



JULY 1981

MPG

Everyone in our generation—it's the same thing. When you heard 'I Want To Hold Your Hand' for the first time, you got hooked on that positive magic. We play because it feels good. What is life without music, anyway?" quips Steve Carey, songwriter/vocalist/keyboard player for MPG. As for the five goal-oriented members of MPG, life would not be reaching its potential had it not been for music, as their self-titled debut album proves. A lyrically optimistic endeavor with no pretensions, Carey says of the album: "I wanted to make positive statements people could relate to; it just happened many of the songs are love songs. But it helps to know truths and write about them."

MPG has been together for two and one-half years, developing their high-octane blend of rock with a rhythm and blues feel, at a proving ground for the new cosmopolitan sound coming out of Atlanta: the Bistro. The small club, tucked away in the shadows of Atlanta's skyline, has given bands a chance to develop and cultivate a new sound as the South enters the eighties—one removed from the duelling guitars and boogie atmosphere so prevalent in bands of the past.

"We played that music in copy bands while growing up in the South. We're over it now," explains drummer Michael Bolt. "At the Bistro," he continues, describing how the new sound of pop and R&B origins with distinctive urban overtones was forged, "everyone was influenced by each other—egging each other on to really work."

Originally, Carey, Bolt, and bass player Steve Locklin toured the East Coast club circuit until they ended up playing original jazz in an Atlanta nightspot. Night after night, an old man known only as "Miles" would come in to see them perform. By the time they had moved to the Bistro, where guitarists Kim Smith and David Mikeal joined them, they became known as the Miles band because of the old man's patronage. Yet they didn't feel the name fit their image; therefore, out of deference to their patron, and to maintain the tremendous following they had built around the name, Miles, they changed their name to MPG.

A few months later, record companies began courting what had become known as the Bistro bands. Remembers Carey: "A&M saw the same potential in us as we see in ourselves," and MPG was signed. MPG spent six weeks recording their nine-song album at Axis Studios in Atlanta and Davlen Studios in Los Angeles, with Tom Knox and Carey co-producing. The result? A melodic, finely-honed collection of Carey compositions with "a style that only comes with experience and from weeding out the bad," as Carey sees the music. "We'll keep working, however long it takes, to get across what we do best."

