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Album review



LOUIS HILGARTNER Staff Reviewe

Van Halen **MCMLXXXIV Warner Brothers**

Nobody thinks Van Halen is just okay. They either love 'em or they hate 'em. For almost 7 years the Pasadena quartet has been shocking the world with its lifestyle and music, and the latest album 1984 continues in this tradition.

For starters, there are a lot of keyboards on this album. In the past, Eddie Van Halen - who really did take classical piano lessons as a youngster — had been content to dabble with keyboards while focusing his attention on the guitar licks that made him one of the most copied guitarists since Jimi Hen-

Also, previous Van Halen albums have been recorded "live." I don't mean live in the sense of a live concert performance. The kind of live I'm talking about is when a song is recorded at one time by the whole band. Producer Ted Templeman says he just sets up microphones in the studio and the band plays - just as if they were playing for an audience.

The album opens with the ti-tle cut, a one-minute synthesizer solo. Following it is the hit single "Jump." This is the first song Van Halen has released in which keyboard is the lead instrument with guitars over-dubbed (recorded over the basic song at a different time) in the

"Panama" is more in the true Van Halen style, if there is such a thing. Wild, reckless and live, Dave Lee Roth, the band's shy and introverted lead singer, belts out the vocals in a fashion similar to the band's first al-

"Top Jimmy" is another example of this album's departure from the norm. While Eddie makes good use of his distinct technique, the melody of this tune is carried by overdubbing three guitars playing har-monies. I predict this song to be one of the album's most frustrating for aspiring guitarists to try to learn. Eddie continues his ability to play leads in no particular key or scale and have them fit perfectly.

Rounding out side one is a cut called "Drop Dead Legs." As you might have guessed, the song describes a favorite Van Halen pastime—women, especially good-looking women.

Another first awaits you as soon as the second side gets un-

Much hoopla has been made over the fact that Eddie makes his own guitars, but few know that his brother Alex builds his that his brother Alex builds his own drums.

The side-two opener, "Hot For Teacher," features Alex on his custom drums. I predict this tune to be the most frustrating for aspiring drummers.

"Hot" is a colorful reliving of those good ol' days in high school — sort of.

This fast-paced boogie has several interludes where we several interludes where we find Roth asking the eternal questions "Whadda ya think the teacher's gonna look like this year?," "What're ya doin' this weekend?" and (to the new teacher/victim) "Did ya miss us?" Between the blinding guitar and nounding drums we tar and pounding drums we find out that "Homework was never quite like this." Best quote in rock 'n' roll: "I don't feel tardy."

An interesting pipe-organ type sound introduces "I'll Wait."

I say organ, but with Eddie

on guitar you just never know.
With the exception of the massacred version of "You're No Good," which appeared on Van Halen II, this is the first "I'm down because my woman ran off' tune the band has recorded. Again the solo is key boards which gradually give boards which gradually give way to the patented "Eddie Van Halen" guitar solo, although this time we hear a little of the Eric Clapton style which Van Halen first emulated years ago.

The last two songs, "Girl Gone Bad" and "House Of Pain," are puzzling.

I have always considered Van Halen to be a kind of happy-go-lucky party-till-you-die band.

While both songs are noholds-barred rockers, somehow the idea of Van Halen trying to get serious about something just doesn't seem normal. Then again, the word normal has to be thrown out when discussing Van Halen.

1984 has its moments, but don't expect it to be the next see albums page 15

monday movies

MORNING

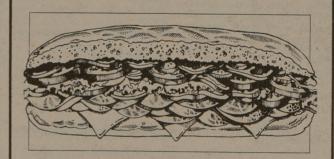
9:00 ② ★★★½ "A Man Could Get Killed" (1966) James Garner, Melina Mercouri. A banker mistaken for a secret agent becomes entangled in a web of espionage and smuggling.

EVENING

7:00 (3) (2) ****/2 "Superman II" (1980) Christopher Reeve, Margot Kidder. While saving Paris from a nuclear explosion, Superman unwittingly frees the trio of power-ful villains who were originally imprisoned by his Kryptonian

:00 ② *** "Fort Apache" (1948) John Wayne, Henry Fonda. A stubborn cavalry officer is held

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