

The physical shape of the album cover determines the size, dimensions, and material of the sleeve, to a certain extent. But it is also shaped by demands of, e.g., genre, economy, class, and cultural distinction. For instance, the rise of the LP format in the 1950s and the high-art association with classical music, and later jazz and rock, was as much about the promotion via the album cover designs as about the recording format itself.

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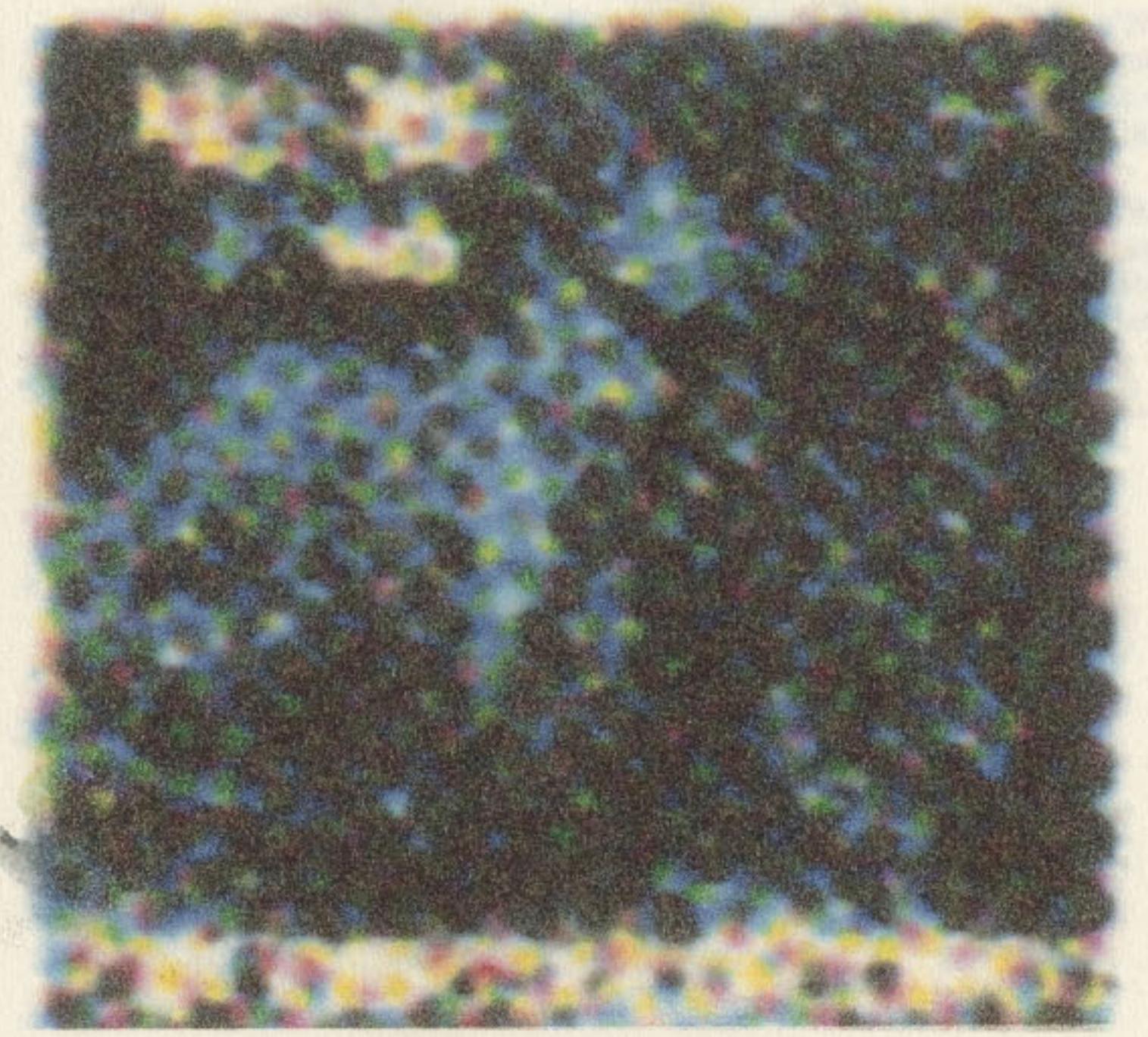
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The standard long-playing record sleeve is 12.375 inches square.

