

Nice & Ten Years Heavies —But Family Weighs Out

NEW YORK—Music measured out by weight will have to tip the scales against the Family, Reprise group, whose Gothic rock shocks were felt at Fillmore East, Wednesday (10), forming a British alliance of violent, mind-flushing psychedelics with the symphonic fury of the Nice and the chilling guitar of Ten Years After's Alvin Lee.

Peggy Lee Spins Exciting Tales of Life and Love

NEW YORK — The Peggy Lee Revue—or so it seems—opened at the Empire Room in the Waldorf-Astoria, Monday (7), after undergoing a soul transplant that now features the Capitol Records song stylist in a beat-happy Memphis mood.

Polished to the point of spontaneity, Miss Lee unraveled her mini-dramas of life and love, digressing from her moody themes to touch and coax with gentle quips. Reliving her "Fever" classic and singing away the generation gap with "Spinning Wheel," popularized by the Blood, Sweat and Tears rock group, the breathy booster of feminine song also romped through "A Natural Woman" and "All of a Sudden My Heart Sings," both brassy beat tunes from the soul bag, bound to prolong her fine career as a disk and club attraction.

Diana Trask

NEW YORK — The tendrils of country music are everywhere. The Living Room, a small East Side night spot, has imported Dot Records' Diana Trask to give their clientele a stiff dose of modern country music, when they usually get the more allegedly sophisticated performer. Australian-born Miss Trask gives a genuine Nashville touch to "Gentle on My Mind," calls in at the "Harper Valley PTA," renders a soulful "There Goes My Everything," and goes out a rattling "Build Your Love on a Solid Foundation," among others at her opening on Monday. (7)

In the bright, perky performance by Miss Trask one gets the modern country singer—the emphasis is on the songs, cowboy uniforms are out, and straws are for sipping not chewing.

IAN DOVE

The Nice, whose nowhere name belies the darkly subversive organ attack at the hands of the dedicated and demonic Keith Emerson, are, at their best, as instrumentally mesmerizing as any rock heavy in the highly respected rock profession of terrorizing the senses. Cavorting over his organ like a frenetic train engineer squeezing the last licks out of an old boiler, Emerson punished the keyboard (with daggers, to boot!) till the bells and chimes cried out and crashed together. His symphonic speed trips, responsible for the black comedy of Leonard Bernstein's "America," were brooding hymns in the psychedelic church, laughing and stumbling like the classical anarchy in the phantom of the opera. Brian Davison on drums and Lee Jackson on bass assisted brilliantly in the mind destruction, recorded for the discriminating head heavies on the Columbia-distributed Immediate label.

The Family, with all the woes of an embryonic rock group still getting together in a neighborhood garage on Saturday mornings, nevertheless brought to the Fillmore the erratic and frightening voice of Roger Chapman. Shrill as a bagpipe and trembling like the eerie vibrato of an Irish folk chant, Chapman's penetrating wail in "Tapestry of Life" threatened the safety and security of every timid soul. Unfortunately, the quintet soon tumbled into ineptitude, adding insult to injury as Chapman slapped, kicked and finally heaved the microphone stand in a pretentious fit of showmanship. Chapman's alien cry, the group's instrumental diversity, some strong lyrics—and a good dose of discipline—might still salvage the Family for a good run at disk and live success.

As for Ten Years After, Deram group, their reputation as the Cream of the proletariat has quickly rocketed the quartet into the ring of rock elite. Alvin Lee, whose raw-voiced guitar blues is distinct from—but just as distinguished as—the super-slick psychedelics of guitar master Eric Clapton, is easily one of the very best rock guitarists. Bassist Leo Lyons is by far the most flamboyant member of his breed, while Chick Churchill on organ and Ric Lee on drums are an extra measure of pleasure for this most popular of English rock groups.

ED OCHS

J. J. Walker in A Moving Set

Signings

RCA signed a young progressive blues group called the **Deirdre-Wilson Tabac**. The first single, produced by **Sonny Casella**, couples "The Other Side of Life" and "Look In My Face."

