



TARGET

When you listen to Target's music—its clarity, its earthiness, its high-voltage electricity—you know you're hearing the real thing: a tough, tenacious rock & roll band. There's unmistakable virtuosity in Target's music, but it's manifested in a refreshingly straightforward way.

The listening is just fine, both in live performance and on the John Ryan-produced debut album, *Target*. The watching's fine, too, for all five of these young players from Memphis have the looks and moves of born rock & roll stars. The band members honed their music and moves in the little clubs of Memphis before joining up with Ruby Starr/Black Oak Arkansas-impresario Butch Stone and his Sweetater Enterprises. And when they were booked at the last minute to open bona fide concerts with such divergent bands as Loggins & Messina and Kiss, they didn't disappoint the fans who were expecting the Amazing Rhythm Aces or Dr. Feelgood. As a matter of fact, the crowds—and the critics—gave Target a better reception than they gave the headliners.

And when the band was signed by A&M Records, what did bass player Tommy Cathey say? "I don't

feel like I've grasped that whole thing, yet." That typically—genuinely—modest statement comes from a player who was recently described by *Memphis Press-Scimitar* reviewer Punch Shaw as the "backbone of the group (who) gives Target a unique bass sound because he is out front with leads and solos that would pale the mightiest guitarist."

Not to say that Target's guitarists—the group has two lead guitarists—are any slouches. They were lauded by the same critic this way: "Other groups use two guitarists but none work so effectively as Paul Cannon and Buddy Davis."

Then there's Jamison—vocalist—whose assertive style excludes the need for a keyboardist, his voice becoming yet another instrument of the band. He has that rare combination of pretty-boy good looks and dynamic presence on stage. And there's drummer David Spain, whose sure tempos keep Target on-target. As *Memphis Commercial Appeal* critic Walter Dawson put it, "... there's not a weak link among them."

All five worked with some of the greats of the business before joining up to become Target: From Cathey, who has worked as a much-in-demand

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Biography

studio musician and who lists John Prine's *Common Sense* and Yvonne Elliman's *Rising Sun* among his most recent credits; to Jamison, who enjoyed a hit single, "If I Cry," at the ripe age of 17; to Davis, who has recorded with Alamo, Luther Ingram, and David Porter and who has performed live with the likes of Z.Z. Top, Freddie King, and Charlie Daniels; to Cannon, who spent three years as staff guitarist for Steve Cropper's TMI Productions and performed live with Poco, Sly & the Family Stone, B.B. King, and the Staple Singers; to Spain, who has performed with Allan Rich and Pure Prairie League.

A-year-and-a-half ago they officially got together and formed the Target that exists today. It wasn't

easy—it never is when you're trying to do something right. Jamison and Tommy got together first and even five years ago knew they would one day be destined to work together full-time. Then came Buddy Davis, who floated in and out, did stints elsewhere and then, three years ago, came home to Memphis and joined Jamison and Tommy. Marius Penczner, keyboardist for Ruby Starr, joined them for a while, then left to team up with the prestigious Black Oak Arkansas. More trial and error. Then, enter David Spain. And Paul Cannon (at 27, the oldest of the group), with whom Tommy had been impressed for a long, long time. "I used to marvel at him," he remembers. Target is now primed and ready to fire—so take cover.