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Editorial

There have always been a multiplicity of record labels in the shops. But this did not always mean that there were a large number of record companies, as so many of you were very well aware. The four major companies just had several labels each. Phillips and Fontana were the same outfit; Capitol, M.G.M., Parlophone, Columbia etc., all came from E.M.I. and so on.

But the position has changed very much during the past few years. Polydor, Track, Island, Elektra and many other independents have set up, found their own artists and control their own destinies. All of which has brought a much greater number of opportunities for the group seeking a recording contract.

The extraordinary development of the LP cover has also been helped by this new trend because the competition for album sales in the record shop has intensified so much.

The tremendous thought that has gone into many covers is obvious. But, like the really way-out group names that have been thought up over the past few years, one wonders if it hasn't gone too far. It's very difficult now to produce an outstanding LP cover, just as it is almost impossible to think up a group name which would shock or startle any more.

But the really healthy fact about all these trends is that people are now buying albums more for the sounds that they are going to hear and not, as so often happened before, for the name on the cover.

For some time now we've felt that "Beat Instrumental" should extend its coverage by adding more pages but, of course, that also meant upping the cover price. Before doing anything, therefore, we carried out a survey among a sample of our readers and the almost universal answer was "Yes, we'd like more pages." So, starting next month with the October issue, "Beat Instrumental" will be bigger than ever before for the new cover price of 4/-.

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WILL THEY 'GET BACK' TOO FAR?

Although the Beatles' new LP *Abbey Road* is being released in September, "Beat Instrumental" gives you a very early look at the songs on their next LP which is scheduled for Christmas.

SUCCESSFUL recording artists can be divided into three main types. First, the "stick with the successful formula" ones who hit a winning streak of chart successes and keep on producing variations of the same type of record. The Hollies are a perfect example. The tune and arrangement of their records may vary, but the basic sound of their hit discs over the past six years has remained the same.

The second main group could be called the slow changers. These start off by getting success with some particular sound or style and then change this very slowly and gradually as the years pass, adapting themselves to the changing audience and their own increasing years. Elvis is the perfect example of the slow changer.

There are very few artists who belong to the third category. Indeed, it is difficult to think of even half-a-dozen. But they are the most important of all, because they usually succeed in introducing big revolutionary changes. The Beatles, of course, are the perfect example. Let's call them the 'constant innovators'.

Perhaps in the Beatle-mania days they could have been said to be

slow changers in that their first ten or so singles and half-a-dozen or so LPs were basically produced along the same formula, but during the past three years, almost everything they have done has been different.

But, like all constant innovators, the Beatles are always under tremendous pressure, because they are expected to do something different every single time. Undoubtedly, they have found it tremendously hard to keep up to their avowed intention of producing 14 (or their equivalent) worthwhile songs on every LP.

But no-one should forget the debt we owe to the Beatles. When the "big four" record companies ruled the market, albums were all too often produced to cash in on the success of a single hit, and the inevitable LP that followed a first-ever hit by a new artist normally included the hit song amongst its tracks plus, of course, the "B" side.

And worst of all, the other 12 tracks, if the artist managed to produce that many, were often very inferior songs which had been discarded by the A & R man as potential future singles. It was very rare to find an LP with new songs on it which were

worth listening to.

The Beatles changed all that by insisting that every song on their LPs should be there because it deserved to be, and not because they couldn't think of anything else to fill up the gap.

And they kept it up with an incredible string of magnificent successes like *Revolver*, *Rubber Soul*, *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* and, of course, the very simply titled *The Beatles*—their famous double album.

But it must be getting harder, and the fact that they have decided to put back the release of their *Get Back* album until later in the year might be a sign of the strain they are under.

Get Back is a very interesting LP because it does very little that is new. The Beatles have returned to their original simple line-up—the only extra musician being Billy Preston on keyboard—to produce a series of tracks which are very reminiscent of their early type of recording.

Sockless Beatles

The big difference on this album is that they have left in all the sounds and "between-take" noises which are normally cut out. As their long-time helper, Mal Evans, says: "It's the Beatles with their socks off." The aim is to make the listener feel that he is right in the Apple studio while the song is being recorded.

The "extra" sounds and noises give an intimate and friendly glimpse of their activities in the recording studio, with the Beatles yelling instructions from the studio floor to producer George Martin and engineer Geoffrey Emerick, and passing odd comments to friends and buddies



How much of a back seat will Ringo, George and John take in future?



Paul in the studio which has given the Beatles most of their big hits—EMI's No. 2, St. John's Wood

But already there are murmurs of discontent from many hard-core Beatle followers who are asking why the boys want to "get back" at all. This very vocal section can see only one direction for their idols, and that is forward. They must progress all the time, and this new LP is also very similar to their early LPs in that all the electronic tricks and effects that the boys have perfected over the past six years have been largely ignored. Mostly it is just three guitars and drums plus straightforward echo on the mikes.

Even the album sleeve is a re-hash of a photograph taken by an EMI staff man in front of their office block in Manchester Square over six years ago.

What about the actual tracks on *Get Back*. Well, more time was spent on these tracks than on, for example, the songs on *Please Please Me*, their best-ever LP, which was recorded in one very long session.

The boys may change the order before the LP is actually released, but four songs are, to me, outstanding. The title number, *Get Back*, which finishes the album's first side and is heard again very briefly at the end of side 2. *One After Ninety-Nine* is the album's opener, and Paul raves through the lyric in his famous "wild rocker"

style which we all know from *I'm Down* and *Long Tall Sally*. It's a straightforward rock-and-roll number which the Beatles crop up with pretty regularly and always do well.

For You Blue is George Harrison's main offering. George has never managed to produce the kind of memorable songs that Lennon & McCartney write, but this one is a pretty good try. And there's not a sitar to be heard.

Standard

Let It Be should become another McCartney standard. I say McCartney and not Lennon & McCartney because it's an obvious "Paul" song and although the Lennon & McCartney tag has always given blanket coverage to the majority of John and Paul's songs, one would have preferred to know who actually conceived each number.

Save The Last Dance and *Maggie May* are revivals of well known numbers—something one didn't expect the boys to bother with when they have so much original creativity at their disposal.

The other numbers like *Dig A Pony*, *I've Got A Feeling*, *Teddy Boy* are all handled adequately but not outstandingly. *Two Of Us* is a number

which has also been recorded by a new Apple signing, Mortimer.

While we are waiting for the record buyers' verdict on *Get Back*, the Beatles are busy recording more numbers which they may release on a "quickie" LP before *Get Back*.

Meanwhile, the individualism is creeping in. Everyone knows that Ringo is the Beatle who is fast becoming a film star, following his roles in "Candy" and "The Magic Christian". John, George and Paul are competing on a rather different level, which curiously enough also cuts across their work as Beatles.

George, who didn't have much success with Jackie Lomax, has hit the jackpot with Billy Preston. John's recording half is Yoko Ono. But while the *Ballad of Yoko Ono* and their Plastic Band has roared to chart success, Yoko's own vocal effort has not been very well received.

Paul has notched up huge sales with Mary Hopkin, who looks set for a bright future.

But this does pose problems for the individual Beatles because, if they are going to devote a great deal of their time and energies to promoting other artists, isn't this going to affect their own recording efforts together.

S.M.



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PLAYER OF THE MONTH

MICK TAYLOR



MICK Taylor was remarkably cool, considering his remarkable "promotion" to the ranks of the Rolling Stones. His place in pop history, anyway, is assured—first new man to be enlisted in either of the two outstanding groups of all time . . . Beatles and Stones.

Mick is a sandy-haired, knowledgeable young man, born January 17 1949, and educated at Onslow Secondary Modern School in Hatfield, Hertfordshire. He was, he reckons, pretty adept at toy trumpet solo work at the age of three, but guitar was the first instrument he really studied.

He's self-taught. "I learned by listening to records. I used to like to listen to the American blues guitarists, then see what I could copy. Now I just like listening to all kinds of music—yes, classical as well. I've been buying classical things for quite a while now—Sibelius, Debussy-Ravel, modern classical music. But I don't listen to much music that comes from before the 19th century.

"No, I don't read music. I don't think it affects song-writing—if you get a good idea for a song, you can still do it, if you want. But it's a good thing to read music, all the same.

"I've always wished I could play the piano. But it's the sort of thing you should start when you are young. I'll probably never get round to it now and, anyway, now I just want to go on developing my guitar work."

Big time

The sheer speed of hitting the big-time leaves Mick suitably breathless and bemused. For a short time he was an engraver, then a labourer, then he joined the Gods. Later he joined John Mayall's Bluesbreakers, replacing Peter Green. Two years later came the call to join the Stones. Mick, of course, was still at school when the Stones started hitting the charts. And at the time of being invited to replace Brian Jones, he'd never even seen the group play live.

Said Mick: "I've collected quite a few guitars during my life. Seven, I think. There's a Gibson Firebird, two Gibson Les Pauls, a Fender Telecaster, a Martin acoustic, a Fender Stratocaster . . . and the other one I honestly can't remember at the moment.

"The various influences are all from the American blues greats. As for writing . . . well, I've really only just started. I haven't done anything good yet, but I feel I could do so. At the moment, I write just for myself—nobody else in mind".

He admits it was strange at first playing with the Stones. But he'd always "been aware" of their music and approach. He was told that there would be plenty of gigs in future, as opposed to the Stone's near-retirement of the previous years—and that news pleased fans as much as Mick Taylor himself.

As for security, Mick says simply: "That doesn't worry me so much. Security implies a fear of what is to come. I believe, right now, that you can live quite happily without getting into a panic about what might happen tomorrow."

Incidentally, the new Rolling Stone doesn't drink, is a vegetarian and is not interested in drugs. He's interested only in making a worthwhile contribution to the British music scene. And he's certainly in a strong position to do just that.

P.G.

JON HISEMAN COLUMN



I AM starting to write this month's article aboard a ship bound for Harwich from Copenhagen. Denmark is a country I, and the band, always enjoy.

The most amazing thing is the fact that the Danish public are the most discerning audience in Europe.

Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Germany and France all have teen magazines which churn out uninformed mush at weekly intervals—so, of course, has England except that there are some very worth while magazines to save the situation.

Denmark, however, only has one monthly magazine of its own and for the rest relies upon the English MM, NME and its own daily newspapers. The arrival of a group like Colosseum heralds a press reception—photos, interviews, etc., and the next day presto! total coverage in all their daily papers—serious discussion of our expressed views and large photos.

We were asked to do a TV show. Naturally, we assumed that we would be hustled in, not told what was happening until the last moment, and then called up to mime to our latest record. But no, they gave us a 25-minute show and simply left us to it—literally gave us a studio, producer and technicians, asked us what numbers we would be doing, explained that 30 seconds either end of the 25 minutes was a period for credits, pointed out the clock and we got on with it.

Naturally, this resulted in a very relaxed and musically worth while show, sympathetic camera work, fine sound and 25 minutes of peak-time viewing devoted to us, who in the English establishment's eyes would be no more than just another pop group.

Altogether, this is the sort of environment I was brought up to imagine existed for jazz musicians in America, but now, I realise, does not.



third ear band

"THREE classical heads and a hand-drummer"—Glen Sweeney's own description of the Third Ear Band. Glen is the band's drummer, probably its spokesman, and is the only man I've ever met who's an admirer of Sonny Murray. (Jazz fiends will remember that Murray was the drummer who caused a hoo-ha at a Festival Hall Drum Workshop a couple of years back by being apparently unable to play drums.)

Third Ear are causing their own stir at clubs throughout the country, and of all the "underground" groups remain the most subterranean. Their instrumentation is probably unique among bands working the clubs: there is Glen on regular drums and an assortment of hand-drums, Richard Coff on violin and viola, Paul Minns on oboe, recorder and a variety of whistles and flutes, and a mysterious girl called Ursula who plays cello. The band is entirely acoustic, has no vocalist and totally defies categorisation.

The biggest audience so far for Third Ear's music was undoubtedly at the Stone's Hyde Park concert, but the story started some time before that. In its present form the band has been going since last September, and it was really Jim Haynes of the Arts Lab who put them in business with a three nights a week booking at the Drury Lane scene of many a happening.

With Dylan

Since then the number of gigs has been steadily rising, until, as Glen says, "about the only band we haven't done a gig with is the Beatles." By the time this goes to press they should have done the Isle of Wight date with Dylan—and there aren't many British bands who have played on the same bill as that little-seen maestro.

I met Glen and Richard Coff in a chrome-and-spilt-tea Notting Hill café, whose atmosphere did nothing to dampen their obvious enthusiasm for their music. (Paul Minns and the mysterious Ursula had apparently mystically disappeared for the day.)

What about the music? Why violins, etc.? Was there any truth in the rumour that they had sent entire audiences to sleep with subtly devised drones? Glen and Richard quickly cleared away some of the misconceptions that surround their music. Definitions of their music have ranged from "a fusion of East and West" to "musical mysticism." Glen explained: "We play intuitive music. There are all sorts

of elements in it, folk, classical; we draw on the entire musical spectrum. But there again, our music is not made up of parts, it's whole in itself. We're a heavy band, I suppose, even though we're acoustic."

Richard took up the thread: "Our music is based on improvisation, but not in the jazz sense. Whereas jazz musicians usually use chord structures or at least modes, we use a basic drone sound. This is why so many people compare us to Indian and other Eastern musicians." Didn't lack of amplification make for some snags when playing in clubs? "Sometimes, but we find that people usually stop whatever they're doing and sit down and listen, especially more recently as we're becoming more 'accepted', if you like. There again, as far as electronic effects are concerned, you can top them on violin or cello by using what's known as the ponticello technique. There's some really freaky sounds in a violin."