... **Neon**, a rock group, has signed with Columbia. **John Hill**, Columbia a&r man, will produce the group. ... **Kenstella** to Decca with her debut single, "I Wanna Spend My Whole Life Loving You," produced by Decca's **John Walsh**. ... **Ray Bloch**, conductor on the "Ed Sullivan Show," has signed with Ambassador Records. ... Bay Sound Records in Baltimore has recently signed **Brenda Key**, **Herb Alonzo**, **Tommy Brown** and **Nicky C. & the Chateaux**. ... **Singer Lee Dresser** to Amos Records. ... **Roy Hamilton** has signed with the Bell-distributed AGP label and debuts with "Dark End of the Street." ... **Narvel Felts** has signed with Celebrity Circle Records.

Irish Rovers Doing Their Tour Thing

NEW YORK — The Irish Rovers, Decca group, are on a 17-day one-nighter tour of Western Canada and the U. S.

The group is due in Los Angeles April 29 for a schedule of recording dates under the direction of Bud Dant, Decca's West Coast a&r chief.

Ochs Shatters Establishments, Audience in a Swinging Act

NEW YORK — Phil Ochs, probably the finest protest singer around, brought his program of disillusionment, cynicism and revolt to a packed Carnegie Hall on April 4 and the effect was shattering.

Ochs' performance was punctuated by frequent applause from his youthful audience as he delivered his potent antiwar and antiestablishment lyrics.

The A&M artist delivered his material in almost chronological order beginning with pre-protest numbers, such as "Power and Glory" and "Hills of West Virginia," but the mood soon changed as he turned to biting material from his Elektra days, including "I Ain't Marching Anymore" and "Here's to the State of Mississippi." He updated the latter to add President Richard Nixon and the Rev. Billy Graham to his targets.

But there was a tender, dramatic quality to this early material also as he delivered "The Highwayman" and "There But for Fortune." "I've Got Something to Say, Sir" had strong appeal, especially to student dissidents.

His A&M material also provided some of his finest moments, especially the ragtime "Outside of a Small Circle of

Hello People Elephants: 3

NEW YORK—The Hello People acts, had a highly successful set Saturday (5). The Philips group, well as did their superior music, were the unit's first Fillmore East

Gary LeMel, New Capitol Artist, Holds Playboys

LOS ANGELES — Vocalist Gary LeMel, presently working the Playboy club circuit, belongs to the Mel Torme finger snapping fraternity.

With a six-song set, he is able to interest and hold an audience comprised mostly of tourists and visiting firemen. While at the local Playboy club, LeMel has been running down songs of a contemporary nature such as "Hold On, I'm Coming," "California Dreaming," "I've Gotta Be Me," "If You Go Away" and "Abraham Martin and John."

The shift into contemporary songs has not hurt the former jazz bassist turned pop tenor. LeMel played bass for six years, including a stint with Anita O'Day, and has only been singing professionally since 1964. His recent signing with Capitol should help introduce his excellent voice to mass audiences.

ELIOT TIEGEL

a pointed song of disillusionment. "Doesn't Lenny Live Here Anymore" was another good number from the album.

Ochs, who possesses one of the best of folk voices, accompanied himself mainly on guitar although he turned to piano for a couple of numbers. His cynical comments between selections also were telling.

He also turned the stage over to two prominent Yippie leaders, but soon resumed his singing after the microphones were temporarily turned off. He resumed with David Blue's "All Quiet on the Western Front" with Yippie Jerry Rubin holding the lyrics. Ochs is a disturbing performer who makes his audience think. In this, he's truly unique.

FRED KIRBY

Aquarius Theater Slates Concerts

LOS ANGELES—The Aquarius Theater, home of the Coast production of "Hair," is setting up concerts for its traditional dark night, Mondays. The Neighbors of Watts have rented the facility for a concert April 28 with a number of major acts

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