

BUSTIN' OUT OF L SEVEN — Rick James — Gordy/Motown G7-984R1 — Producers: Rick James and Art Stewart — List: 7.98

On the heels of his platinum-selling debut album last year, Rick James has returned with a rapid-fire, piercing R&B/disco effort on "Bustin' Out." James, who plays guitar, sings, composes and co-produces on this LP, has developed into a very assured, confident artist who unleashes a crunching, furious-paced workout on the album's several dance numbers. However, James is not limited to performing raucous upbeat songs, as witnessed by his aching, synthesizer-laden ballad, "Spacey Love."

NATURAL ACT — Kris Kristofferson & Rita Coolidge — A&M SP-4690 — Producer: David Anderle — List: 7.98

The latest duet album by this husband & wife team is a varied, engaging package of tender ballads, pleasant medium-tempo tunes and brisk rock numbers. The twosome have become adept at harmonizing together, so most of the songs here work well and provide enjoyable pop/MOR listening. One of the keys to this LP's success is the good choice of material, featuring compositions by Billy Swan, Stephen Bruton, Kristofferson and others.

BREATHLESS — Camel — Arista AB 4206 — Producers: Camel and Mick Glossop — List: 7.98

"Breathless" is an album of such beauty and vision that it's almost aurally tangible when it cascades out of the speakers. Cut for cut, Camel offers an unflinchingly smooth musical majesty which is heads and shoulders above any number of other bands meandering around the nebulous world of progressive-rock. Hats off to the group members for delivering an uncompromisingly polished gem of an album which could emerge as an AOR fave for several months to come.

NOTHING IS SACRED — The Godz — Casablanca NBLP 7134 — Producer: Eric Moore — List: 7.98

On its second album, The Godz has concocted a potent collection of storm-trooping rock 'n' roll that should appeal not only to teenyboppers but to hard-rock fans in general. The Godz employs a typical assortment of guitar-rock licks, but what makes this LP special is that the quartet injects its own colorful personality into the material. Standout cuts include "Gotta Muv," "Rock Yer Sox Auf" and "He's A Fool." For AOR formats.

ALL MOD CONS — The Jam — Polydor PD-1-6188 — Producer: Vic Coppersmith-Heaven — List: 7.98

Although the Jam is one of the top selling and most respected rock bands in England, the trio has yet to break through in America. However, this should change with "All Mod Cons," the Jam's most innovative and compelling effort to date. The group has considerably refined its hard-rock formula on the album, adding sophisticated instrumental and vocal textures while still retaining its kinetic rock 'n' roll style. The LP's best song is "Down In The Tube Station At Midnight," a bonafide classic.

CATCH ONE — Tony Wilson — Bearsville BRK 6985 — Producers: Ron Albert and Howard Albert — List: 7.98

After a successful stint as a key member of Hot Chocolate, British-based artist Tony Wilson is launching a solo career on Bearsville. Already a hit album in Europe, "Catch One" invitingly blends together traces of American pop, disco and British-style rock for a delightful formula. Wilson possesses a catchy, distinctive voice, and he is backed here by several top studio musicians. Top cuts include the single "Try Love," plus "Africa" and "New Orleans Music."

BILLY BURNETTE — Polydor PD-1-6187 — Producer: Chips Moman — List: 7.98

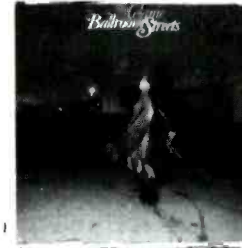
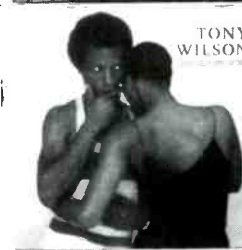
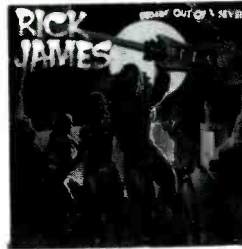
The son of famed rockabilly artist Johnny Burnette, Billy Burnette on his debut album has emerged with a country-rock effort that displays his southern rock 'n' roll roots. Burnette, who wrote or co-wrote the material here, is clearly influenced by the country works of Eric Clapton and Bob Dylan, plus the pop-rock harmonies of Fleetwood Mac. Featuring the backup support of several top southern musicians, this LP includes the upbeat single, "Shoo-Be-Doo."

BALLROOM STREETS — Melanie — Tomato TOM-2-9003 — Producer: Peter Schekeryk — List: 9.98

This two-record set marks Melanie's debut on Tomato Records. "Ballroom Streets" is an elaborate, beautifully packaged album which not only introduces several new Melanie compositions, but contains new renditions of "Brand New Key" and "Candles In The Rain." The LP was recorded live in the studio, using very few overdubs, so the entire set has a very spontaneous, spirited feel to it. Includes the single, "Running After Love."

