

rock...

'Towers open fire' - PR and hype

By Steve Grant

Any good pressagent can brainwash the gullible people who are buying rock 'n' roll records these days. Rock, like baseball and the movies, depends heavily on a star system - cults of greatness. And nobody falls for it any more with the movies.

Elsewhere on this page, Bill Serovy '71 remarks that Janis Joplin, being thoroughly human, cannot live up to any of her press notices, which make her out as a deity.

How many people would like Cream's version of "Spoonful" in-

cluded on Wheels of Fire without the barrage of raves that accompanied its release? How many people would consider Eric Clapton the best guitarist who ever lived (what a joke) if they hadn't been told to think so?

John F. Kennedy said, "Where there is smoke, there is usually a smoke-making machine." So these men sit on Madison Avenue or Sunset Boulevard, manufacture smoke, and forget about the fire. Janis Joplin's smoke gets seen more than Nina Simone's, but she ain't got near the fire.

Promo is a depressing thing to think about. It brings about people like Led

Zeppelin, Al Kooper, Big Brother, and most of all the Beatles. These people are strictly lightweight, not to be taken as anything more than froth. So you think Ginger Baker is the best drummer in the world? The average good jazz drummer can play rings around him.

Likewise, most rock musicians, if not every last one, would get laughed out of any good jazz jam session. The Jefferson Airplane, who certainly make worthwhile music, are simply not the be-all and end-all of music. It is high time rock fans caught on to the plain impotence of just about all rock.

Not that the "lewd jungle rhythms" haven't got their place. Probably, they aren't lewd enough. But to compare the Beatles' "Yesterday" to Stravinsky's "Symphony of Psalms" is not much different from comparing *Spider-Man* to *Ulysses*. All four can be enjoyable, but some afford you a much more powerful high than do the others.

Which leads us back to the beginning again. A high that is mapped out for its recipient is no kind of high at all. And presumably, that's what rock 'n' roll should be - a healthy vehicle towards a high.

Talking Rock

By Bill Serovy

Records by Jack Bruce, the Beatles, and Bob Dylan are now on tape and should be released within the next couple of months. A little about each:

Bruce's record has been ready for some time now, but won't appear until after he has cut still another album. This one, "Jack Bruce and His Friends," was taped before the breakup of Cream, and is a free-style instrumental, with Bruce playing acoustic bass. He doesn't feel that the album would be too well received now, so a more conventional record will be out first to pave the way.

The new Beatles album will be very simple and feature the use of acoustic instruments. Previous work of this type has been of high quality, so the record should be interesting, at least.

Dylan went to Nashville to cut his new record and spent quite a bit of time jamming with Johnny Cash. Two songs on the album feature Cash, with a possible joint album on tape from the sessions.

Janis Joplin may have been promoted out of a future. After all the fantastic predictions and publicity, she would have had to be a mere goddess to meet specs. But although she thinks each performance is an improvement, she hasn't lived up to the rumors. This is due partly to difficulty with her backup group, but mostly because nobody could be as good as Janis was supposed to be.

CJ and the new Fish are trying hard to keep a good thing going. One reason for the reconstitution of the group was the arrest of lead guitarist Barry Melton for growing that kind of grass in his front yard. Another rumor concerning Eric Clapton's new group is that the new drummer to join Clapton and Winwood will be an old drummer: Ginger Baker.

Johnny Winter, the blues guitarist from Texas, has been signed to a five-year contract with Columbia. In the process, he turned down a \$500,000 offer from RCA Victor. Joe Namath, where are you?

Random

Score one more for the record companies - this time it's London. The redone cover for "Beggar's Banquet" claimed incorrectly that all the songs were Jagger/Richard compositions, although the original correctly credited Rev. Robert Wilkins with "Prodigal Son." Wilkins originally recorded the song in 1964 on Piedmont.

The Electric Circus in New York is now being renovated in order to better compete with the Fillmore East, which is having problems of its own. Along with a completely new interior, there will be a remote control light show over the center of the floor featuring 66 slide projectors. If it's done well, tickets could probably be sold for the lights alone.

Coming soon, on the Rolling Stones' TV special, is the super-group of all time - with Eric Clapton, John Lennon, and Keith Richard.

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CAB hears fairness issue in airline youth plan dispute

The merits of airline youth fares were disputed at a hearing before the Civil Aeronautics Board last week in Washington. Airlines, student groups, and others argued for retention of the youth fares, in opposition to the Trailways bus system. The CAB has not yet issued a decision.

Several bus companies and a few airlines have opposed the reduced rates for three years, and a ruling by a CAB examiner January 21, upholding their view, led to last week's hearing.

The bus companies have argued that youth fares are unjustly discriminatory against persons over 21, and some

courts have agreed. This point was also supported by the examiner in his 83-page decision and was a primary object of contention last week.

American Airlines, who first introduced youth fares, supplied *The Tech* with a statement noting that "In the year ending June 30, 1968, more than five million youths saved some \$112,000,000 in transportation costs as a result of the fares," and "Youth fares presently account for almost six per cent of all domestic airline travel." Supporters in the industry also argue that revenue from standby ticket sales helps depress costs for all airline passengers.

Educational advantages for youth have been another point of supporters (Please turn to page 7)



Photo by Ewing Galloway.

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classifieds

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