

circular



The Miseries of Ranking #1 and #2 in LPs and Singles in the

A week or so ago, as the crow flies, Warner/Reprise found itself "dominating the charts." Reprise's Neil Young had *Billboard's* #1 single and #1 album. Warner Bros.' America had *Billboard's* #2 single and #2 album. The titles are unimportant.

Although the feat of one company doing this is probably unprecedented, it's tough to say that for surely sure. The record business, living as it does on a smile and a hype, keeps few statistics.

Circular assumes it never happened before.

These chart listings have not made the Warner/Reprise toppers happy. Wealth, riches, have they made Howard Hughes happy? Nah. Warners neither.

These chart rankings have noticeably increased the level of paranoia among Warners executives. Lately, frankly, Burbank has not been a happy site to see.

This will seem odd to some, who must vision that pushing one's way to those top spots requires an effort comparable to that of Gen. Sherman, pushing his way from Atlanta to the sea, razing farms and raping widows.

Not true; Warners executives do not raze farms.

And getting to the top of the charts has, for WB execs, turned out to be nowhere near as much fun as burning Georgia.

Then Why All This Paranoia?

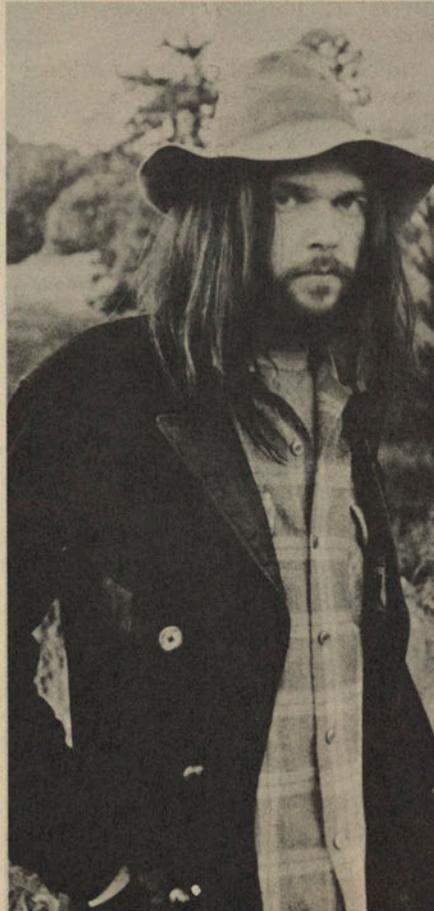
Because, first of all, as any intelligent record executive knows, the minute you hit #1, all your artists want to leave you and sign new contracts with Buddah Records. That's because these artists now know for sure that Warners is too big and too busy to worry about little them.

And this success-on-the-charts then makes Warners execs look

around the office nervously and muse to themselves, "By gawd, maybe we *are* too big. Used to be I knew all the secretaries by name."

Still another paranoia is that this apparent wealth tends to spur Warners' normally suspicious Accounting Department into galloping through the halls like Paul Revere, warning the rest of the company that it's spending too much money, and to hold fast. "Profitless prosperity" becomes the cliché of the week.

The healthiest side benefit of Accounting's galloping paranoia is that it has, to date, prevented Warners' ad men from taking out



Neil Young

one of those smug trade ads that say, "We're Number One!" big.

It is not easy to tell Warner/Reprise that last week somebody else was Number One. And somebody is *always* number one. And nobody, outside of mom and dad, really cares. But try telling that to an exec who's just hit Number One. Hah! a lot of good that'll do.

Why Otherwise Intelligent Execs Make So Much out of Being #1:

Paranoia gallops rampantest, however, at the grim suspicion, secret in their hearts, that these execs may someday have Less to



America

Same Week, Which Warners Just Did

Crow About. That soon, instead of showing up on the charts as #1, with a bullet, they could be sitting there as #131, with an anchor.

Yet record executives need the charts as much as they need paranoia. Because the charts are one quantitative measure of how successful they're living their lives. There's something absolute about being printed up #1, and finding something absolute these days is worth rapping a few widows for.

So this fleeting moment of glory, despite the accompanying paranoia, is meaningful to some. It has been, until recently, meaningful to



Warners' lightly bearded executives who each morning drive their late model Executive Car Leasing imports in on the freeway from Encino to Burbank. Who spend that 20-minute ride flicking their Motorolas from Top 40 to FM, cursing or exulting, push for push, at what they hear.