THE INSIDE STORY — Robben Ford — Elektra 6E-169 — Producer: Steve Cropper — List: 7.98

Ford has played guitar beside Joni Mitchell and Tom Scott in a number of successful ensemble projects and is a respected mainstay in the L.A. session scene. And everybody knows who Steve Cropper is. Their combined efforts make this second solo album a very enjoyable offering of unencumbered fusion, blues and pop styles. A great multi-format record, "The Inside Story" both typifies and ennobles the L.A. sound.



MADAM BUTTERFLY — Tavares — Capitol SW-11874 — Producer: Bobby Martin — List: 7.98

With its eighth album, the five Tavares brothers continue to exhibit the versatile lead and harmony vocals, the crisp arrangements and strong selection of material that has made the group among the top in its R&B/disco/pop field. "Madam Butterfly" is equally divided between infectious dance numbers and tender ballads, and spotlights such first-rate tracks as the single "Never Had A Love Like This Before," "Straight From Your Heart" and the title cut.

MOMENT BY MOMENT — Original Soundtrack — RSO RS-1-3040 — Producer: Various — List: 7.98

Lee Holdridge's lyrical main theme is one of the better recommendations of RSO's latest film offering. This soundtrack album offers five versions of that theme, the finest being Yvonne Elliman's vocal treatment on the LP's single release, and John Klemmer's several sax solos. The remainder of this album is mostly MOR and includes tunes by Michael Franks, Dan Hill, Stephen Bishop and 10cc.

NO MEAN CITY — Nazareth — A&M SP 4751 — Producer: Manny Charlton — List: 7.98

This could probably be the first Nazareth album that incorporates texture and subtlety into the musical proceedings. The addition of erstwhile sensational Alex Harvey Band lead guitarist Zal Cleminson might have something to do with why the total sound and feel of "No Mean City" is less heavy-duty industrial strength rock and roll and even less uni-leveled metallic drone. A natch for AOR acceptance, with at least three possible singles lurking around to boot.

INSTANT FUNK — Salsoul SA 8513 — Producer: Bunny Sigler — List: 7.98

Instant Funk is an energetic new disco/R&B configuration which ably executes tight, pulsing dance tracks and sparkling soul ballads. An invigorating cross between Brothers Johnson-style R&B/disco and Philadelphia soul, this album showcases the arresting lead vocals of James Carmichael and the jumping rhythms of bassist Raymond Earl and drummer Scotty Miller. Best cuts here are "Crying," "Never Let It Go Away" and "I'll Be Doggone."

HE WHO IS WITHOUT FUNK CAST THE FIRST STONE — Joe Tex — Dial/TK 6100 — Producer: Buddy Killen — List: 7.98

Dancin', stompin' Joe Tex is back with his typically charismatic collection of funky dancefloor gems. Throughout most of the album, Tex audaciously shouts and wails his way through such riotous upbeat tunes as "Loose Caboose" and "How Do You Spell Relief." But the singer/composer also demonstrates that he has a more passionate, intimate side, delivering a subtly-powerful performance on "If You Don't Want The Man." A consistently entertaining outing.

BIGHORN — Columbia JC 35618 — Producer: Martin Shaer — List: 7.98

The Northwest's growing reputation as an important music market is further enhanced by this Seattle quintet's debut album. Good piano chops, a great rock and roll lead vocalist, and inspired, if a little too pretentious, writing mark this balanced pop sound rock collection as a sure winner with teens weaned on Elton John or Styx. If this act delivers in concert as well as it does on this record, watch out.

MEDUSA — Columbia JC 35357 — Producers: Skip Drinkwater, John Lee and Gerry Brown — List: 7.98

Medusa is a unique eight-piece outfit which combines an interesting vocal-based, R&B-flavored style with the flamboyant guitar pyrotechnics of a Boston. Cheryl Alexander and Eric Tagg competently handle the group's vocal duties, but the most exciting aspect of the band is Medusa's fiery guitar work and the keyboard passages of James Batton. Suited to AOR formats, with possible R&B potential.

A LA CARTE — Triumvirat — Capitol ST-11862 — Producer: Jurgen Fritz — List: 7.98

Germany's Triumvirat has apparently abandoned its ELP-tainted concept album stance which garnered the band a considerable cult following with its "Spartacus" LP four years ago. In place of its erstwhile keyboard/drum/guitar bombast we now find the band leaning heavily into a slick pop-rock format liberally laced with full-bodied brass overdubs; the end result being instantly more accessible to a potential mass audience.

INTRODUCING DANNY JOHNSON — First American FA 7717 — Producer: Archie Russell — List: 7.98

Formerly a vocalist with the Chi-Lites, Danny Johnson's solo debut effort provides plenty of evidence that this singer is an expert at producing romantic, neoclassical soul recordings. Johnson predominantly utilizes his falsetto voice on the LP, sweetly and stirringly singing such numbers as "Taking My Love For Granted," "Dreamin' Again" and "I Might As Well Forget Loving You." For R&B and possibly disco airplay.