

ARTS

Listen to the new albums from Lone Justice and XTC

SHELTER
Lone Justice
On Geffen Records.

By JULIAN WEST

THE FIRST I HEARD off the new LP by Lone Justice was the title track, "Shelter." I liked it immediately. It was catchy and seemed to have something to say. It also sounded a little different from the general run of Top 40 hits, for reasons mostly — but not quite entirely — to do with Maria McKee's voice. She has a distinctive deepish voice with a trace of an accent, and sounds agreeably like a clear-voiced version of Stevie Nicks.

The flipside of the "Maxisingle" (three songs instead of two) is disappointing by comparison. The one other selection from the album, "Belfry," starts off promisingly enough but soon bogs down, becoming repetitive and too-familiar sounding. Perhaps I would like it more if McKee's vocals were audible. They are much less crisp and open than on "Shelter," and it is a struggle to make out the words. They don't sound too inspired anyway, so perhaps it is just as well.

If the full LP contains a few more hits like "Shelter" then it is not a bad buy. One suspects, however, that the maxi-single contains the best the album has to offer.



SKYLARKING
XTC
On Geffen Records.

By JULIAN WEST

SWINDON, ENGLAND is an odd place for a pop band to come from, and a stranger place still to wish to stay. Take my word for it. Perhaps it is because XTC chose not to abandon their home base that they never quite hit the top of the charts, especially in North America.

Their new album, "Skylarking," could well explode this theory. It rises to the level of their earlier material, which has earned them critical acclaim and a devoted following, and ought to earn them a measure of popular success as well.

Fans of the splendid two-LP set, "English Roundabout," will not be disappointed by what they hear here. Some of the tracks, such as "Dear God" and "Extrovert," sound as though they could have come straight off the earlier album. Listening to them, it is impossible to tell that several fairly troubled years lie between the "Roundabout" and "Skylarking," and that the latter represents something of a comeback for XTC.

Those unfamiliar with XTC can expect to hear unadulterated, upbeat rock. Lyrics are usually direct enough that one can take them in while dancing, but not without wit as sung by Andy Partridge. Songs by Colin Moulding do not hold up to Partridge's best, but on the whole the album is catchy, pure and well worth a listen.

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Sun rising on Northwestern's lakefront campus

Quick. What do George Balanchine and Margaret Mead have in common? Good question, right? Yesterday lunchtime got into a long conversation about it with a guy taking a course there at NU called ethnography of performance. Talked for over an hour. Sure beats usual summer drivels about tan lines. Mine's good by the way.

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