

On Reflection

ON REFLECTION

The newsletter
of *The APEX*

Vol. II, Issue 3
April 1990

INSIDE:

Relayer.....p. 2
ABWH.....p. 3
Market Value.....p. 4
Barngrover/Light.p. 5
Echoes.....p. 6
Marillion.....p. 7

"Music hath caught
a higher pace than
any virtue that I
know. It is the arch-
reformer; it hastens
the sun to its setting;
it invites him to his
rising; it is the sweet-
est reproach, a
measured satire."

—Henry David
Thoreau

Happy the fan who discovers Happy the Man

For those who have yet to do so, now is the time to get into the very best American progressive group ever, Happy the Man. Any number of fruitless attempts to procure their three rare LPs can be discharged to the past as a new CD collection is now in fairly good distribution.

Titled *Retrospective* (and originally announced in *OR*, 8/89), the CD boasts 15 tracks and a running time of over 70 minutes. The sound quality is excellent and the booklet tells all anyone could ever want to know about the band and the music, both of which went unjustly unnoticed.

I myself am rather new to Happy the Man and rather than forge any pretense of having exclusive information, I will base the facts presented in this article on the extensive liner notes written by *San Diego Union* music critic, George Varga.

The roots of Happy the Man can be traced back to 1972 when guitarist Stanley Whitaker, who was playing a gig at a U.S. Army base in West Germany, met and jammed with soldier/bassist Rick Kennell. As Varga put it, "The two discovered a shared affinity for Yes, Genesis, Gentle Giant and other seminal progressive rock bands whose music Happy the Man used as the inspiration for its own, equally adventurous work."

Whitaker moved to Harrisonburg, VA. Kennell put him in touch with drummer Mike Beck and singer Cliff Fortney, who also relocated to Harrisonburg. Soon Kit Watkins (keyboards, flute, recorder, marimba) and Frank Wyatt (keyboards, sax, flute) were added to the lineup. And upon his discharge in 1974, Kennell also joined the fledgling band and Happy the Man

was born. Their influences put out *Relayer*, *Lamb Lies Down*, and *Power and the Glory* that same year.

Fortney left as the band began amassing a wealth of instrumental material. HTM relocated to Washington, DC in 1975 and built a strong local following, even attracting the interest of the recently-bandless Peter Gabriel, who spent a day and an evening jamming with the band and considered hiring them to support him.

In 1976, Arista signed the band to a five-year, multi-album deal. The label naturally urged them to perform some vocal material and Whitaker reluctantly took on the additional role of singer. Their first two



The final lineup, l-r: Stan Whitaker, Kit Watkins, Coco Roussel, Rick Kennell, and Frank Wyatt.

Relayer

ABWH PERFORM AT ARISTA BENEFIT

Arista Records celebrated its 15th anniversary recently with a benefit concert billed as the largest single event to raise money for people with AIDS. Anderson, Bruford, Wakeman, Howe was among the many performers who appeared.

The concert, dubbed "That's What Friends are For," was filmed for broadcast sometime in April on CBS. More than \$2 million was raised; proceeds go to the Gay Men's Health Crisis and other AIDS organizations.

MOODIES SOLO CDS

Polygram Records has just released on CD some of the solo albums by members of the Moody Blues. These include Justin Hayward, *Night Flight*; Graeme Edge, *Kick Off Your Muddy Boots*; Michael Pinder (where has he been?), *The Promise*; and Ray Thomas, *From Mighty Oaks*.

RENAISSANCE COMPILATION

Sire Records will release a new CD compilation of Renaissance's music on March 27 called *Tales of 1001 Nights, Vols. 1 & 2*. I assume it will be a 2-CD set and will most likely include the full "Scheherazade."

CANTERBURY TALES

Writes APEX member Greg Katona:

My main reason for writing to you this time is that I've had my mind completely blown by some old progressive music that's entirely new to me. If you're already familiar with these, please forgive my ignorance.

The band I'm referring to is Hatfield and the North, three-quarters of which became National Health. I've been a Health nut for years but somehow missed out on Hatfield. Both of their albums (now thankfully on CD) are classics and the CDs have extra tracks. It's like discovering unreleased National Health. If you already own these you know what I mean.

