SOUNDS

By Carl Matthews

ASHFORD AND SIMPSON
"Love Or Physical" (Capitol)

Nick and Val, one of the most respected duos in pop music, return with their fifth Capitol album.

The two met in 1964 in New York City at the legendary White Rock Baptist Church where Val was a member of the church choir. The duo signed on as staff songwriters for Scepter Records, and wrote a hit for Ray Charles titled "Let's Go Get Stoned."

Later, in the 60's, Ashford And Simpson wrote such memorable Motown hits as "Ain't No Mountain High Enough," "Ain't Nothing Like The Real Thing" and "You're All I Need To Get By."

With Warner Brothers Records in the 70's, Nick and Val had such hit singles as "Send It," "Don't Cost You Nothing," and "It Seems To Hang On." In the 80's, of their hottest hits was "Street Corner," from their 1982 "Street Opera" LP on Capitol.

Ashford and Simpson

Their 1984 hit single "Solid" was sampled in the current rap single by M.C. Lyte, "Lyte As A Rock."

"Seems like we're just sitting on a time bomb," sings Ashford in the new album's title track, a song which deals with a question that lovers in this day and age must face: whether what they have is just physical attraction or real love.

This is the sort of high-quality songwriting that these "custodians of love" have been known for, for years. "Something To You," "Cookies And Cake" and "Timing" on side two are all fine dance numbers as well, with guest star Nile Rodgers contributing guitar on "Timing" and Nick and Val handling most of the synthesizers and drum programming.

SIMPLY RED
"A New Flame" (Elektra)

Mick Hucknall, Fritz McIntyre, Tim Kellett, Chris Joyce, Tony Bowers, Heitor T.P. and Ian Kirkham are preparing to burn up the charts with their third album, "A New Flame."

Simply Red was formed in the early 1980's in England. "Money$ Too Tight (To Mention)," their version of the Valentine Brothers' American R&B hit, was one of their first big hits in the U.K.

Simply Red's debut album "Picture Book," released in 1986, included the number one smash "Holding Back The Years." Their follow-up album in 1987 was "Men And Women."

Much of the material on the new album fails to generate the same sort of excitement as their "Picture Book" album did, but there are some good moments here, such as Hucknall's "To Be With You," a simple upbeat pop exercise that captures the fun spirit of their earlier hit "Money$ Too Tight."

With their cover version of "If You Don't Know Me By Now," the Harold Melvin And The Blue Notes classic, the group proves Mick's assertion that "recutting classics is always dangerous — you've got to try and make them different." Unfortunately, this recut lacks the energy of the original Teddy Pendergrass performance.

Other cuts: "It's Only Love," "More," "Turn It Up," "Enough."

Music Notes

Peace train nowhere in sight

An author by the name of Salman Rushdie has had major problems ever since he came out with his controversial book "The Satánic Verses." You may have heard about the Ayatollah's death sentence against the author, whose book is said to be "blasphemous."

What does this have to do with the record industry? Good question.

A popular singer of the 70's, Cat Stevens, now known as Yusuf Islam, recently endorsed the Ayatollah's sentence against Rushdie, and in protest, some radio stations have pulled Stevens' music from their playlists.

How many of you think that this Rushdie business is getting out of hand? Are the stations using censorship to protest censorship? What do you think?

Guy has honed their skills to a fine edge

From their sharp-dressed look to their interwoven vocal style, you can tell that Guy is in control of their artistry, especially when you realize how young this New York trio's members are.

Singer/arranger Teddy Riley (vocals, arrangements, production) is 20, Aaron Hall, III (vocals) is 21 and Damion Hall (vocals) is 19.

Guy, along with the group Today, will perform at the Lyric Opera House on Saturday, March 4 at 8 p.m. and 10:30 p.m.

"What's different about us is that we do it all," says Riley. "You don't find many groups like us who produce, write and perform all at once. But we grew up doing that. This personal focus allows Guy to be musically diverse, yet keep a sound of their own.

Guy was formed in 1987, when Riley and the Hall brothers came together after varied individual projects and accomplishments.

Riley began playing drums at the tender age of three, moving on to keyboards, bass, guitar and trumpet at six. His goal was to find an instrument he could master; the keyboards ended up as his choice. After joining several choir bands in New York area churches, at age 11 he decided next to pursue R&B as well.

Thus, before his teens, he was performing in New York area clubs with his group, Total Climax. When this band had run its course, he formed yet another unit, Kids At Work.

