best cuts:** "Plans Of The Lord," "Do Your Own Thing But Don't Touch Mine," "Lil Liza Jane," "The World We're Livin' In Today," "Pick Up The Tempo."

**Dealers:** Almost universal appeal here. Stock in rock and country and play in store. Remember, this group has a strong reputation.

**R.E.O. SPEEDWAGON—Lost In A Dream**, Epic PE 32948 (CES). R.E.O. have been around for several years and have built up a solid core of fans with their own special brand of hard rock. Mike Murphy's vocals and Gary Richrath's guitars move well into the current vein of rock that seems simple and easy yet is exceptionally well done. Should this band break through with an AM hit they could easily become one of the next of the "big groups." Again, a band that best fits into the B.T.O. vein and have been around just as long.

**Best cuts:** "Throw The Chains Away," "You Can Fly," "Lost In A Dream," "Do Your Best," "They're On The Road," "Wild As The Western Wind."

**Dealers:** One of those bands that keeps on selling and keeps gaining fans. Check your files and see how the last LP did.

**DIONNE WARWICK—The Very Best of**, United Artists CA-LA 337-G. Ms. Warwick is back at the top of the charts now with the Spinners, and this set collects the Bacharach and David songs that made her a household name, singing straight rock, soul and the kind of easy listening songs that appeal to one and all. Every single cut on here is a true hit and everyone will bring back fond memories for the many fans Ms. Warwick has accumulated over the years. For those just getting to know her through her recent hit, the LP is a must. The lady has roots.

**Best cuts:** "Don't Make Me Over," "Make It Easy On Yourself," "You'll Never Get To Heaven," "Walk On By," "Anyone Who Had A Heart," "Do You Know The Way To San Jose."

**Dealers:** With her recent record comeback and Christmas gift time on the way, this one can't miss.

**ANDY FAIRWEATHER LOW—Spider Jiving**, A&M SP 3646. Andy Fairweather Low is a veteran of the British rock scene who has learned well over the years, for he's come up with a set here focusing in on just the kind of material that is crashing the charts today—good basic rock. Surrounding himself with an all star band made up of the likes of Henry McCullough, Denny Seiwell and Mark Naftalin, Andy's basic message can best be likened to the sort of thing Bachman-Turner Overdrive is churning out, a lot of fun music that holds its originality. With rough vocals fitting perfectly in with controlled but frenetic music and some enhancing, almost gospel like backup vocals, Fairweather Low has come up with one of the finest rock LPs in recent months. Should appeal to those

## Spotlight



**BARBRA STREISAND—Butterfly**, Columbia PC 33005. Possibly the finest LP Ms. Streisand has ever come up with, artistically and commercially as she runs the gamut from reggae to classic r&b cuts to David Bowie material to "oldies but goodies" to Paul Williams to almost gospel material. As always, she uses her voice perfectly, adapting to the material at hand and making the song her own while still retaining the familiarity for the listener. Production work of Jon Peters is magnificent with no song overdone and all material suitable for the audience Ms. Streisand has built over the years. At the same time, this set, more than anything she has ever done, is packed with potential AM hits. One of the premier singers of our time has certainly come up with an LP to please everyone. For once, the tired adage of "something for everyone" holds completely true.

**Best cuts:** "Love In The Afternoon," "Guava Jelly," "Grandma's Hands," "Jubilant," "Life On Mars," "Since I Don't Have You," "Let The Good Times Roll."

**Dealers:** Just let the people know it's here.

interested in strictly commercial sound (several possible singles) and lots of others.

**Best cuts:** "Spider Jiving," "Drowning On Dry Land," "I Ain't No Mountain," "Standing On The Water," "Mellow Down."

**Dealers:** Use unique cover art for display.



**THE LOVE UNLIMITED ORCHESTRA—White Gold**, 20th Century T-458. Some fine renditions of a number of Barry White compositions, produced and arranged by White with help on the arrangements from Gene Page. Good vocal breaks from White help break up the music—but the tranquil, ethereal quality of the music would be enough on this fine effort. A must for White fans and certain to get play on a lot of MOR stations as well as soul outlets.

