Lightening Gene Parsons’ fire

by Jeff Palmer

Kindling Gene Parsons (Warner Brothers)

Gene Parsons’ career as a member of the slowly disintegrating Byrds was overviewed by the writers in the creation of the group, as the face of many a rock drummer, he had completed the excellent songs written by Roger McGuinn (with guitarist Jacques Levy), the generally mediocre but nevertheless unique camp of Shiva Batun, and the moving ballads sung by Clarence White as his beautifully mountain-like voice. Not the few moments in their spotlight were memorable performances, perhaps. But the entry of the Byrds from Melody Rider and “Yesterday’s Train” from Unlearn can testify. Now on his first solo album, Kindling can play what he always enjoyed — bluegrass — and the results are impressive.

Kindling may not well be true bluegrass, but is in a close enough vein, with the accent on guitar, mandolin, fiddle, and banjo; the instrumental numbers being similar to those Gene and Clarence White wrote together for the Byrds. Most of the songs were written by the band, and the album is a nice blend of up-tempo pickin’ numbers and more mellow material such as “Love Way Back.” Little Fats Lowell George’s “Wills,” popularized by Stevan a few years ago, takes on a mellower tone, with an infectious touch of accordions by Nick Drackett. None of the songs drag, as they are all then less than three and a half minutes long — an AM programmer’s dream. However, it is doubtful that any one of these songs will hit the charts, especially far the Mason-Dixon line.

Gene has extended his musical virtuosity to guitar, banjo, pedal steel, and at each of these instruments. The fine friend Gibb Gillette plays fiddle on three tracks, and the late Clarence White plays guitar and mandolin on seven of the album’s 11 tracks. Kindling is probably the last solo performer for an ex-Byrd, following efforts by Roger McGuinn and Gene Parsons (newcomers). At the time of White’s senseless death last fall, as he was struck by what would be a relatively quick death, he had recorded only two tracks for his solo album. (I’m sure they were a hit.) At least some of his last recorded work is on Kindling, and some of Clarence White’s last performances here make a good album even better.

BSO preview

by Stephen Owades

Steffi Orazu, the new music director of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, has set the “Boston of America.” One of the most obvious signs of Boston’s place as one of the principal centers of culture is the BSO (Boston Symphony Orchestra). This weekend marks the opening of the orchestra’s ninety-third season, and the inaugural concert of Orazu’s reign as music director.

Following the resignation of Charles Munch, the music director has been uprooted (Lemara- dor) or (Weinberg). This has been felt as a loss of sense of occasion of its concerts and its season as a whole. For the BSO was a protest against under- standing, more recently the Chicago Sym- phony, and with Karl Richter grabbed the low- light as America’s top ensembles, while the BSO itself. This weekend marks the first of Ozawa’s tenure. It is promised to be a big hit. At least some of his last recorded work is on Kindling, and some of Clarence White’s last performances here make a good album even better.

The original “Glamour Boy”

by Mark Astolfi

Alladin Jane – Dave Bowie (RCA)

The recent appearance of the Dave Wakely’s cover of the classic, “Glamour Boy,” offered the Dave Wakely EP to listeners. In a brief chat with the title (“Rap music” and “Glamour”) the song is clearly a modern version of the song.

The question of whether the public accepts its pop heroes, or whether the pop heroes are merely the first victims to react to the wands of change, is a great one. I tend to think that, when, for whatever ultimate reason, the conventions or mores of a society are about to change, the first place it pops up, like a lump in a rug, is where there is the most freedom of expression to begin with: the entertainment world, and the arts in general. In two short years we have seen high heels, shag haircuts, and ear- rings on guys, and it’s not just the New York Dolls, but the Fillmore boys down the street. Even the Guess Who, bastards

The Guess Who’s “Glamour Boy” of Middle Class glomrock, sing “For $4,000, you can look like a woman tonight,” in their latest single “Glamour Boy,” and a razorblade company has an ad on TV featuring an underweight cop in drag, using their blade to get that look. This is the truth, it’s a world where nobody else is on the force, sure as hell.

It’s while you’re Patterson you can be a direct result of the World’s Liberation Movement, for as functional equality

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