

dears. All of side one is a glowing tribute to that prowess, but "Parasite" is the one that shot through me initially.

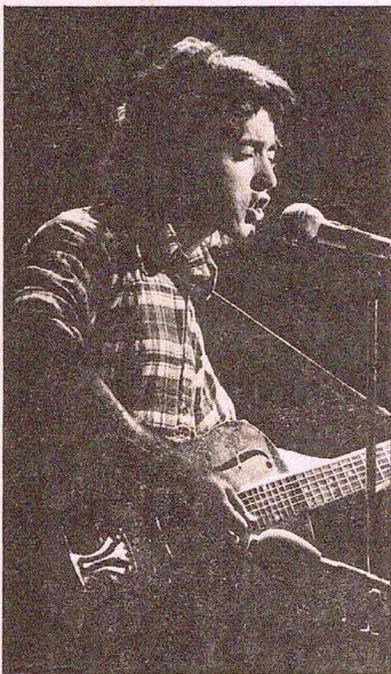
Of course, what really makes it all hang together is the solid wall of bass, drums, and razor sharp rhythm. Paul Stanley grinds out the chords with expertise and purpose. It's a welcome flashback to the days before everyone wanted to be Eric Clapton or nothing, and it proves that rhythm guitar work is neither dull nor doomed to be forever in the background. All it takes is enough imagination and skill to make it stand out. And of course, cooking along nicely and precisely together are drummer Peter Criss and bassist Gene Simmons, a heavy yet miraculously fluid duo. Relentless might be a good adjective to throw in at this point . . .

Side One is the winner, a dazzling collection of rockers, most notable among them the aforementioned "Parasite," "Hotter Than Hell," and "Rock and Roll, Let Me Go" which is really getting back to basics. I dare you to sit still.

The second side suffers for two reasons: a) because after side one anything would be anticlimactic, especially more of the same, and b) the songs aren't as much fun.

And I have more reservations. But why grouse? I don't get a chance to say good things very often, so I'll be generous. Give it three chances. If after that you still don't feel anything but deaf, there's always your kid brother. But mind that you wrap it in brown paper first.

Cynthia Dagnal



Mike Putland

Rory jars the spleen one more time.

**RORY GALLAGHER**  
Irish Tour '74 . . .  
(Polydor)

Well, I've been playing this thing for about 3 days now, thinking of every conceivable way to say as many good things as I can about it 'cause I've always been fond of Rory, but

damn it, he sure did make it hard.

Here, watch me go out on this limb a minute: *EVERY DOUBLE LIVE ALBUM EVER MADE, SHOULD COME WITH TABLETS OF NO-DOZE JAMMED INTO THE SPINDLE HOLES.* Allman Bros. fans may submit their death threats to me c/o this magazine.

Rory's an entertainer as well as performer, something one picks up occasionally after more than a few endless, spleen-jarring tours of everywhere. I think another reason I'm fond of him is because he has the sheer audacity to entertain and perform in these days of Halloween/summer stock/rectal rock by just showing up on stage with his guitar and band and a head full of alcohol and *great God yes*, singing and playing.

There's enough material here to maybe stretch it across 2 satisfactory sides, but to stretch it across 4 leaves enough holes to run a moderately large locomotive through and just drag the existing entertainment down. One such hole is the fact that side four is "various after hours jam sessions." Another term for this might be "studio." Why the hell couldn't they do it on a stage with one of those adoring hometown audiences?

Well, it's true. A sizable amount of time on this particular set would answer the dreams of any insomniac. However, the whole album doesn't deserve to be written off. "Cradle Rock," the strongest and opening piece, is a fine showcase for Rory and his band, a bared-teeth rocker with some scorching slide and a frenzied, characteristically Gallagher pull-em-up ending punctuated with well-placed hysterical screams guaranteed to crank the boogieometer up more than a few notches.

Ah well, Rory professes a preference to cut every third album or so live, so let's hope in the next couple years he'll be delivering to us the nice, live, high energy boot in the ass he owes us.

Clyde Hadlock



Elvis jars nothing, but he sure can move product.

**ELVIS**  
Having Fun With Elvis On Stage  
(RCA)

I really don't believe this album exists — who the hell else would have the balls to put out 37:06 minutes of out-takes from live recordings, bill it as "a talking album only" and charge money for it???

However Elvis and his fans are laws unto themselves and apparently exist in the sort of universe where not only is this sort of thing not a rip-off, but actually gobbled up by the

faithful.

Now Elvis is no Will Rogers, and his raps are not particularly fascinating, except of course to those who want every word ever uttered, every drop of sweat, every scarf . . . etc., etc.

The high point of side one (other than a two or three minute straight-forward reminiscence about his early career) is when a chick demands "Gimmie a scarf!" — in the same kind of urgency usually associated with phrases like "This is a stickup," or "Want a woman, honky?"

Thruout both sides there are a couple of running "gags" (which eventually make you gag); one is a song intro where Elvis intones, "Wellllll . . . well, well, well well—" as guitars follow his line and chicks scream. His average remark is along the line of — "Why you screaming— I ain't even done nothing yet?" Pretty snappy, right?