Growing Up

Yet it is one more sign of flickering intelligence along Executive Row at WBR that these tensions are, even today, in fact being recognized.

And this recognition—that exec can not live by chart alone, since that standard, though all the exec has got, still is pretty dumb—has given birth to a new resolve among Warners execs.

In adopting it they have avoided one of the Top Ten Paranoias of all: that these top chart items—Neil Young and America—got to the top of the charts with little effort at the record company level; that these records popped from the artists, rushed out the door and never looked back; that these powerful Burbank execs couldn't have killed these records with a stick.

Yes, that piece of paranoia is gone now, too, and in its place is Warner Bros. Records' new resolve, which goes—

Be It Resolved That

whereas Warners may be #1 and #2 right now, Warner/Reprise vows never again to get into that position.

Even as these words are being writ, Warners is quietly at work.

And so, if in a week or so, *Circular* readers learn that Warner/Reprise has slipped, and is less than 1-2 on both charts, count that slip as one more triumph for those heady execs repping the Big Bunny.

This new-found disdain for the charts will be a major achievement. Achievement-wise it will be so big it might even be Top Ten.

March Music

It seems like nearly a month since *Circular* last trumpeted the hatching of a covey of new albums.

High time, then, for a new blast of the old release trumpet.

Greeting ears this month, peeping from among the folds of a merchandising banner exclaiming MARCH MUSIC, are the following new Warner/Reprise/Raccoon/Viva/Bizarre/Bearsville (pant) pancakes:

The Train I'm On—Tony Joe White

A Tribute to Woody Guthrie (Part II)—Various artists

Love the One You're With, Night-tide, One Stormy Night, Love Token, Stormy Weekend, Emotions and The Mystic Moods of Love, all by the Mystic Moods Orchestra (a batch prompted by Warner's distributional hook-up with Viva/Pentagram, which has been releasing them at a more seemly pace over a lengthy slug of time)

Sunset Ride—Zephyr

Crazy Lady—Joyce Everson

Dirt—Paul Kelly

Machine Head—Deep Purple

Dreams—High Country

Morning Glory—Mary Travers

Sunstorm—John Stewart

The Kink Kronikles

Goldie—Goldie Hawn

Jennifer

Bob Mosley

First Taste of Sin—Cold Blood

Just Another Band from L.A.
—Mothers

Bare Trees—Fleetwood Mac
Hungry Chuck

Inspirational Verse

Put your hand on your mouth
when you cough

That will help the solution

— The Staple Singers
"Respect Yourself"

A Further Inquiry into the Source of "Desiderata"

Be wary of neat packages, and remember that the truth often comes wrapped in loose ends . . .

That epigram was coined under the influence of one of the neatest packages of these untidy times, the document entitled "Desiderata." Faithful readers of these pages will recall that the package had begun to unwrap itself, so to speak, last fall with the release of the Warner Bros. single and album of "Desiderata," interpreted by Les Crane, Fred Werner and chorus. "Desiderata," thitherto the subject of posters and church bulletins, is the sermonesque essay which begins: "Go placidly amid the noise & haste . . ." It was generally assumed to have materialized anonymously on the premises of "Old Saint Paul's Church, Baltimore," and bore the date 1692.

As is now known, "Desiderata" was written in 1927 by Max Ehrmann, author and lawyer of Terre Haute, Indiana, who died in 1945. The first glimpse of the truth came as the Les Crane single began its career on the charts. The copyright owners, whose recourse with the poster publishers was as elusive as the publishers themselves, the poster business being run on the lines of a floating crap game, had no such problem with Warner Bros. They let the record company know what had been previously been unsuspected—that "Desiderata" is *not* in the public domain.

How, then, had the myth been fostered? What of Old Saint Paul's? And how come the date of attribution, 1692?

From *Circular's* digs, using only powers of deduction and the long distance telephone, Sherlocking

was begun. Now, some months later, most of the mysteries are in hand.

A Direction Finder

The first major break in the case came with a phone call to Miss Mary Meyer of the Maryland Historical Society. Miss Meyer, thoroughly conversant with the general facts and fictions surrounding "Desiderata," helped vastly, first with her candid synopsis of "Desiderata's" sonorous advice. "What it means," she said succinctly, "is keep your cool." Which established her at once as one swell historical lady. And she turned *Circular* onto the *right* Old Saint Paul's out of the boom town of Baltimore churches which were both old and named after the great epistlelarian.

