



Rod Stewart



Johnny Winter



Elton John

1973 was a very good year for rock 'n' roll

By HANDELL L. ROHN
Youth Seen Rock Critic

In a year of shortages, there was not a shortage of good rock material. 1973 was a very good year for rock 'n' roll.

Although there were a few disappointments, 1973 was the year when many established artists produced albums as good if not better than any in their respective careers. Artists with only a few albums under their belts found the formula to turn out high quality works and several new faces emerged with respectable debut albums.

The Beatles, as solo artists, had their best year since they disbanded.

Ringo Starr released an album that could fall into rock's "easy listening" category. Surely the best by the large-beaked drummer, "Ringo" united all of the fab-four on a single disc for the first time since their breakup. The album was by no means a breakthrough in rock music, but all the songs fit into Starr's somewhat nasal sounding vocals making a thoroughly enjoyable album.

Paul McCartney's "Red Rose Speedway," which was released in the spring, was a disappointment, but his latest, "Band on the Run" although still not up to what he is capable of producing, is one of the better albums of his solo career and may mark a step towards better and more significant

work. "Band on the Run" will be reviewed later in Youth Seen.

John Lennon hit a low point in his career when he released "Some Time in New York City" in 1972 but he bounced back with "Mind Games" the best album of his career and the only album by a solo Beatle which can be compared to the former group's classics.

Lennon is in Los Angeles now working on a new album of old '50's rock 'n' roll hits with producer Phil Spector and if "Mind Games" is any indication, it should be a masterpiece.

George Harrison's "Living in the Material World," wasn't as inspiring as his "All Things Must Pass" album but was a decent effort nonetheless.

Also, it has been said that Lennon and McCartney have settled their differences which could make way for a Beatles reunion.

The number two group that became the number one group when the Beatles disbanded, the Rolling Stones, released one of the best albums of their careers, "Goats Head Soup."

The Stones, who have always been dedicated to black music, finally got their production and managerial problems ironed out, all the time maturing as musicians, to produce a blues and rock 'n' roll album of unprecedented quality.

The Who released the best concept album

since "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band" and the best rock-opera ever. Titled "Quadrophonia," the album is about the teenage frustrations of a boy growing up in London during the mod era.

The Who's and particularly lead guitarist Pete Townshend's most ambitious work, "Quadrophonia" is a landmark recording of the '70's.

Bob Dylan, who hasn't recorded very much in the past five years, appeared in the movie and wrote and performed the music for "Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid."

A single from the soundtrack was released, "Knockin' at Heaven's Door" but the album was rather poor when compared to his earlier work.

However, Dylan signed with Elektra-Asylum Records this year and an album, to be called "Ceremonies of the Horsemen," featuring the Band as back-up musicians will be released sometime this month.

When Dylan switched labels, Columbia retaliated by releasing "Dylan," the worst ever by the poetic minstrel. It is a collection of songs written by other artists and Dylan's versions don't even compare to the originals.

Another major disappointment this year was Jethro Tull, who released the absurd "Passion Play," two sides of Tull at their worst.

Johnny Winter, the albino blues guitarist from Texas, released the excellent "Still Alive and Well," after a two year absence from recording. Winter had been fighting heroin addiction and many felt he would never record again.

Johnny's brother, Edgar, reached stardom with his album, "They Only Come Out at Night," from which two singles, "Frankenstein," and "Free Ride" were released.

Despite the death of Duane Allman, the Allman Brothers Band made the second best album of their careers, "Brothers and Sisters." The country flavored "Ramblin' Man," was the first successful single for the group although they've had numerous album successes.

Elton John was the performer of the year, releasing two splendid albums, "Don't Shoot Me, I'm Only the Piano Player," and "Goodbye Yellow Brick Road," and a string of AM radio hits.

Rod Stewart didn't cut any albums this year except "Ooo La La" with the Faces, which, like all Faces albums, was a step below Stewart's solo efforts. However, Mercury released "Sing it Again Rod," a collection of Rod's greatest hits.

Yes, also was very quiet this year except for their live album "Yessongs." Yes keyboardist Rick Wakeman released an excellent solo album, "The Six Wives of Henry VIII," and is planning another, a musical

adaptation of Jules Verne's "Journey to the Center of the Earth."

Joe J. Gels Band finally reached stardom with their fourth album, "Bloodshot," one of the best records ever released by a white rhythm 'n' blues band. Their latest "Ladies Invited," is even better than "Bloodshot" both lyrically and musically.

Steve Miller also reached stardom with "The Joker," already a certified million seller. Because he released the single of the same name from the album, "The Joker" may be one of his biggest sellers although it isn't his best album. Miller, who began his career with a blues band, later became one of the leading West Coast musicians with albums such as "Brave New World," "Children of the Future" and "Journey East of Eden."

The Raspberries' contribution for 1973, "Side Three," is the group's best so far. It had several outstanding cuts but the four lame cuts kept the album just above mediocre.

Like the Raspberries, Blue Ash is dedicated to the British rock of the mid-'60's. Their debut album, "No More No Less," thankfully not as teeny boppy as "Side Three," is one of 1973's outstanding albums.

Another of this year's outstanding albums was made by a new group, Backman-Turner Overdrive. The band is dedicated to hard rock 'n' roll similar to the type played by

the Rolling Stones in 1966-67. Their album appropriately titled, "Backman-Turner Overdrive," is the best hard rock 'n' roll album so far this decade with the exception of Mott the Hoople's "Mott."

Grand Funk Railroad decided to drop their pretentious "hipness" and released a solid rock album "We're an American Band."

The most overlooked yet talented artist in rock, Marc Wretz, churned out his second top-notch album, "Holthouse Smiles." Wretz, who is every bit as good as Harry Nilsson and is lyrically two steps ahead of McCartney, possesses an uncanny ability to produce nice, toe-tapping melodies. His lyrics sometimes sparkle with the sarcasm of Lennon at his best and/or the wit of Ray Davies.

Joe Walsh's "The Smoker You Drink, the Player You Get," is as good as any from his James Gang days. However, without Walsh at the helm, the James Gang hasn't made any noteworthy rock contributions.

Led Zeppelin's fifth album, "House of the Holy," was one of their best albums although the band seems to just get better and better with each new release.

Many artists who broke into stardom in the '50's and early '60's are still successful in the '70's



Left: Led Zeppelin (clockwise) Robert Plant, John Bonham, John Paul Jones, Jimmy Page



Introducing . . .

Randall L. Rohn, the Bulletin's youth page rock and literary critic, is a senior at Vincennes University where he majors in journalism. His interest in journalism began while a student at Alexandria Monroe High School where he was a staff member of the school newspaper the Tiger's Tail and a Bulletin Youth Correspondent. From there he advanced to Alexandria correspondent with his own column called "Alexandria News". After graduation became a summer intern and staff writer for the Bulletin. During his first year at Vincennes University he was also a staff member of the Vincennes Sun Commercial. At the Vincennes University newspaper, the Trailblazer, he has been a general reporter, assistant campus news editor, assistant editorial page editor, associate executive news editor and presently fills the Trailblazer's third highest position as news editor. Randy is a member of Phi Theta Kappa National Junior College Scholastic Fraternity, and has an accumulative grade ratio of 3.589 out of a possible 4.0. After graduation from VU this spring, he plans to study at the University of Madrid in Madrid, Spain.

Below: Raspberries Dave Smalley, Jim Bofanti, Eric Carmen, Wally Bryson