Both Richard and Glen were at pains to point out that their recent LP *Alchemy* was not representative of the band as it now is. "We made that album in 16 hours flat, and at the time we were under a certain amount of stress and strain. We were deeper into the mystical thing then too, and we want to avoid that sort of label now."

In what way is the band developing or will it develop? Both agreed that nothing could be planned: "The band develops organically—when one thing is exhausted we go on to whatever is coming next. It's the same with individual numbers. We may do something on a gig that's OK, so we keep it in. If it's not, we throw it out."

Like an increasing number of musicians in bands, Richard, Paul and the mysterious Ursula were classically trained—but regard the training only as a springboard to enable them to do things their own way. Said Richard: "If you want to play free, in a way you have to throw that kind of training overboard. But it can be useful in that it gives you an insight into a certain type of technique."

If any band in Britain can be accused of "doing their own thing", the Third Ear Band is surely it. Their strange, idiosyncratic sound is only just beginning to get to the people—but of those who have heard it, many are hooked. The Third Ear Band in the charts is an incredible but delightful idea—let's all try and fix it.

C.H.T.

STATESIDE REPORT

STEADILY becoming recognised as a unique exponent of blues in America is the talented 44-year-old black artist Clifton Chenier. Louisiana-born Chenier has been playing blues and Cajun music professionally with his band for the past 15 years, but his fame as a gifted musician has been restricted primarily to home fans and the few outsiders who have been fortunate enough to fall under his magic.

Chenier's musical tool is an accordion, an instrument that

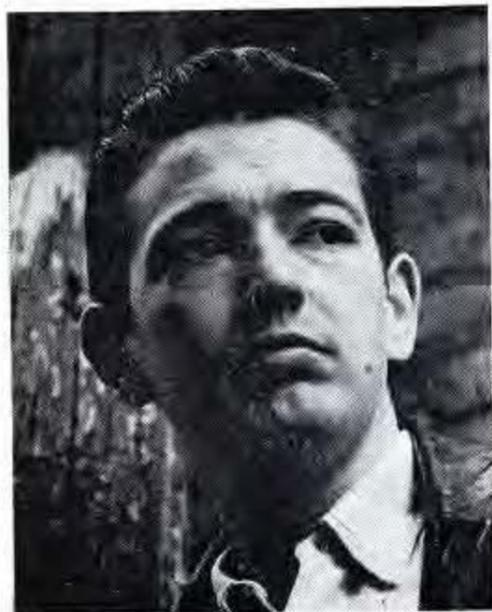
Louisiana Cajun music, is practised faithfully, and Chenier is considered one of the finest Zydeco performers around.

Fusion

The blues that he plays today is a fusion of traditional country blues and Zydeco, a peculiar-sounding amalgam that he first heard performed more than 30 years ago by his predecessors. Chenier's early blues influences were Amade Ardoin (the first Negro to play blues accordion), Sidney Babineaux, and a few other black musicians from the Zydeco belt. It was in the 1940s when they were most popular that Chenier became fascinated and influenced by their works.

One can't imagine the possibilities of an accordion in the blues until one has heard Chenier—accordion up front, swinging and swaying over a heavy bass line. He's adept with his instrument, and has the knack for transforming the aged blues into a young and exciting expression. The accordion, it seems, definitely has its place in the blues.

Chenier records on Arhoolie Records (Box 9195, Berkeley), a small company in California that specialises in recordings by a number of old black bluesmen. He has three albums presently on release, including a new one called *Black Snake Blues*. They're worthwhile recordings



Charlie Musslewhite
—new line-up

has never been exploited as a blues vehicle, except by a small number of local musicians of the Louisiana-Texas Gulf Coast. In this region, Zydeco, a dance music that is an offspring of



Clifton Chenier, blues accordion exponent
with Arhoolie Records

that should be of special interest to collectors of the blues.

What have the young Chicago blues bands and musicians been doing these days? Some of the groups have undergone several changes, and a handful of the musicians have gone out and started new bands of their own.

Paul Butterfield, the most famous of these young blues-makers, is still heading his band, though most of the original personnel have been replaced. A new LP is now in the works at Elektra.

Maugh showcase

Bugsy Maugh, who recently left Butterfield, has released his first solo LP on Dot Records. Maugh was limited to bass guitar and a few vocal exhibitions with Butterfield; he felt that he could develop as singer on his own. The LP, titled *Inside Bugsy*, showcases Maugh as a singer, backed by a nine-piece band.

Another former member of Butterfield's band, Elvin Bishop, is now heading his own group in the San Francisco area. Besides lead guitarist Bishop, the band includes Applejack Walruth on harp and occasional bass; John Chambers on drums;

Art Stavro on bass; and Steve Miller, formerly the outstanding singer/organist for Linn County, on keyboards. All members of the band take turns on vocals, and their first album is almost ready for release.

Charlie Musslewhite—vocalist, harmonica player, and leader of his own blues band—has a new lineup that includes Jack Roulette on steel guitar Jack Meyers on bass, Meyers on guitar, Skip Rose on keyboards, and Fred Below, Jr. on drums. Roulette, Below, and the Meyers brothers are black musicians that have been around for a long time. Below has been with Musslewhite since the band began a few years ago, and Jack Meyers played and recorded a good deal with Buddy Guy. It is a tribute to Musslewhite that such fine and experienced musicians have chosen to back him. Musslewhite's original guitarist, Harvey Mandel, departed from the blues to experiment with his guitar. He already has two albums on Phillips.

As for Mike Bloomfield, he is with Nick Gravenites near San Francisco, jamming when the mood hits him and paying some dues to the black musicians who inspired him. He produced Otis Rush's last LP,
(continued on page 27)



Get Your Group Together

PART 6: MAKING YOUR FIRST DEMO DISC

Very few artists go into a recording studio for the very first time without being tremendously impressed by the sound that comes out of the speakers when they hear the play-back of something that they have just recorded.

But that beautiful sound can be very misleading. The conditions in any modern-day recording studio are well nigh sound perfect. They must be, otherwise it wouldn't be a recording studio. That means that the equipment and speakers are really first-class.

But, if you really want to know how your recording will sound on a normal record player or transistor radio, then ask the sound engineer to play it back through their small speaker. Most studios do have this built into their equipment somewhere. It's just a normal rough little speaker, the same as you find in a poor quality record player or radio, and it therefore gives you a very good idea of what your recording will sound like to the ordinary bloke in the street.

But when you go in to make your first demo disc, you are not aiming to make a master tape. The whole object of the exercise is to produce a recording which will demonstrate either a song or your own group's sound to a potential recording manager and

the first problem is always what song to choose?

We have discussed this thorny issue many times in "B.I." before. If you have been able to come up with a really unusual and ear-catching arrangement for an old number, then it might be worth doing. But generally speaking, today's A & R men are looking for something new, and that can only mean new songs.

If they sign up a group who have no original material, then the A & R man is stuck with the job of finding a song for them. So what he is always looking for is a good group with first-class instrumentalists, a different sounding singer or singers, and good, tuneful, original material.

A good song

There are so many people writing songs these days that finding material is no problem. It's choosing a good song from all the numbers that are offered to you that is so important.

The next problem is the arrangement. Here again, originality is everything. Take, for example, Mary Hopkin's *Those Were The Days*". If you listen to the words of the song you will quickly realise it would be much better sung by a deep-voiced baritone because, frankly, the words are straight out of an old-fashioned musical. But with a clever arrangement and Mary Hopkin's sweet voice, Paul McCartney produced a modern sounding disc. And even Joe Cocker managed to transform *With A Little Help From My Friends* so that many people thought it was better than the Beatles' original.

There are all sorts of rules one can give about arrangements but they have all been broken so many times—and so successfully—that one wonders if there are any rules at all that really count. But for your first demo disc, one should try and keep the basic arrangement idea simple. In other words, once you have hit on the basic rhythmic pattern to run right through the number, or patterns if there are more than one, then try and think up a few alternative arrangement ideas which really stand out and then leave it at that.

So many demo discs just consist of everyone playing all the time, as somebody once put it. And these seldom add up to a good sound.

Your first visit to a recording studio will be a fascinating experience depending, of course, upon the amount of equipment available. If you can afford to use one of the major independents, tremendous possibilities are open to you. In fact, so much can be done in the large recording studio that it sometimes baffles the beginner, who finds it difficult to know what to use and what not to use.

The only way to realise one's full potential, of course, is to make a series of demo discs and choose the best of the bunch when you have finished. It can be very expensive, but, you never know, you may find a master tape amongst them when you have finished.

Next month, we will talk to you about the all-important business of selling your group to a recording manager.



THREE INTO ONE --- WILL GO

IMAGINE it. You are playing in one of the country's top five groups, every record a hit, the bread rolling in, the girls screaming. You are truly a pop star, but you feel you are stuck in a rut; perhaps you want to move on to new material, perhaps you need a complete change of direction. In that situation it takes a lot of courage to leave the group and cast your fate to the wind, for it's too easy to think of the many pop artists who have made this step, only to disappear from the scene.

Buffalo Springfield had split up. Graham Nash, still with the Hollies, happened by and the three of them sat chatting for a while, picked up their machines and started playing. Immediately they knew that they had stumbled on the combination they all wanted and then and there they started laying plans for an album, in spite of the fact that they were all contracted to different record companies.

The three of them took it from there, signed to Atlantic and

July to Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young with the addition of ex-Buffalo Springfield guitarist Neil Young (who has recorded a solo album for Reprise, *Everybody Knows This Is Nowhere*) and Buffalo Springfield's first bassist Bruce Palmer. This makes the group six-strong, including three ex-Springfield members. Provided the tensions that split the Springfield don't re-occur, the musical adventures should continue with Britain's Graham Nash at the centre of it all.

CROSBY, STILLS & NASH

But sometimes it works, as it has for Graham Nash, who left the secure success of the Hollies to team up with ex-Byrd Dave Crosby and ex-Buffalo Springfield Steve Stills. At first sight this seems a strange combination of talent, for the Hollies were and still are essentially a hit-parade group, whereas Crosby and Stills have a slightly different musical heritage. Yet Graham Nash made the leap and it turns out to be a leap forwards, as you can judge from Crosby, Stills and Nash's first album which contains the highly successful Nash composition *Marrakesh Express*.

The origins

It all started in a living room in California's Laurel Canyon one afternoon late last summer. Dave Crosby was working on new songs for a solo album following his departure from the Byrds, and Steve Stills was sitting around wondering what to do now that

re-assembled early this year to start work on the album. They were happy sessions in an enthusiastic atmosphere as strands of Byrds, Buffalo Springfield and Hollies twisted together to produce something entirely new. As they worked on one song, Dave Crosby suddenly found his voice: "I finally found my voice," he said. "I sang harmony with the Byrds because I didn't know how to do anything else. Every time I had a lead vocal I choked up because I was scared."

At another time, Donovan dropped into the studio, listened to the tapes, started dancing round the studio, and soon everyone was sat around singing an impromptu and approximate version of *Hey Jude*. They were that sort of sessions and the atmosphere of three guys working together comes across on record.

Also playing on the album is ex-Clear Light drummer Dallas Taylor who is playing regularly with the group that expanded in

And just why did Graham chance his arm by leaving the Hollies to join up with Crosby and Stills? He recalls "They wanted to do that album of Dylan songs, you know, make them real commercial, and I just had no enthusiasm for it. And when I was in L.A. we all sat down and played together and it sounded so beautiful I knew I'd want to do it."

Taking a chance

"It was a big risk for me. It's hard to be sure of what financial level you're going to be able to maintain and it was hard for me to leave the Hollies for that reason."

Graham knew he was taking a chance leaving his money in England and going to play with Stills and Crosby but he took it. The reason was the best possible of all reasons: "It's what I want—at least it is for now."

M.H.

FAMILY DOGG

a new way of life

A HIT record can change a lot of ideas. Until recently, the Family Dogg was something of a part time activity for its members. All five had extra interests, mostly within the music field, and the Dogg made no live appearances. *Way Of Life* for the group has meant TV dates—both home and abroad—and the stepping up of rehearsals for their proposed first concert.

Already, the increased schedule has enforced a change of personnel. Doreen De Veuve who works as a Fashion designer, and also sings with BBC Choirs, has left. And Christine Holmes has taken her place.

Steve Rowland, leader of the Family Dogg, explained "When you have a hit record, it's easy to find people who want to sing with you, but it's difficult to get the right person. Christine is a real professional. She is always 100 per cent for the group. She wants to be a solo singer but as long as she is with us she will make Family Dogg as good as the group can be, and so help herself."

Steve is well known for his hit productions for Dave Dee, The Herd and the Magic Lanterns. However, he is reducing the amount of producing he is doing and will have more time to concentrate on the Dogg world.

"I've just produced new records for Cupid's Inspiration and The Herd," he said, "but I've dropped Dave Dee, P. J. Proby, the Magic Lanterns and Los Bravos. I think it unfair to have their careers rest in my hands as producer when I know in my heart I haven't the time to devote. I have to pass. There are five members of this group and everybody has to put up their end."

"Zoocy" is the other girl in the Family Dogg, and she sings the highest harmony line. She also works as a session singer and tours as a backing voice.

Mike Hazelwood and Albert Hammond create the third part of the harmony. Mike described how the group first came together: "Steve worked in Spain about three years ago doing clubs with a group. Albert worked with another group there. He then came to England with yet another group, and I was asked to write some material for them. Albert played me some songs, but, being Spanish, his English lyrics weren't very good, so I wrote some lyrics for his tunes. Together we took some material along to Steve."

