



Not since Screaming Lord Sutch has there been such a... er... well... you play a helluva guitar, Ron.

#### RON WOOD

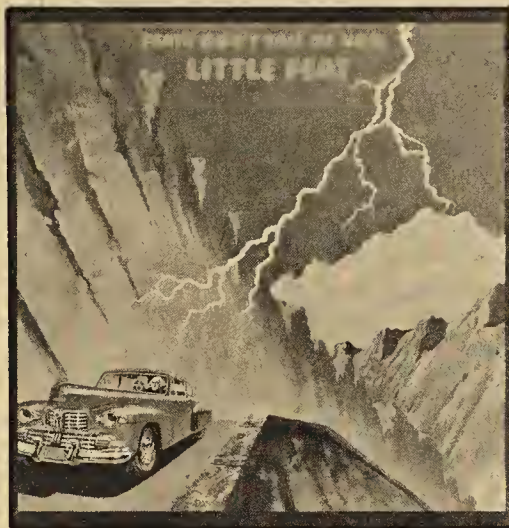
*I've Got My Own Album To Do*  
(Warner Brothers)

The average cynic would probably expect any album by such a long-time competent sideman as R. Wood (original Marriot Small Face and Stewart sidebar) to be merely competent. What he wouldn't expect is a juicy cross-breed of *Sticky Fingers*, *Every Picture Tells A Story*, and *Hands of Jack The Ripper*. But that's what *My Own Album* is. *Sticky Fingers* because Keith Richard is as much a part of this album as Wood, constantly mainlining ever-right guitar fills behind Wood's, and chipping in with patented vocal accompaniment that makes this the best sounding Stones album in a long while. *Every Picture Tells A Story* because Rod Stewart's albums always owed more to Wood's solid, unobtrusive yet fundamental instrumental touches than many care to recognize, and *Hands Of Jack The Ripper* because, like Screamin' Lord Sutch before him, Ron Wood is one of the most incompetent vocalists imaginable, no better than you or I and probably worse, and destined never to inspire jealousy in a throat cancer patient.

Half of this album is super, though. "I Can Feel the Fire" is the sort of opening every album needs — ballsy, accessible and interesting, with Keith R. propelling it vocally by echoing and propping Wood's efforts, and Ron's live-wire guitar doing the rest. "Far East Man" is a complete reversal, in which Wood meets the Delfonics and comes out credibly sounding moody and melodic. "Crotch Music" is a scintillating, riff-infested prance that'd do the Allmans proud and should have been a lot longer, and "Shirley" and "If You Gotta Make A Fool Of Somebody," featuring friend R.S. 'on pipes are nearly as good. Only a few tracks don't make it. "Mystify Me" and "Take A Look At The Guy" suffer through Wood's untrained goofy warble, that ruins what otherwise might have been two merely boring songs.

But in total there's so much pure power in this album that I can recommend it without question. In these days when every toad who ever overdubbed a bass run on a "Bubbling Under The Top 100" reject figures he can make a solo album, it's good to find some one with both the talent and the friends (for when the talent runs out) to come up with a passable effort that should sell on more than just name alone.

Alan Niester



#### LITTLE FEAT

*Feats Don't Fail Me Now*  
(Warner Brothers)

On a recent visit to where-it's-at-today, aka Austin, Texas, there was one record I heard being played constantly everywhere I went. Was it Michael Murphy? Was it Jerry Jeff Walker? Was it Willie Nelson? Nope — it was *Dixie Chicken* by Little Feat. Here you have one of the world's most sophisticated listening audiences, one drenched with the best of American music, and, as discriminating listeners, they choose the best.

THE BEST rhythm section in rock.

THE BEST slide guitarist in the world.

THE BEST foot-shufflin', finger poppin', backbone slippin' funky chicken...

Hey, look — I've been telling you about Little Feat for years. I know how good they are, even Warner Brothers knows, or so they'd have you believe from all the support they're giving them. And ya know, I think people are coming around.

So here we have the next Little Feat album, a proud successor to *Dixie Chicken*, in the noblest Little Feat tradition. Including a smashing medley of two great classix from previous records: "Cold Cold Cold/Tripe Face Boogie," in which the pinnacles of guitar virtuosity are scaled.