During this time, he met current manager Gene Griffin, who encouraged his interest in production. Kids At Work went on to sign with the CBS-distributed Sounds of New York label, releasing a single, "Singing Hey Yeah."

It was as a producer that Riley began to attract major attention. While in his teens he worked with a wide range of rap/R&B/funk artists. Some of his best-known credits include rapper Kool Moe D's first two LPs, Uptown/MCA group Heavy D & The Boyz debut album, tracks on Billy Ocean's **"Tear Down These Walls"** LP (the title song and "Get Out Of My Dreams") and Keith Sweat's **"Make It Last Forever"** LP. As an arranger his projects have included Doug E. Fresh's "The Show" and Bobby Brown's new MCA album, **"Don't Be Cruel."**

Damien Hall, Teddy Riley and Aaron Hall, members of the group Guy, perform their hits this Saturday, March 4 at the Lyric Opera House.

In addition, he was grooming younger brother Markell's talents, playing keyboards on the debut Atlantic EP of Markell's group, Wrecks-N-Effect. During this same time, Teddy was ready to assemble his most important band thus far. He found the right partners in Aaron and Damion Hall.

Like Teddy, Aaron had grown up with music, singing and playing bass and keyboards since childhood. After singing in church, he performed with a

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ALL THAT JAZZ

By Bob Matthews

Don't have a lot to report on jazz activities this weekend, which gives us a chance to touch on some things that have piqued our interest.

Happened into one of the high-tech audio-video stores in Baltimore, and was simply amazed at what is available these days—provided you are independently wealthy.

Whew! The prices on some of this stuff simply make you gasp, but what a treat for the ears and eyes.

You can probably remember when video tape recorders were new, expensive and hard to come by. At the same time, video laser discs were vying for public favor, touting superior picture quality.

So the battle of formats wavered between VCRs, laser discs, Beta or VHS formats. The apparent winner is the VHS VCR, which is the format most in use today.

Nothing new or startling in all this, except that High Definition TV is on its way, which will change things again. But, we were exposed to the latest in laser discs.

They now come able to play all sizes available, both video and audio. What this means, is that you are able to play a laser disc for superb picture quality, and couple it with CD sound.

Not only will these state of the art machines play the 12-inch laser discs, they will play the 5-inch audio CDs as well, plus the new 3-inch video jobs, and the 8-inch CDVs.

Ahah! You probably didn't know that all this was available...and neither did I.

One of the major complaints against the laser discs has been a dearth of product (their word for material to play).

Learned to my astonishment that there is a wealth of jazz available in this medium. Of course they won me over with a digitally recorded disc of Diane Schur with the Count Basie Orchestra.

Of course, you have heard the album, and know that this was the last thing that guitarist Freddie Green was a part of, but have you seen it in video

Suppose you could, with CD sound — wouldn't that be a gas?

Just wanted to keep you up to date on what's going on in the video-audio marketplace.

* * *

Caught the **Donald Harrison/Terence Blanchard Quintet** at the Left Bank Jazz Society session last week, and a romping, swinging set it was.

All though it was pretty well attended — not capacity — it was a financial loss for the society.

As we pointed out last week, it is just about vitally necessary for LBJS to increase its prices if they are to continue to present jazz concerts.

And we certainly hope they survive. Was happy to report that many people came up to me at the session, and agreed with our premise that there has to be a price increase.

The club is understandably reluctant, since an increase might play a hardship on some of

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Eastside High was
a training ground for jail

Then Joe Clark took over.

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Photo: Hugues Magien in *Prince Igor*/photo by Martha Swope

The Dance Theater of Harlem is a joint presentation of the Washington Performing Arts Society and the Kennedy Center.

—Guy

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variety of gospel groups, including the Daryl Douglas' Singers, the Bethel Gospel Tabernacle and the James Cleveland Convention.

Last year, he recorded the live **"Hold On"** LP with Hezikiah Walker and the Love Fellowship Crusade Choir. When his longtime friend Teddy asked him to join Guy, Aaron made the leap to popular music.

Also coming on board was Aaron's brother Damion, who was in his second year at Virginia State University when he got the call from Teddy. He, Aaron and an older brother had sung as a gospel trio years before.

Singing and playing drums during his school years, he performed at many high school talent shows and won many contests as a vocalist, including The Delta Star Search.

"Working with Teddy has been very comfortable for Aaron and me," Damion says. "We've known him for so long, he's part of the family, like a brother."

This close relationship makes Guy an unusually harmonious collaboration. Classy and versatile in sound, they've honed their skills to a fine edge. Guy is a trio with a single goal: quality music.