"Some of our material has been used by the Family Dogg, but I

don't think a writer should have anything to say about what a group records. Steve makes all these sorts of decisions."

Mike and Albert came up with the hit *Little Arrows* which has sold about four million copies for Leapy Lee. They also wrote Joe Dolan's *Make Me An Island* and *I'm A Train* for the Colours of Love.

"I think it's important to keep a song simple and the subject matter wide open," he continued. "In this way many more people will be able to find a meaning in the song. In *Little Arrows*, I don't think we used a word of more than two syllables. I think the lyrics are as important as the tune but they mustn't get in the way. It's a matter of writing the first half so that people know the second half without hearing it. Then they can sing along."

"One thing I noticed is that it helps enormously to get a play on 'Family Favourites'. Both *Little Arrows* and *Way Of Life* seemed to start to move after that."

Mike sees his songs as pop-country influenced and of no deep meaning. The same might be said for other Family Dogg material. It is unpretentious, popular music. The success of *Way Of Life* is a triumph for harmony and blending of voices.

TV Shows

Earlier Dogg records—*Brown Eyed Girl* and *The Storm* have meant more on the Continent than in England. As a result they are soon to make several European TV appearances including a half hour spectacular for Holland.

Next month, an album called *Way Of Life* will be ready. It includes some of Steve's poetry which will serve as an introduction to some of the tracks. A follow-up single will also be released and Steve has chosen Kenny Young's *Arizona*.

"We're aiming to be a concert act, but we're not accepting any offers until the second record is out," said Steve. "Some top session musicians have said they're interested in working with us and Albert will play 12-string and Mike 6-string. I could play drums, but if I did we'd sound like the Tremeloes, and really we are first a singing group."

"If *Arizona* gets into the Top Twenty, we'll feel more confident to stand on the stage and entertain. If people pay 25s. to see us at a concert, I want them to go away feeling they've had twenty-five bob's worth of entertainment."

BI's CHART FAX

Britain's best-sellers of the last four weeks, in alphabetical order showing songwriters, producer, studio, engineer and publisher.

Baby, Make It Soon (*Macaulay*) The Marmalade
RP—Mike Smith. S—CBS. E—Mike Ross.
MP—Welbeck/Schroeder.

Barabajagal (*Leitch*) Donovan and Jeff Beck
RP—Mickie Most. S—Pye. MP—Southern.

Bringing On Back The Good Times (*Goodhand Tate/Cokell*) Love Affair
RP—Mike Smith. S—CBS. E—Mike Ross. MP—Josid.

Conversations (*Greenaway/Cook/Lordan*) Cilla Black
RP—George Martin. S—EMI. E—Jeff Jarratt. MP—Cookaway.

Curly (*Wood*) The Move
RP—Mike Hurst. S—Olympic. E—Vic Smith and Alan O'Duffy.
MP—Essex.

Early In The Morning (*Leander/Seago*) Vanity Fare
RP—Roger Easterby and Des Champ. S—de Lane Lea. E—Barry Ainsworth. MP—Lowery.

Give Peace A Chance (*Lennon/McCartney*)
Plastic Ono Band
RP—John Lennon. S—Canadian. MP—Northern Songs.

Goodnight Midnight (*Young*) Clodagh Rogers
RP—Kenny Young. S—Wessex Sound. E—Michael Thompson.
MP—April Music.

Honky Tonk Woman (*Jagger/Richard*) The Rolling Stones
RP—Jimmy Miller. S—Olympic. E—Glyn Jones and George Chkiancz. MP—Mirage.

I Can Sing A Rainbow/Love Is Blue (*Hamilton/Popp/Cour/Blackburn*) The Dells
S—American. MP—Mark VII/Croma.

In The Year 2525 (*Rick Evans*) Zager & Evans
RP—Zager & Evans. S—American. MP—Essex.

Je t'Aime . . . Moi Non Plus (*Gainsbourg*)
Jane Birkin and Serge Gainsbourg
RP—Jack Beristock. S—Philips. E—David Woyda. MP—Shapiro Bernstein.

My Chérie Amour (*Cosby/Wonder/Moy*) Stevie Wonder
RP—Hank Cosby. S—American. MP—Jobete EMI.

Need Your Love So Bad (*W. John*) Fleetwood Mac.
RP—Mike Vernon. S—CBS. E—Mike Ross. MP—Peter Maurice.

Peaceful (*Rankin*) Georgie Fame
RP—Mike Smith. S—CBS. E—Mike Ross. MP—Apple.

Saved By The Bell (*R. Gibb*) Robin Gibb
RP—Robin Gibb. S—Chappell. E—John Country. MP—Saharet.

Si Tu Dois Partir (*Dylan*) Fairport Convention
RP—Joe Boyd. S—Sound Techniques. E—John Wood. MP—Blossom.

That's The Way God Planned It (*Preston*) Billy Preston
RP—George Harrison. S—EMI. E—Glyn Johns. MP—Apple.

Too Busy Thinking About My Baby (*Whitfield/Bradford*)
Marvin Gaye
RP—Norman Whitfield. S—American. MP—Jobete Carlin.

Viva Bobby Joe (*Grant*) The Equals
RP—Edward Kassner. S—Regent A. E—Adrian Ibbotson. MP—Grant Music.

THE headline was pretty explicit. "Creedence Clearwater — Biggest breakthrough since Elvis Presley!" Sounds rather far-fetched, in point of fact, but there's enough evidence pouring from America to suggest that the four-strong team are going to have a longish spell as the top Stateside rock group.

The group was formed under the full title Creedence Clearwater Revival towards the end of 1967. But if this looks like a jet-paced ride to the top forget it.

These boys have been together, under a variety of names for 10 years. They were the Blue Velvets and the Goliwogs . . . operating in a rather small way since their high school days.

First, the group line-up. There is Stu Cook on bass, Doug Clifford on drums, and the brothers Fogerty—Tom on rhythm and John on lead, harmonica and vocals. And there's no doubt that John Fogerty is the inspiration behind the group's current massive popularity.

Last year was the build-up era. They signed with Fantasy Records, based in San Francisco. Their first album, *Creedence Clearwater Revival* went straight into the charts. A single, *Susie Q*, was taken from the album and became a hit. Then

I Put A Spell On You, from the same album, also made the charts. Then came *Proud Mary*, a track from the huge-selling *Bayou Country* album—and suddenly fans were talking about the group in Britain.

Talking about a style of music which is instantly distinctive—a mixture of Cajun music, of hard rock, of blues.

Now hear John Fogerty on the single-minded application that led to the breakthrough.

"I was called up on Army service and this created a kinda lull in the group. When I came back, there was one helluva lot of competition in the San Francisco scene. Groups from there were getting the recognition they'd long deserved and the whole area became a kind of Mecca for musicians. The list was long—like Jefferson Airplane, Country Joe and the Fish, Moby Grape and Big Brother and the Holding Company. I guess there were 50 groups all of the same high standard—and there was, at last, a lot of work available.

"Regular concerts at the Fillmore West, at the Avalon Ballroom, then the clubs like the New Orleans and the Matrix. Then again there were the free concerts in the parks there—something which helps a band

CREEDENCE

get a big following, and something which I notice is happening right now in London.

"When we changed our name, we also changed our direction. Before we'd had smart-aleck managers who tried to make us a kinda fun-group, wearing all the way-out clothes and so on. We got a complicated story about how we got the new name. Clearwater actually comes from a television commercial for beer. Creedence is the name of a friend of ours. As for Revival . . . well, that simply implied that we got back to roots. You could say that we're in there mid-way between blues and rock 'n' roll, but you can't say that we're directly a product of San Francisco.

"Our inspiration comes right from Louisiana, over the other side. What I dug was the Southern folk-scene, the stories of Mark Twain and all. That Mississippi basin scene—well, 'Proud Mary' was the story about a riverboat in those parts. Though I never lived in those parts, my songwriting comes

right from there. All of us in the Revival, all of us we listen to Muddy Waters and Howlin' Wolf, and the original Sun Memphis boys, Elvis and Johnny Cash—and when we listen to them, we think we're listening to the greatest. Greatest of all is Carl Perkins. His achievements held us together during those years when we were just clowning around, no direction

—wondering whether we shouldn't just get to hell out of the music business."

And, of course, now the Creedence Clearwater boys look like pointing the group scene back to a stronger sense of simplicity.

Says John Fogerty: "We figured that groups were tending to over-involve the audiences. Sure, it was a good thing to get away from basic monotony, but the experimentation in the studios was so strong that some of the fans lost the way. We find that audiences like to sit and listen to us, but it'd be fine by us if they got up and danced around. We want to be happy and make people happy . . .



CLEARWATER REVIVAL

there's a whole lot too much of the big-voiced we-gotta-protest thing creeping in to all kinds of music."

In fact, John has visited the Mississippi areas, studied the style of production in the studios there and he says: "Nothing disappointed me. There was the air of history there, the knowledge that the pioneers of country-rock and country-blues all started there. My head was full of fantasies about how it would be and nothing happened to disappoint me.

"Now, suddenly, we find ourselves kinda near the top of the pile. We don't want to change. We worked too long and too hard over the years to throw anything away right now. American audiences dig us, and now our job is to get ourselves across, live, to other countries. We'll show you the blues, but it'll still be our own interpretation."

It looks very much like Creedence Clearwater Revival has staying power.

P.G.



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PIBLOKTO!

THE RETURN OF PETE BROWN

PETE Brown first established himself on the poetry scene through his experimental New Departures work combining poetry with music and putting across the idea of live poetry shows rather than formalised drawing room recitals. He then became recognised as a songwriter composing material for the Cream with Jack Bruce. He then moved on to the pop scene when he formed the Battered Ornaments last year. Now Pete has a new band—Piblokto!—to carry on his adventures as performer, singer and songwriter.

Different concept

Pete formed Piblokto! following his departure at the end of June from the Battered Ornaments who were fast making their name via live appearances and their Harvest album *A Meal You Can Shake Hands With In The Dark*. Pete Brown and Piblokto! is a totally different concept from Pete Brown and His Battered Ornaments: "It's my fourth band," said Pete, "but it's the first one where I am really in control. The Battered Ornaments was a co-operative band where I was singer and front man and the material was mine to start with, although that was a matter of convenience. I was the musical junior of the Battered Ornaments, but at the same time the only one who had any concept of where it might go.

"Piblokto! is a proper backing group, semi-arranged, and geared to support my vocals. After watching the 'Free For All' TV show I did with the Battered Ornaments, it struck me that there was hardly any support for the vocals. There was no keyboard instrument and the bass and guitar were making sounds, playing hardly any melodic lines. For someone like myself who isn't a trained vocalist, it was very difficult.

"With the jazz background of Chris, Butch and George, it was moving towards a free jazz thing, whereas I found myself getting more mainstream and poppy. But now I've got the vocal support from the organ and bass in Piblokto! with just guitar and drums. I wanted to avoid the swing



towards jazz, because a lot of people are getting drawn into it. I want my band to sound like a huge folk group and I want it to evolve into more of a show, giving time for improvised mutterings — through a good PA."

Pete formed Piblokto! with various musicians who had never

played before he brought them together. Giant Glaswegian Jim Mullen plays guitar, both 6 and 12 string electric, and never uses a plectrum. "I have always played with my thumb. I just did it without thinking when I started and I still do it." Jim had a band in Glasgow that was playing on the

same bill as Pete there when they met up. Eighteen-year-old Roy Sharland plays keyboard (previously he was playing with soul bands), and is the proud owner of a 1943 Hammond B2 with percussion added. Completing the line-up are drummer Laurie Allan, who has been working abroad, as has bassist Roger Bunn who has made an LP in Holland singing his own songs.

The group is already working with Pete on an LP to be called *Things May Come, Things May Go, But The Art School Dance Goes On For Ever*, and will be going out to clubs and colleges in the autumn playing nearly all new material. "The Battered Ornaments never played rock," said Pete, "so in one way Piblokto! is a move towards the centres but the material is eccentrically mine. There's *From The Soul*, a 45-bar soul piece, the *Art School* thing, and *Walk For Charity, Run For Money*."

Songwriting

So Pete is now firmly into the music scene, but what about his poetry? His latest book *Let 'Em Roll, Kafka*, was published recently, and he will still do the occasional reading but, says Pete, "music is more important at the moment. But it's possible I'll be making a poetry album. I've been writing for about 15 years now, so there's 15 years' worth to go into more books!" While his poetry has receded in importance at the moment, Pete has been busy writing more songs. "I've written a song with and for Colosseum called *The Machine Demands A Sacrifice* and I'm proud to have written the lyrics for Jack Bruce's album."

And on top of that there's material he's written for Piblokto!

And where on earth did the name Piblokto! come from? "Well," said Pete, "there's this bloke leaping out of a burning aeroplane in a cartoon, and a mate of mine replaced whatever he was saying as he jumped out with "PIBLOKTO!" See?"

M.H.

FOCUS ON MIKES

A "BEAT INSTRUMENTAL" SURVEY OF SOME OF THE MICROPHONES AVAILABLE IN THIS COUNTRY FOR BOTH RECORDING AND LIVE PERFORMANCE USE

THE SUCCESS of a group nowadays often depends on how well they sound on stage, and this depends to a very great extent on the type of microphones they use.

There are three basic types of microphone defined by reference to the way they pick up sound: cardioid; figure-of-eight; and omnidirectional.

