



Bobby McFerrin



David Johansen

**David Johansen**  
**Live It Up**  
**Epic**

Mucho fun. That appears to be David Johansen's creed. He fronts a band that's New York mainstream in sound but he's not into macho posturing himself.

Neither is he into marketing. It's a pity, because he has recorded three albums all deserving greater exposure and sales. Surely a live album should give a second chance to these overlooked songs.

Instead Johansen has plenty of fun performing old faves (an Animals' medley, Four Tops' 'Reach Out I'll Be There', Foundations' 'Build Me Up Buttercup', Goffin/King ballad 'Is This What I Get from Loving You'), four from his critics' rave debut and only one track each from his underrated *In Style* and *Here Comes the Night* albums.

The cover version that epitomises Johansen's good humour is the Cadets' doo-wop epic, 'Stranded in the Jungle' — an ambitious undertaking where the band prove that they ain't just

thrashers.

Syl Sylvain is out on his own now. None of the musicians here were with Johansen for his 1978 promotional live album and *Live It Up* isn't as raw as the Sylvain dominated promo album. We get yet another side to the elusive David Johansen.

Murray Cammick

**Bobby McFerrin**  
**Elektra/Musician**

Bobby McFerrin is possibly the most exciting new singer to bridge pop and jazz vocalising since the emergence of Al Jarreau in the early 70s. And if that sounds like a record company hype then consider the following:

1) McFerrin takes three pop chestnuts and successfully renders them anew. 'Moondance' is treated with a moody piano figure and a lovely wordless-vocal/instrumental solo. 'Dance With Me' becomes a popping samba and 'You've Really Got A Hold On Me' has hit potential in a duet with Phoebe Snow.

2) His covers of jazz composi-

tions are equally impressive, from Horace Silver's hymn of 'Peace' to Bud Powell's leaping 'Hallucinations'. The latter is a dazzling display of double-tracked, unaccompanied wordless vocalising.

3) McFerrin's own pop songs are excellent and easily stand beside the quality of the material he's chosen to cover.

4) His original jazz numbers are virtuoso exercises. Making full use of multi-tracking, he swoops, slides, grunts, hoots, flutters and becomes everything from a horn section to a chicken. All this with seeming ease and to largely enjoyable effect.

If the above comments make the album sound like a mish-mash from another smartass singer who can't find his own style they're not meant to. *Bobby McFerrin* is a debut to showcase the man's range and abilities and as such, completely succeeds.

5) Oh yeah, the backing musicians are great too.

Peter Thomson  
**Al Green**  
**Higher Plane**  
**Myrrh**

Al Green is not just another religiously-inclined pop singer. As the cover of *Higher Plane* reveals, he's also the Reverend Al Green of the Full Gospel Tabernacle, Memphis, Tennessee. Indeed, since Green assumed sole control of his musical direction in 1977, he's worked on a closer alliance of his twin preoccupations — sex and salvation. They're reconciled so well these days that the same intimate, loose musical style can carry both his secular and his popular material, yet be spontaneous and energetic enough to perfectly convey his spiritual joy.

On *Higher Plane* you get eight gospel songs — a couple, like 'Amazing Grace' and 'Battle Hymn Of The Republic', are treated in a very standard way — but the rest are so seamless, so distinctively Al Green that he could have written every one.

His first gospel album, *The Lord Will Make A Way*, was perhaps a stronger overall collection, but both of these albums are so lively and good-natured that while they may not convert the heathens, they definitely provide uplifting music, even for unbelievers.