Also on the Canterbury front, I finally purchased a copy of *Two Rainbows Daily* by Alan Gowen (ex-Health, Gilgamesh) and Hugh Hopper (ex-Soft Machine, In Cahoots). It was the second to last album made by Gowen before his untimely death. If you're familiar with his work you know how beautiful this album is—absolutely exquisite, timeless music.

Does anyone have any information on the band In Cahoots, the most recent in a long line of great Canterbury groups? Their lineup consists of Phil Miller, Hugh Hopper, Pip Pyle, Elton Dean, and Steve Franklin. I've heard they've been touring in Europe.

SWEDISH SOUNDS

I received a letter and flyer from a Swedish progressive group called Isildurs Bane. They have just released their fifth album, *Cheval: volonte de rocher*, on their own Isildur Records.

According to their letter, "The music is a tribute to the curious postman Ferdinand Cheval, who built a stone palace in his garden with his own hands." He worked for over 30 years on it, as the townspeople watched on, believing him insane. In the 1920's, shortly before his death, he became recognized and praised by the French surrealists.

The letter further states, "The music combines the power and drama of Isildurs Bane with the acoustic and dynamic sound of a chamber orchestra. The album is all instrumental...[and] is available on LP (6 tracks) and CD (8 tracks). The prices are set in Swedish kronors and does not include freight costs."

The price of the LP is 35 SEK, and the CD is 55 SEK. Their previous albums, available only as LP, are *Sagan om den irlandska algen*, *Sea Reflections*, *Eight Moments of Eternity*, and *Sagan om Ringen*. All are 35 SEK.

To order, or for more information, write to Isildur Records, Box 164, 310 40 Harplinge, SWEDEN. Telephone number is 46-35-108609. They say they'd love to hear from progressive fans around the world.

On Reflection is published monthly by the Aficionados of Progressive Excellence (APEX).

P.O. Box 661
Cambridge, MA 02140

Editor/Publisher:
Jason M. Rubin

SPECIAL THANKS: Mark Margerum, Greg Katona, Frank Jarvis, Mark Doomkey, Michael Newman, Mitchell Ragone, and Laura and Jolie.

©1990 The Rubisher. All Rights Reserved.

RATES

BACK ISSUES

• \$2.00 each

SUBSCRIPTIONS

• \$18.00 - U.S.
(incl. Hawaii and PR)
• \$23.00 - International
(incl. Canada)

CLASSIFIED ADS

• \$5.00 per 80 words
• \$12.00 - 3 placements

DISPLAY ADS

• 1-1/2"x3" - \$6.00
• 10.00 - two placements
• 3"x3" - \$10.00
• \$18.00 - two placements
• Will quote on special sizes and placements.

"There's no such thing as art without craft; it's impossible, you might as well go down to the beach, pick up a shell and declare it art, you won't find anything more beautiful. If art is that easy, nature does it better."
— Roger Dean

ABWH: Already Been (Wonderfully) Heard

So many thoughts, dangling down from the spools of my senses. So soon after my second ABWH show, on the second leg of their U.S. tour, just seconds, it seems, from the last ovation thrust upon the artists who have brought so much joy and feeling into my life for so long.

The show? It was unbelievable, impressive, spectacular—just what I expected. The show? It was the same damn show they played last summer, *minus one song*, same songs, same order—not what I expected at all. The show was amazing. The show was a disappointment.

I hadn't wondered about the show too much beforehand, but a few obvious questions introduced themselves to me the afternoon of March 20 as I waited impatiently at work for the stubborn hours to give way to showtime. First, would they open the show the same way, with Jon's enigmatic medley of "Time and a Word" (appropriate), "Owner of a Lonely Heart" (pointless), and "Teakbois" (forgivable); then Steve's never-a-surprise combo of "The Clap" and "Mood for a Day;" then Rick's more original and truly impressive solo spot; climaxing with Bruford, Levin and the rest of the band doing "Long Distance Runaround," shifting into the opening riffs of "Heart of the Sunrise," and finishing off with my favorite reason for having working ears—a Bruford percussion solo?

In a word, yes.