The first of these, the cardioid, is so called because its area of sensitivity extends in a heart shape around the actual part of the microphone which picks up sound. This type of microphone is most sensitive at the front and least sensitive at the back.

The figure-of-eight type of microphone picks up sound from two sides only, the other two being "dead" to sound. The omnidirectional type, as its name suggests, picks up sound from all sides.

In deciding to buy a microphone, a group should first of all consider what it is to be used for. A microphone designed for work in a recording studio will not function as well in a live performance, and *vice versa*.

The main qualities a group or performer usually looks for in a microphone are maximum volume and tonal response and freedom from feedback. This last point is

probably the most significant, for, while there are many good quality microphones on the market, not all of them can cope with this problem.

Feedback is caused by amplified sound being reflected from hard surfaces or speaker columns and being picked up again by the microphone, which attempts to amplify the original sound still further, resulting in a build-up and a characteristic howling or whistling noise.

Cardioid type

One way to get rid of this is to use highly directional microphones like the cardioid type, and position them so that the "dead" side is the one facing the speakers. This is the type of microphone most favoured by lead singers.

A further advantage of the cardioid type of microphone is that it allows a singer or instrumentalist to change his position in relation to it without distorting the quality of reproduction.

Another method of preventing feedback is by using a limiter/compressor at the amplifier stage. This also has the effect of eliminating distortion caused by "peaks" of sound, as, for example, when a singer suddenly shouts.

Figure-eight and omnidirectional microphones are

used in some groups, but their use is limited mainly to the amplification of brass section and harmony backings. Also, their response to close range work is not as good as the cardioid type, and they are much more prone to feedback. They are, however, extremely suitable for recording work or in places where the problems of external noise does not arise.

As well as these three types of microphone, a would-be buyer will also come across references to different impedances—e.g., high, low and medium. Impedance is the measurement of the amount of resistance of the microphone element to any signal (for example, voice) or signal frequency.

In effect, impedance has little or nothing to do with the reproduction qualities of a microphone, but one or two points are worth bearing in mind. First, when a microphone is used with an amplifier, their impedances should be matched, ie, a high impedance microphone should be used with a high impedance amplifier, and a low impedance microphone with a low impedance amplifier.

A low impedance microphone *can* be used with a high impedance amplifier, but there will be a considerable loss in the volume put out by

the amplifier. However, if a high impedance microphone is used with a low impedance amplifier, not only will there be a loss in volume, but the tonal quality will suffer considerably.

It is also possible to obtain microphones with dual or triple impedance settings, by which means it is possible to switch from one to another to get the benefit of each type's different characteristics.

Most PA systems produced for the music business are high impedance models, and consequently the corresponding microphone for group work would be the one to buy. However, there are certain advantages to be gained from a low impedance microphone, one of these being that it permits the use of a much longer lead than usual, and is free from hum or interference. Consequently, this type of microphone would be most suitable for gigs like cabaret work, where the performer moves about among the audience.

Having decided what type of microphone is most suitable, the group or singer can contact any one of several suppliers, or manufacturers, some of whose equipment is reviewed on the following pages.

(continued on next page)

AKG

FOR GENERAL group work and for lead singers, AKG recommend their D1000 cardioid microphone, an attractive model finished in gold for a striking professional effect. This microphone has a selectable tone quality by means of a "Tri-Sound" switch which gives bass, medium and sharp variations.

The problems of "pop"—the explosive sounds made by vocalists working close to a microphone—and shock are overcome by a bronze sinter cap which protects the element. In this model, feedback is claimed to be non-existent even at high volume. The "Hit" version of the D1000 is fitted with an on-off switch.

For the amplification of drums—a feature of the heavier "progressive" groups—AKG say a good bass response is essential, and for this purpose they market the D12 and D20 models.

Anti-feedback

Designed to complement the existing D19 range, the new D190 dynamic cardioid unit incorporates the anti-feedback characteristics of the D1000, and has an elastically mounted element to give protection against damage.

An interesting idea is the company's Condenser Microphone Module System (CMS) which gives three selections of wind shield, seven types of condenser capsules and a variety of accessories which, with the utilisation of field effect transistors (FET), can be built up in different combinations to form a complete studio recording microphone system.

GRAMPIAN

IN THE lower price range of models, this company produce the GC2 cardioid dynamic microphone, which is fitted with an on-off switch. Costing £18 15s., the GC2



The AKG D1000 cardioid microphone with anti-feedback characteristics and a Tri-Sound switch to give three tonal variations

comes complete with a swivel holder, connector and 18 ft screened lead. A cheaper model is the GC1 which has a non-metallic diaphragm said to be resistant to temperature changes, corrosion and mechanical shock, and this costs £16 10s.



Gramian GC1 dynamic cardioid microphone

LUSTRAPHONE

ESTABLISHED in the industrial communications field, Lustraphone are now challenging the beat group market with their Model 4-30 highly directional cardioid microphone. The company say this model's polar response makes it suitable for use where acoustic conditions are unfavourable and feedback occurs at relatively low amplifier gain settings.

Priced at £20 5s., the 4-30 comes complete with a shock-resistant presentation case,

21 ft of twin-screened cable, 9 ft of co-axial cable and a five-pin DIN plug. Optional extras both for this unit and its omni-directional companion, the 4-20, include a stand mounting clip, pre-amplifiers and various accessories.

MARSHALL

DESIGNED for use with all high impedance equipment, and particularly with the Marshall range of high-powered PA systems, the Marshall 3700 HI-Z is an attractive slim-line model, gold-plated for stage effect. A dynamic model with a cardioid response, this new unit is supplied in a plush-lined case complete with stand adaptor, lead and fittings, at a cost of £33 12s.



The gold-plated Marshall 3700 HI-Z dynamic high impedance microphone

NEUMANN

PRODUCING microphones since 1928 mainly for the recording studio market, Neumann have a wide range of condenser units with a variety of pick-up patterns. The first of these, the U871, resembles its well-known predecessor, the U67, except that it is equipped with a field effect transistor instead of a tube.

Below the microphone element in this model there are three switches which control the directional characteristics, frequency response and sensitivity. The microphone casing is easily opened by unscrewing a ring at the base, thereby providing access to two 22.5v batteries which make the U871 independent of any power source.

A purely omni-directional microphone made by Neumann is the KM 83i, which is said to have particular application to the overall pick-up of large orchestras. In order to prevent overload of the microphone preamplifier resulting from the pick-up of high level solo instruments, a 10db switch on the body of the microphone reduces sensitivity at the gate of the field effect transistor.

Cardioid

Also equipped with a switch to reduce sensitivity, the KM 84i has a cardioid characteristic, and has a condenser element designed as a pressure gradient with an acoustical delay network.

ORANGE

JUST introduced by this company is a moving coil hyper-cardioid condenser microphone developed specifically for group work, claimed to have exceptional anti-feedback characteristics and to have twice the sensitivity of conventional moving coil units. The microphone, which has a stainless steel casing, is said to be virtually indestruct-

(continued on page 18)

(continued from page 16)

ible, as Orange say, it can be dropped from a height of 10 ft. on to concrete without damage.

A further feature of the model is its "anti-pop" characteristic, the result of a patented coated polyester diaphragm capsule, which makes it suitable for close-range vocal work.

Known as the Orange Hyper - Cardioid, this new microphone is a dual impedance unit, and comes complete with 33 ft. of screened cable, transistor power unit, cases and windshield at a cost of £45.

PHILIPS

APART from their range of equipment for the domestic market, Philips also sell professional microphones. The most elaborate of these is the EL 6037 moving coil unit, specially designed for vocalists and instrumental soloists, which has anti-feedback

characteristics. Attractively finished with a rosewood hand-grip, the EL 6037 costs £28, this price including a quick-release holder with a universal adapter to fit any stand, and a fixed screened four-core cable.

Another model, the EL 6041, is fitted with a bass attenuation switch for close-range working.

SENNHEISER

GOLDEN BEATMICS, three new microphones from Sennheiser Electronic, mark the company's entrance into the beat scene with dynamic models having anti-feedback and hum-cancelling properties. These microphones, finished in black and gold, also have added bass properties.

The first model, the MD 409 instrumental and vocalist microphone, is a 200-ohms impedance unit with a silent operation on-off switch. It is stand-mounted, and costs £29 17s. The next in the

range, the MD 415, is a vocalist's hand microphone, also of 200 ohms, and costs £34 15s. 6d.

Finally, the MD 421 de luxe, the most sophisticated of the three, has a variable bass control and a dual low-high impedance of 200 and 24,000 ohms. Equipped with a quick-release stand adapter, this



Two of Sennheiser's range of microphones

microphone costs £42.

Although the beat group scene is a new departure for Sennheiser, they are well represented in the recording studio field by both condenser and moving coil microphones. Among the latter is the MD 411 HLM, which, as the letters after the number suggest, is a triple (high, low and medium) impedance model, and is a smaller version of the MD 421 studio microphone.

SHAFTESBURY

AMONG the cheaper range of microphones available in this country is the Shaftesbury UDM 105, which is made in Japan, and costs £7 10s. This is a dynamic uni-directional model with a built-in on-off

(continued on page 20)

NEXT MONTH'S BI

Next month, "Beat Instrumental" will be giving an on-the-spot report of the latest instruments and equipment at this year's British Musical Instrument Trade Fair, together with pictures and details of some of the well-established lines available. Don't miss your copy - order from your local newsagent or direct to Beat Publications Ltd,

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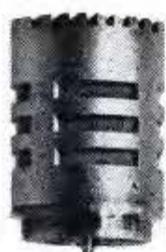
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(continued from page 18)

switch and a high and low impedance switch, and it is die cast with a chrome finish, the front being protected by a wire mesh screen. Supplied with the Shaftesbury is a microphone holder and a screened lead.

Cheaper

For the group or performer with only limited funds, there are even more inexpensive microphones of this type. For example, the DM 107 non-directional dynamic mike with the same fittings as the UDM 105 costs only £5 10s., while for an extra 5s. you can have the UDM 104 uni-directional model.

SHURE

SHURE BROS. have been in the microphone business for 44 years, and produce a wide range of microphones, mainly dynamic. They cater for the beat scene with their B series of microphones which are ready packaged, comprising a swivel clamp, cable and plugs for use with high impedance



Shure B565 Unisphere I

amplifiers.

One of the most popular of Shure's range is the Unidyne III series—Models 544, 545 and 545S—which are said to give remarkably faithful reproduction of the human voice and to have a completely uniform pick-up about the axis at all frequencies.

A model which is used frequently for semi-professional recording is the 55S multi-impedance uni-directional unit, available with or without a switch and in a satin or gold finish.

Incidentally, from Septem-

ber, prices of all Shure microphones will be subject to slight modification to assist in the changeover to decimalisation, but the company assured *Beat Instrumental* that prices would be marginally less.

One of the most successful of Shure's recent microphones has been the Unisphere, with its characteristic bulbous head, which acts both as a breath filter and a protective cover for the microphone element, and is designed to withstand relatively heavy treatment.

A useful accessory on the Unisphere A B85SAV is a volume control which is smooth and easy to operate.

Shure are introducing three new microphones in October, the B588 Unisphere B, the B548 heavy duty Unidyne IV and the B515 Unidyne B.

VOX

DESIGNED to provide wide range reproduction of music and voice, Vox microphones are slender dynamic moving coil units, robustly built to withstand rough usage.

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TAKE one member of a well-known top group; he gets a group together from among various people he knows and says he will produce their records; the group is given a name, goes into the studio, comes out with one single which the record company, to whom the member of the well-known top group is contracted, digs; the record is given maximum promotion and it gets to number one. Verdict: operation successful. But what if it happens *twice* . . . ?

Track records really scored with the Pete Townshend-produced *Something In The Air* by Thunderclap Newman, a group specially put together for record. Now they are hoping to do it again, this time with a group that was got together by Roger Daltry who is also recording the band. The name? Bent Frame. One can detect a certain air of excitement at Track as they wait to see how Bent Frame fares, and the company is getting the idea out that there is a lot of friendly competition between the two groups.

The line up of Bent Frame is



Bent Frame

Dave MacDougall on organ and piano; Robbie Paterson on bass; John Hetherington on guitar; and drummer Tony Haslam. Dave and Robbie are the only two founder members of the group, which included Jimmy McCulloch (now of Thunderclap Newman) until recently when he was replaced by Tony, ex-roadie for the Who. So you see, it's all very incestuous.

Loud, but melodic

The group did a few tapes, took them to Roger Daltry who liked them and decided to work with the group. Since their formation they have been working in IBC studios on their single *Accidents* using other people's equipment, having blown up their own! From which you will gather that they are a loud outfit, but to judge from what we've heard, they are a melodic one too. They

feature their own material ninety per cent of the time, for all of them are experienced musicians who have worked with different groups at different times, and all of them are fed up with the way they have been treated by past agents and managers. They are all extremely vocal on this point.

"We're fed up to our back teeth with these people," said organist Dave MacDougall. "We have all been pushed around by various agents telling us to do things that have been no good for us. We've all been asked to join groups that are well known but we haven't because we felt we wouldn't be happy with the set up. Here people are telling us what to do as well, of course, but the difference is that it's what we want to do anyway. Really we do what we want, if we don't like a thing we don't do it."

"We've all been at it for five years or more and for the first

time we've found what we want. We all appreciate the struggler who goes through the grind, trying to get something together. Robbie and I said we'd never play together again (we've known each other for years) but it wasn't us that was wrong—it was the management."