The twist of a telephone dial reached the assistant rector of Old Saint Paul's Church, Rev. George P. Donnally, who has become accustomed to dealing with inquiries about "Desiderata." There are so many calls, in fact, that Old Saint Paul's has a form letter to help set the callers straight.

Seeded in Turmoil

To begin with, there was no church in Saint Paul's Parish until 1693, when the first log structure to serve as such was erected. However, and here is where the seed of misunderstanding may have first sprouted, Old Saint Paul's Parish was *founded* in 1692, after the Anglican Church had emerged from the religious turmoil of the Reformation.

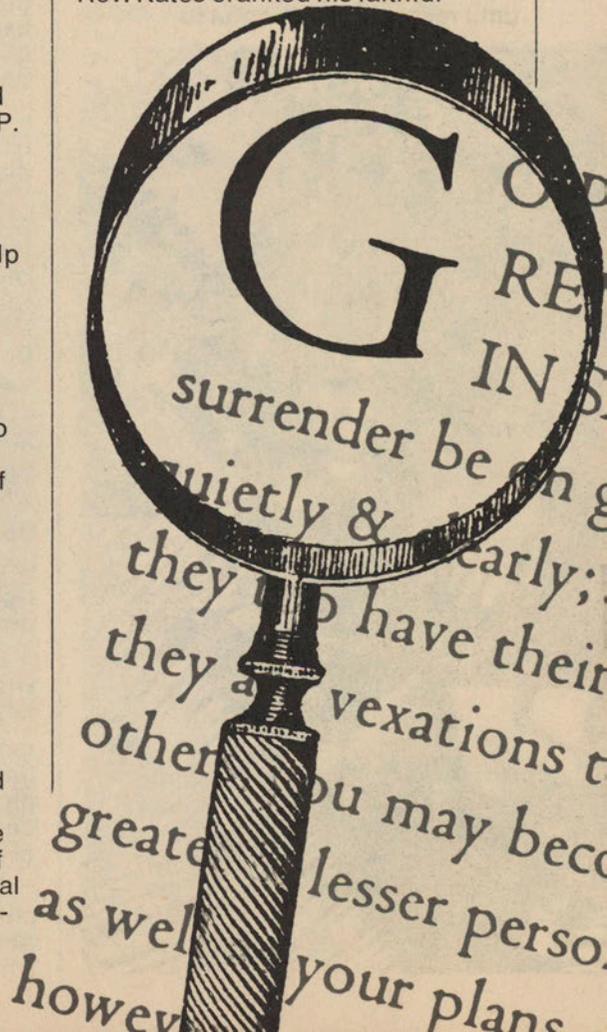
In 1956, the then rector of Old Saint Paul's, Rev. Frederick Ward Kates, used Ehrmann's poetic collection of homilies in an inspirational tract which was mimeod and tucked among the pews for his parishioners to *find* and take home to ponder over. There is no copy of this tract extant, but it seems logical that the church logo would have included the founding date. Obviously then, somebody *did* find

"Desiderata" in Old Saint Paul's Church, Baltimore, and in a thoughtless spasm of romantic enthusiasm, leaped to conclusions which generated the present myth, along with some highly provocative ironies.

For instance, there isn't a copy of the "Desiderata" in any form in the church. Rev. Donnally wants to keep it that way. His exact words were: "Not if I can help it!"

Video Pilgrimages

Why the mixed feelings? For mixed they are, because the old church has basked in the warmth of steadily increasing public interest during the 15 years or so since Rev. Kates cranked his faithful



mimeo. "Desiderata" has come to be known as "The Baltimore Prayer," and, in addition to attracting mail from all over the world, it has inspired three TV documentaries, all taped in the church. Rev. Donnally said cheerfully that a party of young visitors had arrived to pay their respects to the non-existent "original" of the famous document while one of these TV crews was shooting.

We are *sometimes* delighted with the free publicity," he said.

"Why *sometimes*?" *Circular* asked.

Affluent Mice?

There was a time when Old Saint Paul's would have joyously peddled "Desiderata" posters. After all, a dozen daily mail inquiries plus the drop-in trade would amount to a tidy income for, say, the building fund. (The present church was rebuilt in the year following its destruction by fire in 1855, and must surely have its geriatric problems in maintenance.) The pace of "Desiderata" mania accelerated toward the end of last year with the release of the Les Crane recordings, a brisk commercial flurry which should have trickled down so that, at least in Saint Paul's Parish, church mice would no longer represent a low point on the poverty index.