Second, would they play any chestnuts from the archives that remained unopened last summer, like "Perpetual Change," "Siberian Khattru," "Yours is No Disgrace" (a very popular number, I'm led to understand), or songs that are pre-Howe and Wakeman or post-Bruford? Even though there were whispers that "Sweet Dreams" had been played elsewhere, and even though Jon mouthed an obligatory "Soon, oh soon the light" and "Nous sommes du soleil" at the end of the

"Disillusion" section of the show—closing "Starship Trooper," the answer was a resounding no.

And finally, would there be new songs that we haven't heard before, or perhaps the undeservingly unreleased (on album) "Vultures in the City?" Again, no.

Therein lies the disappointment. It was certainly not in the spirit of progressivism to be a live jukebox with the same tunes in it. But there were a number of moments that made the night magical and in retrospect, I will probably think back on this concert not as a major disappointment but just as an opportunity to play back the original splendor of the first time last summer. Like pulling out a familiar album and reliving the thrills that made it so special when it was first played.

For one, Howe was in much better form than last summer. His solo spot, predictable as it was, nevertheless clearly demonstrated that his poetic grace with an acoustic guitar is not only still intact, but ever evolving. There were two-minute-or-so instrumental introductions to both "Clap" and "Mood," involving flamenco flourishes and nimble fretboard work that were welcome additions to the other more obvious selections. During "Mood," Howe strolled around the front of the stage, looking relaxed, seeming to know that many a young guitarist spent an entire summer learning to play the tune he was now performing so effortlessly, extending a line here, adding a frill there.

Howe also stood out on "And You and I," "Brother of Mine," and, of course, "Starship Trooper." Having been lost in the mix of the album and appearing to take a back seat to Wakeman last summer, it was truly refreshing to hear Howe being more assertive.

Following the introductory suite, the band did "Birthright," "And You and I," "Themes," the Bruford/

Levin jam, and "Close to the Edge," followed by a 15-minute intermission. The Bruford/Levin jam, to me, is the highlight of the whole ABWH phenomenon. When they pair up, either in their duet or as the rhythm section within other songs, they are not really of the Yes/ABWH continuum; rather, they become a King Crimson execution within an overall Yes framework. This is a fusion of two classic progressive traditions that has no more successful precedent. As such, it becomes an explosive experience that provides the most fireworks of the whole show.

Bruford and Levin don't just get up there and do their practiced thing. Sure, there is an organization and a structure to their duet, but the outlines are filled in with experiment and discovery, new timbres and combinations, and changing tempos. Now it's jazz, now it's funk. And yet throughout, it is excellence sought and excellence attained.

Following the intermission, Jon spake his love, peace, and spiritual energy sermon and proceeded into "The Meeting," with pretty piano by Wakeman. That song is overwhelmed by "Brother of Mine," a rare case of the first single being the best realized tune of a new album. That was followed by "Heart of the Sunrise," in my book the best Yessong to play for a live performance. The song commands such a powerful energy of sound and movement, that it is all one can muster to actually applaud and express with two palms how thankful one feels to have been riding the crest of the sound waves.

Then, the band leaves the stage and there is time for one last prayer that there will be something other than "Roundabout" and "Starship Trooper" for my twenty-five dollars. Alas, "Roundabout" begins. And even though it was the best "Roundabout" I have ever heard (recorded version included)—thanks

continued p.7

Market Value

HELP!

From the "various artists" albums *Fire in Harmony*, *Exposure*, and *Double Exposure*, can someone help me locate LPs (if available in the U.S.) by the following:

Pendragon
Haze
Trilogy
Solstice
Isthar
Heimdal
Airspeed
Abel Ganz
Weirdstone
Egdon Heath
Coltsfoot
Pharaoh
Twice Bitten
Comedy of Errors

Also—does Galadriel have more than one album? Did Pallas release anything after *The Wedge*? Is there a third album by Sagrado?