The meaning

And what impression are the public going to get of Bent Frame? They play music that is loud, heavy maybe, well-put together, with good use of organ and vocals, it could well appeal to anyone. Said Tony Haslam, "We're not thinking too much about what the public likes and so on. If people don't like what we play, then they don't like it."

And that statement gives the real clue to Bent Frame: they know what they want to do, they are going to get on and do it and hope to carry people with

them. The impression comes across of a bunch of fellows who are very much a *group*, with no one standing out front taking the limelight. "Dave is probably the most musical," said Robbie, "but he's not on the star bit. Everyone is equal within the group and if anyone comes across stronger it will be because of his music. We have no image singer who stands out the front. You know the thing, he might be 20 stone and spotty with glasses but he is the image just the same."

With their loud music and their hardish attitude to agents and so forth, are the public going to be presented with a bunch of thugs? They are not deliberately going out to be aggressive, but they don't mind stirring up a bit of controversy. Tony summed up their attitude: "We don't want to be aggressive but we're not going to be cream puffs. Nor are we going to be pushed around and all wear green velvet trousers because a manager wants us to, but if any of us wants to wear green velvet pants then of course he does."

So look out for Bent Frame and keep your ears open for the very good and very commercial single *Accidents*. We have the feeling that you are going to be hearing an awful lot of it if Track have their way.

M.H.

THE WHO have always struck me, at any rate, as being a particularly English sort of group, in much the same way as the Kinks, for example. If you go back far enough the roots of their music, good ol' rock and roll, are clearly American; but Ray Davies and his football and village green obsessions and the subject matter of Pete Townshend are out of very similar moulds. They're both writing about things very close to home for most of us.

Keith Moon put his ad in *The Times* in search of a title, then joined the ranks of the aristocracy by becoming a lord. An Englishman's house being his proverbial castle, Pete Townshend has a very nice castle, an eighteenth-century place with big hedges, climbing plants and a plaque which marks it as a protected building of historical interest. Fittingly, it looks out over a quiet reach of the Thames to a historic shrine of British pop, Eel Pie Island.

Pete on banjo

Eel Pie was the scene of mighty raves in the early days of the Home Counties beatnik/mod/R and B scene, close to Richmond, Ealing, Kingston and other centres. The hotel in the middle of the island's overgrown straggle of boat-houses and chalets, haunted by the ghosts of the Rolling Stones, the Yardbirds, Manfred Mann and Cyril Davies, was also the scene of Pete Townshend's first public performance. He played banjo in a trad band.

Though the Who's career has progressed from the inarticulate power and frenzy of *I Can't Explain* and *My Generation* to the sophistication and meticulous complexity of *Tommy*, all the old atmosphere of the early days is still there. The Who's present stage shows are, Pete thinks, better than ever in terms of sheer guts and excitement. There's an edge of nostalgia when he says that he's never thought of himself as anything other than a rock and roll man. This probably explains why the group are so good.

Even *Tommy*, hailed by many as a masterpiece, stands up perfectly as a double album of rock songs plain and simple. All the other levels of the work, which are intended—Pete likens it to a *sufi* story which is supposed to give the reader or listener exactly what he puts into it—work in a purely rock framework.

He has had approaches from various classical orchestras and opera companies, asking to perform *Tommy*, but Pete sees no special virtue in this interest. Apart from anything else, he believes that the only people who could ever do *Tommy* justice are the Who. It was written specifically for the group to perform—"the beauty of rock is that

no matter how advanced it is, it is there one minute and gone the next. You don't want all the spectacle and scenery of a stage."

The implication being that rock can stand on its own two feet. Townshend knows that it has its own standards, equally rigid as those of more respectable art forms. As soon as you treat it as an "art form" then you have to lose much of the basic quality of the instant power of rock.

"I called it an opera, but it certainly isn't the same as accepted opera. It was just a name I used to give some indication of the scope and continuity of *Tommy*. When we perform it, we like to keep the sort of end-of-the-pier feeling. Us on stage with no real lights, maybe just a couple of spots to make us look a bit more glamorous. It's all got to happen inside the audience's heads, not on a great big spectacular stage. I like the house lights to be left on, too, so I can see people's faces. You've got to be a great artist or a real old trouper to be able to walk out on stage and sense the mood of the crowd. I need the feedback of people's expressions. If you don't take them into account you end up, to use the traditional expression, doing your own thing and nothing more."

After a long period of hard graft in the recording studios, *Tommy* is now done. It has taken its place as a milestone in pop, a very worthwhile achieve-

THE

ment, and you might have thought that the group would be cutting down on personal appearances to have a rest and then maybe attempt something even more ambitious on record. But the opposite is the case; the group are working hard on stage around the country, they don't have spare time on their hands.

True to what he believes about pop, Pete intends the next Who album to be a live recording. As we went to press, he hadn't managed to find a suitable place for the recording. In August however, the group were to go to America to take a full week's booking at the Fillmore (one of the first groups to be offered such a residency by Bill Graham), and he hoped to do it there.

While in the States the group will also make an appearance at the 'Aquarian Exposition—3 Days of Peace and Music' at Woodstock in the company of some other big names.

The group's status in America is now higher than it's ever been—the same, incidentally, is true of the Kinks—and



WHO

they have been offered some top television work. Pete, however, doesn't want to do the TV, since the programmes offered are not rock shows. His idea of what the Who are and what they must do is worked-out one hundred per cent. His confidence in the group is as near total as makes no odds.

It is well known that Pete makes demos of all his songs for the Who himself in his own home studio. These demos are of an incredibly high standard. Pete building them up track by track and playing all the instruments himself, and there can be no doubt that he could very successfully make his own records without John, Roger and Keith.

But: "I would never, never, never make a record of my own away from the group," he said with much feeling. He is very conscious of just how necessary the group are, of how much they contribute. The whole is greater than simply the sum of the four members; the group context imposes a discipline on what Pete writes, they make sure

that he doesn't take off on any false tangents, they give him invaluable support and enthusiasm, and he also believes that they assure a certain amount of success to whatever he writes simply because of their name.

Something In The Air justified all the time Pete spent on getting Thunderclap Newman together and producing their records, becoming a number one hit much to his and many other people's surprise. But nonetheless, he is a little worried that when the public realise he is doing something outside the Who they will jump to the conclusion that the group is not as important as it once was, that the Who may be winding down, something which he goes to great lengths to counteract. "Anything like Thunderclap Newman is a special affair, just an occasional venture outside. There won't be many at all."

Even with Thunderclap, which Pete had been setting-up for a long period of time, he was unable to devote enough time to have the group work out exactly as he planned it. It was originally intended for the three founder members, Andy Newman, Jimmy and Speedy, to be leaders of their own groups, each one being a personality whom Pete considered worthy of their own band, and the record being a one-off thing for the meantime.

It got into the charts when Pete was out of the country, and Chris Stamp of Track, who hadn't previously had very

much to do with the group, obviously wanted them out on the road. This involved getting a bass player and a drummer, and perhaps before they were ready for live appearances—none of them having played in public for some time—Thunderclap Newman were no longer a trio and were playing to massive crowds. It remains to be seen how they will progress, or whether Townshend will be able to continue to provide them with his expert guidance. And now Roger Daltry has been producing a group called Bent Frame (see page 23).

Recognition

It seems likely to me that in future years, Pete Townshend will gain increasing recognition as one of the most important musical innovators that England has produced. His knowledge and judgment on everything to do with rock; the techniques, the qualities, and everything which makes it what it is, are tremendously impressive. He has a way of pointing out things that one has known instinctively all along but never bothered to put into words. He, along with Ron Geesin (someone of whom he thinks very highly—listen to Ron's *A Raise Of Eyebrows* on Transatlantic) and one or two others, has realised the potential of the tape recorder and all the new possibilities it presents.

Right from the beginning, he has made a point of finding out as much as possible about the business of recording. He is now talking in terms of bouncing signals off the moon and recording them to see how they turn out. Though hampered by the size of the rooms in his house, his studio equipment is as good as most professional concerns. He stresses the absolute necessity of any songwriter having a multi-track machine, which although fairly expensive, he sees as vital. You can get down on tape exactly what you hear in your head. Young songwriters send letters to Pete asking him for help and advice on many topics. He is convinced that with a good machine, they would have half the battle won. After all, rock music was the one factor that caused the dramatic advances in recording techniques we've been witnessing over the past few years.

It does seem, however, that a group will tend to either concentrate on recording experiments or on perfecting live performances. The Who are making it very much a two-way process, carrying what they learn in one field over to the other. They are continually referring back to the basics of rock; at the same time they are one of the best pioneering bands of all. And they are very, very English. Ours.

R.S.



A QUOTE from Brian Auger: "The music coming from the radio here is the lowest in the world." A quote from the BBC: "We must separate Radio One from Radio Two—to their fans, Emperor Rosko and Eric Robinson barely inhabit the same planet, let alone the same airwaves."

So the BBC, in the "Broadcasting in the Seventies" plan, want to negotiate, on behalf of pop fans, another 70 hours weekly of needle-time. And trim back a whole list of orchestras like the Northern Dance Orchestra in order to reduce the Corporation's annual deficit of £4,500,000.

Out, then go many musicians. And in comes the Musicians' Union with a quote: "If the BBC think they can drop half their musicians and get the other half to help them to do it . . . it is simply not on." And there are rumblings of strike action by the MU; and positive outbursts of anger from the housewife fraternity who dig the BBC's various orchestras.

Chaos reigns in our comparatively tight-knit broadcasting system. And not for the first time. The Corporation virtually has the monopoly, with its growing chain of regional stations, too. The government killed off the so-called "pirates", to the delight of the BBC.

Local radio

Also by way of summary: the Corporation are angry at the Government's "slow wavering" over the future of local radio—over the development of the £5,200,000-a-year network of 40 stations . . . the BBC had been led to believe a final decision would be given this month.

Yes, chaos. But let's dig a little deeper and try to understand the different points of view. For a start, the arguments raging against commercial radio. From all the humbug and sanctimonious back-chat, one would think that a money-earning private radio station is likely to be at the root of all our moral wrongs.

But come off it! Commercial radio has been here for ages, in the successful shape of Radio Luxembourg. How many young lives have been ruined by Radio Lux? And if you want to assess its popularity, just check on the listening figures during the evening stints from the Grand Duchy. Astronomical, they are.

Before getting to the Musicians' Union viewpoint, consider what will happen IF the BBC application for an extra 70 hours' needle-time goes through. It's almost double the present allowance. It could mean a breakthrough for dozens of new groups and singers—getting that all-important chance for stardom in the shape of a disc plug on the radio. And, in turn, the army of so-far unknown songwriters can get their numbers on the air.

We keep saying that pop music in Britain is drifting, driverless, towards oblivion . . . well, we say that *sometimes* when the general monotony gets too much. America HAD the edge in world pop, then a Beatle-laden Britain took over, but now America is coming back. Partly due to the BBC's attempt to re-create the sound of the pirates on Radio One. Finally the Corporation has admitted that their embryo

POP and the BBC



Brian Auger: "radio music is the world's lowest"

pop station is far from a rip-roaring success as it stands right now.

Says the Corporation: "Records are the lifeblood of any pop network, so we must negotiate this new needletime agreement."

The discussions proceed slowly with the Phonographic Performance Ltd.—the organisation which acts on behalf of the entire British recording industry to control the broadcasting and public performance of records.

For some years, the contract with the BBC has allowed for up to 82 hours' needletime on ALL the BBC's main services, including television. To help reorganise Radio One, it's estimated that an extra 70 hours will be needed.

Of course it won't be easy to get. Musicians are up in arms about the report which includes proposals which could make 300 of them redundant. A spokesman for Phonographic Performance explained: "In negotiating new agreements, we have a special regard for the interests of musicians."

Hardie Ratcliffe, general secretary of the 32,000-strong Musicians' Union, is of course pledged to fight the proposals all the way. He says: "The plan gives the music profession a raw deal. From the

commencement of radio, a series of concessions had been made by the Union, on behalf of the professional, without which radio and television could not have developed into what, together, is now the best broadcasting system in the world."

Not much glimmer of hope there. There is also talk of cutting down the number of casual performances by pop groups, dance bands and sweet music units by something over 30 per cent. Even so, it could surely be true that the MU, in fighting for the livelihood of 300 members could be working AGAINST improvements for a lot of the other members.

However there is another side to all this. The side of the pop fan. He or she most certainly would not suffer if the BBC plans go through. If Radio One got what it wanted . . . extra needle time running through from 5.30 am to 2 am the next morning . . . there would be more records, a greater variety of artists and a bigger chance of a breakthrough for unknown talent.

Most disc-jockeys would welcome this. Quite a few, like Kenny Everett, already refuse point blank to play records of makeshift bands playing, say, a Beatle or a Beach Boy song. These dee-jays return to the old days of the "pirates" with considerable nostalgia—the days when "lesser" discs were picked up and promoted and NEW voices got a chance. The BBC could get on the same lines, but only with the good-will of the union etc.

Opportunities

If, of course, the Postmaster General eventually gives full support to the Radio Five network of local stations, then there can be additional opportunity for local groups and artists to build a reputation. "Regional break-outs" are often talked about in the American system, but they rarely can happen here. It IS improving, in the sense that there are already eight local stations, but what is needed is a go-ahead for the other 32 waiting patiently in the wings.

Television, though, is in a class on its own for treating pop as if it doesn't exist. The occasional bright spot comes up, like BBC-2's "Colour Me Pop" which is superbly produced. But otherwise it's "Top Of The Pops"—and that's your lot!