By tolerating the "harmless" self-deception of date and authorship imposed by accident and the human need to believe, the present rector, Rev. Halsey M. Cook, might readily have found an answer to the financial worries of administering an old institution in a new day.

But it was not to be so.

Written in Red

Whatever such dreams there were terminated with the threat of suit for copyright infringement because a church, like a record company, is right there where you can find it and haul it into court. The

form letter which was mentioned refers queries to the publishers of the late Max Ehrmann's book of poems containing "Desiderata." Thus, with postage and printing and all, "Desiderata" has become a red ink item on the parish budget.

A further irony lies in Max Ehrmann's disillusionment. From clippings sent by the obliging Rev. Donnally, *Circular* learned that Ehrmann wrote six books in the 10 years after he graduated from Harvard.

It appears that he then concluded that he could not support himself as a writer.

Alternate Course

He had a law degree to fall back on, and at one stage of his career became deputy prosecuting attorney in Terre Haute. His homilies include the advice: "Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time." One might footnote this: Have an alternative career handy should your first love prove humble beyond endurance.

Eleven years after his death, Ehrmann's "Desiderata" began its heady rise to fame as one of the most popular posters ever, and much later it had its flurry as a hot property in the recording industry. Common enough for authors to miss fame in the days of their lives, but poor Ehrmann did not even have the posthumous courtesy of credit for his own work.

Such are the facts, in the face of a myth which will die hard, if at all. The Baltimore church archivists who meet and archive together at the Maryland Historical Society may still be shaking their heads over letters from far away into the next century. Phone conversations with the folk in distant Baltimore prompt a gentle note of resignation. They seem to sense that they are caught up in a myth which is bigger than the simple truth.

— Leonard Brown



Last week's question was the identity of Bob McFadden's straight man on "The Mummy," (comedy single of 1959), alias Dor, who was none other than lovable Rod McKuen (Dor is, of course, Rod spelled backwards). Before breaking up the team, McFadden and Dor went on to make an album for Brunswick, *Songs Our Mummy Taught Us*. Among other early 45s that Mr. McKuen would perhaps rather forget are "Oliver Twist" (Spiral 1407, 1962) and "Ballad of Hollywood (A&M 712, 1963).

Question for Next Week

When were the first 33-1/3 rpm records made for public consumption and by what company? Hint: it was *not* Columbia, which under the direction of Peter Goldmark (now head of Goldmark Communications, Inc. for Warner Communications) made the first *successful* LP records beginning in 1948.

The winner of Dr. Demento's two-weeks-ago question (Q: What is the name of the 1950s song which shares a railroad title with a cut from Captain Beefheart's *The Spotlight Kid* LP? A: "Click Clack" by Dickey Doo and the Don'ts) is Jack Woker, who requested the second Kinks album, *Kinks-Size*, which he gets.

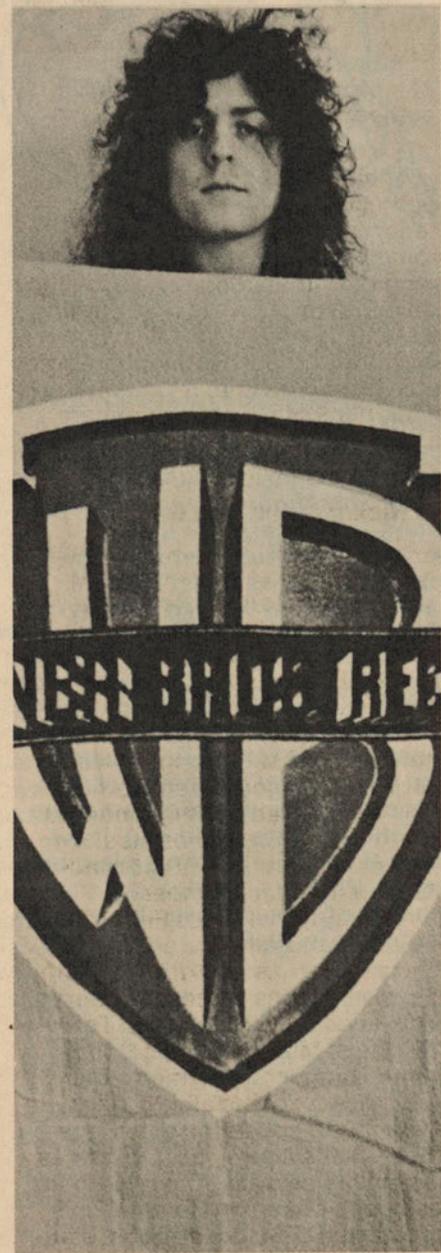
Each week the good doctor poses a music lore question whose answer is the focus of his subsequent column. The earliest reply to his question (mailed to Dr. Demento, c/o *Circular*, Warner Bros. Records, 4000 Warner Blvd., Burbank, Calif. 91505) wins any single Warner/Reprise catalog album (please specify choice). Answers will be geographically pro-rated on the basis of two days per time zone, ties will be judged on the basis of penmanship, wit and lucidity.