Please contact:

Mark Doomkey
P.O. Box 160742
Sacramento, CA 95816
(916) 452-9081

FOR SALE:

Import CDs, \$20.00 each:

Mike Oldfield, *Earth Moving*;
Hawkwind, *Collection*; Residents, *Live in Holland*; Waters/Geesin, *Music for the Body*; VDGG, *Still Life*; Amenophis, *You and I*; Cocteau Twins, *Tiny Dynamine*; Roy Harper, *Flashes from Archives of Oblivion*; Dead Can Dance, *Dead Can Dance*; Steve Hillage, *Motivation Radio*; Banco, *Io Sono Nato Libero*.

Add \$2.00 postage per order. Buy with confidence—I've been advertising in national publications since 1985. Satisfaction guaranteed.

Rick Melchionno
4015 Carousel Way
Chesapeake Beach, MD 20732
(301) 855-7162

YES MAGAZINE is the ultimate Yes fan publication. Each issue is packed with exclusive news, interviews, and photos. You won't find this Yes coverage anywhere else. Recently, YES MAGAZINE subscribers got a very special extra - a private listening party in the studio with Trevor Rabin. Subscribers got to meet Trevor and preview his new album. If you're not getting YES MAGAZINE, you're missing the most complete Yes, YESH!, and Yes related news coverage anywhere, not to mention some VERY EXCLUSIVE YES MAGAZINE merchandise that just \$19.95 in the U.S. and \$19.95 elsewhere. Please make checks or money orders payable in U.S. funds only. YES MAGAZINE, 12 Chestnut Place, Dix Hills, NY 11746-5414. Be sure to add a permanent home and a return address. We cannot deliver to airport addresses.



"YES Magazine is quite marvelous!" -Jon Anderson
"The best YES fan magazine worldwide!" -ROCKLINE
Listed in the ABWH Tour Program, and in the ABWH per-per-view special!



The Yes fan magazine for all good people

P.O. Box 85, University Station
Syracuse, NY 13210

\$3.50 CURRENT ISSUE
\$5.00 OUTSIDE THE U.S.

\$13.50 ONE YEAR SUBSCRIPTION (4 ISSUES)
\$16.50 ONE YEAR SUBSCRIPTION OUTSIDE THE U.S.

PROGRESSIVE
MUSIC FROM
AROUND THE
WORLD ON CD!



Atoll, Banco, Barclay James, Can, Eno, Flairck, Focus, Gentle Giant, Gong, Hackett, Hatfield @ the North, Japan, King Crimson, Magma, Manfred Mann, Marillion, PFM, Yes, plus many others!

ROUND SOUNDS
419 N. Pacific Coast Highway
Redondo Beach, CA 90277
(213) 372-3477 fax: (213) 316-1902

ZNR RECORDS
P.O. Box 58040
Louisville, KY 40258
(502) 933-0783 (after 8pm EST Sun.)

Progressive music by mail order.
1,000s of LPs in stock, from
Atoll to Zappa and everywhere
in between! Good prices.

WANT LISTS RESEARCHED
"Famous Guarantee" - money
back if you don't like the music!

Barngrover/Light: Lots of guts, some glory

Talk about taking risks. A new album by a new group on an independent label—and it's a *concept* album! So while the reviewer is getting a feel for the group and its elements, and the album and its elements, there is that other variable, the concept, that has to succeed as well.

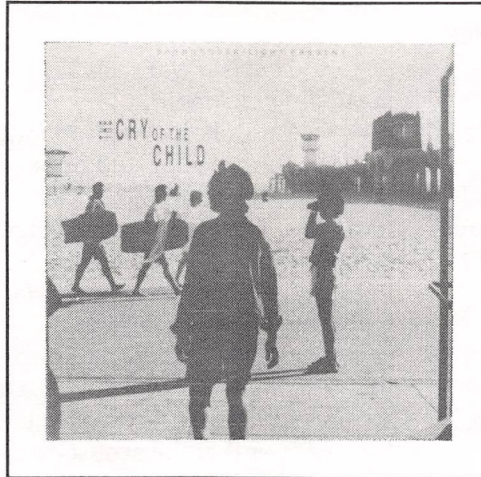
For *The Cry of the Child*, by Barngrover/Light, I would give a cautious thumbs up and a strong curiosity to hear their next project, *Living on the Outside*, which is slated to be released "shortly" on the California-based CRS Records.