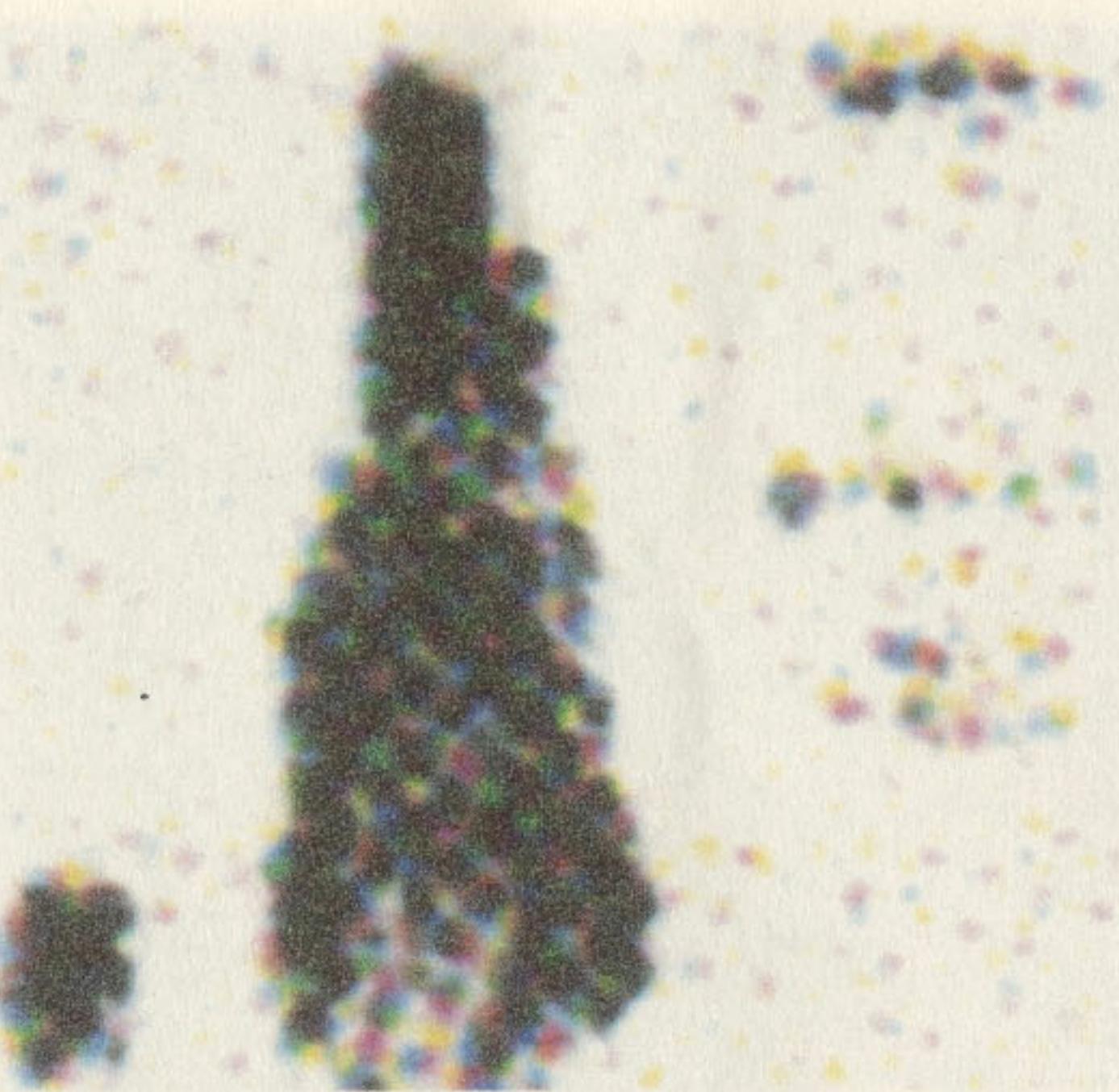
While it's nice to hold and appreciate album covers in their familiar size, we may not be seeing these covers as they are. To see an album cover objectively—to ignore its artist, genre, cultural significance and place in time, might mean to see it clearer.

Reducing the album cover's standard physical size to one tenth of an inch by one tenth of an inch, might make things clearer.

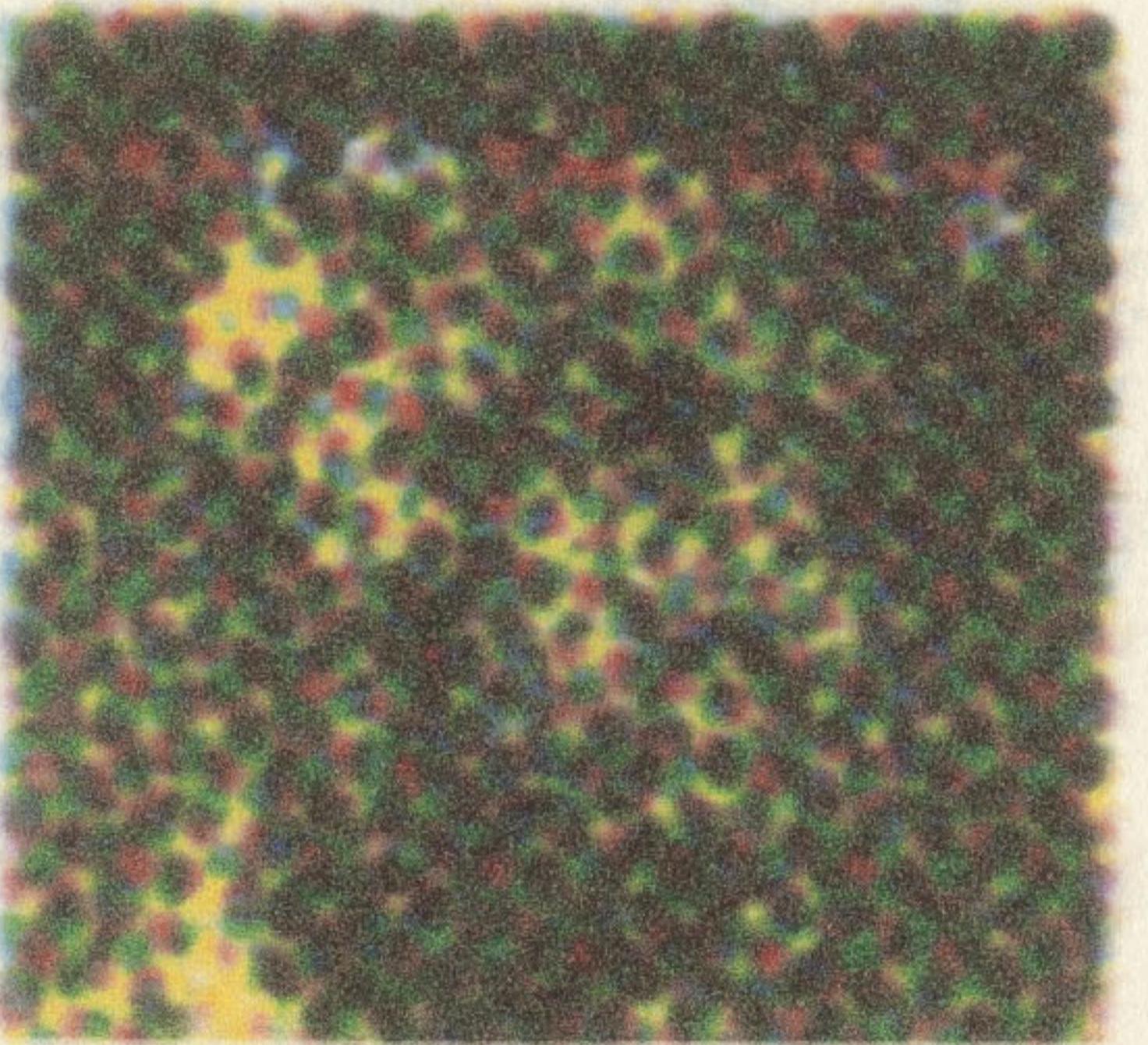
is valuable for more than mere kitsch factor. Over the course of the album's 12 tracks, a rich tapestry of tropical percussion works through three rhythmic models -- the , the , and the bolero. Overlaid with structures and easygoing vibes playing, this set is a tasty cross-section of early Tropicalia. While the disc lacks the hot that would characterize or the large-scale orchestrations of the composer's collaborations with Lalo Schifrin, is a exploration of the fusion of and music.