New Singles

Telegram Sam

T. Rex
REP 1078

T. Rex are able to translate ancient rock virtues into absolutely modern terms, a feat which once again is



Marc Bolan

accomplished in their latest single, which already has epoxied itself to the top of the British charts for week on week. What Marc Bolan does better than anyone else around nowadays is to fashion gemlike rock and roll couplets, verses rife with internal rhyme, alliteration and rhythm, refrains on the order of "Jungle-face Jake/Jungle-face Jake/Make no mistake/About Jungle-face Jake," from this brand new offering. Recorded in Denmark, if memory serves, it's in a not dissimilar vein to "Bang-a-Gong," whose path it will no doubt follow up the charts.

Oh Well (Part 1)

Fleetwood Mac
REP 1079

A dynamo of a single is this first-rate Fleetwood Mac archive number headed out—in an edited version—for its second go-round from Reprise (the first time was back in 1969, according to local memories). It's a Peter Green creation, spotlighting his business-like echoey shout, staccato lyrics and pungent guitar licks and it spins swiftly from its first note to the last. The track can be found in full-length and full stereo on FM's *Then Play On* album. It serves as prelude to the group's imminent new long player, *Bare Trees*, timed to coincide with a comprehensive U.S. tour.

Who Can I Turn To (Where Can I Go)

Cool Sounds
WB 7575

This single boasts an arrangement complex enough to provide for at least three records, but the whole production is squished into one record which clocks in at slightly less than three minutes. Last time out, the Cool Sounds came within shouting distance of a hit single and this one betters its predecessor considerably. The lead singer boasts a grainy, powerful voice similar in quality to that of the lead singer of the Dells. His cohorts support him

with harmonies which duck in and out of a rich instrumental brew, a brew through which can be heard amassed horns and frequent church bells. The record starts slowly and soulfully, shifting gears after half a minute into a quick stepping rhythm, a la Friends of Distinction. Despite its title, by and by, the song bears no resemblance to the elderly "Who Can I Turn To?"

Ain't Wastin' Time No More

The Allman Brothers Band
CPR 0003

The Allman Brothers Band have sold seven digits worth of alums without the benefit of a meaty hit single, an oddity which may be rectified by the release of this track from the band's new *Eat A Peach* album on Capricorn. Greg Allman wrote it, he sings it and supplies keyboard underpinning. The delectable moaning slide guitar is the work of Dicky Betts. Tom Dowd produced the single (and most of its parent double album) in his current studio home—Criteria in Miami (the one in Florida). It's a trifle longer than a Top 40 Dream Single at 3:40, but it's a compact performance for the Allman organization, which loves to stretch out.

Top Ten

1. America (BS 2576)
2. Neil Young/*Harvest* (MS 2032)
3. The Allman Brothers Band/*Eat a Peach* (2CP 0102)
4. *Malo* (BS 2584)
5. T. Rex/*Electric Warrior* (RS 6466)
6. Jimi Hendrix/*Hendrix in the West* (MS 2049)
7. *A Clockwork Orange* sound track (MS 2573)
8. Gordon Lightfoot/*Don Quixote* (MS 2056)
9. Black Sabbath/*Paranoid* (WS 1887)
10. Faces/*A Nod's as Good as a Wink* (BS 2574)



Jeffrey Cain



Judy Sims



Alexis Korner



Captain Beefheart

Life in These United States

★ Before winging back to their respective homes in England, the three lads of America (currently enjoying the Number 2 single and album, you bet) were feted at the Cattleman restaurant in New York. Next to America's fete was a smaller, quieter fete—a family of three celebrating daughter's birthday. America, led by Alan "Big Al" Rosenberg of Warner/Reprise Artist Relations, sang "Happy Birthday" to the girl, who seemed embarrassed, even mortified, until she learned it was America, none other. Seems her sister had, that very morning, given her *America*, the album, as a birthday present. Sigh.