First, the strengths of *The Cry of the Child*. The most obvious one is the guitar work of Robert Barngrover. Claiming the influences of Clapton and Hendrix, Barngrover demonstrates both feeling and technique. His solos are well-crafted and communicate the emotions of the main character while clearly serving the needs of the music.

Another strength is the overall tightness of the band, more impressive considering that much of the album was recorded live to 24 tracks with a minimum of overdubs. Guest saxophonist Jerry King contributes some notable solos and colors.

The band itself features Barngrover on 6 and 12-string electric and acoustic guitars, synth and vocals; Steve Light on piano, keyboards, acoustic guitars and vocals; Jerry Lohr on bass; and Tom Barile on drums. In addition to King on sax, there is guest work by Grant Cermak and Dorothy Collins on vocals, and Greg Davis on harp.

The concept itself is as follows: Our Hero leaves his parents' house, in which he had lived uninspired and without adequate recognition, in search of his destiny. He looks to Hollywood but can't get inside. Frustrated by feelings of inadequacy and unable to find a niche, he is left on the street pondering his struggle. He receives a gift,



the Bible, from an old man, and eventually begins to read it. From the word of God and the story and teachings of Jesus Christ, he finds not the answer but the question. He doesn't meet the destination, but he finds peace in knowing where lies the path.

The concept looks good on paper, as the idiom goes, but actually stumbles on the lyric page. Even with the benefit of a written narrative that provides a diary-page summation of the concept (like Gabriel did in *The Lamb Lies Down on Broadway*), the story doesn't flow smoothly; you get it in snapshots rather than a film strip. Granted, masterpieces like *Tommy* and *Quadrophenia* don't read as well as they are performed, but the lyrics and the story overall seem underdeveloped. Who is this guy? Could there have been another event somewhere between Hollywood and

the streets? Why had religion been missing and what suddenly made it so meaningful to him?

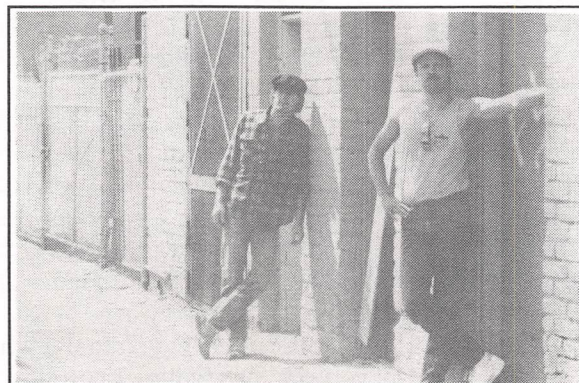
Overall, I would give an A for effort. If progressive rock is a mix of brains and balls, then the latter is definitely here. The former is here, too, but needs to be either applied to single cohesive subjects, song by song, or else just tightened up to carry a full album's relating of an idea.

The vocals are very reminiscent of Lou Reed, not just the timbre but the delivery as well.

I'm a big fan of Reed but such a vocal style seems rather disjointed with the music, though certainly not with the concept.

To sum up, *The Cry of the Child* is recommended on a number of levels, most notably the guitar work. I really think Robert Barngrover is a major unknown talent. Perhaps the APEX can do something about that.

The album, on LP or cassette formats, is available from CRS for \$11.00, postage included. To order, or for more information, write to Michael J. Newman, President, CRS Records, 2619A England, Huntington Beach, CA 92648. ☺



Steve Light (left), and Robert Barngrover.

Echoes

ON THE SIDE OF THE CONSUMER

My rebuttal to Stephen Roberts.

I've never looked gratuitously for so-called "dated" keyboard instruments, nor are they all I'm looking for. In the wealth of "new" music I have heard countless groups and to me, it is extremely difficult to find a musical element I've never heard before. Hearing Adrian Belew's *Desire Caught by the Tail* in 1987, I was struck with how the second track, "The Laughing Man," resembled the synthesized timbres on "Maxwell's Silver Hammer," recorded back in 1969 by the Beatles.

What I'm saying is this: many groups supposedly on the cutting edge are really reiterating the rock lexicon of the psychedelic '60s. There is nothing wrong with this but for record companies, small or large, to proclaim that artists can use psychedelic elements to be "futuristic" and that art rock is "outdated '70s music," smacks of hypocrisy.

