



Philip Glass

# Glass' music is repetitive

By JEFF GROVE

Philip Glass has struck again. The bad boy/darling (depending on your viewpoint) of both the rock and classical markets has signed an exclusive contract with CBS records. If *Glassworks*, his first album for the label, is any indication, Glass has quite gotten the better of CBS.

Glass, 44, is a classically-trained composer who leans to rock, particularly New Wave. A typical Glass composition has a short introduction and a short melody which are then repeated *ad nauseum*.

The opening cut on the album, imaginatively titled *Opening*, features a piano solo with no real melody. It is basically a study in how long a listener

can stand to hear two clashing rhythms played simultaneously. Michael Riesman's sloppy playing doesn't help matters.

The other bands on the first side are just as monotonous. *Floe* starts promisingly enough with a mysterious French horn passage, but an electric organ and soprano saxophone soon interrupt with the effect of water boiling. The whole thing sounds like the theme of a cheap news program. *Islands* features shrill flute and clarinet solos screeching over a dizzying cello figure.

A piece called *Rubric* follows to start off the second side, sounding like the musicians turned the score for *Floe* upside-down and played the resulting music.

It is only in the final two pieces that Glass shows any significant promise in this new rock style. *Facades* consists of a gentle cello theme played under a tranquil saxophone choir. The last work, *Closing*, continues the mood of serenity with its fragile piano solo.

But two pieces, slightly better than mediocre, cannot save an album like this. None of the pieces really have conclusions, they simply stop. Glass' work is undeniably music, yet it is far from art. In recent interviews, Glass has said that his music is based on repetition. But repetition, when over-worked as it is in this album, can become tiresome. S

Jeff Grove is the assistant arts editor for *The Daily Tar Heel*.

## Film Clips

**Absence of Malice**—Somewhat simple, but still refreshing look at irresponsible journalism. Sally Field's reporter character presses for a big story on innocent Michael Gallagher (Paul Newman). For once, the newspaper takes the rap. Good food for thought. Directed by Sydney Pollack.

Lawrence Kasden's film, **Body Heat**, is an attempt to revive the genre of film noir that flourished in the 1940s and 1950s. It's a film about passion and how it can destroy a man. But it's too close to the types of films it attempts to emulate. And because of this **Body Heat** seems dated; it's a polished well-made film that is stuck in a dead genre.

**Ragtime**—Possibly one of the best films of the 1981 Christmas crop. Based on E.L. Doctorow's best-selling novel, the film explores America of the 1910s. Director Milos Forman found the right formula for adapting Doctorow's interesting narrative, as he tells the story of **Ragtime** around three intertwining plots.

## Executives

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*Mobs*, Hutton said, is about getting mobbed at a concert.

So far the band hasn't had too much trouble fitting their music into their student life. However, they said that they had to be careful and make time to study.

"We play one night on a weekend and study one," Hutton said. "We don't play during the week except for really good pay."

"When you come in at 5 on a Sunday morning, you don't feel like studying, so you have to work it out. But girls have more effect than music," he added.

Hutton said that they don't plan to give up their studies for music, yet. But they are ready for the day a contract is offered.

"We've even gotten album covers drawn," Sharpe said. "Everything starts out in this red notebook (he holds the book up), or in Henry's pad."

The band just recently played at the Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity at UNC, and they have an idea for their next concert.

"We'll play at Chapel Thrill for free," Sharpe said. "They can save the money and buy beer for everyone!" S

Jeannie Reynolds is a contributing writer to *The Spotlight*.

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