For some ineluctable reason, *Feats Don't Fail Me Now* seems more accessible to the uninitiated listener. Therefore, if you are an old fan, you will like to know that the usual standards of Little Feat quality have been met in this product. If you are NOT an old fan, become a new fan by following these two simple steps:

1) Buy the record.

2) Slip it out of the shrinkwrap, place the record on the turntable, and place the phonograph needle on the first cut, "Rock and Roll Doctor."

Easy, wasn't it?

Ed Ward



David does his famed Lou Reed imitation (singing "Men of Good Fortune") in Bryan Ferry vines. Tres avant!

#### DAVID CASSIDY

*Cassidy Live!*  
(Bell)

Here's a guy with some claim to status. His dad's distinguished himself, right alongside Claude Akins, as one of the slimiest heavies ever to grace the TV cop shows and his mom runs a tight musical ship nightly, riding over a rowdy herd that includes Danny Bonaducci and Dave Madden.

Where Cass Jr. shines is up onstage, out in front of maybe six or eight thousand screaming Briton boppers. He's got a lot of what pre-rockenroll audiences used to clamor for — *polish*, showbiz spunk, that trouper stamina occasioned by plenty of public pratfalls on the boards. Davy's thoroughly pro; slick and choreographed, well versed even in intra-song patter and convivial coyness. Since these qualities are generally associated with another, older brand of performer, and since his vocal skills, while impressive, are hardly commensurate with that kind of bravado and slickness, he comes off beautifully — as a precocious starkid having way too good a time to worry about credibility or critics or anything. He's a natural ham, takes to smalltime Bigtime like Anka or Darin did.

Who's to say this isn't the best live "rock" album of the year? I'll take this Dave over that downhill skidding other one anyway. Coiffed and spangled, this one sounds like a cross between a 38-year old karate chopping Presley and the grinning, apple-cheeked Wayne Newton. He picks killer material, strokes it with a gentle show biz hand ("Some Kind of Summer" and the slowed-down "Breaking Up Is Hard to Do" sound like companion pieces to sloppy El Pres glut like the live "Suspicious Minds," all overrecorded rhythm and trashy tambourine-on-highhat), and walks away a winner every time.

His versions of oldies by the kiddo Beatles ("Please Please Me") and Rascals ("How Can I Be Sure") are doublesided xerox, his rock medley (a gruntoid "C.C. Rider," "Jailhouse



Rock," etc.) irreverent and his job on Stills' hoary "For What It's Worth" the best that song's ever had; the band goes crazy once Cass burps up his helium vocal, running amok like 1969 G. Dead turned loose on 12,000 Haight St. regulars on a '67 Sunday. "Mae" is classic Dennis Yost and "Delta Dawn" outbludgeons Cocker and Russell's well-known assaults on subtlety.

Slicker than the once-blissful Bonos, almost as powerful as Rory Gallagher, twice as hammy as the Hudsons, Jack and Shirley's firstborn has distinguished himself this time. Are you ready, brothers & sisters?

Gene Sculatti



Got any sadistic notions, John? Naw, just a few flies in his eyes.

**STEPPENWOLF**  
**Slow Flux**  
(Mums)

The first Steppenwolf album sounded great on cassette. Best part was on "Sookie, Sookie" when John Kay told the chick to let it hang out and you could absolutely feel her flesh shake as the reel of tape spun around the machine. Then on their second album Steppenwolf proceeded to the heights of ambivalence with lotsa technical trivia that was re-echoing the Vanilla Fudge's *The Beat Goes On* about the same time. *At Your Birthday Party* had a great cover but was total cereal, and *Monster* was too political to matter. The Steppenwolf live stuff was great cuz you could hear the dirty words to "The Pusher" performed with greater strength and clarity, hissing between his teeth. All in all not a bad track record, overlooking the gaps on my shelf, for a band that finally gained the reputation of becoming the first heavy-metal Grateful Dead.

Yeah, I remember it well. A friend from Texas sent me a brown envelope in the mail, and inside there were the remaining fragments of a broken copy of "Born To Be Wild." I was confused. That song had meant total power, total violence, to me whenever it throbbed on the radio, and I stomped on the accelerator. Did this mean that Steppenwolf was not to be trusted?

Of course!