Mr. Roberts is being patronizing when he says "try some new things," assuming I am the one who is being addressed. I know how stultified and mindless contemporary rock FM radio is, so innovative artists can't get through. But I also know if you allow someone to sell you something simply because it's new and different, then you must have superficial values and deserve to be taken.

Mr. Roberts' concept of supporting new acts, even if you think they're mediocre, is pure salesmanship. No consumer ever had an obligation to an artist, starving or otherwise. If a band decides to specifically market itself as heavy metal or progressive, it is probably too banal for yours truly. If, however, they have a vision like Adrian Belew's *Desire* or Peter Gabriel's "Family and the Fishing Net," then the content is more powerful than an irrelevant "progressive" label would do justice to.

That is how to market music—with content.

Mr. Roberts seems to forget that the '80s are gone and he is incorrect to assume I am a '70s nostalgist. I just felt that the Feigenbaum notion—that 15-minute numbers, operatic vocals and Hammond/mellotron keyboards are necessarily nostalgic musical characteristics—is completely unsound. To use an analogy, Robert Fripp once told *Guitar Player* that the acoustic guitar was "an anachronism, in no way a contemporary form of expression." That was in 1974. Today he teaches and performs on acoustic guitar. Whatever he would say if confronted with the dichotomy in attitudes, the fact remains that the acoustic guitar continues to be used. So does the wah-wah pedal.

To say "nobody does that anymore" will forever limit people's forms of expression from actually expanding. I never declared that orchestral use of keyboards or 15-minute song suites were a formula progressive rock should follow; I'm saying that the opinion that 10 years of denying such concepts could produce any musical innovation smacks of stupidity and narrow-mindedness.

The people who have participated in this debate really have something to sell. As a consumer, I have to be caught by something. Saying "you should check out these new bands" is like telling a lawyer to study Einstein or Bertrand Russell. What if I don't care?

If I'm asked what I have to sell, it is simply this: after 20 years of being heavily involved in rock music, I've actually found greater opposition to variants in image and style now than ever before. I've also theorized that the emphasis on "new" enslaves the Do-It-Yourself artist to the whims of corporations willing to produce

only the banal. "You shouldn't like the mellotron or the Maestro Phaser; not because you are incapable of producing new music with them, but because we don't have any for sale." Pure economics pretending to be artistic values.

I will not support things new just because they are new. I will support things I know or feel imaginative and stimulating. New bands interested in exploring 15-minute suites should know that an audience exists that is conducive to such music, hidden in dark places that propagandists and rock critics never frequent. If said critics claim such '90s bands are reiterating the values of the '70s, remember that opposing values can now be consigned to the '80s, a decade valuing minimalism pointing to disintegration. Do you want to go that way again? I don't, but I can only speak for my ears.

Frank Jarvis
Geneva, IL

SURVEY

You're in a record store and looking at a record you've never seen, heard, or heard of before. Being a record collector, you would be willing to buy the record anyway, if certain conditions were met. Rate the following in terms of how important each is in your decision-making. 1 is most important and 4 is least important.

- Cover art
- Instrumentation
- Length (or number) of songs
- A familiar name (as a musician, producer, etc.)

Marillion: news and review

by Mark Margerum

[This article is part concert review and part general Marillion news.]

PARADISE ROCK CLUB, BOSTON, MA, FEBRUARY 7, 1990— From the opening notes of "King of Sunset Town," the mood was set for an excellent night of music that can only be described as *Marillion*. The crowd was extremely receptive to the band, even though the Boston rock club was passed by on the *Clutching at Straws* tour, reportedly due to Fish's love of the bottle.

Steve Hogarth, Fish's replacement as frontman, was quick to thank the crowd for such a warm welcome and for making him feel at home in the band. It is hard to imagine Marillion without Fish, but Hogarth proved himself to be a first-rate singer and showman.

