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SOUNDS

By Carl Matthews

PERFECT GENTLEMEN
"Rated PG" (Columbia)

Now that hit-record producer Maurice Starr has successfully raised New Kids On The Block to superstar heights, he's ready to unleash his latest teen sensation upon the music world: Perfect Gentlemen.

With their smooth choreographed showmanship and clean-cut image, the talented young trio of Corey Blakely, Maurice Starr, Jr., and Tyrone Sutton, have a good chance to become a big hit with fans who are currently into New Kids On The Block, whom Perfect Gentlemen have toured with.

The story of Perfect Gentlemen began one day in the summer of 1989, when Maurice Starr, who for some time had wanted to put his son, Maurice, Jr., in a singing group, saw 11-year-old Corey Blakely, a next door neighbor, riding his little sister's bicycle in the neighborhood.

Struck by the youngster's adorable look, Starr asked him if he'd like to be in a group. When Corey said he thought that would be fun, Starr introduced him to his son, and eventually to Tyrone Sutton, and before long the group, under the guidance of Starr, landed their record deal with Columbia.

If you're one of the millions of New Kids On The Block fanatics, you owe it to yourself to check out this cassette.

Songwriter Starr manages to inject a little humor even in the sad songs. In the mellow "Ooh La La (I Can't Get Over You)," the poor fellow is feeling down because the girl he likes is moving away. At one point, he says, "You think if we keep singing this song, she'll hear it over the radio and come back?"

There's no denying the Jackson 5 influence here. The first song on "Rated PG" is a Starr composition titled "One More Chance." The Jacksons have recorded two different songs called "One More Chance" in their career.

And "Birthday Girl" not only borrows a riff from the Jackson 5 classic "Mama's Pearl," but also does a take-off on the hit song "ABC" by including this line: "You don't have to show me what you can do — I already know."

As derivative and unimaginative these performances are, one thing is clear: these newer kids on the block are having a lot of fun.

VARIOUS ARTISTS
"Super Hits Of The 70's (Have A Nice Day)" (Rhino)

Back in March I told you that Rhino Records had come out with five volumes of "Super Hits Of The 70's" on CD, which contained such big hits as "Indian Reservation" by the Raiders and "I Think I Love You" by The Partridge Family, as well as lesser-known songs such as "Neanderthal Man" by Hotlegs and "Fallin' Lady" by Punch.

Well now Rhino has done it again, with five more volumes to brighten your day.

Among the big hits on volumes 6 through 10: "Alone Again (Naturally)" by Gilbert O'Sullivan; "The Candy Man" by Sammy Davis, Jr.; "Do You Know What I Mean" by Lee Michaels; "Precious And Few" by Climax.

All of the songs included were released between 1969-1973; the late 70's are not represented at all.

This compilation is recommended for those who like the old "bubblegum" type hits of the early 70's, such as Alive & Kicking's "Tighter, Tighter," and the old country-flavored hits, such as Lobo's "Me And You And A Dog Named Boo." If you want the hard-rock hits of the early 70's, look elsewhere; you won't find Led Zeppelin or Hendrix here. Nor will you find any disco or Motown hits.

The sound quality of the discs is quite satisfactory. If you're the kind of person who's always wanted to hear Giorgio's "Son Of My Father" in digital stereo (I figure that only 10 percent of the readers of this column have even heard of the record at all) then "Super Hits Of The 70's" is for you.

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AREA ENTERTAINMENT

Columbia to host 10-day arts fest

The 1990 Columbia Festival of the Arts, running from June 22-July 1, has announced its complete schedule.

The 10-day multi-arts festival presents more than 60 events by 40 performing groups in nine different locations in Columbia.

The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, known throughout the U.S. as "the musical success story of the generation," comes to Columbia for a 10 day residency.

It includes chamber music concerts, pre-concert dialogues with two of America's leading composers, William Bolcom and Charles Wuorinen, open rehearsals, and student coachings.

Charles S. Dutton, star of August Wilson's new Pulitzer prize - winning Broadway play, "The Piano Lesson," comes down from New York to perform his one-man show, "The Prince of Senegal," based on the life and work of Ira Aldridge, the first Black Shakespearean actor to achieve international acclaim.

Also on the roster for 1990 are performances and workshops by: Pilobolus Dance Theatre,one of America's most unique and innovative contemporary dance/theater companies;

Award - winning composer William Bolcom and Grammy- nominee, mezzo-soprano Joan Morris, in a concert of popular American song;

Path Dance Company, one of our region's most highly regarded modern dance companies;

Mystic Paper Beasts, unique larger - than - life puppets for children of all ages; and the Model Secondary School for the Deaf's "Road Show," an internationally acclaimed deaf performing troupe.

Other events include performances by two of Howard County's outstanding ensembles, the award-winning Columbia Pro Cantare chorus, and Kinetics Dance Company, a modern - ballet company established as a performance vehicle for MD dancers.

The Maryland Museum of African Art opens an exhibit, African Expressions in American Art, during the Festival, and is sponsoring a series of related events and performances, including a concert by the Sankofa African Drummers and The Morgan State University Jazz Quintet.

At the Town Center Plaza, in downtown Columbia, the Festival's Lakefront program offers ten days of free outdoor performances by more than 15 outstanding performers and groups such as:

Charlie Byrd, The Annapolis Brass, Ethel Ennis, Tomi Casciero, Eva Anderson's Baltimore Dance Theatre, Deanna Bogart, jazz fusion group Moon August, and Trinidad and Tobago steel orchestra.

A special feature of the Lakefront program is the Artisans Show, held from June 29 - July 1. Forty - six outstanding artisans have been chosen from a field of 142 by jurors from the Maryland Institute of Art, and will exhibit and sell their wares.

The Festival will close with a concert by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra and violinist Itzhak Perlman, with guest conductor Hugh Wolff, that includes excerpts from Mendelssohn's "A Midsummer Night's Dream," and the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto in D.

Columbia, MD, is located halfway between Baltimore and Washington,D.C., and is easily accessible from Route 29 and Interstate 95. Festival parking is free, and all facilities are accessible to the handicapped.

FIRST U.S. ARMY BAND

Ft. Meade summer concerts

Fort Meade's seventh Summer Band Concert Series begins June 3 and runs through August 12, with the exception of July 1 and 8. The program features the United States Army Field Band, the First U.S. Army Band and Two guest bands.

These free, hour-long Sunday evening concerts feature military musicians who have performed all over the world and who play a variety of music, including patriotic, big band jazz and classical.

June 3 — United States Army Field Band and "Soldiers' Chorus".

June 10 — First U.S. Army Concert Band.

June 17 — U.S. Army Field Band - "Jazz Ambassadors".

June 24 — U.S Army Field Band - "The Volunteers".

July 4 — First U.S. Army Concert Band.

July 15 — U.S. Naval Academy "Wind Ensemble".

July 22 — 257th Army Band - D.C. Army National Guard.

July 29 — First U.S. Army Jazz Ensemble.

August 5 — First U.S. Army band - "Camouflage" (Rock Band)

August 12 — Combined Concert - United States Army Field Band and Soldiers' Chorus and First U.S. Army Concert Band

Concerts begin at 7 p.m. at Devers Hall.

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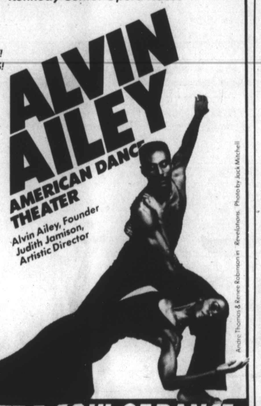

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