As Brian Auger was saying in that previously-mentioned interview: "The music we actually get on radio simply doesn't represent the music coming out of Britain . . . music which is of a higher standard than ever before."

A good point. But it doesn't solve the problems. What's needed is a realistic and modern approach to commercial radio. The BBC's plan doesn't accept the idea of using commercials on radio as a way round the all-important cash problem. What they'll do is ask the Government to allow an increase on the licence fees.

We'll be shelling out an extra couple of quid to pay the licence, which pays the groups, who pay the arrangers, who deal with the writers needed to get exposure and so improve pop standards.

P.J.

(continued from page 8)

Mourning In The Morning. In addition, Bloomfield is acting as an unofficial booking agent for some of the lesser-known Chicago bluesmen, exposing them by setting up gigs in San Francisco.

Kinks 'shaky'

It's difficult to imagine a top flight British band having trouble on the American market, but recent reports indicate that the Kinks are having a shaky going in the States. Warner Bros., the Kinks' American record distributor, is planning an expensive and elaborate publicity project, hoping to improve sales. According to WB, the Kinks have "no plans for another American LP in the foreseeable future."

To date the Kinks have released nine US albums and countless singles, but no successful commercial hits since *Sunny Afternoon* a few years ago. With their American future at stake, all hope for the Kinks apparently lies in their upcoming promotion campaign.

Steve Miller, who recently finished the mix on the Miller Band's forthcoming album *Black Magic*, will be one of the various musicians featured on

Merriweather, a jam session recorded by Capitol. Charlie Musslewhite, Barry Goldberg, and Dave Mason are other artists who jammed for the recording, reported to be a two-record set.

Although he has joined the Crosby, Stills & Nash trio, Neil Young will continue to record as a solo artist for Warner Brothers, backed by Crazy Horse, his own band. Young is presently working on his third album—one side a live performance, the other a studio recording. Bruce Palmer, the original bassist for Buffalo Springfield, has also joined C, S & N.

Lee Michaels' new A & M album took less than seven hours to complete, and features only Michaels (vocals, organ, bass) and his drummer. Taj Mahal has a new two-record album ready for release. Felix Pappalardi, best known for his production work with Cream, now plays bass for his own band called Mountain.

Classic revivals

Big Mama Thornton's first Mercury album is scheduled to include her classic *Ball And Chain*, *Sunshine Of Your Love* and Booker T's *Born Under A*

Bad Sign. The Edwin Hawkins Singers' follow up to *Oh Happy Day* is *Ain't It Just Like Him*. The most popular commercial group in America, Creedence Clearwater Revival, continues its streak of successful two-sided hits. *Commotion/Green River* is their latest, and will be followed shortly by their third album.

Boz Scaggs, formerly with

the Miller Band, plays with Mother Earth on the group's new LP *Make A Joyful Noise*. Tracy Nelson and Powell St. John are the only members from the original group remaining. The LP features country blues on one side and city blues on the other. Canned Heat has a new album called *Hallelujah*.

M.A.

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GROUPS like Fairport Convention deserve full credit. They strain earnestly to find musical perfection, turn away from mere publicity-grabbing exploits . . . and go on building a strong reputation among fans who like to listen rather than go individually beserk.

As I write, the Convention are more concerned with recording than with gigs. But plans are being laid for an all-out onslaught in the Autumn. For a start, a new dimension is being added by Dave Swarbrick, who will contribute fiddle and mandolin once he has cleared up his present work with Martin Carthy.

And a new drummer, David Mattacks, has finally been found to replace 17-year-old Martin Lamble, who died tragically in a car crash back in May this year. Actually Martin plays on the latest album *Unhalfbricking* (Island), but then so does Dave, who was on *Si Tu Dois Partir*, the single which put the group in the charts for the first time—a French language version of Dylan's *If You Gotta Go*.

Dave fitted in the group immediately. His quite amazing work on *Sailor's Life* (an old sea-shanty featured on the album) is going to be a basis of the future sound. In fact, he's had a solid-body violin made by a guitar-building expert, John Bailey.

So we can look for a Convention approach to a sort of English folk sound but played on electric instruments. A lot of the traditional material will be unearthed by Dave, who has an encyclopaedic

knowledge of the field, but the team includes its own writing units.

One thing that impresses me is the way the Fairport Convention are willing to bring in other singers on their album sessions. Marc Ellington, for example, came in to work on the album—he is the American folk-singer friend of Bob Dylan, currently in Britain because of a bit of bother with the US Draft Board! It was Marc who "found" a couple of the previously un-recorded Dylan tracks on the album—he has a collection of acetates from sessions made by Dylan purely as a guide to his songs for other artists.

Even so, the basic team of Tyger Hutchins, Simon Nicol, Richard Thompson and Sandy Denny is a very complete unit in itself.

And if you're wondering about the title *Unhalfbricking*—well, that's easy to explain. Says Simon Nicol: "It came from a game we

created in the van on one of the many times we ran out of petrol. We sort of take it in turns to invent words. Sandy actually came up with this one and we all thought it was so strange that it stuck in the memory. Try it a few times and I think you'll agree it sounds nice."

Basically the Convention get a strange mixture of modern rock and traditional elements. The group expect a certain amount of criticism from the traditionalists, the purists, but they don't hold the view that certain kinds of music should never be changed in any way. "We want an essentially English approach," said Simon. "It needs thought and care, but we've had a lot of time recently, as we've sifted through the long list of drummers who want to work with us—and the ideas are developing nicely. You can call it an English electric sound, but the emphasis can switch around a lot now that we can use Dave to the full."

Over the years, Fairport Convention have gone quietly and efficiently along a musical path. At first there was singer Judy Dyble, later replaced by Sandy Denny. The tragic death of Martin was the big blow . . . this young self-taught drummer was exactly right for the group's mixture of musical styles.

But it all takes time to adapt to change—especially for such a tight-knit musical team. They hope, by the end of September, to be doing full-scale gigs. But the Convention have a firm belief that if a thing is worth doing at all, then it is worth doing to the best of one's ability. That determination is what has built them into a top-draw group through the country, even without more than one nibble at the charts in terms of single success.

As for Dave Swarbrick, he has found a new spiritual home. In the traditional revivalist field, many will mourn his departure from Martin Carthy, but in fact Martin has always had a strong solo act and is quite capable of developing in different fields.

Perhaps the biggest asset to the Convention's new launch this autumn is the song-writing ability of such as Richard Thompson and Sandy Denny. Richard's sense of style on *Cajun Woman*, for example, show the direction they can follow.

A good album, *Unhalfbricking*, but only a stepping-stone. There is much musical goodness yet to come.

P.G.

FAIRPORT CONVENTION

★ IN THE STUDIO ★



GIVING THE FACTS BEHIND THE HITS

JOHN PANTRY, one of the engineers at IBC, told us that a good deal of the studio's time recently has been taken up by block bookings for Jon Hiseman's Colosseum and the Bee Gees—no strangers to IBC. John remembers a few years ago that groups would very often book an hour or two hours to make their singles, and any running-over would result in worried expressions all round at the thought of the expense. We hear stories today of how little money there is in pop, how belts are going to have to be tightened, how groups are going to the wall during the universities' summer vacations—but the amount of money being spent by record companies on groups is bigger than ever. One only has to read these columns to see just how much time is spent in studios by people like the Bee Gees.

The Bee Gees have, in fact, been doing a number of things in IBC. They have been working with Lulu on sound tracks for the *Cucumber Castle* TV project, and also have been producing records by Pat Arnold. Three songs have been cut, one of which will be an A-side, with the group playing the backings.

Paul Nicholas from the cast of *Hair* has recorded a single entitled *Freedom City*, the Family Dogg, produced

by Steve Rowland, have been doing odds and ends to complete their first album for Bell, and Harmony Grass have finished their album for RCA Victor at IBC. One particularly interesting session took place when Marsha Hunt, presently playing with White Trash, appeared in the studio to record some numbers with a backing provided by Pete Townshend on guitar and three of the Small Faces. We do not know what will become of these recordings.

The Colosseum have just done a "B" side and were busy working on the completion of their album just before leaving for America. The records are produced as a combined effort by Gerry Bron and the group. John Pantry was very much impressed by working with the group—"I had to be thinking as hard as I could all the time. They know a hell of a lot about recording and you can't ever give them any engineer's guff; they're incredibly good". Tony Reeves, bassist with the group, is himself a record producer of

repute.

Mervyn Conn has been in IBC producing on sessions by the Peddlers and a singer called James Royal, Roger Daltry has been producing Bent Frame, Maurice Gibb has been working with his group Tin-Tin, and a new Paul Ryan song has been recorded by brother Barry for release as a single—*The Hunt*, produced by Bill Landis. Landis was also about to start work with Dusty Springfield when we spoke to IBC.

Mike Ross, engineer at CBS studios, gave us the news that Maynard Ferguson, now settled in Britain and living in a country cottage—it's not only pop groups!—has been in the studio recording with his big band under producer Keith Mansfield. A single has already been finished, and work on an album is to start in October. Mansfield has also been producing sessions by jazz organist Alan Haven for album release.

The Tremeloes and the Love Affair have also been spending a lot of time in the

CBS studios. The Tremeloes have recorded a number of tracks from which a single will be chosen, while the Love Affair have recorded about half of the songs for a forthcoming album—*The Love Affair Sing Phillip Goodhand-Tait*—with, as usual, Mike Smith in charge of production.

Mike Fitzhenry, the other engineer at CBS, has been at the console on sessions by two men who call themselves the Cardboard Orchestra. Between them they play a grand total of 24 instruments, and are making an LP for the CBS label.

Flautist Harold McNair has been recording tracks, as have the Rockin' Berries, who have been coming into the studio around midnight after finishing their stage appearances at the London Palladium. For Blue Horizon, Duster Bennett has been producing his own single, which instead of the one-man-band style, will be fully orchestrated. For John Peel's Dandelion label, the re-shuffled Python Lee Jackson group have been recording tracks and the Occasional

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Word have been finishing work on their "alkaline-folk-poetry" album.

Most of the studio time at **de Lane Lea** last month was taken up by the Fleetwood Mac, who are producing their own stuff for one album, now finished, and possibly a second one. The music, we are told, is mainly blues. Martin Birch did the engineering. Also taking up a lot of time was a new Howard/Blakely venture—a space opera for Lyn Music, to be released on the Philips label. This opera is performed by a group called Flaming Youth and an orchestra, with Harold Geller helping the two composers with the production. Engineer Barry Ainsworth says "no freak-out" about the album despite its theme.

Deep Purple have been recording, this time without Derek Lawrence, and have a new single *Hallelujah*, for Tetragrammaton. Also for Tetragrammaton, Freddie Ryder has recorded several ballads, one of which will be released as an A-side.



George Chkiantse at the controls of Olympic's new 16-track recording console

Mickie Most has been in the studio, laying down a backing track for Nancy Sinatra. Nancy will shortly be coming over to put on the vocals. Another New York commuter was Lou Futterman, who flew over to produce sessions by soul man J. J. Jackson. The Foundations have done a new album at de Lane Lea, as have Peter Shelley and Ben Findon, and also Rosetta Hightower, one of the unsung heroines of backing vocals on many hits,

has made her own album with producer Ian Green.

Formerly the singer with Fairport Convention, Ian Matthews had just started work on an album when we spoke to Barry Ainsworth, who speaks very highly of what's already been done. The songs are a mixture of Ian's own compositions and those of Ken Howard and Alan Blakely, who are producing the record. American singer John Davidson was recently in England to do

some television; he paid a visit to the studio with producer Tim O'Brien.

Cliff Cooper's **Orange** studio, now completely re-decorated and having taken delivery of new echo-plates and Dalby units, has been busy recently with sessions by Robin Gibb, the Pretty Things, Freedom—who have finished their album for Byg Records, which Cliff describes as "a complete knockout"—and Balond, whose LP is now finished. Decca group Sam Apple Pie have been doing demo records in Orange, and DJ Rosko has been recording there, as also have Tim Hollier, the Candy Choir, Victor Brox and Vince Melouney, a frequent visitor. Orange have just finished recording the theme music for a Swedish film, *The Shot*, played by the Mandrake.

Orange are presently negotiating for the emergence of a new label, to be run by the organisation in conjunction with *Opry*, the C and W magazine. Cliff says that the label, to be known as Lucky,



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will be the first in the UK to specialise exclusively in the country field. In conjunction with Gordon Smith of *Opry*, Brian Hatt, a producer with a growing reputation, will be producing the first sessions for the label with the famous Willie Nelson and also one of the real greats of C and W, whose name we are unfortunately not able to divulge presently. All Britain's leading C & W artists who are under contract to *Opry's* subsidiary, Country Music Enterprises, will be signed to Lucky.

Advision have been mostly occupied with work for the Marmalade label recently. Engineer Martin Rushant told us of a new Brian Auger Trinity album just completed, made up of some original compositions from Brian and Lobs

with a few outside songs. Everyone in the studio seems very excited about the record, reckoned to be Brian's best ever. Auger has also been recording some backing tracks for a film currently being made which stars Julie Driscoll.

The Blossom Toes, at last getting some recognition, have been starting work on a new album to follow *If Only For A Moment* which was also recorded at Advision. Love Sculpture have now practically finished their album which has been progressing on and off for about six weeks, and Mike d'Abo has produced his first solo single which is expected to be a big hit. A new London group, Gracious, have been recording an album, and Advision also handled a session by Clyde

McPhatter—remember *Little Bitty Pretty One?*—which produced a single, *Denver*, for B and C Records. Others who have been recording at Advision include a three-piece group called Cups who have an album for Tetragrammaton, Chris Barber and his band, and Rosko's group, Motherload, doing reductions on material recorded in the States.

