

Rat A Tat Tat AMERICA!

1. Sammy Marshall & the Party Crashers: **ROCK AND ROLL BOOGIE BEAT** (John Koproski, Jr.; from Silver 106)
2. Rodd Rogers: **DREAMS OF LOVE** (Phil Carroll; from MSR TM-2972)
3. Stan Beard & the "Swinging Strings": **SNOBOWS** (Eleanor Gless & Sandy Stanton; from Abbey 1211)
4. Rodd Keith: **LET'S GO SAVAGE YOU AND I** (Bob Davis; from Preview 1151)
5. Bill Joy: **BORED CAN'T COPE WANT OUT** (Mary Wisniewski; from MSR 2422)
6. Kay Weaver: **ASTROUNIVERSE** (James Wilson, Jr.; from Columbine LP CRH-289)
7. artist uncredited: **PINCH ME** (Robert Madden; from Halmark 750749)
8. Dick Kent: **ONE SOUL LOVE** (Julius Ganious; from MSR 828)
9. Norm Burns & Singers: **WOW WE WOW** (John Ferguson & Lew Tobin; from Sterling 446)
10. Rodd Keith: **MY PIPE YELLOW DREAM** (Helen Secre; from Preview 1342)
11. The Real Pros: **IT'S YOU, CHEROKEE LOU** (Marvin Utter; from Cinema 7412)
12. Rick Kershaw: **FLYING INFORMATION** (Robert J. Bales, Jr.; from Columbine LP NST-35)
13. Randy Rudolph: **HO, I GOT TO FIND YOU BABY** (Leon Davis; from Preview 1522)
14. Teri & The MSR Singers: **I'VE FOUND MY TRUE LOVE** (John Kelly IV; from MSR LP 210)
15. Milford Perkins: **THE DUCK EGG WALK** (James A. Means; from Preview LP 241)
16. William LeBlanc: **A HALL OF FAME AWARD** (John J. Turk; from Hollywood Artists LP HAR-51)
17. artist uncredited: **THIS WORLD IS IN A HELL OF A FIX** (Alma N. Bonds; from Halmark OV-446)
18. The Real Pros: **RAIN ON THE ROOF** (Georgiana Vunk; from Cinema 7325)
19. Dick Kent: **RAT A TAT TAT, AMERICA** (Florence Timm; from MSR 2240)
20. Stich Stampfel & The "Singing Strings": **IF I COULD ONLY SEE YOUR FACE**
(Hermann Stampfel; from Action 1138)
21. Nita Craig: **I HAVE A NUMBER** (Vern Morehouse; from Preview 1341)
22. Rave-Ons: **A MELLOW SWEET SIXTEEN** (John Byrd; from Columbine LP CRH-14)
23. The Real Pros: **TEENAGE QUEEN** (Frederick Herrick; from Cinema 7201)
24. Milford Perkins: **AMTRACK EAGLE** (James Wilson, Jr.; from Preview LP 240)
25. Gary Roberts & The Five Stars: **MINNI-HA-CHA** (Donnie Smith & Lew Tobin;
from Sterling 679)
26. Teri Summers & The Librettos: **SEASON'S GREETINGS** (Raymond Moberly;
from MSR LP 209)
27. Teri & The Librettos: **THE EVENING IS APPROACHING** (A. Pilipiak; from MSR LP 207)

Also in the
MSR Madness series:

**THE BEAT OF
THE TRAPS**

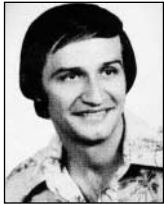
**THE MAKERS OF
SMOOTH MUSIC**

**THE HUMAN
BREAKDOWN
OF ABSURDITY**

**I'M JUST THE
OTHER WOMAN**

**I LIKE YELLOW
THINGS**





IF I COULD ONLY SEE YOUR FACE. Gottscherisch is an obscure Germanic dialect spoken in the southeastern Slovenia district of Gottschee. Although this song is in English all the way, some of Hermann “Stich”

Stampfel’s (▼) other lyrics were originally written in Gottscherisch, then translated to English before being dumped into the song-poem gristmill. Stich recorded his own vocal for “If I Could Only See Your Face,” then sent the tape to Sandy Stanton, who applied his patented “Singing Strings” overdub (“O.D.”) treatment.