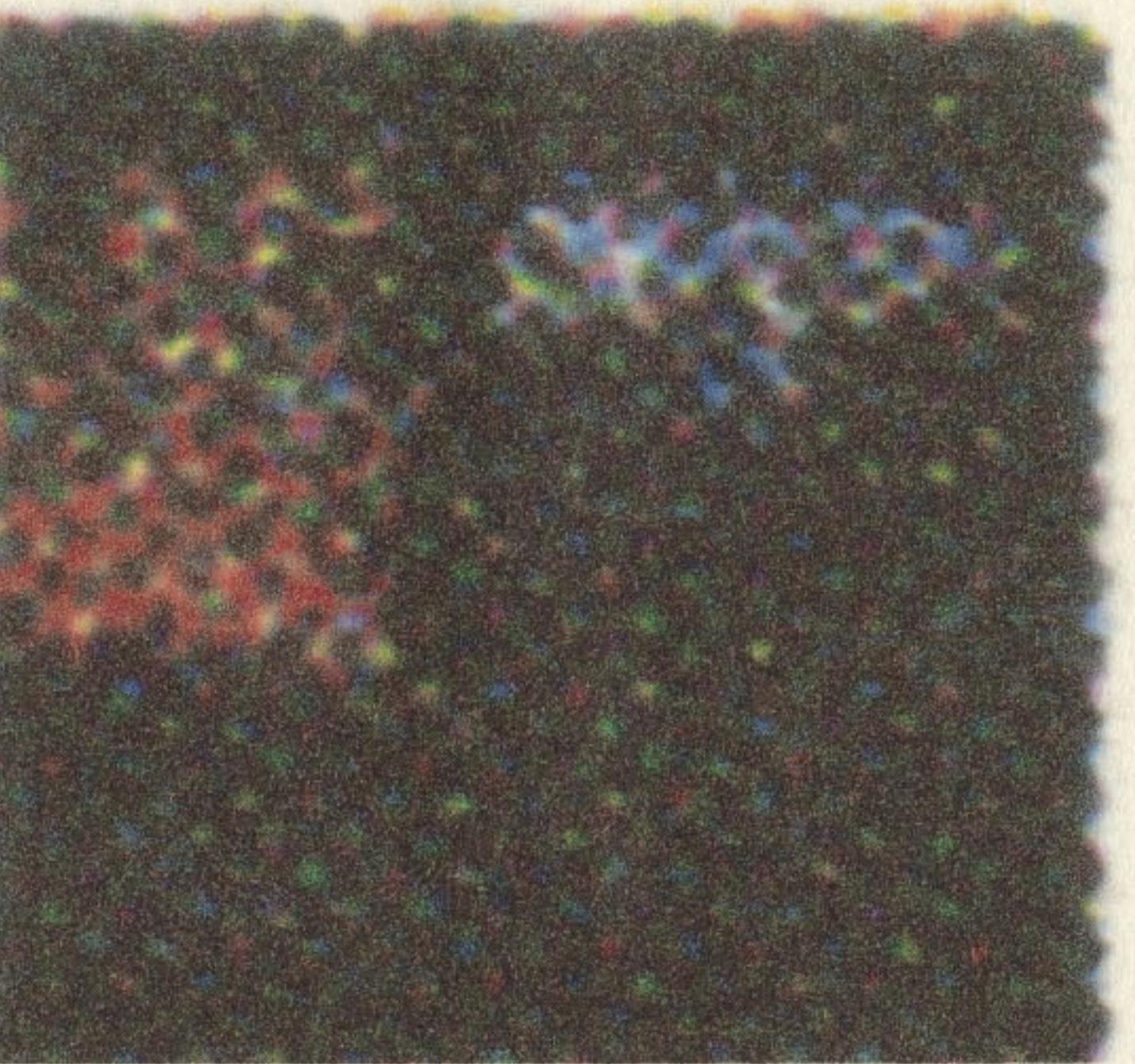
One of lesser-known band sessions, this lyrical set of five originals (plus the standard "Memories of You") features his usual sidemen of the (trombonist Jimmy Knepper, trumpeter Clarence Shaw, Shafi Hadi on tenor and alto, and drummer Dannie Richmond), along with pianist . The music stretches the boundaries of , is never predictable and, even if this is not one of ' more acclaimed dates, it is well worth acquiring for the playing is quite stimulating.