Title of the Week

★ Thirty Days Out have finished their second Reprise album, tentatively dubbed *Miracle Lick*. It was recorded in Connecticut, mixed in London and, aside from the multi-talents of Thirty Days Out themselves, features the keyboard wizardry of Bing McCoy and the vocal magic of Madeline Bell and Doris Troy. *Miracle Lick* should emerge in April, if all goes as planned, which it hardly ever does.

Birthday Ballyhoo

★ This week's celebrations included the following musical notables: Anita Bryant (March 25), Johnny Burnette (March 25), Arturo Toscanini (March 25), Al Jolson (March 26) and Diana Ross (March 26).

The Big Time Beckons

★ The crew who do *Circular* are one less beginning with the next issue—Judy Sims, long a stalwart and even a staple in the spine of *Circ*, is leaving to become editrix of *Rolling Stone's* Los Angeles Flyer. It was Judy who resurrected *Circular* March 8 of 1971 (Vol. 3, Number 1, if you're counting) as editor-in-chief, a position she held until she sailed into the arms of the WB Publicity Department after finishing Vol. 3, Number 20 (July 19) last year. Since then she has enlivened and enlightened this very Items page with cheerful regularity and even extended herself for an occasional longie on the order of "The Dead Deliver" in Vol. 3, Number 31 (Oct. 4, 1971).

Direct from Point Reyes Station, California . . .

★ The first Raccoon newsletter has informed the world that (a) Michael Hurley will have a new album soon, produced by Banana of the Youngbloods; Michael drove all the way from Massachusetts to California for a tour with the Youngbloods and High Country before starting the album; and (b) Jeffrey Cain is about to complete his second Raccoon effort, produced by Jesse Colin Young, called *Whispering Thunder* and decidedly rock and roll. His first effort was quiet and folk, but Jeffrey has himself a rock band now. Coming out momentarily is the second High Country album, *Dreams*.

Beefheartmania

★ Ticket-engulfing frenzy is sweeping England just ahead of Captain Beefheart's current tour there. Frederick Bannister, an English promoter, advises *Circular* telegraphically that concerts at Colston Hall in Bristol, Town Hall in Birmingham and Royal Albert Hall in London were sold out. Birmingham sold out in two hours and, reports Bannister, "box office at Birmingham has written applications for tickets to practically fill second house."

His Nickname is "The Guv'nor"

★ Alexis Korner, legendary British bluesman (where have you heard that phrase before?) who really is one, will have a first WB album in March or April, titled *With*. Alexis founded Blues, Inc., in 1962, a band which featured Dick Heckstall-Smith and Charlie Watts . . . and later included Mick Jagger, Jack Bruce and Ginger Baker. Korner also "discovered" a singer named Robert Plant. Korner has also been a university lecturer, BBC broadcaster, a founder-member of Britain's National Blues Federation and a successful voice on British TV commercials. As for *With*, all of the above musicians (except Jagger) perform on the album, as do Terry Cox, Steve Miller, Graham Bond, Danny Thompson and many, many others; it's a double album, one half of which is a collection of vintage tapes—that's how all the big names. Back in the present, Alexis Korner has been booked on Humble Pie's just-started U.S. tour as guest star.

Firesign Follies

★ The Firesign Theater, who are not Warner/Reprise artists, have just completed a 60-second television commercial for themselves, an event subsidized by their record company, Columbia, which is neither an affiliate, licensee, subsidiary or distributee of WB. The commercial's good stuff, though, as is the group

and as are their records, so *Circular* makes so bold as to plug it in these pages. Los Angeles area residents can view it March 25 on Channel 5 from 5:30-7 p.m. or 10:30-midnight, sometime. Or wait for it to run sporadically the next week on Channel 52. If they react in droves, *Circ's* other readers will see it elsewhere in the country in the future. Shades of Captain Beefheart.