After dedicating "Script for a Jester's Tear" to the crowd, the band

launched into a string of old favorites and new classics such as "Slainte Mhath," "Warm Wet Circles," "Season's End," "Uninvited Guest," "Incommunicado," "Berlin," and the Marillion signature tune, "Kayleigh." Steve Rothery's guitar work was as sharp as ever. In my opinion, the best guitar players are named Steve: Rothery, Howe, Vai, Morse, Hackett, and Vaughn [...and Hillage! Ed.]. Maybe Fripp's middle name is Steve!

The band sounded great and Pete, Ian and Mark really accented each other perfectly. The highlights in my ears were "Easter" and "After Me" from *Season's End* and "Warm Wet Circles" from *Clutching at Straws*.

All in all, it was a memorable concert and Marillion fans once again proved that they are the best fans in

the world. The Paradise was full of friendly fans of a band that deserves such an ardent group of followers.



Other news....The day after the above-described Marillion show, the band appeared on an MTV news segment. Apparently, they played a huge outdoor festival in Brazil with less dignified acts such as Bon Jovi, Tears for Fears and the Eurythmics. Steve Hogarth was interviewed during the spot.

Also, Fish's long-awaited first solo album has been released. It is called *Vigil in a Wilderness of Mirrors* and it is on EMI as an import CD. It's a great album, featuring a beautiful track called "Gentleman's Excuse Me," which has lovely pianos and orchestra arrangements. ☺

ABWH cont.

to the backup guitarist whose only useful function on this earth is to allow Howe to play acoustic through the whole first part of the song—it is still "Roundabout." And "Starship Trooper" ends the night, two hours and forty-five minutes later, as I knew it would.

When I got home, I looked through my records, trying to decide which selection I should take with me to my dreams. A Yes album? Or Crimson? Normally, I would choose one of those, but on this night not even Gentle Giant could satisfy what I had been craving. I needed a surprise, something unexpected, something I hadn't heard before or wasn't very familiar with. I chose U.K.'s *Danger Money*, which I have owned for ten years and probably haven't played in eight. It was great. ☺

ANDERSON BRUFORD WAINEMAN HOWE



Happy the Man continued

albums were produced by Ken Scott, who had worked on albums by the Mahavishnu Orchestra, David Bowie, and Supertramp.

Happy the Man was released in 1977, after which they toured the U.S., opening for artists such as Japanese synthesist/percussionist Stomu Yamashta, Renaissance, and Gato Barbieri. Beck left later that year and was replaced by Ron Riddle, who only stayed long enough to record *Crafty Hands* in 1978. Riddle was replaced by Coco Rousset.

Arista dropped the band after *Crafty Hands* for the usual reasons—lack of airplay, sales, and commercial appeal. In February, 1979, a demo tape was recorded in the hopes of getting a new record deal. Unable to attract offers during the late '70s record industry slump,

the band folded that year.

After appearing briefly in Camel, Kit Watkins formed his own label, Azimuth Records, in 1980. Azimuth released his first two solo albums, *Frames of Mind* and *Labyrinth*, and, in 1983, *Happy the Man 3rd: "Better late..."*, which was the demo tape recorded in 1979.

The first two HTM albums were released on CD in 1989 by the BMG Victor label in Japan. Two other CDs are pending from the WMAS label in the U.S. The first will be a collection of early, pre-Arista tracks, and the other (apparently just released) will be the third album.

This brings us back to the beginning of this article and the compilation *Retrospective*. The CD is on the ESD (East Side Digital) label, which has also released two more

recent Kit Watkins albums, *In Time* and *Azure*. Of the 15 tracks, only one has vocals. The others demonstrate the incredible ability of Happy the Man as musicians. You'll hear keyboards that are both elegant and playful, fluid and searing guitar lines, odd time signatures and masterly-executed changes. In short, it's a delight and an important discovery for the uninitiated.

If you can't find the CD anywhere, try writing to the label—East Side Digital, 200 North Third Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55401. The catalog number is ESD 80292. ☺

Happy The Man is surely not the only band whose music has transcended time, but it may well be the first whose time has transcended music.

Today, a full 10 years after this critically acclaimed Virginia quintet's demise, interest in Happy The Man's music is approaching an unprecedented high, as befits a band whose music still sounds ahead of its time.

The APEX

P.O. Box 661

Cambridge, MA 02140

We know progressive music when we hear it!