

Austin American-Statesman, May 19, 1979, Page 20

Jefferson Starship leaves trail of exes

STARSHIP REPAIRS: Jefferson Starship played its first concert since last summer's riot in West Germany Sunday in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park. The free concert was not announced in advance because city officials feared too large a crowd, but 9,000 people still turned out. **Grace Slick**, who had been attending some rehearsals and occasionally even singing, missed the gig, thereby ruffling some feathers among her colleagues. "We put on a concert and she didn't show, so I guess she's not in the band," says a source close to the Starship. **Marty Balin** also has jumped ship and has been replaced by **Mickey Thomas**, formerly **Elvin Bishop's** vocalist. The rest of the lineup remains **Airplane** original **Paul Kantner**, **David Freiberg**, **Pete Sears**, **Craig Chaquato** and new drummer **Aynsley Dunbar**. The group plans to start recording an album in mid-June.

Jack Cassidy, bass player for the **Airplane** and **Hot Tuna**, has joined a New Wave group called **SVT**. . . Another **Airplane** alumnus, drummer **Joey Covington**, is touring the East Coast with his new band, the **San Francisco All-Stars**. Other members include **John Cipollina**, formerly with **Quicksilver Messenger Service**, and **Stephen Love** and **Buddy Cage**, both dropouts from the **New Riders of the Purple Sage**.

BROTHER TROUBLES: The Starship's not the only Bay Area band going through a personnel shake-up. The **Doobie Brothers**, riding the crest of their most successful album, "Minute By Minute," have lost two members — guitarist **Jeff Baxter** and drummer **John Hartman** — and deny reports vocalist **Michael McDonald** wants to split. **Baxter** will be replaced by **John McFee**, the former **Clover** axeman who's also toured with **Norton Buffalo**. Rumor has it **Chet McCracken** will take **Hartman's** place. . . Meanwhile, another former **Doobie**, guitarist **Tom Johnston**, is finishing a solo album for summer release, and **Baxter** and **Al Kooper** have been working up tunes and putting together a band.

TURN BACK THE CLOCK: Austin's favorite 50s band, **Johnny Dee** and the **Rocket 88s**, has recorded an album of car, beach and heartbreak standards that will be sold in local record stores as well as at the group's shows. **Dayton Baker** of Dallas, the band's new manager, fronted the money for the LP which also includes three original tunes that sound like they were buried in a time capsule in 1959. No heavy messages in these grooves, but the album's getting airplay on **KSAT** in San Antonio and **KVIL-FM** in Dallas. **KSAT** is inviting all graduating seniors at S.A. high schools to a party in Alamo Stadium June 1 with music by **Johnny** and the gang. . . **Dee** and the **88s** will take their

riffs



Grace Slick

Townes Van Zandt

time warp on the road this summer. They're booked for four weeks in July at Six Flags Over Georgia and a week in August at Lake Tahoe.

EXPANDING MARKET: Hot on the heels of the new *Austin Arts and Leisure* magazine, a Dallas-based entertainment journal plans to start circulating in River City. *Texas Nickelodeon*, just eight months old, but with a giveaway circulation of 80,000 in the Metroplex, next month plans to start distributing 30,000 copies a month in Austin. **Liam Sullivan**, publisher of the defunct *Waterloo Impartial Crier*, will supervise the local edition and is looking for writers to cover all areas of the arts. Once the Austin section gets off the ground, Sullivan hopes to move into San Antonio as well. **KLBJ-FM** is the mag's "sponsor" locally; it's tied-in with **KZEW-FM** in Big D.

RATINGS MADNESS: Arbitron's spring ratings sweep ended last week, bringing a collective sigh of relief from Austin radio folks. Results should be out sometime in July. . . The competition here is downright mellow compared to major markets. Take Chicago, for instance. Eleven Windy City stations reportedly spent nearly \$1 million on television advertising alone to hype themselves during the just comp-

leted survey period. And that's only the tip of the big money iceberg. One rock station gave away a \$75,000 suburban home, another offered two Hawaiian vacations and a third turned a lucky listener loose in a bank vault containing \$1 million cash. The city's top black station may haveaced everyone though. Located at 1390 on the dial, it sold gas at 13.9 cents a gallon and had cars backed up for blocks at a southside filling station. That even got TV news coverage — which is free.

ON THE TOWN: It's a big week for jazz fans. Percussionist **Tony Williams** headlines at Armadillo tonight, followed by **Ralph Towner** Sunday. Tuesday, **David Amram** joins **Passenger** at Steamboat 1874. . . Steamboat 1874 also presents folkie **Townes Van Zandt** and his new band Wednesday and Thursday. . . the Kerrville Folk Festival, featuring just about every Texas folkie you can think of, kicks off Thursday. . . The **Dillards**, one of the original country rock groups, bring their electrified bluegrass to the 'Dillo Thursday night. . . Mark your calendars, '60s refugees. **Country Joe and the Fish** play Armadillo Friday. . . **Augie Meyers** and the **Texas Head Band** are featured next Saturday at Briarcliff Marina's "First Annual Memorial Day Weekend Outdoor Dance." Second Generation, the band headed by **Clay Meyers** and **Shawn Sahn**, sons of **Augie** and **Doug**, also are on the bill.