**Best cuts:** "Always Thinking Of You," "Spanish Lei," "You Make Me Feel Like This (When You Touch Me)," "Dreaming."

**Dealers:** Stock in White's bin as well as Love Unlimited Orchestra.

**TIMMY THOMAS—You're The Song I've Always Wanted To Sing**, Glades 6504 (T.K.). The man who scored so well with "Why Can't We Live Together" is back with a fine set characterized by an almost monotone organ background (used so effectively by T.K. with George McCrae), excellent vocals and a flavor that while not reggae is Caribbean at least. Thomas is one of the better stylists in soul today, often sounding a bit like Otis Redding when it comes to phrasing, but still remaining an original. The mid-tempo ballads work best here and seem like best bets for radio play. Some possibility of pop crossover, but soul is the focal point as the disk keeps the drive to establish T.K. as a major soul entity continues.

**Best cuts:** "You're The Song I've Always Wanted To Sing," "Deep In You," "Spread Us Around," "One Brief Moment," "What Can I Tell Her."

**Dealers:** Thomas is a strong soul name.



**CHIP TAYLOR—Some Of Us**, Warner Bros. 2824. Some may instantly wonder if this is country, but a complete listen to the album assures that it not only fits the country vein, but contains some of the most powerful lyrics ever written. The brilliant writer-singer covers a range of subjects, mean-



**GLADYS KNIGHT & THE PIPS—I Feel A Song**, Buddah BDS 5612. A new Gladys Knight LP is always a welcome event for those in the music business, not just because it means strong sales and lots of airplay, but because it means some of the best singing in pop music today. Gladys, if possible, has developed her voice even further on this LP than on past efforts, moving through ballads, uptempo cuts and even a narration. Vocal backup of the Pips is superb and the instrumental backup ranges from funk to almost show tune arrangements. Whether it be rock, soul or easy listening, Gladys Knight is one of those rare performers whose music knows no barriers and who appeals to everyone who is a fan of any kind. Singing is equally strong on the rockers and the ballads, and the inclusion of a live tune hopefully is a preview of a complete LP to come. For the moment, however, this set is a complete stunner. Watch for immediate pop, soul and MOR airplay.

**Best cuts:** "I Feel A Song (In My Heart)," "Seconds," "The Way We Were," "Better You Go Your Way," "Don't Blow Down The Bridge," "The Need To Be."

**Dealers:** Cover painting is best art yet for a Gladys LP.

ingfully, and has a succession of strong crossover hits.

**Best cuts:** "Early Sunday Morning," "If I Can't Be In Austin," "Here Again," and "Some of Us." His "Funny Songs" is also very good, but very "in."

**Dealers:** This one can be pushed in many directions.

**SUE THOMPSON—And Love Me**, Hickory 4515 (MGM). She keeps getting younger and better. A great diversity of songs, with fine production, and the LP probably shows her talents more than anything she has done in a long while. It also contains two of her singles.

**Best cuts:** "Trains" (exceptionally good), "The Very Thought Of Losing You," and "My Daughter." She also does a fine job with the standard "I Can't Help It (If I'm Still In Love With You)," and a Spanish version of the "Tennessee Waltz."

**Dealers:** Beautiful color design enhances a fine album.

**DENNIS WEAVER—People Songs**, ABC 847. Call them "people songs" if you will, that's what country music really is. Some narrations, plenty of recitation, and enough singing to establish this fine actor as one with a feel for country music. It's surprisingly good.

**Best cuts:** "Calhoun," "Save A Little Sunshine," and "Hollywood Freeway."

**Dealers:** With all his fans from television, this one should move well.

**DON GIBSON—Bring Back Your Love To Me**, Hickory 4516. When Gibson sings, people listen. They'll listen to this one over and over again, because it's Gibson at his best. A lot of warmth and feeling in the songs, many of them self-written, but with a sprinkling of material from other great writers.

**Best cuts:** "My Heart Would Know," "I Better Stop Dreaming," "Without Your Love," and "Somebody's Words."

**Dealers:** His hit single as the title gets this off to a great start.

**JUSTIN TUBB—A New Country Heard From**, Hilltop 209. A rather unusual concept for an LP, yet done in an excellent manner by this talented singer who, too long, has been in the shadows. All of the songs on the album were previously recorded either by new country artists, or those who were just starting to get country play when they did the songs. Now Justin gives them his own style, and it comes off well.