I HAVE A NUMBER. If you think you detect the uncredited hand of Rodd here, you are not mistaken. Nita Craig was his girlfriend and musical *protégée*.

A MELLOW SWEET SIXTEEN. The Rave-Ons were the house band on Columbine’s earliest few albums, but were soon canned due to customer complaints. It’s hard to imagine what fault anyone could find with them, though. Who wouldn’t thrill to have his or her song performed by a group that makes the first rehearsal of a junior-high garage band sound harmonious by comparison, sung by a large-yngitic vocalist who laughs in the middle of it?



COLUMBINE CRH-14, FEATURING THE RAVE-ONS

ROCK AND ROLL BOOGIE BEAT. Like its flipside “Twist And Turn,” which led off *The Human Breakdown Of Absurdity* (MSR Madness, volume 3), this upbeat party-styler from 1961 is practically begging to jump-start our little hoedown. Silver Records was the vanity label of Cleveland song-poet John Koproski, Jr., who sent his hot-rockin’ and always-fine little babies off to be birthed at the Globe Recording Studio in Nashville.

DREAMS OF LOVE. Nothing cute or weird going on here, just a perfect soul-pop ballad delivered with majestic grace and power. Rodd’s slide upward into the final falsetto note is particularly sublime. This is song-poet Phil Carroll’s (▲) *fourth* time out on MSR Madness. He previously checked in with “Watch Johnny Carson,” “Yippee Hippee” and “I Take A Fancy To Nancy,” and there are plenty more P.C. gems still to go around.

SNOBOWS. Stan Beard is believed to be a *nom de song-poem* of Sandy Stanton, the founder

of the Film City studio and label and one of the true *characters* of the song-poem game. The “hook” to this lovely number about the aurora borealis is when the rhythm of the Chamberlin’s human manipulator inadvertently runs counter to the instrument’s built-in beat box.

LET’S GO SAVAGE YOU AND I. Gauguin went native in Tahiti. Rodd Keith goes native in the American West.

BORED CAN’T COPE WANT OUT. An excellent period piece, although evidence that Rodd, who was several years’ dead by the time this one was cut, was song-poem music’s one true keyboard genius.

ASTROUNIVERSE. James Wilson, Jr., Thomas Guygax’s only rival as Song-Poet King, often comes up with words that sound like words yet aren’t words. We find him here in the midst of his physics phase, an especially fertile era. Despite a slight fissure in the line about the Qualbyzmatrons, this is one of Kay Weaver’s (►) best vocal performances.



PINCH ME. Halmark's sound is cheap even by song-poem standards. They didn't even make their own recordings, instead simply adding new vocals to recycled music beds. It doesn't take long for the Halmark fan to become familiar with all their tracks, but the fun is in the surprise, as each new lyric careens headlong into the same old music.

ONE SOUL LOVE. One of the things song-poem music does best is freeze-frame a trendy moment in pop culture history. Dick Kent, one of the most reliably enthusiastic of the studio singers, is a perfect choice to take on a lyric of this sort.

WOW WE WOW. The flip to "Human Breakdown Of Absurdity." Love that Sterling Records guitar sound! Their reverb is nothing to sneeze at, either.

MY PIPE YELLOW DREAM. Once again we find Rodd working within the confines of conventional pop structure, yet not contenting himself with a mere readymade. It's a cryin' shame he was never given a crack at the actual record charts — in a just popworld, he would've burned 'em up.

IT'S YOU, CHEROKEE LOU. Every record on L.A.'s Cinema label was credited to The Real Pros. Although Cinema and its cousin Command Performance were separate entities from Preview and MSR, all drew from the same talent pool. The lead Real Pro on this outing is unmistakably Dick Kent.

FLYING INFORMATION. The title is a clever pun on "flying in formation"; the lyric a rare example of a song-poem that was written with tongue knowingly in cheek. Robert J. Bales, Jr., is another in a long line of top-notch song-poets from the Chicago area.

SANDY STANTON, PEERING OUT FROM BEHIND THE ELECTRIC HARMONICA



perfect complement to Del Casher's stinging guitar style. Song-poet John Kelly, also responsible for "City Hospital's Patients," "The Saddest Story" and "Cloud Nine," is one of the best. This is the *sixth* song compiled from MSR 210, *Variety Songs For '69*, clearly the greatest original song-poem album of 'em all.