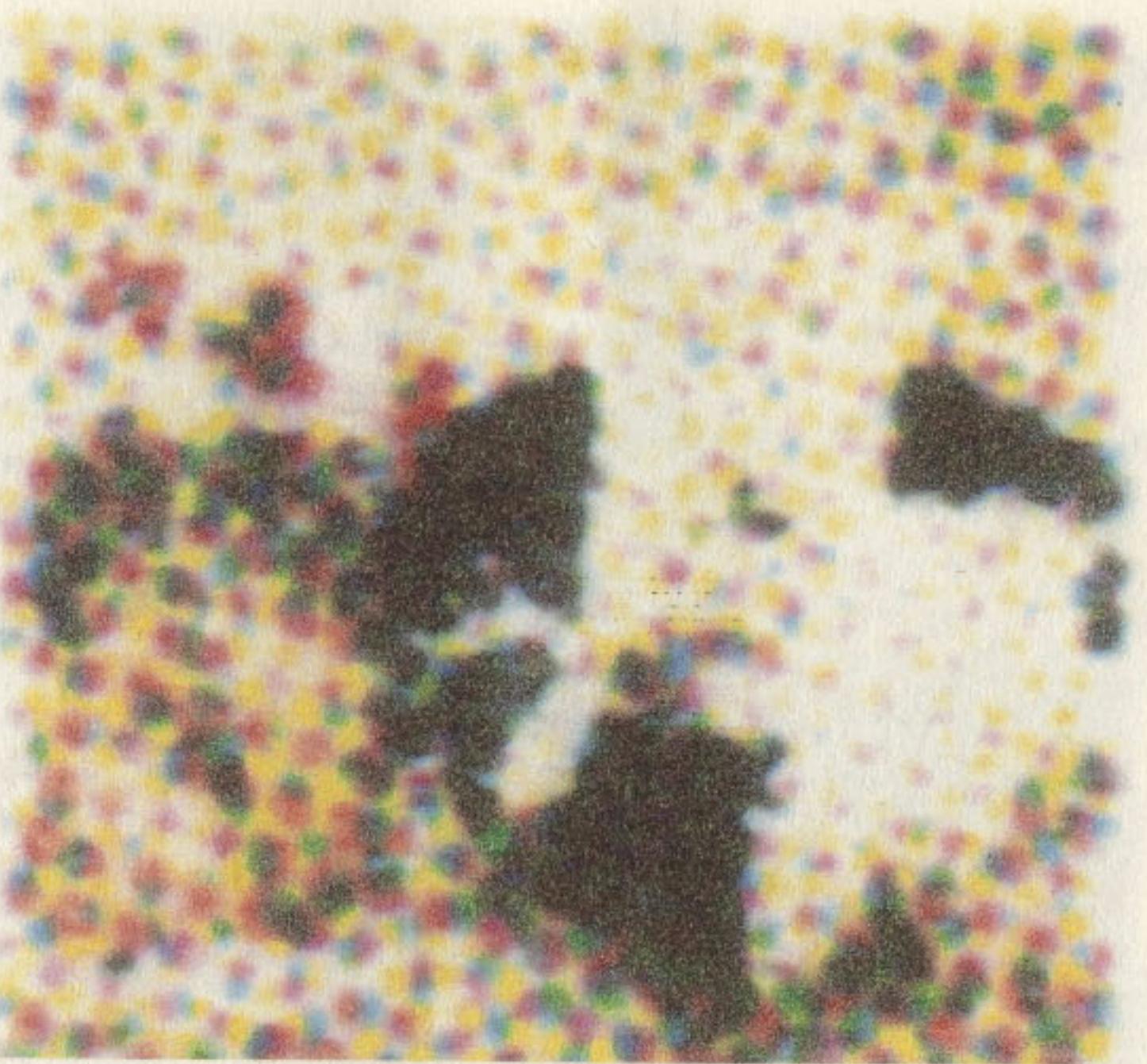
' includes some of the greatest music produced in the studio with arguably his very best band. There are three tracks that are immortal and will always stand the test of time. The title selection is a pure tuneful melody stewed in a shuffle penned by pianist Bobby Timmons, while tenor saxophonist Benny Golson's classy, slowed "Along Came Betty" and the static, militaristic "Blues March" will always have a home in the repertoire of every student or professional band. "Are You Real?" has the most subtle of melody lines, and "Drum Thunder Suite" has 's quick blasting tom-tom-based rudiments reigning on high as the horns sigh, leading to hard . "Come Rain or Come Shine" is the piece that commands the most attention, a highly modified, lilting arrangement where the accompanying staggered, staccato rhythms contrast the light-hearted refrains. Certainly a complete and wholly satisfying album, ' ranks with the very best of and what modern offered in the late ' s and beyond.



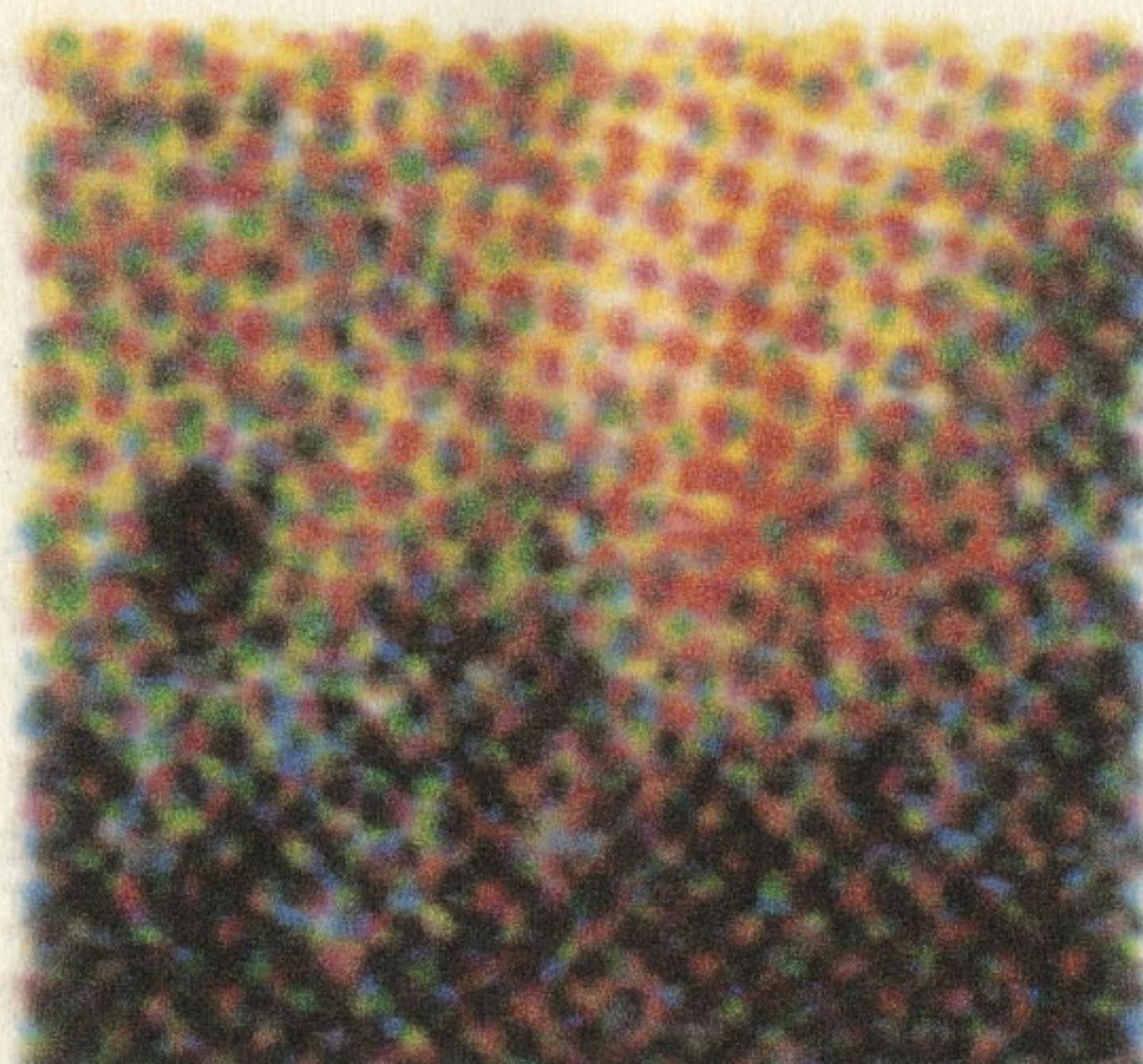
's debut for Verve, although better from a standpoint than his later A&M releases, is certainly in the same vein. The emphasis is on his tone, his distinctive octaves, and his melody statements. Some of the material (such as "People" and "Matchmaker, Matchmaker") are tunes of the and the brass orchestra (arranged by Johnny Pate) is purely in the background, but there are some worthy performances, chiefly the two-part " " and "



