

## Record Review

Bob Woodhead

With Christmas Day's "Top Of The Pops" (B.B.C. 1 at 2 p.m.) featuring the year's chart-toppers, I thought it would be a good idea to provide readers with a list of the number one songs they can expect to see performed on video or in the studio.

Tuesday, December 25, 1985: Merry Christmas Everyone (Shakin' Stevens) — two weeks.

January 7, 1986: West End Girls (Pet Shop Boys) — two weeks.

January 21: Sun Always Shines on TV (A-Ha) — two weeks.

February 4: When The Going Gets Tough (Billy Ocean) — four weeks.

March 4: Chain Reaction (Diana Ross) — three weeks.

March 25: Living Doll (Cliff Richard And The Young Ones) — three weeks.

April 15: A Different Corner (George Michael)

— three weeks.

May 6: Rock Me Amadeus (Falco) — one week.

May 13: Chicken Song (Spitting Image) — three weeks.

June 3: Spirit In The Sky (Dr. And The Medics) — three weeks.

June 24: The Edge Of Heaven-EP (Wham) — two weeks.

July 8: Papa Don't Preach (Madonna) — three weeks.

July 29: Lady In Red (Chris De Burgh) — three weeks.

August 19: I Want To Wake Up With You (Boris Gardiner) — three weeks.

September 9: Don't Leave Me This Way (Communards) — four weeks.

October 7: True Blue (Madonna) — one week.

October 14: Every Loser Wins (Nick Berry) — three weeks.

November 4: Take My Breath Away (Berlin) — four weeks.

December 2: Final Countdown (Europe) — two weeks.

December 16: Caravan Of Love (Housemartins) — one week to date.

Apart from "Top Of The Pops" other radio and television programmes worth listening to are: America's hits of 1986 at 3 p.m. on Saturday 27 (stereo Radio 1); The Independent Radio Network Chart of 1986 at 5 p.m. on Sunday 28, followed at 7 p.m. by the Top Albums (Ocean Sound); The B.B.C.'s Top Singles of 1986 at 5 p.m. on Sunday, January 4 (stereo Radio 1); Pop Videos of 86 at 4.15 on Monday 29 (TVS); and The Chart Show's Videos of the Year at 5 p.m. on Tuesday 30 (Channel 4).

In my opinion the best promotional videos of the year were Peter Gabriel's "Sledgehammer," Queen's "A Kind Of Magic," Madonna's "Papa Don't

Preach" and the Communards' "Don't Leave Me This Way." As far as full-length videos go I enjoyed Jaki Graham's brilliant "Set Free," "The Story Of The Bee Gees," and the re-released "Earth Wind And Fire In Concert" and "Compleat Beatles" which is probably the best video ever released.

In the Observer next Wednesday (December 31) I will be reviewing the year's musical trends in more detail and looking back at my favourite L.P.s. Meanwhile, here is my choice of the best singles of 1986:

- 1 Set Me Free (Jaki Graham).
- 2 Gypsy Woman (Bobby Womack).
- 3 Chain Reaction (Diana Ross).
- 4 True Blue (Madonna).
- 5 West End Girls (Pet Shop Boys).
- 6 Where You Gonna Be Tonight? (Willie Collins).

7 State Of The Heart (Philip Bailey).

8 All And All (Joyce Sims).

9 Give Give Give (Disco Aid).

10 So Cold The Night (Communards).

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In my opinion 1986 was the complete opposite of the previous year because it was packed full with good L.P.s but very few classic singles.

In 1985 there had been only a handful of enjoyable albums like "Brothers In Arms" by Dire Straits which continued its successful run in the year just passed. It was top of the compact-disc chart for 49 consecutive weeks, was in the Top Ten L.P. chart non-stop for 14 months and is still in the Top Thirty having sold more than two million records in this country.

There is still a slight possibility that it may overtake Michael Jackson's "Thriller" as the best-seller of all time with 2,530,000 sales.

On the subject of record-breaking runs, the Meat Loaf L.P. "Bat Out Of Hell" finally passed the all time record of 381 weeks on the L.P. chart that was previously held by "The Sound Of Music" soundtrack.

There has been a return to prominence for heavy-metal rock music thanks to new Continental groups like Bon Jovi and Europe, and earlier in the year there was a craze on re-

mixed disco hits from ten years ago from groups like the Real Thing and Tavares. Hip Hop and Rap records also played a big part in the make-up of the charts.

Bob Geldof finally received a knighthood in 1986 and the charity bandwagon that he started rolling shows no signs of slowing up. Charity hits of the year included Sport Aid, Disco Aid, the Cast Of Grange Hill and Comic Relief.

For Sport Aid, Tears For Fears re-recorded their award-winning best single of 1985 and called it "Everybody Wants To RUN The World".

For Comic Relief Cliff Richard teamed up with the Young Ones to re-record "Living Doll" which went to number one meaning that Cliff has now had chart-topping singles in four different decades from the Fifties to the Eighties. It was not the only comedy record to reach the top either; Spitting Image turned the trick a month later with "The Chicken Song".

My favourite L.P. of the year was the "Communards" which gets my vote because it came across as something so stunning and different at a time when

most albums were predictably, hum-drum affairs. It has a highly sophisticated, almost tongue-in-cheek, Eastern feel to it.

Next Thursday (January 8) I will be concluding my review of the year's musical trends and listing the ten best-selling singles. Meanwhile, here is my choice of the best L.P.s of 1986:

- 1 Communards (Communards).
- 2 True Blue (Madonna).
- 3 The Queen Is Dead (Smiths).
- 4 Please (Pet Shop Boys).
- 5 Have A Good Forever (Cool Notes).

6 Whitney Houston (Whitney Houston).

7 Inside Out (Philip Bailey).

8 Break Every Rule (Tina Turner).

9 Frantic Romantic (Jermaine Stewart).

10 equal: Revenge (Eurythmics); Through The Barricades (Spandau Ballet).

I shall be reviewing the Spandau Ballet album in full in January, as I did not have time before Christmas.

In my view the best compilation L.P.s of the year (featuring older material) were Wham's "The Final", "The Earth Wind And Fire Collection" and "Street Life — Bryan Ferry And Roxy Music".