

Allman Brothers Band
Reach For The Sky
 Arista
Charlie Daniels Band
Full Moon
 Epic
The Dirt Band
Make A Little Magic
 United Artists

Fashions don't influence the Allmans, and in many ways that conservatism is what makes their new album the best of this country rock crop.

Dickey Betts' fluid guitar style, Gregg Allman's back-from-the-dead vocals, and the band's percussion-laden sound make it a shock to realise it's eight years since *Eat A Peach* set the standard for southern bands.

Charlie Daniels heads more for the story-telling tradition of country, and by now it's starting to sound a little forced. Even the Merle Haggard patriotism of "In America" doesn't really stir the emotions.

As for the Dirt Band, the problem is the material. There's no "Mr Bojangles" on the new album, and some of the songs sound like Eagles' out-takes, which isn't an enjoyable thing to say about a band which made one of the outstanding country sets of all time with 1973's triple album, *Will The Circle Be Unbroken*.

Phil Gifford



Gillan

Paul Simon
One Trick Pony
 Warner Bros

At the beginning of the year, *Creem's* ubiquitous Film Fox stated that Paul Simon was producing an "as yet untitled rockdocu flick in which Lou Reed will star as a record producer looking for a fair shake, rattle and roll to be provided by the B52s". *One Trick Pony* is the soundtrack of a forthcoming Paul Simon movie, but it obviously is not that particular item.

Simon's music has remained fairly consistent over the years. Since the break-up with Art Garfunkel his writing has, if anything, become more disciplined and concise.

A good deal of the songs in *One Trick Pony* provide eloquent commentaries on the pressures of the music business. "Ace in the

Hole" and "God Bless the Absentee" being two of the most effective. The latter is one of those archetypal Simon lyrics with images a la "Punky's Dilemma". However, the polish and flair in the presentation easily outweigh the sententiousness which marred some of the earlier songs.

The laid-back and wry sadness of "That's Why God Made the Movies" and "Long Long Day" is rather touching. "Long Long Day" has some rapturously lovely passages involving an uncredited backing vocalist — naughty WEA for not printing credits!

One interesting thought: it is generally accepted that there is a strong neo-Romantic backlash in the contemporary American mainstream — could Paul Simon be in the vanguard of a similar movement in popular music?

William Dart

Deep Purple
Deepest Purple (Very Best Of ...)
 EMI
REO Speedwagon
Decade of Rock & Roll
 Epic
Gillan
Glory Road
 Virgin
Krokus
Metal Rendez-vous
 Ariola
Saxon
Wheel Of Fire
 EMI
Ted Nugent
Scream Dream
 Epic

The tracks on this compilation have stood the test of time so far, the only gripe being the omissions of "Hush", the first single from Deep Purple Mark I (1968), and "Misleadin'" from *Burn*, Deep Purple Mark III (1974). Having attained the status of being continually recycled, the whole thing has become a millstone around the members' necks and all Deep Purple fans should have these songs already.

It's taken Ian Gillan three line-up changes and eight albums to produce the finest hard-core disc for several years. With John McCoy (bass), Bernie Torme (guitar), Colin Towns (keyboards), and Mick Underwood (drums) contributing the musical arrangements and Gillan the lyrics, the band soar magnificently through nine tracks, all of which reach new heights in heavy rock and roll. Buy this record, I thoroughly recommend *Glory Road*, it's an injection of lifeblood into rock music!

The release of Reo Speedway's 2LP compilation, *Decade*, comes at a time when the popularity of the band appears to be waning in the States. They are virtually unheard of in New Zealand.

Of the 19 songs, "Golden Country" (1972), "(I Believe) Our Time Is Gonna Come" (1976), "Back On the Road Again" (1979) and the 12-minute extravaganza "157 Riverside Avenue" really stand out. Side Three captures the band in their true element — "live", and hopefully their live double album *You Get What You Play For* will be released in NZ if this album sells.

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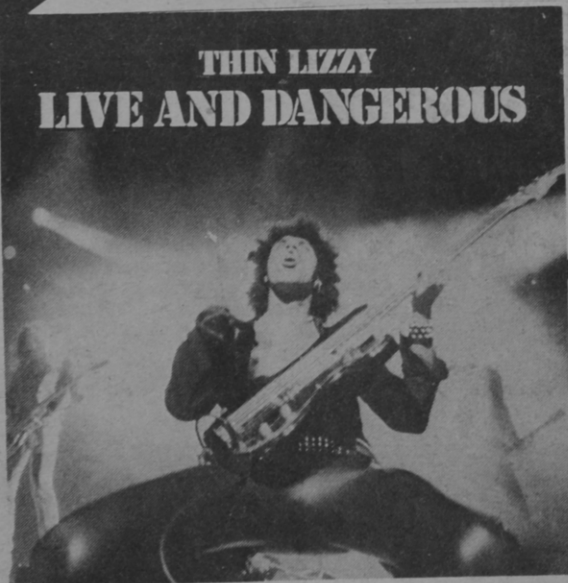
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