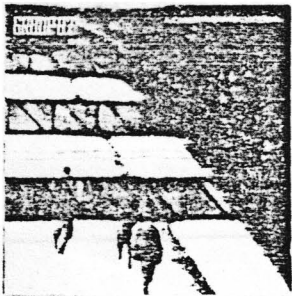


Second Annual Polyphony Awards Banquet

by: Robert Carlberg

The year of Big Brother, women in space, and Doonesbury's return has seen Electronic Music mature tremendously. Not only are synthesizers being used frequently -- and well -- in popular music, but "Electronic Music" itself has grown more professional and accessible, blurring the distinction. No longer a novelty as it is absorbed into the mainstream of music, E.M. has gained respect and passes on its vitality to a new generation.



Album of The Year: Group 87 - *A Career in Dada Processing* (reviewed Aug). A prime example of the new maturity in electronic music, brought on by the influx of established musicians and sophisticated hardware. Honorable mentions: Laurie Anderson - *Mister Heartbreak* (Aug) and Thomas Dolby - *The Flat Earth* (Apr): Adroit use of electronics in more conventional frameworks.

Song of the Year: "Mr. Moto's Penguin (Who'd Be An Eskimo's Wife?)" from Mark Isham's *Vapor Drawings* (Feb). One of the principals of Group 87, Isham proves his success was no fluke.

Tape of the Year: John Wiggins - *Anagenic* (Apr). An example of the type of music that best fits the cassette format, being perhaps too complicated and heroic for the informal LP.

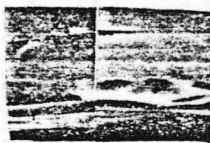
Best Album Title: *The Flat Earth* by Thomas Dolby (Apr). Acknowledges and gently spoofs the inexplicable resurgence in reactionary thought these days.



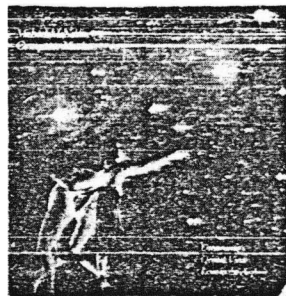
Best Song Title: "Ghosts Before Breakfast" from Michelle Musser's *A Cast of Shadows* cassette (Oct). No reason -- just like the sound of it.

Best Popular Synthesizer Album: Take your pick -- there were a million of them on the radio. A couple hundred thousand anyway.

STEPS AHEAD



Best Jazz Synthesizer Album: *Modern Times* by Steps Ahead (Aug). Shows how to be "modern" while still being timeless.

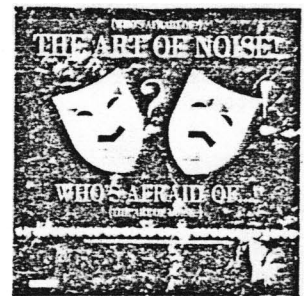


Best Avant-Garde Electronic Album: *Computer Music* by Michael McNabb (Aug). Comes with the kind of lengthy 'explanations' that usually spell trouble, but this one's a

gem of shifting tonalities and surprising transformations.

Most Improved: Laurie Anderson for *Mister Heartbreak* (Aug). After a couple of albums which were not substantially advanced over her debut, Laurie came out with a winner.

Most Likely to Succeed: *The Art of Noise* -- *Who's Afraid of?* (Oct). If not them, then someone like them. It's too dumb to fail.



Best Group Name: *Bluetoy* -- *Re-inventing the Wheel Without a Third Eye* (cassette, Oct). When asked, Chris admitted it's his license plate.



Best Mixing: Iverson and Walters *First Collection* (Oct) for mixing bluegrass and EM. *Tri Atma Yearning & Harmony* (Oct) for mixing jazz guitar, Indian percussion and EM.

Irony of the Year No. 1: *Spinal Tap*, the parody of what's worst in Heavy Metal, played concerts and

(continued on page 16)