's second effort, 's , was in comparison a stronger, more confident, and more enjoyable disc; the push and pull between June Millington's tough guitar figures and Nickey Barclay's rollicking keyboards yield more exciting results here, while Alice de Buhr's sharp, inventive drumming and Jean Millington's subtle, melodic basslines keep the bottom end lively and supportive at all times. The band also delivered a better set of songs this time out; the rowdy good-time of the title cut was a deserved hit single (though it sadly peaked just as it first nicked the Top 40), " " delivers some cool but sassy , "What Kind of Love" and "A Person Like You" find them throwing some serious and quite funny shade on folks who've done them dirt, "A Little While Later" confirmed they could still sound forceful in ballad mode, and "Place in the Country" is a powerful rant against the madness of war and inner-city strife with some of June's most fiery soloing. Richard Perry's production is a sometimes a bit more polished than this music needed, and it's a shame he didn't give this band a punchier guitar sound, but he makes the most of the melodies here (and most certainly had 'em) as well as the group's solid harmonies. As the first all-female band to cut an album for a major label, had the unenviable task of being trailblazers.

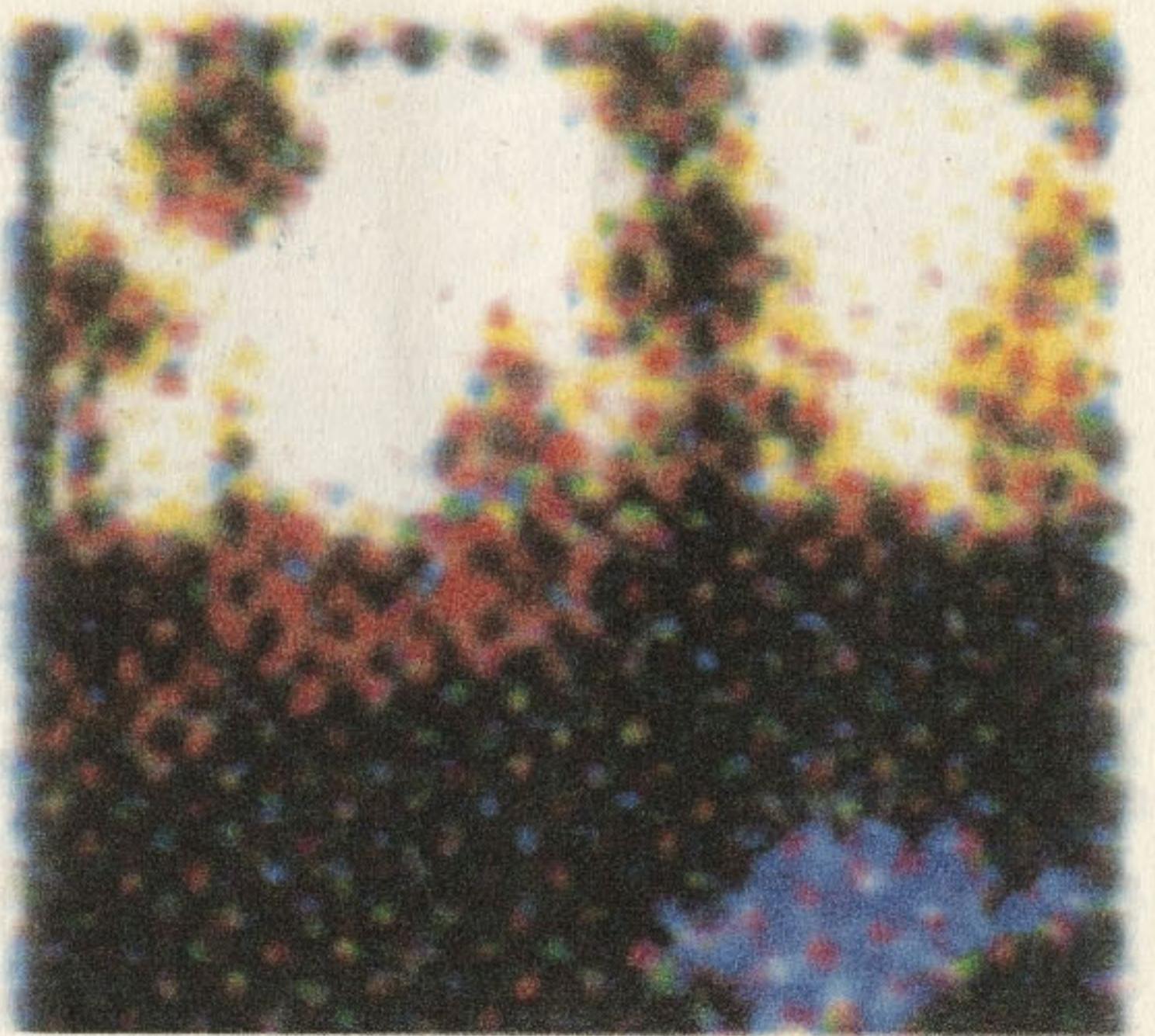


Building from the fusion foundation of , created an alluringly sophisticated album of with . With this record, Walter Becker and Donald Fagen began relying solely on studio musicians, which is evident from the immaculate sound of the album. Usually, such a studied recording method would drain the life out of each song, but that's not the case with , which actually benefits from the duo's perfectionist tendencies. Each song is given a glossy sheen, one that accentuates not only the stronger hooks, but also the precise technical skill of the professional musicians drafted to play the solos. Essentially, is a smoother version of , featuring the same cross-section of and . The lack of innovations doesn't hurt the record, since the songs are uniformly brilliant. Less overtly cynical than previous albums, the album still has its share of lyrical stingers, but what's really notable are the melodies, from the seductive of " " and the lazy of " " to the terse " " and mock calypso of " ". It's another excellent record in one of the most distinguished



