

# Records



**The Hudson Brothers**

Remember when every album you bought came with a poster covered with photos of the group engaged in all manner of exciting pastimes — like eating and sleeping? Well with the Hudson Brothers' *Ba Fa* it's 1968 all over again. In fact from a distance of more than five feet, the poster in this LP is indistinguishable from that in the Beatles' white album. The Hudsons have been trying to sound like the Beatles for years, so I suppose it's only natural that they should begin looking like them.

This record really never should have been pressed. Several songs manage to rise above general mediocrity to genuine awfulness, and most sound like parodies of such diverse talents as Herman's Hermits, Bruce Springsteen and the Miracles.

*Ba Fa*  
*The Hudson Brothers*  
*Rocket*

11/17/75

Elton John's lyricist Bernie Taupin has done an adequate job of production, but he had virtually nothing with which to work. Almost anything would have been better than this.

— Steve Alcorn

Herbie Mann and Stevie Wonder. At her first visit to the Montreux Jazz Festival several seasons ago, Bobbi was described as the "surprise hit" of the event by critic Leonard Feather.

But the fact is, Bobbi Humphrey really had very little to do with the making of *Fancy Dancer*. She wrote none of the songs, there are almost no vocals, and at times her flutework, while highly competent, has been mixed to near-inaudibility.

The album features some exceptional piano playing, super-clean orchestration and tight production values, combined in a thoroughly pleasant blend of jazz and R & B. For the most part it seems to be the work of producer Larry Mizell and arranger Fonce Mizell. Why not give credit where it is due?

—Steve Alcorn

11/24/75  
*Fancy Dancer*  
*Bobbi Humphrey*  
*Blue Note*

Bobbi Humphrey has long been receiving major attention in progressive jazz circles, in part because she is a woman making inroads into the male-dominated field of jazz. She has performed with Duke Ellington, Cannonball Adderley,



**Bobbi Humphrey**

# RECORDS

10/6/75

*Neil Sedaka*  
*The Hungry Years*  
*Rocket Records*



Neil Sedaka

There was a time when rock music stood on its own, unembellished by orchestra or chorale. But some ambitious producer looked upon it and said "let there be strings," and there were strings. And horns, and flutes, and harps, timpani, . . .

The overall effect often results in obscuring the basic song

structure. Happily, this is not the case with Neil Sedaka's *The Hungry Years*, where tasty string and horn arrangements by Artie Butler and surprisingly, Richard Carpenter complement eleven new Sedaka-penned tunes including the title cut.

Sedaka, who had a trio of hits from his last album, scores two obvious choices for singles this time around with "Baby Blue" and "Bad Blood," a catchy number with suspiciously familiar back up vocals. Elton can't resist lending a hand on his protege's project! *The Hungry Years* proves to be a very successful outing for Sedaka for there really isn't a bad cut on the

album. If Neil has had his years, his worries should be enough to fill a belly.

— Steve

10/20/75

*Connie Eaton*  
*Connie Eaton*  
*ABC*



Connie Eaton

A relative newcomer to the country music field, Connie Eaton presents a pleasant blend of Easy Listening and Country sounds on her second album. This LP should appeal to fans of such diverse artists as the Carpenters and Lynn Anderson.

Light on the slide guitar and highlighted by some of the best arrangements in recent memory, the album begins with the single "If I Knew Enough To Come Out Of The Rain" and proceeds through ten pleasantly mellow cuts.

While the lyrics are at times weak, Ms. Eaton's voice — a blend of Olivia Newton John and Toni Tennille — more than makes up for them. In fact, the album's only flaw may be the too-sweet renditions of a few of the record's several "heartbreakers."

It's a pity this album will probably do better on the country circuit. It would be welcome relief in the Middle-of-the-Road wasteland.

— Steve Alcorn

1/3/75

# RECORDS



Andrew Gold

---

---

*Andrew Gold*  
*Andrew Gold*  
*Asylum*

---

---

Andrew Gold sounds like  
. . . well, like just about every

male vocalist you've ever hear. In fact, on first listen, most music enthusiasts could name ten or twelve singers who Andrew Gold might be. Strangely, this vocal anonymity leads not to a predictably dull album, but to a dazzling collection of nine tunes, widely varied in style and perfectly complemented by a variety of vocal approaches.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of Andrew Gold is that the vocalist also plays almost every instrument — drums, bass, guitar, piano, organ and percussion. Typical of one-man bands, the LP's tracks are clean and uncluttered, but unlike other solo efforts (Emitt Rhodes' *Mirror* for instance) there is a tremendous diversity of sound.

One song smacks strongly of the Byrds, the next could be an early Beatles tune. Here are rock and pop, blues and country, blended masterfully into one of the most enjoyable productions of the year.

—Steve Alcorn

1/26/76

# Records

*City Of Angeles*  
*The Miracles*  
*Motown*

The Miracles' new "City of Angeles," promoted as an R&B "Rock Opera," bears little resemblance to anything half so coherent. At its best it sounds like The Miracles parodying Santana, and at its worst it comes across as Alice Cooper parodying Alice Cooper.

According to the album's "libretto," which turns out to be a verbal description of the plot, the story is that of a young man named Michael who comes to Los Angeles and become a musical superstar. Anyone who can find even a trace of this story in the songs' lyrics deserves a position in the CIA's secret code division. In fact one entire song out of the ten is entirely about L.A. gay bars, a subject not even mentioned in the "libretto."

The album has its moments, including a magnificently orchestrated overture and "Charlotte", a slow ballad about Michael's ill-fated lover (according to the "libretto"). But several other fine R&B numbers are spoiled by their lack of relation to the story. Had the best of these songs been assembled without pretense of the "storybook concept" it would have meant a sure best-seller.

—Steve Alcorn

2/23/76

*Who's to Bless and*  
*Who's to Blame*  
*Kris Kristofferson*  
*Monument*

Kris Kristofferson, who has to his credit several fine albums, has aptly titled his latest offering from Monument Records

*Who's to Bless and Who's to Blame?* Many will want an answer to the latter part of that question. But this album certainly is a monument — at least to wasted vinyl.

The main problem here is that, with only two exceptions, the entire record blends into one long, boring Country and Western twang-fest. "Easy, Come On," Kris' latest single, would be a decent song if only his voice were in better form. The album's best cut, "Rocket to Stardom," is an amusing diversion and lends some light to an otherwise dreary disaster.

The recording itself cannot be faulted, but poor production values, the total absence of

orchestration, and an overall lack of imagination leave *Who's to Bless and Who's to Blame?* looking for a scapegoat.

— Linda McBride &  
Steve Alcorn