Records

DIFERENT STROKES -- 19 Contemporary Artists (Columna)
A low price, limited time offer. Different Strokes is one of those promo albums the record companies put out periodically to stimulate sales of slow-moving items. It contains some of the best work of 19 groups of varying styles and talents, many of which deserve more attention than they've received from the record-buying public. Strokes includes solid cuts from Tom Rush, Poco, Spirit, Miles Davis, The Hollies, Soft Machine and the Fleet. My favorites are "Maggie," from Reddibong, the American group; the New York Rock Ensemble’s "Fields of Joy," "Found a Child" from Babie Jack, a new group, and Johnny Winter's fantastic "Rock and Roll, Hootchie Koo." A good bet for rock dilettantes, and it comes with a bonus on the dust jacket, a coupon which, along with $5, will buy you a membership in Columbia's "Playback" program. You get ten samples during the course of a year containing unreleased or just-released material; plus a business reply mail feedback card for your comments.

CRUEL SISTER -- The Pentangle (Reprise)
The melodies, lyric poetry, acoustic guitar work and vocals of the Pentangle maintain the same high standards as always. Jacqui McShee's voice is still the most perfect vehicle for a ballad I have ever heard.

ENTERTAINMENT

FEBRUARY 9, 1971

By Harvey Baker

The Charles Playhouse re-opened after a fashion last week by presenting the Arden Company's production of Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? by Edward Albee.
Perhaps the single most disquieting feature of the play is its length — almost four and a half hours. Nonetheless, the play is not boring, and for the greater part of the last act, the audience sits transfixed before the action on stage.
Frank McCarthy, who plays the leading male role of George, is the standout actor in the play. While Cathy Robinson (this Marie) is supposed to share the limelight with him, his conquest of bar in the final act seems to solidify his mastery of the situation.

Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? is a three act drama of two couples and the "fun and games" that one perpetuates on the other. What it amounts to is that George and Martha, a middle-aged couple at a small, New England college, are given to taunting each other, and the audience with fantasies. The guests, Al Ronzio, and Lori Heineman, are made to watch as a pseudo-drama is played out in front of them; George and Martha flay each other and play a game called "Get the Guests," with George doing whatever possible to ruin the younger couple's relationship.

George and Martha have constructed themselves a neo-reality. In it, George innocently killed both his parents. He is in a rut as a history professor at the college, even though Martha is the president's daughter. Martha has a son, twenty-one years old tomorrow, but George doesn't want to talk about him.

If a real killing can be tragic, what can be even more tragic is the killing of their reality. When George decides to put an end to it in the last act, Martha is shattered, almost. as if George had really killed their only son.

Partly because it was opening night and partly because the intermissions were very long the play seemed to go on interminably. Either the play should start earlier, or the intermissions should be shorter, or some of the text should be cut, because one act is no time for a play to end in downtown Boston. Nonetheless, in parts it is brilliantly acted, and when Martha spits in George's face and you see the spittle fly, it becomes clear you are looking at a serious dramatic production.

The Charles Playhouse, which is hosting Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf, has had a management shakeup, and after closing its doors a few months ago, hopes to get back on the road. Rumor has it that the Charles would like to establish its own resident company. If you want to see a half-decent play, spend an enjoyable evening at the theatre, and help support Boston's only professional non-profit playhouse.

The film, an opening at the Exeter Street Theatre, opens February 20.

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Because we believe it, watching the film is very much like taking part in some encounter group - there's no way to escape the image on the screen, nor to deny its truth.

The film, 'Gimme Shelter'

By Rob Hunter

David and Albert Maysles are both graduates of Boston University, and, since their graduation, they have become quite a credit to the school. Their latest production is a definite success: Gimme Shelter, a documentary of the Rolling Stones' 1969 tour of the US, is frightening, occasionally humorous, and at all times extremely pointed - it is certainly one of the best "now generation" films ever to come along.

The film climaxes, of course, at the dramatic Altamont free concert, with slow-motion re-plays of the murder of a black by Hell's Angels. Along the way, there is a graphic exposition of the life of the Stones and the problems they face. One almost sympathizes as Keith Richards avoids the clutches of high-school chicks doing their best to ruin his performance, until it finally becomes obvious that those high-school chicks are part of his performance. There is, of course, a lot of good music in the soundtrack; the listing looks like a composite "Best of the Stones" album. Ultimately, though, the title says it all - it would be so nice just hide from all the noise and people and hassle.

The film, opening at the Exeter Street Theatre, is primarily notable for the style of production; the Maysle brothers have succeeded in capturing much of the charisma and style so important to the entertainment field and the concurrent problems arising from it. The Exeter has had their sound system completely redone in order to produce the full effect of the Stones' music, and the music alone justifies the admission price. Gimme Shelter is definite-ly a characteristic of the times; an important contribution to the body of art expressing the things that people are into today.

PARANOID -- Black Sabbath (Warner Brothers)

Black Sabbath's brand of dirge-rock is big in Britain but can't seem to catch on in the United States. This, their second (Please turn to page 7)