

KENNY HENSON — Let us Become Man (A Multi-Media Human Symphony)

by DUNCAN GIBBON

ALTHOUGH this album was recorded in 1975 and 1976 at the time of writing it has yet to be released. It is an album that has not dated, but it would be daft to delay its release much longer.

I've known Kenny for about 10 years now, and I think the frustration I've felt about his recorded work has been felt by many others. On a good night Kenny can be magic; yet every-time he's headed into the studio, very little sparkle has emerged.

Which is a long-winded way of saying that this is the first really satisfying recording by K. Henson Esq. The album is not merely satisfying — it's very, very good.

The album is mainly instrumental with small segments of narration by Ramsay McKay, and vocals by Maralin Van Reenen. Colin Pratley, Mike Dickman and Andrew Tracey contribute brief passages but the bulk of the instruments are handled by Kenny — guitars, keyboards, percussion etc — and the material

is Henson composed. Along with Nino Rivera, Kenny also produced the album, and he's obviously his own best producer.

The recorded work demands concentrated listening — it could never be mere background music — and it impresses more with repeated listening. Its major strengths are freshness and vitality — it never lags nor does it become tedious — a criticism levelled by many against *Tubular Bells*. Guitar work dominates most of the tracks, and there are many

inspired moments — at last on vinyl.

I could go on, but this record is music to listen to, rather than to talk or write about. I firmly believe that this is the finest record ever to emerge from a South African studio, by one of our most talented musicians, and I hope that it will be available soon. Both Kenny and Warners must have been extremely pleased with the outcome of this album — let's hope it reaches a wide audience in the near future.