Artist Itineraries

Alabama

Deep Purple/Nazareth
3/23, Univ. of Alabama, Huntsville

Arkansas

Kindred
3/25, T. H. Barton Coliseum, Little Rock

California

Bonnie Raitt
3/21-26, Boarding House, San Francisco
Dionne Warwick
3/21-26, Circle Star Theatre, San Carlos
Cold Blood
3/24-26, Fox Theatre, Long Beach
Seals & Crofts
3/24-26, Golden Bear, Huntington Beach
Van Morrison
3/25, Community Concourse, San Diego

Colorado

Jackie Lomax
3/23, Draught House, Thornton
3/24, Adams State College, Alamosa
Fanny
3/24, Adams State College, Alamosa

Connecticut

Alexis Korner
3/20, New Haven Arena, New Haven
John Baldry
3/22, New Haven College, Westhaven
Fleetwood Mac
3/22, New Haven College, Westhaven
Kindred
3/23, Holy Cross High School, Waterbury
Malo
3/23, Palace Theatre, Waterbury

Florida

Deep Purple/Nazareth
3/24, West Palm Beach Auditorium, W. Palm Beach
3/25, Coliseum, Jacksonville
The First Edition
3/25, Dade County County Fair, Miami

Illinois

Wild Turkey
3/21, Arie Crown Theatre, Chicago

Indiana

Gordon Lightfoot
3/23, Butler Univ., Indianapolis

Kansas

Allman Brothers Band
3/25, Municipal Auditorium, Kansas City
Alex Taylor
3/25, Municipal Auditorium, Kansas City

Kentucky

Kindred
3/24, Fairgrounds Arena, Louisville

Louisiana

The First Edition
3/21, Northwestern Col. of Louisiana, Natchitoches

Maryland

John Baldry
3/26, Painters Mill Theatre, Baltimore
Fleetwood Mac
3/26, Painters Mill Theatre, Baltimore
Rod McKuen
3/26, Morris A. Mechanic Theatre, Baltimore

Massachusetts

Malo
3/22, Fenway Theatre, Boston
John Baldry
3/23, Paramount Theatre, Springfield
Fleetwood Mac
3/23, Paramount Theatre, Springfield
Beach Boys
3/24, Boston College, Boston

Michigan

Rod McKuen
3/20-25, Fisher Theatre, Detroit
John Baldry
3/21, Civic Center, Saginaw
Fleetwood Mac
3/21, Civic Center, Saginaw
Black Sabbath/Wild Turkey
3/22, Cobo Hall, Detroit
Gordon Lightfoot
3/25, Albion College, Albion

Minnesota

Black Sabbath
3/21, St. Paul Auditorium, St. Paul

Missouri

Allman Brothers Band
3/24, St. Louis

New Mexico

John Stewart
3/23-26, Univ. of New Mexico, Albuquerque

New York

Beach Boys
3/20-22, Carnegie Hall, New York City
3/23, Kleinhans Auditorium, Buffalo
John Baldry
3/25, State Univ. of New York, Plattsburgh

Black Sabbath/Wild Turkey
3/25, Rochester War Memorial, Rochester
Fleetwood Mac
3/25, State Univ. of New York, Plattsburgh

North Carolina

Deep Purple/Nazareth
3/26, Park Center, Charlotte

Ohio

Malo
3/24-25, The Threshold, Cleveland

Oklahoma

Deep Purple/Nazareth
3/20, Civic Center Music Hall, Oklahoma City
The First Edition
3/23, Music Hall, Oklahoma City
Allman Brothers Band
3/26, Music Hall, Oklahoma City
Alex Taylor
3/26, Music Hall, Oklahoma City

Pennsylvania

Beach Boys
3/26, Muhlenberg College, Allantown

Rhode Island

Alexis Korner
3/21, Rhode Island Auditorium, Providence
John Baldry
3/24, Palace Theatre, Providence
Fleetwood Mac
3/24, Palace Theatre, Providence

Texas

Kindred
3/26, El Paso Coliseum, El Paso

Virginia

Alexis Korner
3/25, Civic Center, Roanoke
3/26, Alexandria Roller Rink, Alexandria

Washington

Stoneground
3/24-25, Moore Theatre, Seattle
Brave Belt
3/26, Pt. Roberts

Canada

Gordon Lightfoot
3/17-20, Massey Hall, Toronto, Ontario
Brave Belt
3/20-25, The Body Shop, Vancouver
Black Sabbath/Wild Turkey
3/23, Collisee, Quebec City, Quebec
3/24, Forum, Montreal, Quebec