

Record Review

10/9/87
by Bob Woodhead

Four years and nine months after the release of "Thriller" which became the world's top selling album of all time, Michael Jackson follows it with "BAD".

The new disc opens with the powerful, funky title song which will soon be issued as a single. Although the track lasts for four minutes it has a 15 minute video which is based on a true story of a black ghetto youth whose friends lose their rapport with him when he returns from further education.

Next up is "The Way You Make Me Feel" which starts off like the Madonna

song "True Blue" and develops into a real dance floor stomper. However, the melody owes a great deal to Barry Mann's "On Broadway". The unorthodox "Speed Demon" sounds as though it was inspired by Prince's music but my favourite track, "Liberian Girl," is a beautifully arranged, slower song with some wonderful dubbed vocal-harmonies. Following this is the dance number "Just Good Friends" on which Stevie Wonder joins in as guest vocalist.

The rhythmic "Another Part Of Me" will undoubtedly prove popular in the clubs and discos, while "Man In The Mirror" is a mid-tempo tune with a

sing-along chorus. Changing the mood completely is "I Just Can't Stop Loving You", the exquisite ballad that Michael sings in duet with Siedah Garrett which took them to the top of the charts for two weeks in August. We then return to the faster mood with a vengeance on "Dirty Diana", a rock orientated "production" number including some exhilarating guitar work by Steve Stevens, and "Smooth Criminal" which features Jackson's typical "racy" vocals and driving rhythms after the weird, heartbeat introduction. The C.D. bonus track "Leave Me Alone" is weaker than the other songs but still worth its place.

"BAD" has been brilliantly produced but with only two slow numbers and nine real belters it is unlikely to appeal to mass audiences in the same way as "Thriller" and "Off The Wall" did. Jackson is a gifted songwriter but he is definitely missing the golden tunes of Grimsby born Rod Temperton, the former Heatwave vocalist. Nevertheless I will not be surprised to see it overtake "The Joshua Tree" and "Whitney" as this year's best selling albums.

Single of the week is "Tomorrow" by the Communards whose new L.P. "Red" will soon be in the shops. The duo will be performing at the Portsmouth Guildhall on October 8.

Also worth a spin is "Causing A Commotion" by Madonna (from her latest movie).

L.P. chart

- 1 Hits 6 (Various)
- 2 Hysteria (Def Lappard)
- 3 Substance (New Order)
- 4 Whitney (Whitney Houston)
- 5 The All-Time Greatest Hits (Elvis Presley)
- 6 The Joshua Tree (U2)
- 7 Who's That Girl (Soundtrack)
- 8 Introducing The Hardline According To Terence Trent D'Arby
- 9 Changing Faces (10CC And Godley & Creme)
- 10 Give Me The Reason (Luther Vandross)



● Michael Jackson and Siedah Garrett