Record review

A fusion of Beck and Hammer

By Claudia Perry

Outfit of the left Beck's art. Hammer collaboration should not be disappointed with this album. It was recorded during their concert at the Music Hall in October. The album contains the best moments of the evening. A refreshing change from most live albums, it is well recorded and impeccably edited.

Still, the album has a problem. One of the most enjoyable parts of an evening with Beck and Hammer is the way they pace a concert. Hammer, in the role of producer, seems to have a poor sense of his own work. By rearranging the order of the songs, continuity is lost. Songs that were performed half-way through the night are inexplicably presented at the beginning of the disc.

The best example of this middle-headedness comes with the first cut on the second side. Hammer's "Darkness Earth at Search of a Sun" is an impressive concert opener. Hammer builds the song magnificently, culminating in Beck's entrance. By placing the song where it is, he destroys the effect that was created by the pair's improvement as the evening progressed.

"Free Way Jam," the opening cut on the disc, begins with Beck and Hammer trading traffic noises. Instead of leaping in and starting a solo, Beck shows his maturity by waiting for Hammer to set the line. Once given the idea, he reworks it, shaping and heightening Hammer's original premise. This exchange reverses itself on "Scat-

"webula," a Beck composition. Beck sets up the piece-and Hammer textures it with some beautiful synthesizer stylings. The results are splendidly listenable.

The rest of Hammer's band should not go without mention. Drummer Tony Smith provided the support, contributing a starring vocal performance on "Full Moon Boogie" that nearly overshadowed Beck's talkbox work. Bassist Fernando Saunders' raggedy rhythm guitar work on "She's A Woman" was one of the highlights of the evening. Violinist Steven Kindler furnishes lyrical background for Beck and Hammer's antics.

Fittingly, the band's best performance of the evening, "Blue Wind," closes the album. Here, Beck and Hammer trade ideas at a pace that would have most musi-

"cians scrambling to keep up. Hammer's hands does not let him down in this regard. Kindler takes an admirable turn on rhythm guitar. The rhythm section of Smith and Saunders is tight and controlled.

Knowing that this song was the encore makes the performance more incredible. It is hard to believe upon hearing that these people have been playing for nearly two hours. Beck's playing sounds as though the evening has just begun. Hammer, as usual, is right there with him.

Although the album is an excellent work, it is not present but it would better convey the

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ARTS/Boston vouchers will be accepted. Student discounts available at college offices. Tickets are also available at the Music Hall (cash only). For more information, call 342-3945.

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April 1. New members are welcome in all departments. If unable to attend tryouts please call Prof. Everingham at x3-2908 for special appointment. Performances will be 8pm on April 28, 29, 30 and May 6, 7.