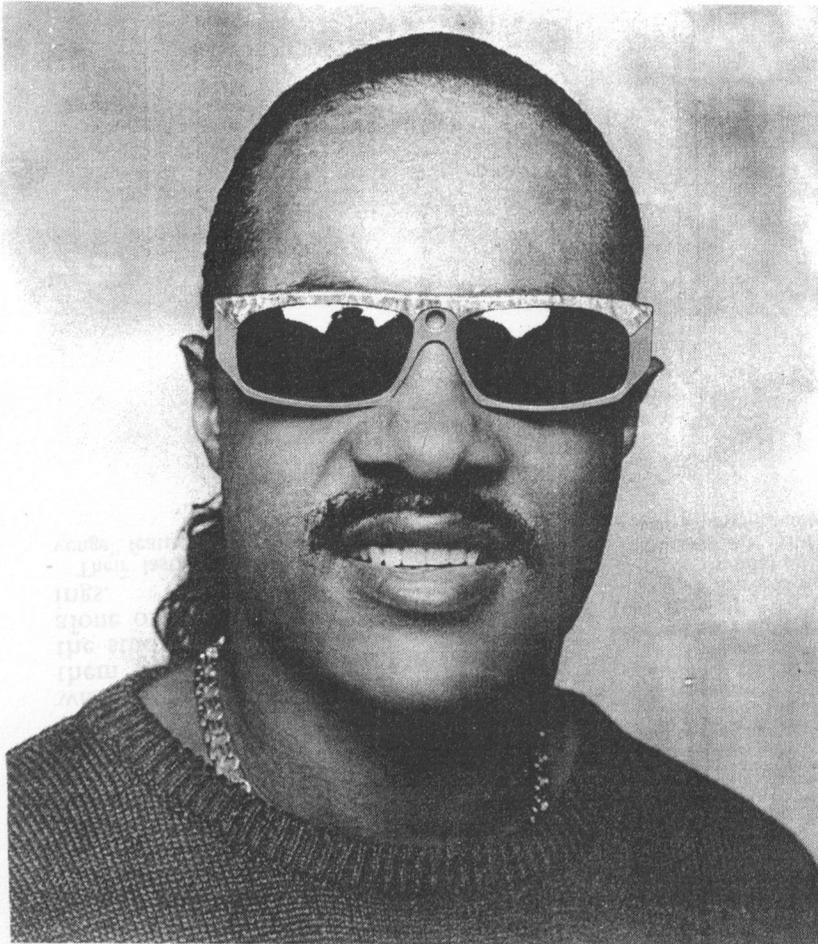

Record Review



● Stevie Wonder

Stevie Wonder is back on the scene with a new album entitled "Characters." The opening track on Side One "You Will Know" is one of his typical, singalong ballads and is easily the best of these ten new songs.

Unfortunately many of the other nine tunes are rather dull and are lacking in melody and musical direction, despite his gutsy vocals and powerful lyrics. These include a duet with Michael Jackson called "Get It" which will probably be issued as a single. Stevie wrote, arranged and produced the LP which is his 29th. This is an eye-catching statistic when you come to realise that he is still only 37-years-old!

Best singer

Another soul singer who first achieved recognition in the 1960s, Dionne Warwick, has also recently released a long-player called "Reservations For Two". It opens with "Love Power," a superb duet with Jeffery Osborne featuring a saxophone solo

by Kenny G.

This lovely ballad was written and produced by Carole Bayer-Sager and Burt Bacharach who composed most of her early hits in collaboration with Hal David. Bacharach and Sager also penned the next best track "In A World Such As This," another melodic tune that is up-tempo by Dionne's standard.

Barry Manilow produced "No One In The World" which is another classy tune, but the other seven cuts fall well below the standard set by these three numbers.

Newly available on a budget-priced C.D. is "The Best of Billy Fury" featuring 20 of his hits from the era 1959-66. These are the re-recordings he made for K-Tel in 1978 using the same arrangements but with the enhanced quality of modern studio recording techniques. In my view Billy was the best British male singer of the Sixties and his voice and all the songs stand the test of time. They include "Like I've Never Been Gone," "I'd Never Find Another You," "Jealousy," "Fools Errand" and of course

"Halfway To Paradise." Billy, who died in 1983, never had a number one hit, but came close on many occasions.

Fans of Tom Robinson and his band will be pleased with "The Tom Robinson Collection 1977-87," featuring his most popular work. The tracks include "2-4-6-8 Motorway," the poignant "War Baby" and a brand new song called "Old Friend."

Paul McCartney has released a four-track video entitled "Once Upon A Video" which begins with the promo video for his December hit "Once Upon A Long Ago" which was filmed secretly at the Valley Of The Rocks in North Devon the day after the "hurricane". The band found it "pretty blowy" up on the cliffs, among them a wind-swept Nigel Kennedy - the highly acclaimed classical violinist who lent his talents to the occasion. The next two videos "Stranglehold" and "Pretty Little Head" are tracks from his 1986 LP "Press To Play", and the final one if "We All Stand Together" taken from "Rupert And The Frog Song," the delightful ani-

mated film which appeared in the cinema in 1984.

The pick of the week's new singles include the soul ballad "I.O.U. Me" by the Winans, "Kiss And Tell" by Bryan Ferry and "For A Friend" which is one of the dramatic songs of the "Red" album by the Communards. Last year Madonna became only the second artist to top a million singles sales in Britain in three consecutive years, emulating the Beatles' feat in the 1960s.

Chart

- 1 Introducing The Hardline According to Terence Trent D'Arby
- 2 The Christians
- 3 Turn Back The Clock (Johnny Hates Jazz)
- 4 Popped In, Souled Out (Wet Wet Wet)
- 5 If I Should Fall From Grace With God (Pogues)
- 6 Bridge Of Spies (T'Pau)
- 7 Best Of Mirage - Jck Mix 88
- 8 Heaven On Earth (Belinda Carlisle)
- 9 Kick (INXS)
- 10 Come Into My Life (Joyce Sims).

Bob Woodhead