Among the visitors to **Chappell's** studios in Bond Street over the last month were Horst Jankowski, the German bandleader who has had hits in this country with *A Walk In The Black Forest* and the Mexico Olympics tune. Jankowski completed an album. Johnny Harris recorded the *Footsteps On The Moon* song at Chappell, and Leapy Lee, Des O'Connor and John Rowles have also been recording there.

John **Jackson** from the studio of the same name in Rickmansworth had just returned from a trip to America when we spoke to him. He visited New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and other cities to set up American distribution of the Ad-Rhythm label, and says that records should be released before Christmas. American talent will be signed in the near future, for world-wide release.

There have been a number of new Ad-Rhythm albums released in England recently, including four organ records in which the label specialises. Keith Beckingham on Hammond has an LP, as have Harold Smart, the old *Take Your Pick* organ man now featured on *Wheel Of Fortune* with his Thomas organ, Vic Hammett on a Baldwin and Jackie Brown on Farfisa.

A demo record was made for Farfisa featuring their new professional model, played by John Dale. John Jackson rates this new organ very highly.

Force West, produced by Jim Buckingham, have recorded at Jackson's a blue-beat version of the old Four Seasons' hit *Sherry* which is released on the CBS label, a group called Jasmin Tea cut a single, *Some Other Guy*, for Tangerine Records, and for the Jackson label, the Electric Throat recorded *Send Out Love*—"a massive choir sound"—and the Bruce Baxter Batucada (Spanish for "blow") have recorded a Sergio Mendes-styled version of the Zombies' big American hit *Time Of The Season*. The Batucada hail from Harrow.

Young Blood, Miki Dallon's new label, bowed in during August with Mack Kissoon on *Get Down With It/Satisfaction* and Jimmy Powell on *I Can Go Down*. Miki told us the label will handle only commercial R & B, and, in an attempt to recreate the American rhythm sound, he will use his own nine-piece band and five-girl backing group with his artists.

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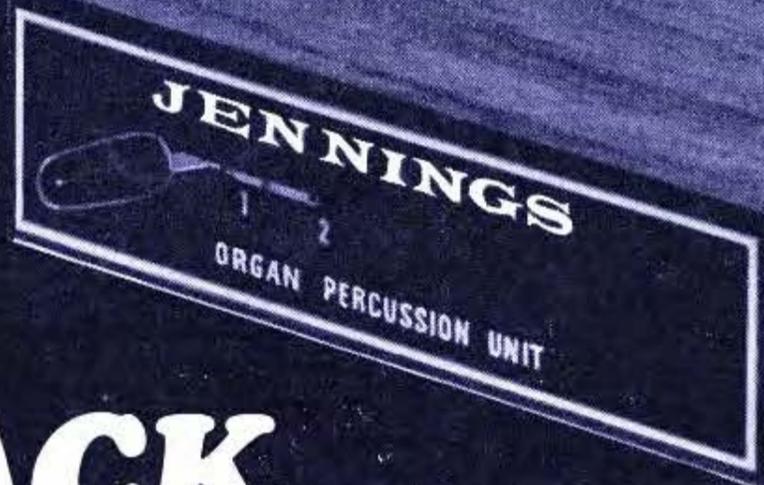
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BONZO DOG

VIVIAN STANSHALL, the noted columnist, *bon viveur* and ring-leader of the Bonzo Dog Band, has a collection of turtles and terrapins that rivals even that of the London Zoo, as your reporter discovered when he was recently granted an audience at the East Finchley residence of the great man of letters.

These delightful and remarkable little creatures were busy performing their antics in a wide range of aquaria while Vivian diligently created lyrics for new songs upon his typewriter. The song with which he was occupied as I stepped into the parlour was a *pastiche* of a Neapolitan love ballad, which he informed me was inspired by the work of Matt Monro. By the side of his typewriter lay a well-thumbed copy of "The Lover's Dictionary"—how to chat up a bird in Five Different Languages—from which the song was taking shape.

I fear, however, that all was not well; the creative process is an unpredictable bedfellow, and Vivian, sporting beach apparel in order to gain full benefit from the pleasant weather, threw his hands to the sky, and posed the rhetorical question: "What's it all about, eh? All this balls about love in a language that nobody understands!" I believe that the key to the Bonzo Dog Band and their music is to be found in

this spontaneous outburst amid the turtles, happy fellows splashing in the confines of their tanks.

The muse having been dislodged from her perch, Vivian kindly asked me whether I should care to inspect "some other interesting chaps", as he put it, and so we proceeded from the house into his garage where I was shown a further vivarium. Knowledgeably, Vivian pointed out freshwater shrimps, tiny snails and other water creatures destined for the stomachs of his fish, which included among their number one barbel, an ugly specimen kept away from the more gentle breeds in its own tank in the hall.

After this informative trip into the garage, I was conducted into the garden by my host with the words: "I say, do you know how to play Frisby?" I responded in the negative, whereupon Vivian hurled a yellow plastic saucer at me. To my amazement, it did not fly as one would have expected, and I found myself making embarrassing contortions in order to grasp the elusive Frisby. It did, in fact, due to the designer's ingenuity and knowledge of aerodynamics, float through the air in the fashion of a milk bottle top when flicked by the index and first finger. Vivian, having recently returned from the United States, said, "It's the latest

craze, Stateside." Unfortunately the mischievous yellow Frisby found its way into a neighbouring garden, so it seemed an appropriate juncture at which to re-enter the house and commence with the interview proper.

Furnished with a finely-chiselled glass goblet of good hock, Vivian and myself sat down to "rap". His young son Rupert, a strapping lad nearly two years old with his father's red hair much in evidence, sat on Dad's knee.

US concerts

We spoke for some time about the current state of the Bonzo Dog Band, surely of all novelty rock and roll "travesty" groups, the very most. Of course, I had already heard the tittle-tattle in show business circles relating to the group's recent series of concerts in America, and I was anxious to discover if the wicket had been sticky or no. Happily, said Vivian, the group's six-week sojourn had been composed of "hits", our American cousins being unanimous in their acclaim for the Bonzos' amusing act.

Not being well-known when they disembarked, few American impresarios had already presented offers of engagements, but it took little time for their reputation to assume large dimensions and find its way into these same impresarios' premises. Never did they receive the bum's rush except upon one occasion when they performed in a huge stadium where nobody could see them and most of the youngsters had come to see a rock and roll combo sharing the billing.

As you read this, the Bonzo boys will be getting their things ready for another trip to America, where they will again be touring for six weeks.

As you read this, too, there will be copies of the group's most recent recorded collection of songs in the record shops across the country. Entitled *Tadpoles*, the long-playing record has a clever yellow cover with cut-out holes which, as the inner sleeve is withdrawn, reveal a succession of diverse images, reminding one of the graphic skills acquired by Vivian at Art School. Vivian, however, gave me some disquieting news. These *Tadpole* pieces, so named because of their being recorded long before the Bonzos achieved fame in frog form, in one case on an ordinary Grundig in a pub, were to go with the television shows, *Do Not Adjust Your Set*, and should have been placed on the market long ago.

But the record company held up the release until August, and in a similar fashion, made protestations with regard

(continued on the next page)

(continued from page 33)

to the difficulties of doing "a little thing like punching holes in the sleeve." Furthermore, Mr. Stanshall was subjected to instruction by record company executives on what makes a "commercial" disc top ten hit shortly after the success of *Urban Spaceman*. Their follow-up, *Mr. Apollo*, apparently did not possess "top ten potential", Vivian having known all along that the seemingly omnipotent Radio One deejays would refuse to play with it as it was too long to be slipped into their programmes.

Urban Spaceman was produced by A. C. Vermouth, better known to the world of entertainment as Paul McCartney. Vivian and he had met and gone back to the Stanshall home for a cup of coffee and a natter, during which Paul expressed his desire to produce a session or two with the Bonzos. It was agreed upon, and the result was a resounding smash. Paul's name was to be kept secret.

Strangely enough, his connection was publicised by someone outside the group, with the result that Vivian hardly fancies asking him to do any more work with the band, though they were originally meaning to do a whole album, and all concerned had much enjoyed the association.

At this point, Mrs. Stanshall came

into the sitting-room with two brimming punnets of strawberries and a pot of tea, which proved most refreshing.

The conversation resumed as Vivian told me of his dreams for the future of the group. "We shan't be doing any more one-nighters after the next American tour," he said. "With all our gear and instruments to move, it costs a hell of a lot just to get us on the road in the first place. We can't help but charge a lot of money, which means that the promoters are often charging a quid for entrance. The kids have to stand crushed shoulder to shoulder to hear us, the majority can't really see what's going on, and they're expected to pay for that.

Value for money

"What we want to do more are concerts where you'd be able to sit in relative comfort and get something like your money's worth."

Other ventures pending are two bigger works written by Vivian, the *Brain Opera* and a new one completed during the American tour, neither of which could be staged on normal gigs, needing a decent theatre or hall.

During their existence the Bonzos have repeatedly encountered difficulties from authorities who have not understood what the group is like, and, as a result, they now manage themselves.

Whereas audiences seem to catch on very quickly, Vivian finding it difficult to recall the last occasion when a British crowd failed to appreciate their efforts, the show business establishment is often worried by and wary of the group, as the published remarks of Sol Warthogstein in this journal have shown. Few groups have been successful at looking after their own affairs, but for the Bonzos it seems the only answer to many of their frustrations.

The future for the group, however, looks as promising as ever. Though it took some time of playing night after night of cabaret in dives across the hindquarters of the nation, the Bonzos seem to have now reached the position where they can do no wrong as far as their rapidly growing audience is concerned. Even on a purely musical level, their standards are incredibly high; Roger Ruskin Spear's machines are getting more disturbing daily, many of them being too complex and delicate to be taken on gigs—another reason for the concert format; compositions by Vivian and Neil Innes are coming prolifically, and Legs Larry Smith has produced his first song. It is hoped to get the operas down on record as soon as possible, and matters are generally proceeding apace. All one has to do now is purchase a copy of *Tadpoles*.

R.S.



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INSTRUMENTAL NEWS

BBC goes for Orange

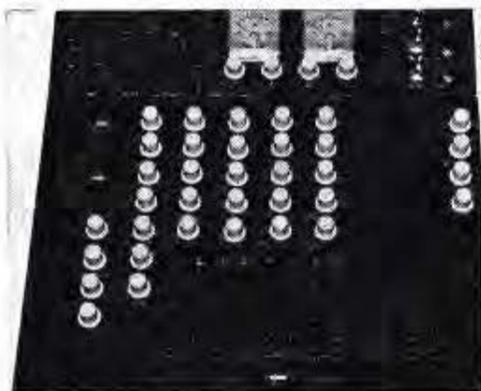
The BBC have finalised arrangements with Orange Musical Industries for the latter to supply Radio One Club and other outside broadcast units exclusively with amplification and PA equipment.

Orange already supply BBC disc jockey Emperor Rosko with amplification equipment, as well as Fleetwood Mac, Humble Pie, Freedom, John Mayall, Jon Hiseman's Colosseum and other British and American groups.

Audio mixing console

For professional musicians who require mixing equipment but want more than four volume controls on a grey box, Edge Productions have brought out the AB Audio modular sound mixing console which is claimed to equal the specification and performance of many top studio consoles.

The unit can be used in conjunction with existing PA set-ups or can produce multi-track recordings working from a single control desk. In this latter connection it could be particularly useful for songwriters, agents, music publishers, etc. who may want to produce a quick tape without the inconvenience of going to a recording studio.



AB Audio console

Edge Productions have issued a complete specification on the AB Audio, and this can be obtained from them at 95 Ardwell Avenue, Barkingside, Essex.

New record label

Byg Records of France, who recently opened a London office under the administration of Roger Fennings (see last month's *Beat Instrumental*), are now to launch an international label for the world called Young International.

Directors are Roger Fennings, Jean Luc Young and Jean Georgakarakos. Their first release will be a stereo LP by Freedom in September.

Naughty—but nice

The controversial Serge Gainsbourg composition *Je t'aime . . . moi non plus* has been recorded on Parlophone—minus erotic sound effects—by Sounds Nice, featuring former Gun organist Tim Mycroft.

Retitled *Love At First Sight* for the English market, the

tune has been given a beat-ballad treatment by arranger Paul Buckmaster, and is produced by Gus Dudgeon and Tony Hall.

Incidentally, the name of Tim's session backing group was the result of a comment to that effect by Paul McCartney when he heard a tape for this number.

Baldwin organ demo

Harry Stoneham and his trio will be appearing at the Baldwin London showrooms from 2.30 to 4.30 on Sunday, 31st August—not the 17th, as stated in our last issue—to demonstrate the Baldwin PR 200 organ which is making its official debut in Britain. Over 500 professional organists have been invited to come to this "pro meets pro" session to see and hear the new organ.

Alan Bown replacement

Robert Palmer, formerly with Mandrake Paddlesteamer, has replaced Jess Rodin as lead singer with the Alan Bown. Rob is already working with the group, who fly to the USA the first week in October to promote their new single, *Still As Stone*.

Gold disc for Zeppelin

Led Zeppelin have been awarded a Gold Disc for sales in excess of £1 million of their first album, *Led Zeppelin*. The LP has sold half a million copies, and was in the charts as soon as it was released.