The other recurring event is a song cue "You know what I can't do?" (Piano, drum riff) — followed by something like, "Remember what the next song is for one thing."

However Elvis does show his humble sincerity when on three different occasions at three different locations, he tells the audience "You're one of the best we ever played for."

Many scarves are given away (each punctuated with a rim shot)— kisses bestowed, and karate leaps leapt.

Actually I have nothing against this record, the people who want to buy it will treasure it I'm sure — I'm just bugged that I had to waste half an hour listening to the damn thing looking for sparks of interest. Cold as ashes.

Tony Glover



**NEIL MERRYWEATHER**  
Space Rangers  
(Mercury)

**RUSH**  
(Mercury)

First, there was English rock 'n roll! Then, there was Southern blues! Now, from Mercury Records, those swell folks who brought you Bachman-Turner Overdrive, we have Canadian heavy metal.

Canadian heavy metal? Maybe it hasn't reached epidemic proportions as yet, but so far, it looks like BTO might very well become the Allman Brothers of the frozen north. They took Canadian heavy metal out of the closet. Now, Mercury is digging up some fresh blood.

Yes. I can hear it now. In a dingy tenement slum, just two miles from that shiny new skyscraper you always see on the labels of Mercury's albums, the president of the company is having a meeting with all his A&R men. "The world *wants* Canadian heavy metal, I tell you!" he tells them. "I can feel it in my corns." If Clive Davis would've had those corns, he'd still be president of Columbia. "We gave them BTO and they loved it! So now we give them the old one-two. Hit 'em high and low. Something old and something new. If they buy it, we'll resign Uriah Heep and dress up Ken Hensley like Burton Cummings. It can't fail! It just can't fail!"

"Look," says one guy. "I know just the group. A friend of mine went to a party once and talked to somebody who used to work with this other dude who balled this chick who said she caught the clap from a dynamite Canadian heavy metal band."

"What a rush," somebody mutters.  
 "Sign 'em up," says the Prez.  
 "Wait a second," says somebody else. "I got another one. You know what I read the other day? Remember that guy who used to back up that foxy blonde chick with the big tits in Penthouse?"

"Yea. Yea."  
 "Well, he's from Canada."  
 "No shit!"  
 "Great," Prez says. "Sign them up, too. I want some product on the market by tomorrow morning at nine o'clock - sharp."  
 The hordes of A&R men scurry off in every direction. One group hops in a cab and drives to Los Angeles. The other packs up a dogsled with an inflatable igloo and three copies of Jack London's *Call Of The Wild* and set off across the frozen tundra, fighting blizzards all the way, asking eskimos if they've ever heard a good Canadian heavy metal band. Finally, they find one named Rush and haul ass back to Chicago, getting into the president's office fifteen minutes late. The other group is already there with a test pressing of *Space Rangers* by Neil Merryweather.

"You're fifteen minutes late," says the Prez.  
 "Yea. We know," answers an A&R man. "We got attacked by a pack of hungry wolves. We jettisoned Tommy and made a run for it and luckily, we got away."

"It's too bad we had to give them poor old Tom," another remarks.  
 "Well," the prez declares, "send his widow a Rod Stewart anthology, any Uriah Heep cut-outs we have laying around, and have Johnson forge Jerry Lee Lewis' autograph on one of his London sessions albums and send that along, too. If she takes it hard, just tell her we'll put a minute of silence on the next Bachman-Turner album. Now, let's hear that album."

They put the album on the turntable and turn the volume up to 8.7 on the Richter Scale. The groups sounds really hot. Classic three man heavy metal that distorts no matter how low you play it. Lead singer sounds close enough to Robert Plant to get called an imitator, but has enough of his own style to get away with it. Down to earth lyrics: none of this progressive shit. Tapes mixed so you really can't tell if that rhythm is an over-dubbed guitar or a bass. After only one song, all the flights have been grounded at O'Hare Airport and parts of Minneapolis are reduced

to rubble. The governor calls out the National Guard to prevent looting. The bomb squad knocks on the office door and asks the Mercury execs to please turn volume down while they evacuate the women and children.

"Okay," says the president. "They make it. What's their name?"

"It was such a rush to get here," one A&Rer confides, "we didn't even have time to think one up."

"Well, hurry it up," the prez commands, "Now, let's hear the other one."

Neil Merryweather's album is slapped on the turntable. They turn the volume down a little bit because somebody's got relatives in Toledo. The music comes on and it's weird, spacial shit. If Superman and Green Lantern ever got a group together, and they were

really into Pink Floyd, this is what it would sound like. Merryweather is really into Stanley Kubrick type sounds. He does the weirdest versions ever of "Sunshine Superman" and "Eight Miles High." Lots of heavy metal guitars and wah-wahs and fuzz tones and synthesizers. Look for Neil Merryweather in Dell Comics. Everybody knows it's good when NASA calls to say it's classified and the Pentagon offers to produce it.

"Yea," says the prez. "Get these down to the wax factory *ex post hasto*. Then get back here pronto. I've got another idea. Bahamian Rhythm & Blues," he says dreamily. "Bahamian Rhythm & Blues."

As the A&R men leave, the president is unlacing his shoes.

Jim Esposito

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