

**Batt review**

# 'Phaedra' revives electronic music

By JAMES RAWSON

Electronic music has progressed a long way over the past decade. Two of the earliest compositions for electronic media, "The Wild Bull" and "Silver Apples of the Moon," by Morton Subotnick, were acclaimed as breakthroughs in the realm of music. Each composition covers an album and each is more mood than music. The works depend on an extremely sensitive and subtle series of sounds and associated feelings to

convey a message that is felt rather than understood directly and can be interpreted as one wishes.

Since the time of Subotnick we have witnessed the advent of the Moog synthesizer which performs classical, rock or blues music with ease and grace. Today, few groups write or perform without a Moog, an ARP, or a Mellotron synthesizer somewhere in the background. And yet this is not true electronic music; it only copies the tones of conven-

tional instruments or provides a half-hidden accompaniment for the guitars and drums. Synthesized sound has not been explored on its own as a musical medium except in a limited way until now.

The resurrection of this musical form has arrived in the person of a new English group called "Tangerine Dream" whose first album is "Phaedra." The record contains four compositions: "Phaedra," "Mysterious Semblance

at the Strand of Nightmares," "Movements of a Visionary," and "Sequent C."

"Phaedra" is the album's major effort, covering one side. Whether the music is based on the ancient Greek legends of the labyrinth, the bull-man minotaur, and the Greek youth who escaped him to marry Phaedra is open to speculation. In some ways it is reminiscent of "The Wild Bull" in concept and style, but is better developed. Majestic open-

ing tones lead the listener into a progression of sounds based around a central theme that increases tempo almost imperceptibly to a climax two-thirds through. The sound switches here from cold abstract tones to near-human "voices" that seem expressive of perhaps sorrow, perhaps pain, perhaps joy, who can tell? Slowly they die to leave a very light impression of children playing as a finish, an epilogue, a benediction.

"Mysterious Semblance at the Strand of Nightmares" is my favorite of the four. It is a dreamlike piece centered on a vague song played on a far-away organ. Overlapping the song are sounds resembling the sea, quiet and peaceful. But before the piece becomes so peaceful as to be boring, it switches moods with winds and more agitated tones dominating the original which re-emerges in the end. The style here is reminiscent of Pink

Floyd, movie dream sequences, Mark Stein's organ solos for Vanilla Fudge.

The most dynamic piece of the album is "Movements of a Visionary," filled with abrupt tone changes and sounds that give the impression of things running about and colliding in space. It has a slightly eerie tone which later smooths into a steady, wavering organ solo, haunting and lonely like an empty room standing on the edge of a cliff.

The last composition, "Sequent C," is the shortest and the closest to conventional music. The mood here is delicate and peaceful with some slightly disturbing monics which suggest unreal sound is flute-like with a breeze sifting through the notes, ultimately carrying it away to hearing.

Edgar Froese, Chris Franke, Peter Baumann make up Tangerine Dream. Their instrumental work with a variety of synthesizers and conventional instruments is superb. This group may soon replace Floyd as the most innovative experimental English group.

It is not the type of music that is easy to understand. Many will find it boring; it is the type of sound one has to be in the mood to listen to. The music is right for relaxing in the summer heat.

I for one am glad to see that synthesized music make such a comeback and find it refreshing to climb out of the hog-wallow of Michael Murphy, Jerry Jeff Walker and their kind have dragged temporary music into to soar in the stars for a short while.

## Centennial coordinator announced

Roger P. Miller will serve as coordinator for TAMU's centennial activities, announced President Jack K. Williams.

TAMU, the state's first public institution of higher education, will celebrate its hundredth anniversary in 1976, and Dr. Williams said plans are being made for a major observance to cite the institution's record of service and plans for the future.

Miller, a 1972 TAMU graduate, has been a staff assistant to Dr. Williams the past year and will continue to serve in that capacity in conjunction with his new responsibilities.

He was previously editor of the Hamilton Herald-News and earlier in his career was a staff assistant to Congressman W. R. Poage.

Miller, who majored in journalism, was vice president of the TAMU student body in 1970-71.

In his new position, which is effective July 1, Miller will work closely with a faculty-staff-student alumni committee which began planning last year for the TAMU centennial.

## Bill wrong? Mutilate it

"If you receive an incorrect computer calculated bill, shred it, Lillian Cochran, home management specialist with the TAMU Texas Agricultural Extension Service said.

"Place the shredded bill—in an envelope, and mail it to the company. This requires personal attention—whereas just a handwritten note might be ignored.

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