

STREET BEAT

VOL. I, NUMBER VI
JUNE 1982

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**CHARLIE PICKETT
AND THE EGGS**

IF YOU DON'T LIKE THIS
ALBUM, YOU DON'T LIKE
ROCK & ROLL

**FUTURISK
AND
RADIO BERLIN**

PLUS

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B-52's
AND MORE!**

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Staff Photograph by Kelly Farrell

CHARLIE PICKETT AND THE EGGS

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By Ken White

By the time you read this, the first album of any import to come out of South Florida since the Ciclid's *Be True To Your School* will be available in your local record store. I speak, of course, of *Live At The Button* by Charlie Pickett and the Eggs.

Yes, it's finally out and it should be available. At the time of this writing (6-16), Pickett's label, Open Records of Ft. Lauderdale, is awaiting the arrival of the album covers. They should arrive any day.

And Charlie Pickett is very happy. "This is a culmination of everything the Eggs have been for the past two and a half years," he told STREET BEAT. "This catches most of our popular numbers and some of our more recent numbers that we feel are real exciting. I'm just real happy with it. The crowd was more than generous."

But listening to the album, one begins to realize that Pickett was wrong. The crowd *wasn't* more than generous. They were merely reacting to an exciting performance of straight up rock and roll, performed by a band of musicians who really love rock and roll music.

The album opens with "American Travelust", a song written by Pickett and drummer John Galway of the Eggs. And travelust is what Pickett and the Eggs seem to offer from. "It could be real successful for us. It could mean that we could travel to other cities and play jobs on the strength of the album, on the name recognition that

the album would get. God, I'd like nothing better than driving around the country for six months, playing city after city after city. I love traveling. To me, traveling is an end unto itself. To us, it's the great American wanderlust." Or travelust as the case may be.

The album continues to come on strong, with a rocking version of the Johnny Kidd and the Pirate's standard "Please Don't Touch" and on into the first Pickett and the Egg's single, "Feelin'". The crowd response to "Feelin'" was great to see the night it was recorded at the Button in Ft. Lauderdale, and it's equally great to hear on record. At each break in the song, a group of girls standing near the front broke into little . . . well, little squeals and screams. Beatlemania comes to your town. Or Pickettmania.

After a couple more rockers and a bluesy, James Cottonish version of "Watch Out" the band slides into what Pickett freely admits is the band's theme song, "Shake Some Action." Heart, heart, heart is all that can be said about the performance of this song. Though I will admit that I have seen the Eggs do better versions at different shows, each and every time they play it, they mean it.

According to Pickett, "We always try to "Shake Some Action", it's our theme and we try to have fun. I mean, people work all week, on the weekdays, they get up, they

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Photograph by Kelly Farrell

go to work, they come home and watch TV, maybe get some low level excitement. But Friday night, Saturday night comes, and you've got to shake some fucking action. You've got to or you've ruined these people's week. And you've ruined my week, because I work during the week and on Friday night or Saturday night, if we're not playing, I want to see a great band, I want to see them tear the place apart, I want to see them shake some action. And if we're playing, I want to see us tear the place apart. I think that's important.'

Side two slides into "If This Is Love, I Want My Money Back," a song which Pickett admits is always the one that people pick up on. Then on through "Tallahassie Lassie," a cover of the Velvet Underground's "Lonesome Cowboy Bill," and "Doreen".

Possibly the best song on the album is the live version of the flip side of the "If This Is Love . . ." single, a Flaming Groovies tune called "Slow Death." Pickett's studio version of "Slow Death" is powerful, but the live version grabs you and drags you inside, building, building, always building.

"Nobody that I know plays rock and roll with the honest intent that I think it was meant to be played with. The Rolling Stones new live album is clean, it's funky, it's nice . . . and it's not rock and roll. I have always felt that rock and roll should have a pumping, sexual beat. When it's sung by a man, it should be sung by a guy with a guy's voice, not REO Speedwagon's sweet girl's voices. And there should be a certain sarcastic or fun attitude towards it. I think that everybody who's heard or studies rock and roll knows that it's threatening in ways, it's fun in ways, it's about death in ways, it's about love in ways, it's about good stories. And I think that's very lacking these days. God, the Supertramps and REOs that are being called rock and roll, they don't have an ounce of rock and roll to the pound in them. It's the new synthpop. It's diluted."

Live At The Button closes with a Pickett/Joe Harris composition, "Phantom Train". On "Phantom Train" Pickett's feelings on rock and roll come together. "When you think about it, I think rock and roll is nothing more than and nothing less than modern American folk music. And it's been diluted so much, that I think when a modern American folk music band who just play straight ahead rock and roll music from the heart appears, they can't help but be warmly accepted." From "Phantom Train" - "And then I seen Arthur McDuffie and I asked him what happened that night/What MacDuffie told me I find hard to believe/Five copys try to stop him and he still succeeds/Strangest case of suicide I've ever seen."

The album will be getting wide distribution, through JEM, Rough Trade, Systematic, Bomp, Stiff, Disques du Monde, Faulty Products, and Greenworld, both in this country and across the world. As Pickett puts it, "Germany, Australia, Argentina - everywhere there's fighting."

"I can't presume to define why rock and roll is," Pickett told us," but this is what I think about it: it's got to be something real. I would be real happy making a living at it. God, it would be great to make a living playing guitar an hour a day."

Amen to that Charlie. And amen to your other line. "I think if somebody likes rock and roll, they're going to like this album. If you don't like this album, you don't like rock and roll."