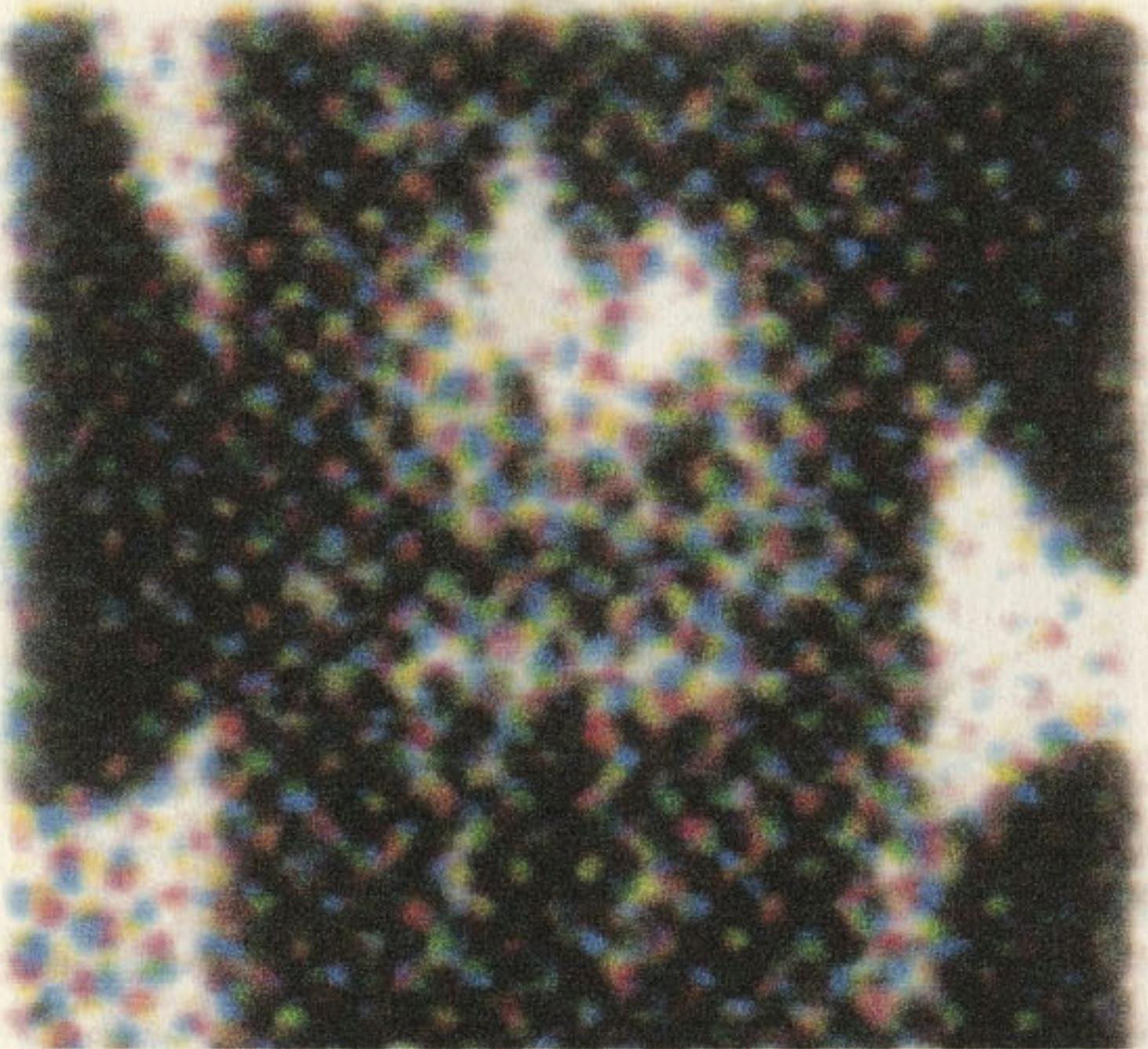
took 18 months between their fourth and fifth albums, reportedly spending eight months in the studio recording

The album was also their first to be made without Bernie Leadon, who had given the band much of its flavor, and with guitarist Joe Walsh. As a result, the album marks a major leap from their earlier work, as well as a stylistic shift toward mainstream . An even more important aspect, however, is the emergence of Don Henley as the band's dominant voice, both as a singer and a lyricist.