Alastair Douglas

**WHERE THE BEAT MEETS THE STREET YOU'LL FIND**

# RICK JAMES

**STREET SONGS**

**FEATURES 'SUPERFREAK'**

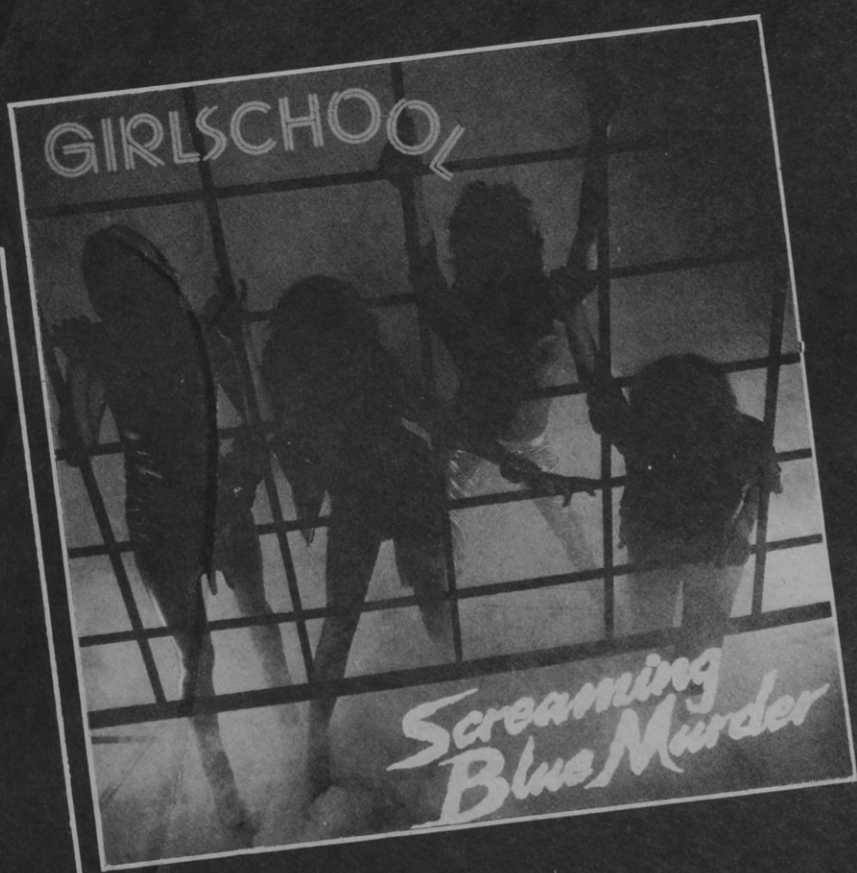
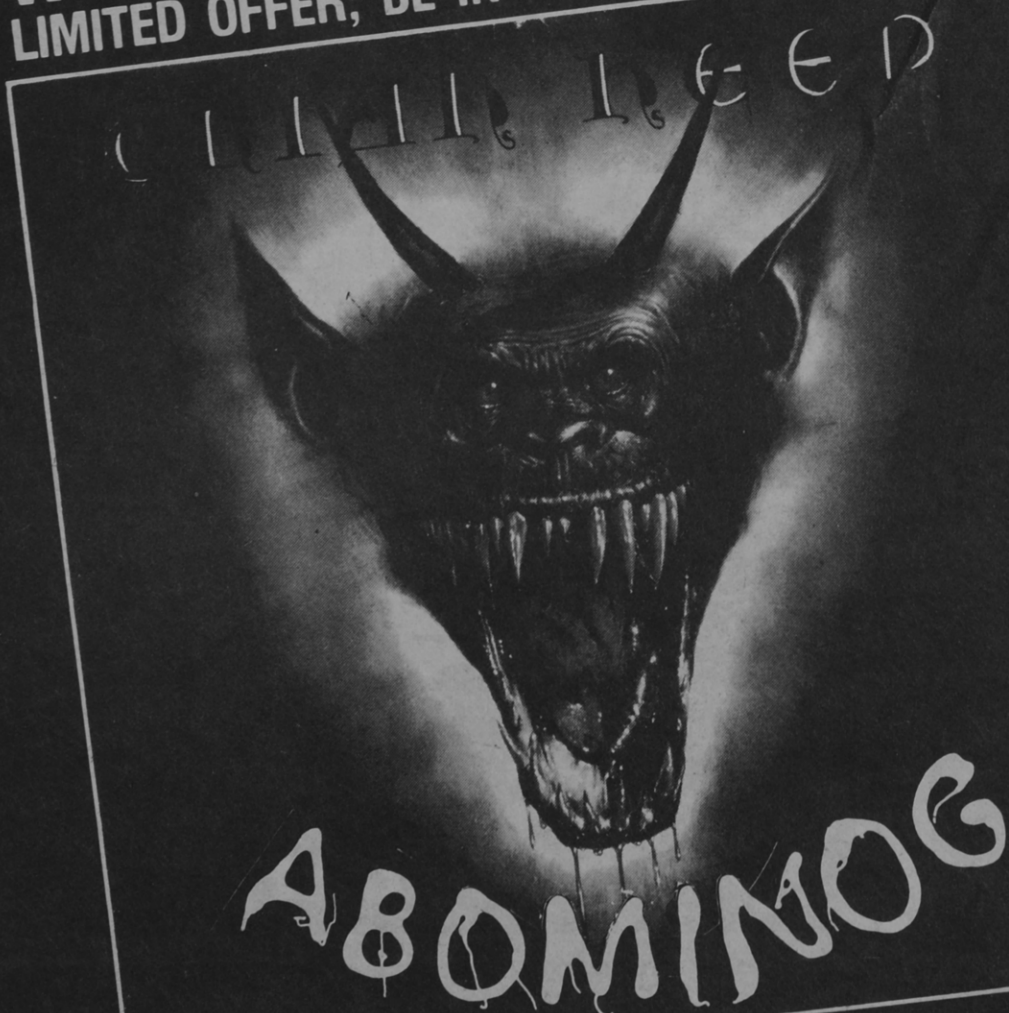
## DO IT! WITH RICK JAMES

MOTOWN

polyGram

**FEATURES 'DANCE WIT' ME'**

**SPECIAL OFFER!**  
**FREE POSTER**  
**WITH EITHER ALBUM!**  
**LIMITED OFFER, BE IN WHILE STOCKS LAST.**



**Uriah Heep**  
**Abominog (Bronze)**  
Original member Mick Box has resurfaced Heep after an 18-month layoff, and with inspired performances from new members Pete Goalby on vocals and John Sinclair on keyboards, has produced an absolute blitzkrieg hard rock album, far and away Heep's best ever. Bearing little resem-



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