

Teagarden & Van Winkle

Music review

Tony Reay

1968

And here we have a new album! Recorded right here in the Motor City before your very eyes and with living audience reaction.

Teagarden and Van Winkle, as many of you may know, consists entirely of two people who play organ and drums and occasionally drawl and sometimes sing. They do all of these things simultaneously and very well, as this album ably demonstrates.

Side one opens with another of those announcers' "Ladies and gentlemen—our hosts for this evening" etc., and then tumbles into "Big City"—a kind of easygoing, down-around, John Sebastian style country blues thing that is just nice and peaceful on the top and nice and peaceful on the bottom too. No deep lyrics—no dope connotations—just good groovy music. Why, you can even dance to it!

After some wild type audience reaction, including WABX's Jerry Lubin's huge voice sounding like a Brooklyn Rasputin, the boys take the same tempo and throw it into "Can't Get Enough of Your Love." And then—right in the middle, from nowhere comes this huge organ. Wow! like a cavern of sound, it rolls and keeps rolling 'til suddenly there it is—gone -and back to the Davy Crockett drawl and the calm swinging.

"Scarborough Fair Canticle" is, and always was, a very beautiful song and it is a measure of how well Skip and Dave have played it to say that one can listen to it without remembering the words. The recording comes over very ghostly and eerie with only a breath of tasteful organ improvisation in the middle. A total of eight minutes and ten seconds of well arranged playing and a good way to end side one.

Side Two opens with more genuine applause leading into "Woman Child." Somewhat more up-tempo, this number has again that piercing organ sound that made Jimmy Smith famous and it should do the same for Skip.

"All Right Mama" is also up-tempo And, what is this, a drum solo? Many people are under the impression that the faster the drummer plays—the better drummer he is (the same people also apply the same rule to guitarists), whereas it is actually harder to play slowly, around the beat than to just play fast, with the beat. Dave Teagarden is a good drummer.

Side Two closes with "Bring It On Home." I really find it difficult to describe this cut except to say that it moves, up-tempo, down-tempo, even across-tempo, and it moved so well that the audience demanded an encore, so they gave 'em one—"Bring It On Home, Part 2." Side Two closes with wild applause and frantic coughing by someone.

I find this album good. I find it amazing, in that the sounds are being made only by two people. I am pleased to be able to say that this is one of the few albums I have heard which can be reproduced and bettered by a live performance because then you can see the guys playing and the music is still as good.

fifth Estate

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Fifth Estate #62, Sept. 19-Oct. 2, 1968

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