**Best cuts:** "That's The Way Love Goes," "Sunshine Lady," and "Draggin' Chains."

**Dealers:** The familiarity of the songs is bound to help.

## Jazz

**MONK MONTGOMERY—Reality**, Philadelphia International KZ 33153. This is an extremely funky jazz record. Ace bassist Monk Montgomery of the famous Montgomery Brothers has himself a nicely structured package that includes several standards and many originals. This is one of the first jazz releases by Philadelphia International and it shows great promise.

**Best cuts:** "Reality," "Me And Mrs. Jones," "Sippin' And Tippin'," "Little O's," "Close Your Face."

**Dealers:** Montgomery is one of jazz's most popular performers and his family name rings bells.

**THAD JONES & MEL LEWIS—Potpourri**, Philadelphia International KZ 33152 (CBS). This label picked one of the greatest jazz big bands to begin their jazz series and this first effort explodes like a firecracker from the first bar. Featured musicians include Billy Harper, Roland Hanna and Jon Faddis and there is a nice mixture of soul classics and Thad Jones originals.

**Best cuts:** "Blues In A Minute," "Don't You Worry 'Bout A Thing," "For The Love Of Money," "Ambiance," "Living For The City."

**Dealers:** This group has sold many albums through the years and this is one of their finest efforts.

**RAMSEY LEWIS—Solid Ivory**, Cadet CA 50058. (Chess/Janus). These are not new Lewis recordings, but they should still be welcomed by his legions of fans. As a stylist who has managed to capture both the pop and jazz markets with his superb piano playing, this artist has few competitors. With this mix of live material and studio cuts, varying between a trio and sextet, Lewis again demonstrates just how versatile he is, moving from standards to originals to folk. A must for any Lewis fan and a good introduction to those just beginning to get acquainted.

**Best cuts:** "What Now My Love," "Everybody's Groove," "Solid Ivory," "Green Sleeves."

**Dealers:** Display in jazz and pop.

**MOOG FLUTING—The Ebony Godfather**, GRC GA 10006. Thomas' most recent outing is a very listenable package. While he has retained his past style, he seems to get into a Herbie Mann-esque groove at times. Still the playing is inventive and this effort marks this label's initial stab into the jazz market.

**Best cuts:** "Oracabessa," "Mama Sing Your Song," "Castlin," "Electric Godfather," "Checkmate."

**Dealers:** In-store play is important for this one.

## First Time Around

**JERRY GOODMAN & JAN HAMMER—Like Children**, Nemperoe NE 430. Former Mahavishnu members Goodman and Hammer have an exceptional first effort with this one. It fully shows their influences on the group's sound as they play every instrument on the album. Each of them is an excellent musician and ably displays it.

**Best cuts:** "Country And Eastern Music," "Earth," "Topeka," "Full Moon Boogie," "Giving In Gently," "I Wonder."

**Dealers:** In-store play is important for this one.

**MIKE MCGEAR—McGear**, Warner Bros. BS 2825. The fact that Mike McGear is Paul McCartney's brother has been one of the poorer kept secrets in pop, yet this is the first time he has really born any resemblance to his famous brother. As a member of the Scaffold, a superb British satirical trio, McGear was perhaps a bit too British to reach American audiences. Here, however, he is doing good old rock and roll. The LP is produced by McCartney and it bears his touch, yet the set remains McGear's. Some humorous material here, but basically a grouping of songs that will bring back memories of the best of the "fun" period in British rock and even a surf oriented tune or two. Should find a spot on the AM airwaves and fit right into the "back to basics" activities of today.

**Best cuts:** "Sea Breezes," "What Do We Really Know," "Have You Got Problems?" "Givin' Grease A Ride," "The Man Who Found God On The Moon."

**Dealers:** Play this one in the stores and it will sell itself.

**J.D. BLACKFOOT—The Song Of Crazy Horse**, Fantasy F-9468. Young American who moved to New Zealand comes up with interesting set with one side devoted to the treatment of the Indians by the 19th Century Americans in a sensitive, informed manner and the other divided into good old rock and roll. The two contrasting styles work well, with Blackfoot able

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Spotlight—the most outstanding of the week's releases; picks—predicted for the top half of the chart in the opinion of the reviewer; recommended—predicted to hit the chart among the lower half positions or other albums of superior quality; review editor: Bob Kirsch; reviewers: Eliot Tiegel, Nat Freedland, Claude Hall, Bill Williams, Jim Melanson, Is Horowitz, Bob Kirsch, Jim Fisher.