Everybody shoulda known way back when this lame band decided to brand themselves as a positive identity after being hip and reading a dumb Hesse novel. Then John Kay parodies the creativity of a loser like Question Mark by wearing shades at all times, and then he even tries to cop Jim Morrison's scene by constantly showing off in black leather and hurling obscenities at the teenyboppers groping at his feet. He was A-1 Nazi but not tuff. A sure bet: John Kay was kicked outa every Hell's

Angels movie he ever tried to get in. He was fake; Steppenwolf was fake.

It's really hilarious, too, that they gotta new record out. John Kay preaches bout how great it is to be a part of the Woodstock Nation and growls in return:

**You might call me brutal**  
**'Cause I've got a few sadistic notions**  
**Oh, but I ain't lying**  
**I'd kill my own for some commotion**  
Oh, yeah, sure.

And the whole album is wrapped in tinsel with the titles punched out like Life Savers, and it's all really very hard to take. If the music is what's important, it sure gets in the way of all the clods in the band stamping their feet and pooting on their horns. In fact, it is not only an extension of Steppenwolf's earlier recorded abortions, but it seems so outa place that it almost makes you forget that V. Fudge and Rare Earth and all the other "heavies" just ain't around no more. It's like this mummy escaped from a tomb or something.

Needless to say, a perfect Xmas gift for that special young guy/girl in yr life who still globs on the Clearasil and thinks that John Kay is synonymous with bully.

Robot A. Hull



**HYDRA**  
(Capricorn)

If I hadn't heard Hydra before, I don't think I would've been prepared for this album. Do you know there isn't a single twelve bar dada-dada blues progression on the whole disc? There aren't any references to fried chicken or watermelon, either. I bet that if you closed your eyes, you'd think they were English. If you hold your nose, you'd swear they were from Texas. Still, some people would say Johnny Winter was just another Duane Allman rip-off if he recorded on Capricorn, but anybody who categorically classifies Hydra with the rest of the marshmellow music on Capricorn Records oughta get fed to the Legend Of Boggy Creek.

Hydra sounds nothing whatsoever like any other Southern band you ever heard before. They come from Atlanta, and it's generally conceded that the best thing that ever happened to the city of Atlanta was when Sherman burnt it down on his March To The Sea. It got rebuilt by the Yankees, so in effect, Atlanta is basically a northern city in the middle of the Deep South. This environment gives Hydra a uniquely cosmopolitan

sound. You won't find any of Macon's laid back depression in Hydra's music. If they reflect anything Southern, it's the reckless frenzy you find in many Texas bands. They've got the same hard, sharp edge. They pound on your skull and stomp on your guts. Anybody who's really listened to Hydra knows they're not just another Southern blues band.

That's the main reason why so many people always talked about Hydra. They had a grapevine through the South that was nothing short of phenomenal. You always heard everything that was going on with the band. There were lots of people waiting for this album, and maybe the best thing you can



Hydra: blasting forth with a whole new Gulf States raveup.

say about Hydra was that it was worth the wait. Nobody who was really into Hydra can be disappointed. The group packed the album with over forty-six minutes of hard, driving music. Vocalist Wayne Bruce sings with the same gutty raspiness as Johnny Winter. Spencer Kirkpatrick plays a slicing lead with overtones of heavy metal, and sometimes almost jazz phrasings. Bassist Orville Davis is all over the scale with innovative bass lines, and drummer Steve Pace holds the whole bottom together with a solid rhythm. The whole sound is accented and highlighted by Dan Turbeville's production. All in all, it adds up to a dynamite debut album. And perhaps that's the most amazing thing about it. It is Hydra's first album. Somehow, you tend to lose sight of that fact when you're listening to it. It takes most bands at least three or four tries to get an album this good.

Jim Esposito

**TRIUMVIRAT**  
**Illusions On A Double Dimple**  
(Harvest)

If you add to a large dose of Emerson, Lake and Palmer some Yes songs, a dash of Genesis, and a sprinkle of Procol Harum and Matching Mole, you will be left with the Frankenstein Monster album of 1974, Triumvirat's *Illusions On A Double Dimple*, a patchwork creation of direct cops and influences sewn loosely together like a body of spare parts, not at all a cohesive structure. Producer, composer and keyboard director Jurgen Fritz, the herr doktor of this German trio, has taken the above mentioned ingredients and stacked them one atop the other, with no visible attempt at fusing all of it into a work at least vaguely unique.

But when last sighted, *Illusions On A Double Dimple* was No. 75 on the charts after a month's residence, and rising faster than Hitler's armies marched through Europe, and