QUICKIES: "Keeper of the Flame," the new **Delbert McClinton** LP, ships next week. . . **Omar** and the **Howlers** played four nights at the Lone Star Cafe this week. After opening for **Joe Ely** Tuesday, **Omar** got to meet one of his heroes, **Mickey Mantle**. . . **John Cale** and his avant garde rockers taped their Thursday night show at Armadillo in hopes of getting some tracks for a live disk. . . Latest word from the **Bill Ham** organization is they hope to have **Eric Johnson** signed to a major label within 10 days. . . The **Geezinslaw Brothers** and the **Michael James Band** are off on a two-week tour with **Willie Nelson** and **Family**. . . **St. Elmo's Fire** teams with choreographer **James Clouser** to present selections from the rock ballets "Caliban" and "Rasputin" Wednesday through Saturday at Houston's Miller Outdoor Theatre. . . With bad weather holding down crowds, this year's New Orleans Jazz Heritage Festival lost \$75,000. . . *Billboard* plans a Texas-Oklahoma supplement in its Aug. 18 issue. . . While **Mick Jones** was a mixer, **Foreigner's** next LP at Criteria Studios in Miami, a speaking burst into flames. Road manager **Mike McConnell** put it out before any tapes were damaged.

— compiled by Joe Frolik

Allman Brothers LP just short of greatness

By JOE FROLIK
American Statesman Staff

It's not a full return to the band's glory days of the early '70s, but "Enlightened Rouges" (Capricorn) the Allman Brothers Band's reunion album, definitely is a step in the right direction. Their famed two-guitar style is back. Gregg Allman's voice is clearer and stronger than it's been in years and the rhythm section couldn't be tighter.

More importantly, the Brothers seem to have regained the spirit and fire that made them America's premiere rock band before the deaths of Duane Allman and Berry Oakley, vicious in-fighting among the surviving members and drugs caused them to sputter and finally collapse completely in 1976. Unlike the band's last studio album — 1975's embarrassing "Win, Lose or Draw" — "Enlightened Rouges" has a bite to it. The Allmans are hungry again, and they have returned to their roots — southern blues — to satisfy those pangs.

Dickey Betts, who wrote or co-wrote six of the eight songs here, plays his hottest guitar licks in years. His instrumental "Pegasus" is a throwback to "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed," and his blazing tradeoffs with new addition Dan Toler on "Crazy Love" and "Blind Love" are a tonic for tired ears. Betts, however, is not a great singer and really ought to limit his crooning to background vocals and harmonies.

record reviews

Gregg Allman wrote only one tune, "Just Ain't Easy," but this bluesy account of his Hollywood humiliation seethes with emotion and is one of the LP's strongest cuts. In addition to singing well, Gregg sparkles on keyboards throughout.

The band's often overlooked drummers, "Jaimoe" Johnny Johanson and Butch Trucks, are in top form and work beautifully with ABB's other newcomer, bassist David Goldflies.

"Enlightened Rouges" falls just short of being a great album — especially compared with the original lineup's definitive "Live at Fillmore East" — but it's a positive sign the Allman Brothers may yet regain their old form. Which might make the '80s rather interesting.

Other recent releases of note: "Running With the Wind" (Marshall Tucker Band, Warner Brothers)

The Tucker boys' first release for their new label is their most ambitious project yet. The album lacks any of the all-out boogie numbers of their early records, but their complex, layered sound continues to mature and grow more appealing. Lyrically, the themes are familiar — a man's need to

be free to ramble when the urge strikes, the value of good friends of both genders and deep appreciation of the land and rural serenity. Top cuts include "Unto These Hills," "My Best Friend" and the nine-minute title song. Not instantly accessible, this LP grows on you after a few trips to the turntable and your patience will be rewarded.

"Million Mile Reflections" (Charlie Daniels Band, Epic).

New producer John Boylan has helped Charlie D. and his good ole boys make their best album in years. Some of the production is too elaborate — the female background singers on "Jitterbug" are unnecessary — and the themes are rather serious by CDB's standards. But "The Devil Went Down to Georgia" is a hard-driving story song in the band's best tradition and gives Daniels a chance to show off his considerable fiddling skills. Also notable are the bluesy "Blind Man," "Blue Star" and "Reflections," a melancholy ode to rock casualties Elvis Presley, Janis Joplin and Ronnie Van Zant.

"Jerry Lee Lewis" (Elektra).

Recorded in just four days last January, this disk recaptures the raw urgency of vintage '50s rockabilly. "The Killer knows how to rock," Jerry Lee sings in "Rockin' My Life Away," and that's the truth. Pounding his piano and snarling his vocals, Lewis has turned out a delightful record that will have you toe-tapping and singing along before

the first cut is over.

"Blue Kentucky Girl" (Emmylou Harris, Warner Brothers).

This album begins and ends with lively, uptempo numbers — Willie Nelson's "Sister's Coming Home" and Rodney Crowell's "Even Cowgirls Get the Blues." But in between, it's all low-key ballads chosen to showcase Harris' voice, as sweet and pure a country instrument as you will hear. Gram Parson's "Hickory Wind" and the title cut, written by Johnny Mullins, are especially fine recordings. The Hot Band sizzles, especially fiddler Ricky Skaggs, and friends who contribute include Little Feat's Bill Payne, Asleep at the Wheel's Link Davis Jr., Nelson compadre Mickey Raphael, Don Everly, Tanya Tucker, Dolly Parton and Linda Ronstadt.

"Hiding" (Albert Lee, A&M).

Ahern also did a nice job producing this debut LP from Hot Band alum Lee, most recently a member of Eric Clapton's touring group. The multi-talented Lee plays guitar, piano and mandolin and covers a varied collection of country rockers and rock ballads by such writers as Rodney Crowell, the Louvin Brothers, William Martin Cowart and Dire Straits' Mark Knopfler. Albert's not much of a singer, so he wisely gets help from Crowell, Emmylou Harris, Ricky Skaggs and Don Everly. Not a blockbuster by any means, but a pleasant surprise.