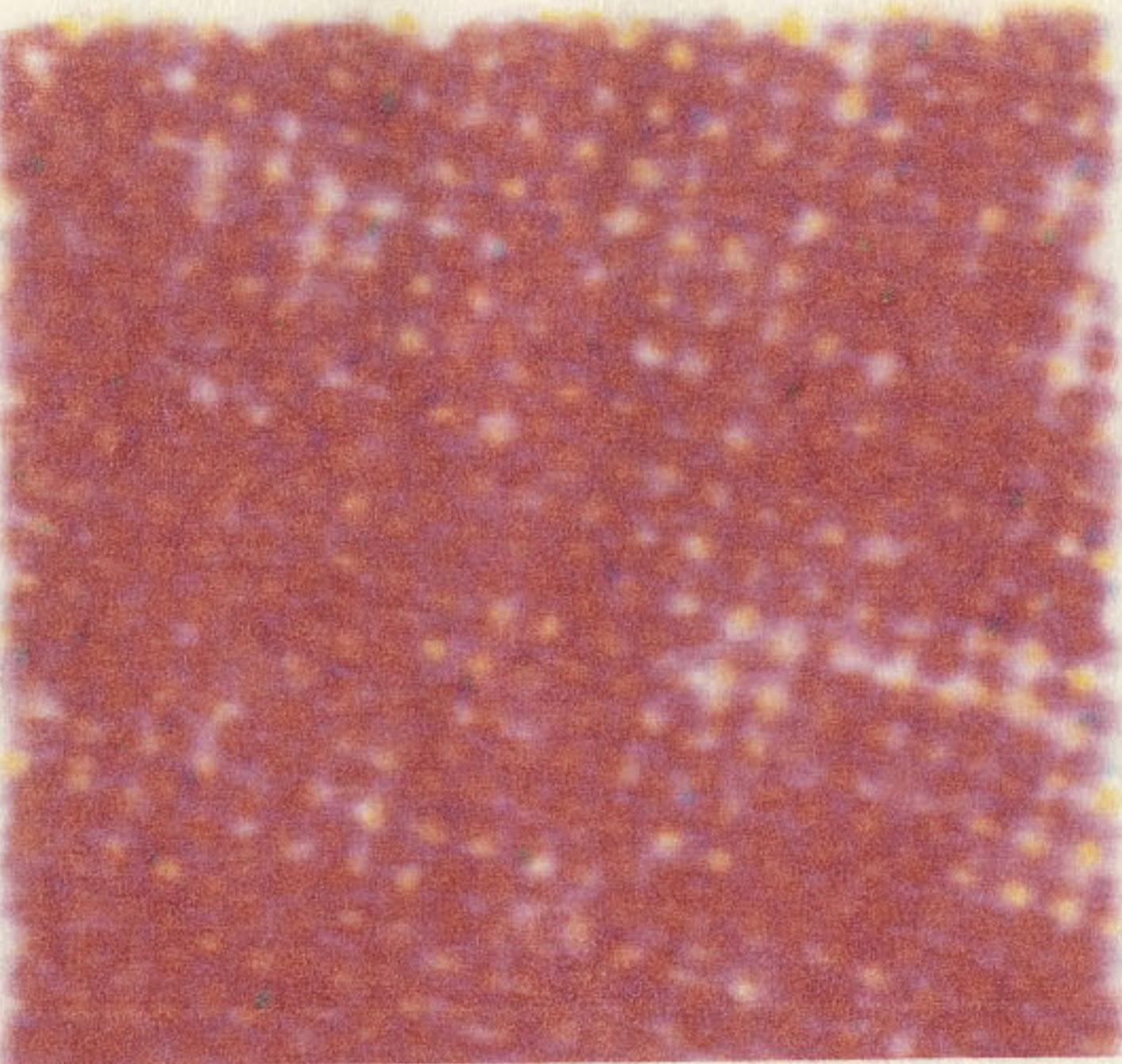


Although self-titled debut was an intriguing release (few bands at the time had the courage to mix modern , , and together), it paled in comparison to their now classic major-label release one year later.

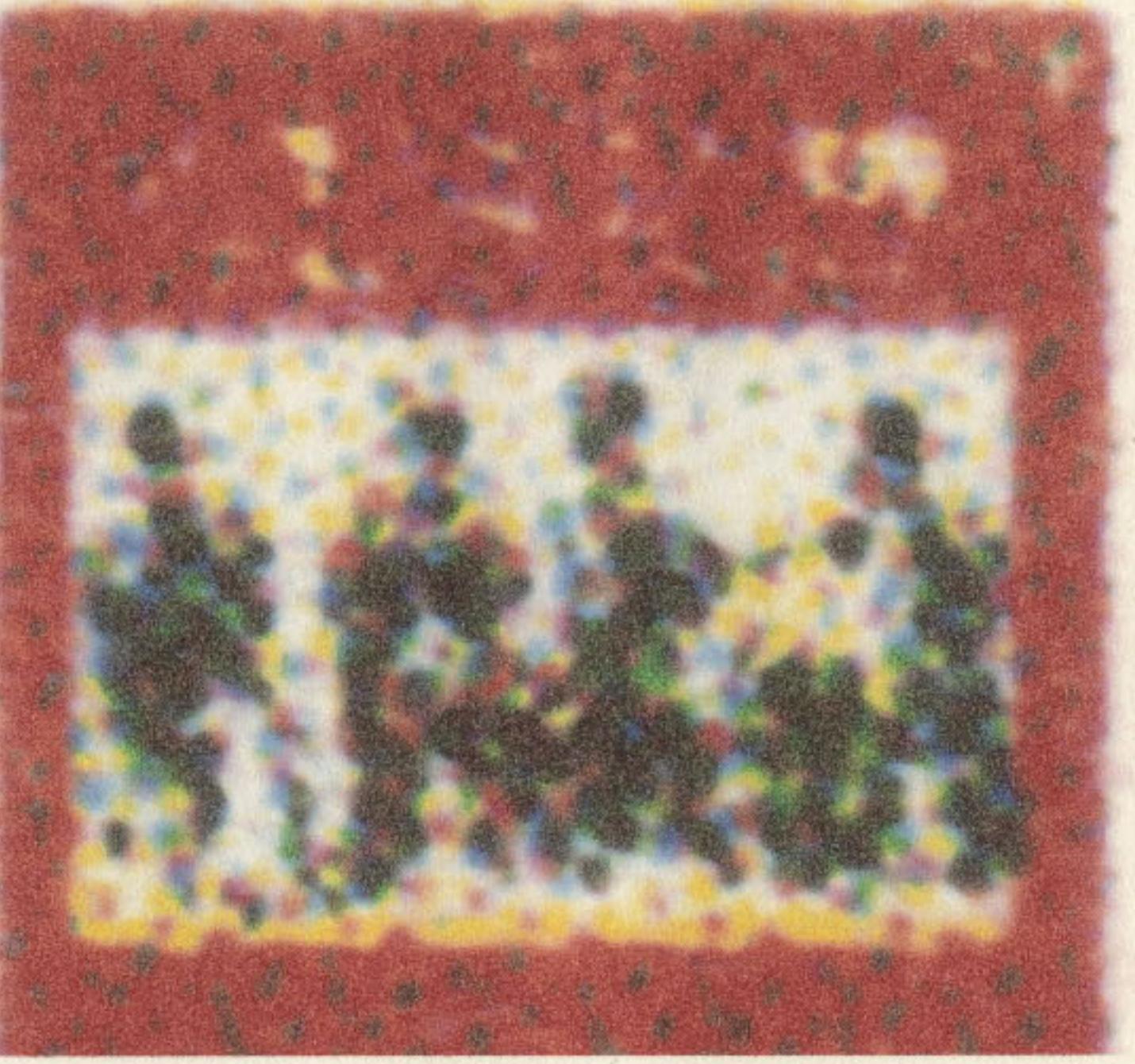
Produced by Dave Jerden and vocalist Perry Farrell, the album was more focused and packed more of a sonic wallop than its predecessor; the fiery performances often create an amazing sense that it could all fall apart at any second, creating a fantastic musical tension. Such tracks as "Up the Beach," "Ocean Size," and one of 's greatest anthems, "Mountain Song," contain the spaciousness created by the band's two biggest influences, and . Elsewhere, " , Just Admit It..." (about serial killer) and the haunting yet gorgeous "Summertime Rolls" stretched to epic proportions, making great use of changing moods and dynamics (something most bands of the time were oblivious to). An incredibly consistent and challenging album, other highlights included the "Had a Dad" and "Pigs in Zen," the horn-driven "Idiots Rule," the instrumental "Thank You Boys," and the up-tempo "Standing in the Shower...Thinking." Like most great bands, it was not a single member whose contribution was greater: Perry Farrell's unique voice and lyrics, Dave Navarro's guitar riffs and wailing leads, Eric Avery's sturdy basslines, and one of greatest and most powerful drummers, Stephen Perkins.



