

Shuman— songs of cynicism

Mort Shuman. Mort Shuman. Philips (PHS 700-005). Brooklyn-born songwriter Mort Shuman has written for singers like Dion and the Belmonts, Elvis Presley, Manfred Mann and Janis Joplin. He is now in France and writing marvelous songs.

Shuman's style is similar to Jacques Brel's—cynical. He has re-recorded his album into English, but it loses nothing in the translation. The song's lyrics are just as cutting and sobering.

"Mister Lee" is about Robert E. Lee and his love for the South before he's defeated and left floating face up in a swamp. "Brooklyn by the Sea" looks back at Shuman's Jewish Heritage. The destruction of Europe by World War II's bombing and fighting is examined in "The Western Shore." "It Can Happen" and "Black Beaudelaire" are equally good.

*** Larry Goober

Made in Japan, Deep Purple, Warner Brothers; and *Bill Withers Live at Carnegie Hall*, Bill Withers, Sussex.

The overwhelming number of "live" and in concert albums in recent months has, for the most part, been a great disappointment.

Most of them are unfortunately badly-reproduced and lack polish. Nor do they make up for this lack in spontaneity, which is the whole idea behind the "live concept." Instead, they come across as shoddy efforts at production, with little or no

interest—Greatest Hits albums without shine.

A case in point is Deep Purple's latest, *Made in Japan*. A tinny unimpressive work, it occupies four dismal sides with longish lukewarm renditions of old, gold favorites—everything from "Highway Star" to "Smoke on the Water."

Nor is their concert deportment exciting. They plod their way through the concert with minimal interest. It's difficult to see how the audience



Rahsaan Roland Kirk

stayed awake at the concert—and they saw it "live".

On the other end of the "in concert" spectrum, however is Bill Withers' *In Concert at Carnegie Hall*. A truly interesting album which combines pater with platters, and manages to keep them in good order. The recording quality is good, as is Withers' performance.

The most interesting part of the album is Withers' interaction with the audience, as he leads in to numbers which draw enthusiastic, appreciative response. His transition between numbers like "Use Me" and "Grandma's Hands" make the two-record set a vibrant, shockingly good piece of work.

*** Jim Gray

The Art of Rahsaan Roland Kirk, The Atlantic Years. Rahsaan Roland Kirk. Atlantic (SD 2-303). The best way to describe Rahsaan Roland Kirk is a quote from the album jacket of this two-record set. "Rahsaan Roland Kirk plays tenor sax, stritch, manzello, B Flat and E Flat clarinets, flute, balck puzzle flute, black mystery pipes, harmonium, piccolo, English horn, flexafone, clavietta, whistle, bass drum, thunder-sheet, sock cymbal, bells, music box, palms, tympani, gong and applies the use of bird sounds.

The man is confusing, impulsive, erratic, but most of all, extremely talented.

Kirk was one of jazz's first avant-garde musicians, and never reached the acceptance that later jazzmen did. But musically his influence on the avant-garde jazz scene is extremely important.

The collection housed in the Atlantic package consists of previously released recordings by Kirk, but since jazz musicians (contrary to pop musicians) rarely have hit singles, it's not a package of Greatest Hits.

To fully appreciate Kirk, one has to see him perform with three sixes stuffed in to his bulging mouth, playing all of them at once, because Kirk is a theatrical showman as well as a jazz musician. But if you can't see him, this double album offers the next best thing...seeing him with your ears.

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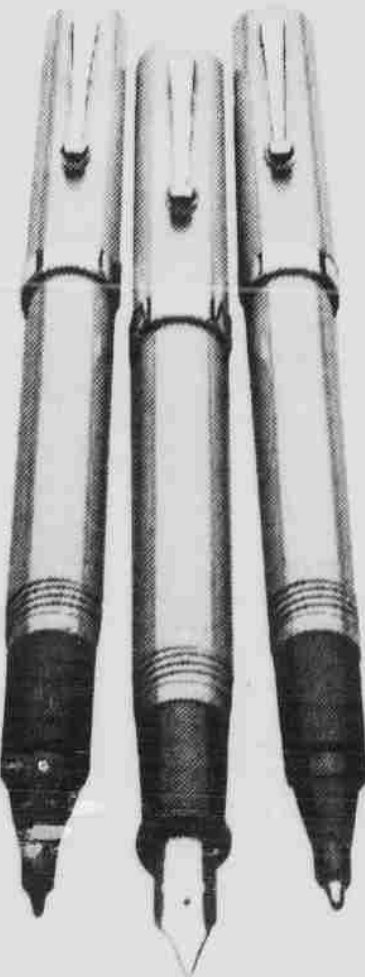
Pershing to host The Guess Who

Canadian rock group, The Guess Who, will appear in a Fillmore style concert at Pershing Auditorium Thursday, May 17 at 8 p.m. The group includes Burton Cummings on piano and vocals, Bill Wallace on bass, Don McDougall on guitar, Garry Peterson on drums and Kurt Winter on guitar. The Guess Who's latest album is *Artificial Paradise*.

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