

15/10/87

Record Review by Bob Woodhead

The best of the recent soul album releases has been "Hearsay" by Alexander O'Neal, produced by the red hot pairing of Jimmy Jam and Terry Lewis. Side One features melodic uptempo numbers, while the second side is slower.

Most of the critics rate Luther Vandross as the number one male soul-singer at the moment but I personally prefer O'Neal's voice. It has a rich, golden quality to it and should perhaps be allowed more prominence in the final mixes of some of the songs on the first side. The slower tunes are not as melodically appealing as the dance tracks so Alexander cannot reach his artistic heights on these either. I am sure that we have not heard the best of him just yet.

Overall though, the album is more than satisfactory. Eight of the nine songs were also composed by Jam and Lewis with "Criticize" being co-written by Mr. O'Neal. This

number definitely holds its own and compares favourably with any of the other tracks. The best cuts are the first three on Side One once you get used to the intervals between the tracks with "chit-chat" and unusual musical interludes.

Top rock band Marillion have released a video-single featuring both their recent hits "Incommunicado" and "Sugar Mice" taken from their fourth studio LP "Clutching At Straws". The former has a sequence where the band were dressed as tramps in Islington, and apparently they enjoyed the role so much the producer had a tough time getting them out of their filthy costumes! "Sugar Mice" was shot at the Half Moon pub, at Herne Hill, on drummer Ian Mosely's birthday.

EMI are continuing to re-issue albums from bygone years as part of their "Price Attack" campaign. The records are re-packaged and sold at the budget price of just under £4. Two of the latest batch representing good value for money are Duran Duran's "Seven And The Ragged Tiger" first released in 1983

and Kraftwerk's "Radio Activity" which has 12 tracks by the German synthesizer band whose music was well ahead of its time.

The Duran disc has the original version of "The Reflex" (which went on to hit the number one spot after being "spiced up"), "New Moon On Monday" and "Union Of The Sanke".

Fans of Mike Oldfield will enjoy his new album release entitled "Islands", although the music has not progressed very far. Side One owes much to his "Tubular Bells" particularly on the guitar passages of "The Wind Chimes Part Two", while the second side has five jaunty little songs featuring vocalists like Bonnie Tyler and Kevin Ayers. These are too similar to the songs of his "Moonlight Shadow" period.

Edwin Starr, who has appeared at Thursday's Nightclub, Chichester, twice in the last year, has a fabulous new single in the shops entitled "Whatever Makes Our Love Grow". It has been written and produced by the Stock-Aitken-Waterman team. Other hot

new 45s include "Little Lies" by Fleetwood Mac (which is the best track on their "Tango In The Night" LP) and "Rent" by the Pet Shop Boys.

LP CHART

- 1 Bad (Michael Jackson)
- 2 Strangeways Here We Come (Smiths)
- 3 Popped In Souled Out (Wet Wet Wet)

- 4 Cream Of Eric Clapton
- 5 Now — Smash Hits (Various)
- 6 Wonderful Life (Black)
- 7 Dancing With Strangers (Chris Rea)
- 8 Actually (Pet Shop Boys)
- 9 Always Guaranteed (Cliff Richard)
- 10 Music For The Masses (Depeche Mode)



● Alexander O'Neal