



"Daring Adventures"
Richard Thompson
Polydor Records
★★★★

For almost 20 years Richard Thompson has been one of the music world's best-kept secrets. Aside from being one of the best guitarists ever to make an album, he is a brilliant songwriter and has a rich, beautiful voice.

Thompson's work with the Fairport Convention during the '60s brought him to the attention of the musical press in England. After he left the band, he made several albums by himself and with his ex-wife Linda that were fantastic but hard to find. Despite widespread critical acclaim, Thompson has not achieved great commercial success. "Daring Adventures," his second album on the Polydor label, could be the album that throws Thompson to the top.

"Daring Adventures" is the first album Thompson has recorded in America with American musicians. Bassist Jerry Scheff, drummer Jim Keltner and producer/keyboardist

Mitchell Froom lend an American sound to help balance the use of traditional English folk instruments played by Thompson and his friends.

The American influence can be felt on several of the songs on the new album. Thompson cuts loose on "Valerie," a hot rocker with a rockabilly guitar lead. "Dead Man's Handle" is pretty darn close to being a country tune. "Baby Talk," a song that could easily crack the top 40, uses an accordion to get a cajun feel. These songs are among the happiest tunes Thompson has ever recorded.

The biggest difference between "Daring Adventures" and last year's "Across a Crowded Room," Thompson's previous album, is that the newest album is much lighter in tone. "Across a Crowded Room," recorded shortly after Thompson's divorce, was filled with painful songs about his relationship with Linda and sarcastic songs about love. Interesting enough, Linda released her first solo album, "One Clear Moment," that same year and it was filled with painful songs about her relationship with Richard and sarcastic songs about love.

Although it doesn't have much commercial potential, the best song on the album is "Al Bowlly's In Heaven," a fiercely anti-war song that sounds like

Thompson's early stuff. The song's slow waltz beat provides the background for Thompson's alternating jazz and blues guitar licks. "Al Bowlly's In Heaven" confirms Thompson's status as guitar god.

Thompson, more than most artists recording today, deserves a monster hit album. If the public would wake up and give "Daring Adventures" a chance, no one would be disappointed.

Review by Karl Pallmeyer



"A Shout Toward Noon"
Leo Kottke
Private Music
★★★★

Leo Kottke has the uncanny ability to make a

12-string guitar sound like an orchestra. "A Shout Toward Noon," Kottke's newest album, shows off that ability.

In the last 17 years, Kottke has released over 20 albums of fabulous music. He is equally proficient on six-string acoustic and electric guitar, as well as 12-string guitar. He has a voice that isn't pretty, but it is appropriate for his darkly humorous songs. His music encompasses a wide range of styles including folk, jazz, blues, country, bluegrass, classical and rock. Unfortunately, Kottke has never achieved more than cult status.

"A Shout Toward Noon" is an instrumental album of mostly original material. Cellist Buell Hwang, Sanford Ponder, Jerry Goodman, Patrick O'Hearn, Eddie Jobson — are more interesting and diverse than the artists on Windham Hill. The price of a Private Music album is more in line with a college student's budget than the Windham Hill albums.

Although the album is divided up into 11 tracks, each song flows easily into the next so that the album is a complete aural experi-

ence. There are several outstanding tracks, especially "A Trout Toward Noon," "Piece 17" and "A Virtuoso Is His Own Reward." The cover version of Duane Allman's "Little Martha" is nice and mellow.

Kottke has been jumping around from label to label for most of his career. There a few record companies willing to dedicate time and money to an artist who doesn't make mainstream music. "A Shout Toward Noon" is Kottke's first album on Private Music, a new label started by ex-Tangerine Dream member Peter Baumann. Private Music

is somewhat like Windham Hill but the Private Music artists — Lucia Hwang, Sanford Ponder, Jerry Goodman, Patrick O'Hearn, Eddie Jobson — are more interesting and diverse than the artists on Windham Hill. The price of a Private Music album is more in line with a college student's budget than the Windham Hill albums.

Review by Karl Pallmeyer

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