

S LOBOS, PAUL SIMON, THE PRETENDERS, HÜSKER D

ISSUE 496 • MARCH 26TH, 1987 • U.K. £1.90 • \$

Rolling Stone

TRANGLES

HOW WHAT THEY WANT

Exclusive

THE MISSING CHAPTER OF ANTHONY MORGESS'S ROCKWORK RANGE

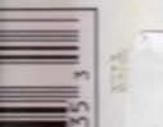
THE STATE OF ROCK IN RUSSIA

Campus

PEAKING INTO THE MUSIC BIZ

ADHUNTING CAMPUS

THE COOL SCHOOLS



0749D
1360

an art form rock & roll music can be, this *Blast of Silence* will resound in your very soul. —Anthony DeCurtis

Without the ineffabilities of heart and soul, intellectualism is just a lot of big words. —Laura Fissinger



AGUA DE LUNA
Rubén Blades y Seis del Solar
Elektra



NEVER ENOUGH
Patty Smyth
Columbia

EVEN THOUGH RUBÉN BLADES'S ENGLISH-language debut isn't due for a while yet, the Panamanian salsa star, lawyer, essayist, activist and actor has already been bear-hugged by the U.S. Anglo intelligentsia. They're rightfully enamored of his first two major-label releases (*Buscando America* and *Escenas*) and his credentials, particularly his cachet with the likes of Nobel laureate Gabriel García Márquez. *Agua de Luna*, in fact, is a series of poems and character studies inspired by some of Márquez's short stories.

Blades's status as a darling of the smart set shouldn't make the general public wary of him. *Agua de Luna* works just fine as highbrow art, but its real import lies in its accessibility to brows both high and low. *Agua de Luna* coaxes the listener toward that place in the human psyche where personal passions give birth to political thought and action and where politics, in turn, shape personal passions. In each of *Agua's* eight librettos, Blades shows that the separation of "head" and "heart" in North American culture is arbitrary, that head and heart, in fact, complete each other.

Agua's sole problem is a uniformness of melody and tempo — in contrast with Blades's first two albums. It's entirely possible, of course, that he wanted to use a certain homogeneity to underscore the connective tissue between central themes. There are several: the soul-straining repercussions of political immorality ("Laura Farina"), the paralysis of collective resignation ("Blackamán"), the difficulties of living a conscious life ("No Te Duermas") ["Don't Fall Asleep"] and the redemptive power of surrender to spiritual mysteries ("Agua de Luna") ["Moon Water"].

It's questionable that this album will vault Blades into mainstream stardom in the U.S. — but the eventuality of that fame seems beyond question. Perhaps *Agua de Luna* is a prelude to fame, a precursor with a crucial message: intellectual mastery is a means, not an end.

IF SINGER PATTY SMYTH WANTS TO shape a distinctive career for herself, as she makes clear at every turn on her solo debut, *Never Enough*, she had better stop lending her sparkling voice to such faceless projects. Fronting the now-defunct Scandal, Smyth brought gritty intelligence and formidable chops to mostly indifferent material. Here, Smyth gives competent-verging-on-inspired vocal performances, but she still seems altogether lost in search of something worthwhile to sing.

Producers Rick Chertoff (Hooters, Cyndi Lauper) and William Wittman (the Outfield, Graham Parker) have erected a wholly artificial atmosphere of synth-heavy arrangements. Hooters Rob Hyman and Eric Bazilian co-wrote the title cut, which has the same mix of derivative hooks and empty lyrics that distinguished the Hooters' *Nervous Night*. This opener sets the tone for

Never Enough. The anonymous, so-tasteful writing and playing album have a blurring effect: these songs are so similar that seem interchangeable.

There are two exceptions, one that with better direction Smyth might have a future. Tom Waits's "Town Train" is a more dangerous choice than most of the slop. It's the ambition that led Smyth to a choice that bodes best. Of Smyth doesn't better Waits's version, but her street-smart voice bites chunks out of the numb Willie Nile contributes "Sue," a slab of insouciant hard rock with a true story to tell. Waits and Nile are exemplary sources for an interesting singer; with more songs like Smyth may one day record a disc that's worthy of her voice.

—Jimmy Guterman



SKYLARKING
XTC
Geffen

NOT THAT LONG AGO, XTC WAS a perfectly perfect band. It corrupted its fans with full hooks with unsettling harmonic rhythms and rocketed hard enough to compensate for the solemnity of ten-shallow political protests. The guitarist and singer Andy Partridge fell ill during the *English Settlement* tour, and band members retired to their houses in the south of England. Partridge decided he was Paul McCartney. XTC's subsequent releases have been dominated by Partridge's love songs and an obsessive exploration of modern-production possibilities.

On *Skylarking*, the band is produced by Todd Rundgren, a close with a Fab Four fixation. Todd lures XTC out of the studio — the LP was recorded in San Francisco and Woodstock, New York — and rebates the band's techno tendencies. The result is as thoroughly futuristic as it is ultimately unsatisfying.

As craftsmanship, *Skylarking* is a remarkable achievement, surely accomplished neo-psychedelic in date. Each one of the fourteen tracks is defined by a series of structural strong melodies on both vocal and chorus, striking harmonies,

Just Released

The Return of Bruno. **Bruce Willis.** **Motown.** *Moonlighting's* charming leading man has come up with an utterly charmless, altogether useless piece of soul-pop pap. On the lame cover of the Staple Singers' "Respect Yourself," June Pointer does a helluva lot more work than does the record's nominal leader. *The Return of Bruno* is bad enough to make one year for the Blues Brothers, or even for Don Johnson.

Men and Women. **Simply Red.** **Elektra.** The second helping from Mick Hucknall and the gang sounds stronger and more consistent than their smash *Picture Book* debut, but at first listen *Men and Women* lacks obvious standouts like "Holding Back the Years" and "Money's Too Tight (to Mention)." The first single, "The Right Thing," along with "Shine" and "Ev'ry Time We Say Goodbye" (a classic Cole Porter ballad) are among the most impressive tracks.

Men's 100% Cotton MEDITERRANEAN shorts \$26

Made of our incomparable Naturalist's Cloth: cool, crisp, pre-washed cotton poplin, pigment-dyed in subtle earthy colors.

#2567 Faded indigo, sand, pewter, jade green
Sizes 29-40 (no 35, 37, 39)
Leather Braided Belt \$25 Imported

Send \$1 for catalogue



BANANA REPUBLIC TRAVEL & SAFARI CLOTHING Co

Please send Check, Visa, Amex, M/C, DC to 224 Grant Ave. Dept. K55, P.O. Box 7347, San Francisco, CA 94120 Add CA, NY, TX, OK Sales Tax and \$2 for Shipping Order Toll-Free 800-527-5200

NOW IN PAPERBACK

"A riveting account .. Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About 'SNL.'"

—Newsweek

"May be the best book ever written about television."

—Associated Press

With 32 pages of photos Now at your bookstore

VINTAGE BOOKS
A division of Random House, Inc.

"One of the most riveting and entertaining books I've ever read about show business." DAVID McCARTHY

A BACKSTAGE HISTORY OF SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE

DOUG HILL
JEFF WEINGRAD