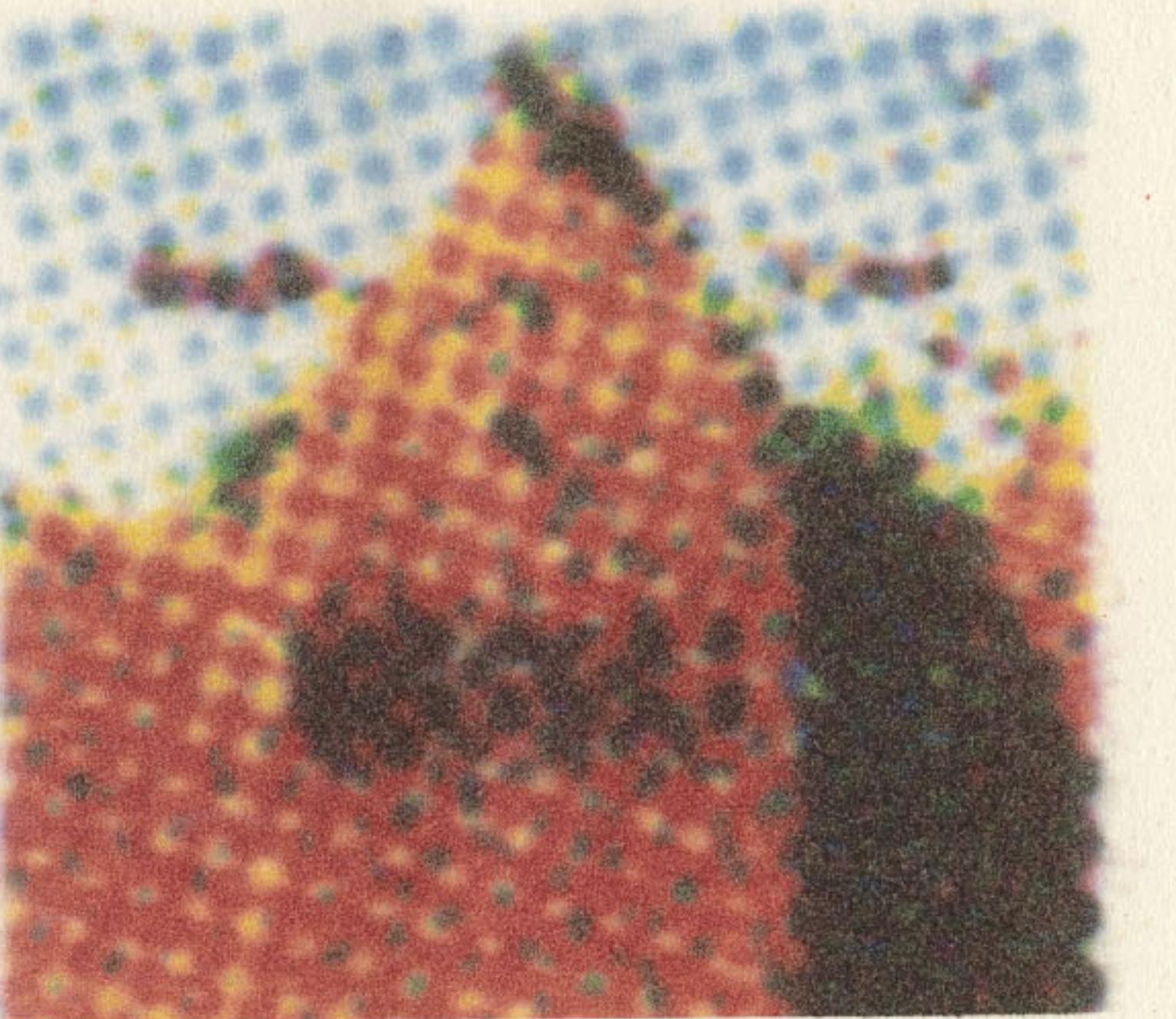
During - trumpeter made a series of little-known recordings with 's a decent singer and a hot comb player, was wise enough to give plenty of space on these 16 selections which also include some clarinet and tenor solos from Eddie Miller, Forrest Crawford and Babe Russin. Hot, if obscure, swing.



presents guitar and guitar related music, recorded across the world from Spain, to Papua New Guinea, Greece to Ghana to India and more. The collection is drawn from 's pioneering and remarkable personal collection of 78-rpm discs, recorded in the 's- 's.



is an aural tour through the heart of Mali. These field recordings were made by in while traveling throughout the West African country. This blend of Ngoni's, clamoring street sounds, the stunning voice of (of the famous family), passing radios, Fulani flutes, runaway sound systems and chants from the Dogon country creates a unique portrait of Mali's rich musical heritage. Eventually found himself in the backseat of a beat up Peugeot on his way to the village of Kela, a Jeli village, where the songs and traditions of the Mande people have been scrupulously preserved. Many of the musical performances heard on this disc were made during that visit. is a strikingly original tapestry of the ancient traditions of Mali in the modern era.



embraced of a range of styles - including , a fixation, and of course, the use of , on this reissue double LP Release on Colored Audiophile grade Vinyl, the album is remastered and re-released with additional tracks. (), (), and (). Known as the pioneers of the fusion of , and music, they were the first group to collaborate with a music producer.

