

ROCK

New Musik travels in straight lines while the Brains reach critical mass. Chaka gets naughty and The Albanian Film Festival kicks off.

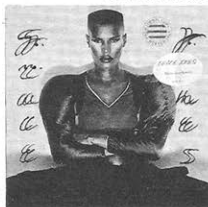
By Vic Garbarini

SHORT TAKES

Jo Jo Zep



Grace Jones



New Musik



Ray Gomez



Phil Lynott — *Solo In Soho* (Warners) Lone Lizzy synthesizes/homogenizes his normally potent black/Celt rock into soft-core pop. The tunes are fine — it's the arrangements that spoil things. Even his ballads sound better in Thin Lizzy's grittier context.

Grace Jones — *Warm Leatherette* (Island) Check out the cover: *The Bride of Frankenstein meets Roosevelt Grier*. Whew. Or maybe a cross between Alicia Bridges and Mean Joe Green. The music? *The Zombies Who Devoured Kingston*, starring Patti Labelle and Marianne Faithfull. Best song? "Bullshit". **The Jags** — *Evening Standards* (Warners) The festival continues. Tonight's feature: *I Was A Teenage Elvis Costello*, starring all the kids on your block.

Dirty Looks — *Selected Shorts: The Last Original New Wave Band*, starring the Staten Island Boys Club. "Fat, ugly, and they play real good" — Clive Barnes.

Wreckless Eric — *Big Smash* (Stiff/Epic) Now playing: *What If Graham Parker and Nick Lowe Were Really the Same Guy?* Starring Ian Gomm. Screenplay by Woody Allen.

Tonio K — *amerika* (Epic) *Mr. Zimmerman Goes To Washington*. Gore Vidal convinces Dylan to join the Sex Pistols and run for President. "A zany but insightful comedy. Thoughtful, humorous, and poignant — I love this jerk." Alex Solzhenitsyn, *The Vermont Picayune-Anarchist*.

The Brains (Mercury) *From the movie of the same name*. Talented but over rated post-punk old/New-New/old wave psychedelic-hard-rock-arties from outer space attach themselves to the back of bored critics' necks, forcing

them to emit uncontrollable hosannas. **Jo Jo Zep and The Falcons** — *Scream Like a Falcon* (Columbia) *Set Me Kangaroo Loose, Bruce*. Crazy scientist implants Graham Parker's brain (and Toots of the Maytals backbone) into the body of unsuspecting Aussie yob. Dancing in the street ensues, and there is much rejoicing in the kingdom. "Hit and Run" is the best white reggae I've ever heard (skanking vocals, as well as guitars). Though the rest of this stuff was the new Graham Parker album when I heard it on the radio.

The Average White Band — *Shine* (Arista) The average black band... What happened to spunk and funk?

Dave Cousins — *Old School Songs* (Passport) BBC-produced documentary originally titled *Elizabethan Hootenanny*. Acoustic versions of Strawbs songs. Get the originals, notably *Heroes and Heroine*, *Ghosts*, and *Bursting At the Seams* (Steeleye and Fairport fans take note).

Bram Tchaikovsky — *Pressure* (Polydor) Heavy metal for New Wavers. No "Girl Of My Dreams" here.

New Musik — *Straight Lines* (Nu Disk) Best of the new specially-priced Epic 4-song EPs. Bright, catchy Euro-pop with a New Wave feel. Title tune a stand-out. There is life after power pop.

Ray Gomez — *Volume* (Columbia) What a cynical money-grubbing-corporate capitalist-pig-sneaky-no-good-trick! Know what they did? They hired all these superstar-types to play on one record, and pretend it was some new guy! Probably did it to save on taxes or something. Well, I'm no fool, no sir. That's obviously Jeff Beck playing his ass off on "West Side Boogie" and "Blues for Mez." And that's gotta be

Steve Miller finally putting some life into his vocals on the pop stuff. I'd recognize Joe Walsh's rhythm guitar work anywhere. I figure they all must have collaborated on the writing, 'cause none of them have done anything this good in years. I mean, here it is — the hard rock, pop, jazz fusion, supercharged breakthrough, and it's all just a cheap trick like the *Masked Marauders*. If only there really was a Ray Gomez. Naw, that'd be too much to ask for...

Ronin (Mercury) LOS ANGELES. MAY 30.(UPI). Police in Burbank report that vandals broke into The Warner Bros. recording complex last night and severely marred Linda Ronstadt's new album. According to Lt. Peter Asher of the L.A.P.D., "a bunch of punks gained access to the studio at about 4 a.m. Linda's band — Rick Marotta, Waddy Wachtel, and the guys — had written some great tunes and laid down the instrumental tracks, with Ronstadt scheduled to add the vocals later. The little ruffians just overdubbed their own trashy vocals, then mastered it and destroyed the tapes. I guess they'll just have to put it out like this..."

Chaka Khan — *Naughty* (Warners) "Clouds" is the best R&B I've heard this year — black pop with muscle. Khan's voice can get up into Aretha country when she has a chance to open up. There are a few other nice moments here, but a whole album like "Clouds" could earn this girl the crown.

Cherie and Marie Currie — *Messin' With The Boys*. Former Runaway Cherie and her clone/sister go heavy metal pop, and I love it. (I don't believe I'm saying this). "Since You've Been Gone" and the title tune are too good to miss. I may start chewing gum again... M