HO, I GOT TO FIND YOU BABY. I don't know who Randy Rudolph is, but he sure was one soul love.

I'VE FOUND MY TRUE LOVE. Teri Summers' taut, driving vocal presents a

THE DUCK EGG WALK. This one goes out to all those who thought "Betsy And Her Goat" was the most ludicrous song they ever heard.

A HALL OF FAME AWARD. I'm too lazy to look up whether John J. Turk really did return his Ohio University Hall of Fame Award or not, but his explanation set to a hip-hop beat sure *sounds* believable.

THIS WORLD IS IN A HELL OF A FIX. Halmark favored an overwrought brand of light opera, which when contrasted with the relatively prosaic lyrics they usually handled could lead to some interesting effects.

RAIN ON THE ROOF. The Real Pro this time is Bobbi Blake, with Rodd Keith on answer vocals. Rodd's sympathetic arrangement perfectly captures the atmosphere of Georgiana Vunk's delicate words.

RAT A TAT TAT, AMERICA. I seem to recall another song that used woodpeckers as a metaphor for America's Bicentennial. Oh, no — the song I'm thinking of used robins, and they were a metaphor for love. Never mind.

YOU NEVER KNOW

by Phil Milstein

AS WITH RADIO WHEN IT'S REALLY CLICKIN', the essential ingredient that separates song-poem music from all others is that of surprise: when you put one on, you just never know what you're gonna find. An exquisite listening experience might well be hiding behind the plainest of titles.

While it's clear at a glance that *something* strange is gonna turn up under titles such as "It's You, Cherokee Lou" or "Astro-universe," there's only one way to discover that a song with as innocuous a name as "I've Found My True Love" is in fact a brittle, driving pop-rocker, that "A Hall Of Fame Award" is a wild ride



through one man's childhood custody battle, or that "Teenage Queen" is a crude beatbox/melodica delight. You can only tune in to the true essence of song-poem music by tuning out your preconceptions of what you might find there. Because when it comes to this kind of gunk, you just never know.

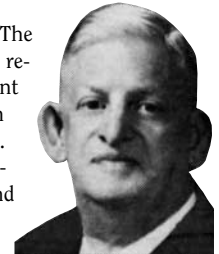
TEENAGE QUEEN. This Cinema release harkens back to an early '60s sound, making its abrupt reference to pot that much more jarring.

AMTRACK EAGLE. With *I Like Yellow Things*, the predecessor to the present volume, we introduced to the song-poem-loving public both the writing of James Wilson, Jr, and the singing of Milford Perkins. "Amtrack Eagle" is where these talented fellas meet each other, resulting in a song that wraps several of its smooth, slippery tentacles around you while others give you a nice, relaxing massage.

MINNI-HA-CHA. You might think we put this on here only to show off Gary Roberts's funny mispronunciation of "Kawliga." But if you did, you'd be wrong ... *dead* wrong. The flip to this is entitled "Oh Dear Daddy, Take My Hand And Hold It Tight."

SEASON'S GREETINGS. The only known song-poem recorded in *three* different versions, all found on various MSR albums. MSR guaranteed customer satisfaction, and song-poet Raymond Moberly (▶) was apparently one hard-to-satisfy customer. For my money it's the sleigh bells that best draw out the song's latent virtues, and thus would have guessed that the version heard here, the only one on which they appear, would have been the one he finally approved of. In fact, though, it was the earliest of the three.

THE EVENING IS APPROACHING. We end with our second consecutive vocal by the great Teri Summers. This mournful song always reminds me of Bobby Marchan's version of "There's Something On Your Mind (Pt. 2)," although in this one nobody dies. A discovery of the brilliant dream-artist Jim Shaw.



Producer: PHIL MILSTEIN | Cover art: RICK ALTERGOTT | Rerecording engineer: ERIK LINDGREN | Disc art: CHARLES BURNS | Digital mastering: ALAN LOWE ARCHIVING | THANKS TO: Barry Alfonso, Rick Altergott, Tom Ardolino, Don Bolles, Byron Coley, Nicholas Cudahy, Lili Dwight, Ellery Eskelin, Richard Franke, Aram Heller, Reed Lappin, Erik Lindgren, Ethel Milstein, Bob Purse, Jim Shaw and Gregg Turkington.

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