Advance orders of over 200,000 have been received for Led Zeppelin's second album.

Honours for Desmond

Desmond Dekker was greeted by thousands of his native Jamaicans when he flew home last month, and he



has been invited by the Jamaican Government to be a guest of honour at the island's independence celebrations.

Carlsbro down South

Top Gear, Rod and Bob Bradley's Denmark Street musical instrument business, have obtained the marketing agency in the South for Carlsbro amplifiers and speaker cabinets.

Started eight years ago by Stuart Mercer in a small attic workshop in Mansfield, Notts., Carlsbro Sound Equipment now has two factories in the town—one producing amplifiers, the other speaker units. But although the Carlsbro range has been gaining popularity with groups in the Midlands, the North, Scotland, Wales and Ireland, it has not previously had a distribution outlet south of Birmingham. Top Gear's move will rectify this, and make Carlsbro better known nationally.

Carlsbro's three basic amplifiers—40 watt, 60 watt and 100 watt—are available in four versions: all-purpose; all-purpose with reverb; four-channel PA; and four-channel PA with reverb. In addition, the 100 watt PA is available as an eight-input four-channel model, with or without reverb, making a total of 14 different amplifiers.

Among Carlsbro's impressive array of speaker cabinets, Top Gear say they are most impressed with the 4 x 15 in bass model as it gives a full round bass sound without distortion—even at a high volume—with a handling capacity of 200 watts.

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Graham Bond is back

Graham Bond, "fed up with the scene in the States", has teamed up with a US alto player, and is returning to Britain from Jamaica where they will join drummer Mitch Mitchell to form a new band. Graham, who left Britain because he felt he was regarded as being too *avant-garde*, thinks the scene here is right now for his type of music.

Meanwhile, Mercury Records are releasing a new Bond LP culled from tracks of two LPs made in the States.

Riviera portable organs



The Vox Riviera organ models 1 and 2 reviewed on page 22 of our last issue are also available in collapsible versions, as our picture shows. Covered in rexine for durability, the organs, respectively single- and dual-manual versions, are specially suitable for group work.

Model 1 costs £495, and the Model 2 costs £750, in either the console or portable versions.

The Riviera will also be available soon in a "stately home" model finish in off-white and gold.

COMPETITION RESULT

THE WINNER of our July competition for a £200 Vox bass amplifier and speaker unit is GRAEME WRIGHT, 9 Raynald House, Gracefield Gardens, London S.W.16.

Graeme, who plays bass guitar with the Side Effects, chose the correct order of outstanding bass parts as follows:

1 — *Lady Madonna*; 2 — *Politician*; 3 — *You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin'*; 4 — *River Deep, Mountain High*; 5 — *19th Nervous Breakdown*; 6 — *Albatross*; 7 — *America*; 8 — *Pinball Wizard*; 9 — *Cupid*; 10 — *With A Little Help From My Friends*.

Beatles' new LP 'Abbey Road'

The Beatles' first 1969 album will be released in September. Titled *Abbey Road*, it will have one long 17-minute track on Side One made up of several songs plus two other new tracks. Side Two features six separate songs.

The new album is named after the road in which the EMI studios are situated—the home, of course, of the famous No. 2 studio, where most of the Beatles' big hits have been born.

It's the old team once again, with George Martin in the recording manager's chair, and red-haired Geoffrey

Emerick sound balancing on all sessions.

Unlike their next release, *Get Back*, which does what the title says and has many songs treated in an early Beatles style, *Abbey Road* is progressive '69 Beatles all the way, and features lots of new sounds, many of which were created in the electronic depths of George Harrison's Moog Synthesizer, which he had specially brought into the studios.

A description of the musical scope of the Moog is given on page 46 of this issue.

Donovan's US tour

Donovan will tape a special guest appearance for television's Andy Williams Show prior to his American tour which starts in California on September 24.

This year's tour, the biggest Donovan has yet done, will see him performing for as many as 750,000 people in more than 30 cities. The venues include Madison Square Gardens, the Hollywood Bowl and a selection of university and college halls.

Vic Lewis, managing director of NEMS Enterprises, this month announced the opening of Nempere House, 3 Hill Street, Mayfair, which is to be the headquarters of Donovan Enterprises, and through which Donovan's current and future business activities will be co-ordinated.



Robin Gibb has been recording at Orange during the month of August

COUNTRY FEVER

Country Fever's first single for the new Lucky label, *Did She Mention My Name* will be released on September 1. The B-side is *Mentor Revenge*, featuring Albert Lee, the group's lead guitarist, on vocal.

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SPIRIT OF JOHN MORGAN



WE ARE told that the blues boom is dying on its feet. We are told of the Chicago-style bands folding up like card-houses, of falling attendances at clubs, and we see the better bands either going back to hard rock or progressing to something near jazz. The public would seem to be pretty tired of the boring "are they authentic, or did he play a white note?" squabbles, and are looking for entertainment rather than musical one-upmanship.

But that doesn't mean no more blues. One group is standing out as combining real blues class with a good-humoured buffoonery to provide tremendous entertainment—the Spirit of John Morgan. Don "Fagin" Whittaker plays guitar, Phil Shutt bass, Mick Walker drums, and John Morgan, believed by many to be the new improved reincarnation of Zoot Money in a track suit, plays piano and Hammond. He also plays electric blues accordion on occasion—as on the famous occasion where he marched on stage, produced the most amazing honks, snerts and whimpers until the instrument exploded in a shower of bean cans and fish heads and blown up bellows.

Fagin looks like a cool, introverted player—but he freaks out every now and then. One night at the Marquee, where the group have had a residency for some months, Morgan gave a big build up on the lines of: "Ladies and gents, we are honoured to have in the audience one of

the all-time blues greats, etc; would you please give him a big hand." Nobody had heard of the hero but he got the applause. Nobody caught on for a while that it was Fagin in blackface camping it up with nimble blues clichés and soulful tortured face.

But this doesn't mean any lack of respect for blues: Morgan is probably the best stride pianist in the country. Some measure of this can be seen from the fact that while in France a couple of years ago, he and Memphis Slim regularly played, together on stage, two grand pianos back to back in a big rave duet. "I remember Slim saying that in a couple of years I'd be able to play like him," says John. "At one time I was playing in the BC Blues Club in Lyons—the BC stands for Buck Clayton—with a French blues band that was really tremendous. We did backings for John Lee Hooker when he came over, and it got to the stage where I was just living the blues."

It all went very well for John in France, but he came back to England and gave up the chance of a career there, and a residency in St. Tropez. He had already had groups in this country, the notorious Basix of Manchester and the JM Blues, which never went professional because of the commitments of the other members, but this time he went down to Devon, his home county, and started a group with Mick, his present drummer, on bass, and

ran a couple of clubs.

This was the beginning of the Spirit of John Morgan as it now stands. He had bought his first organ, though piano was and is his real love, and the group eventually came up to London. It was a fairly slow haul at first, playing second billing, but getting enough work and plenty of return bookings. At first they were with Chrystolis, John and Chris Wright having known each other at Robson. The residency at the Marquee came up, and things began to blossom. They caught on and were soon getting much talked about in the business with their strange but effective mixture of blues, lunacy, boogie-woogie solo piano pieces and Graham Bond numbers with Morgan hurling himself at the keyboard.

Chris Barber and others expressed their admiration for the group and sat in with them. A recording contract was fixed up with Mervyn Conn, an LP now being available, and there's talk of the group going to America and returning to do a tour with Blood, Sweat and Tears in this country. The future looks bright.

And whatever happens to them in terms of mass appreciation, the Spirit (and very definitely body) of John Morgan is the group to see if you're losing confidence in British blues. "We want to bring people out of themselves and have a really good time," says John, the only man I know who can whistle and hum three notes simultaneously.

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"HEY, BEN—look, I've got a new band here that needs some work. They've got a front line of French horn and flugel horn." "Yeah? Listen, why don't you find me an Eskimo string quartet—the ballrooms are crying out for them."

In the heyday of the three guitar/drums line-up a few years back, the lines between manager and agent were probably ringing with conversations like this. If you didn't have the sound of '65 and the right faces, forget it—no work.

Since then, thankfully, times have changed. Bands are featuring instruments like flute, mello-tron and even jew's harp, and more and more are joining the search for an original, individual sound which owes nothing to Chicago or the American West Coast. Such a band is Samson—and they do feature French and flugel horns, not just on certain numbers but as the backbone of their exciting and sometimes terrifying sound.

The band is impressive both to look at and to hear. At London's Blaises club recently they roused a small and blasé-looking audience into cheering and whistling—and discotheque beautiful people aren't known for lending appreciative ears to new groups. But they offer



variety, excitement and clean, tight arrangements, whether playing originals (which make up most of the repertoire), good pop songs like the Small Faces' *Tin Soldier*, or variations on unhackneyed classical themes.

Visually, the approach is cool—but French horn player Ian Kewley makes up the balance by leaping about like a demented pixie, flailing the air with his unfamiliar-looking instrument. Sometimes they end a set with a hilarious rock and roll medley which has to be seen to be believed—everyone lies on the floor, leaps in the air, hurls things about, and unlike most attempts at humour by

groups, it's genuinely funny.

But basically, every member of the band is seriously involved in Samson music. It comes as no surprise to learn that two members, bass player Les Olbinson and Ian Kewley were trained at Manchester's Royal College of Music. While studying there they met drummer Mike Delaney, who was working as college librarian after playing with top bands on the continent.

The key to the band's originality lies partly in the variety of experience of its members. Of the other three, organist Norman Findley has worked with ballroom pop groups, lead guitar Les Jones with rock groups in

Germany, and new member John Pritchard, basically a jazz player, has backed various pop stars like Lulu and John Rowles.

John, a musician with sophisticated tastes, finds the group stimulating: "There is as much musical freedom in this band as in a good jazz group, and because so many idioms have been absorbed everyone has a chance to express themselves fully."

Les Olbinson agreed: "Basically, we play what we like, whether you call it pop, blues or whatever—these days, some of the musical barriers have gone down, so we're finding that people are accepting us for what we are, a music band."

Opportunities

Does the unusual line-up create any difficulties? Ian says he sometimes felt a little weird being the only pop French horn player in the world, but that the instrumentation created opportunities rather than hangups: "With this line-up you're almost forced into doing your own material, because the two horns just don't sound right on a lot of standard repertoire numbers. We find that when we do other people's stuff, our versions are completely different to the originals—for instance, there may be a long jazz instrumental passage in the middle of a number that was previously all vocal."

Not surprisingly, Samson also often uses classical techniques—and that doesn't mean doing rock versions of the Trumpet Voluntary. In full flight, the band sometimes sounds like a miniature electronic orchestra. Their forthcoming LP showcases this idea, one side consisting of a pop opera and the other of songs built around themes from Holst's *The Planets*.

Les explained: "We haven't just cribbed the themes. We've tried to use them and build on them to make an original statement in a different idiom—rather like the way classical composers occasionally use folk songs."

The best thing about Samson is that they are forging ahead with their own individual style, not caring about pop conventions or a particular image. Even "progressive" groups often have a sameness about them (not totally unconnected with a mass neurosis about playing *Spoonful* at a million decibels)—but this band is going its own way. Hear them if you can—there's a lot of good music.

your queries answered

Pick-up repair

Dear Gary,

I have a Kay Red Devil guitar which I haven't used for some time, and I now find that the bridge pick-up is broken. I have contacted local repair shops, who have told me that I need a new pick-up, but am experiencing difficulty in finding where to obtain a replacement.

MICK COURT,
Nottingham.

● Hohner Concessionaires, 11 Farringdon Road, London, E.C.1, will be delighted to repair or replace your faulty pick-up if you detach it from the guitar and send it to them.

Sound-proofing

Dear Gary,

I would be grateful if you would advise me on the most effective inexpensive way of sound-proofing an upstairs room in my house where we play. The room is an attic, and the sound, particularly the drums, echoes throughout the house. Following a friend's suggestion, I am going to stick egg-box trays on the walls and ceilings, but the main problem is the floor.

W. GREEN,
Hartlepool.

● The egg boxes will undoubtedly help to cut down the noise transmitted outwards and upwards, and these are

practical substitutes for some of the more expensive types of sound insulating material. As far as the floor is concerned, the best type of insulation would be provided by several layers of carpet and underfelt, while the windows, if any, could be screened by heavily backed curtaining.

Marvin guitar

Dear Gary,

I would be grateful if you would give me information on the Baldwin Hank Marvin guitar, and tell me if there is a stockist near me.

FRANK DEVLIN,
Glasgow.

● The Baldwin Hank Marvin guitar is a three-pickup model, costing 163 gns. Endorsed by the famous ex-Shadows player, it has a scroll head and Rez-o-Tube string settings. A vibrato arm is fitted as standard. Stockists of this instrument in Glasgow are J. T. Forbes, 122 West Nile Street, C.2, and Alexander Biggar, 271/275 Sauchiehall Street, C.2.

Amp servicing

Dear Gary,

I have a Dynacord guitar amplifier, but have recently discovered that their list of servicing agents in different countries does not include any in England. As yet, I have not had any trouble with my amplifier, but would

like to be prepared in the event of a breakdown. Could you tell me who would undertake repairs?

SIG. D. WESTBROOK,
B.F.P.O. 35.

● Sound City, 124 Shaftesbury Avenue, London W.1, do a 14-hour repair service for all electronic equipment, including the Dynacord range of amplifiers, for which they are the British agents. Their resident electronics engineer is "Pearly King" John Marriott.

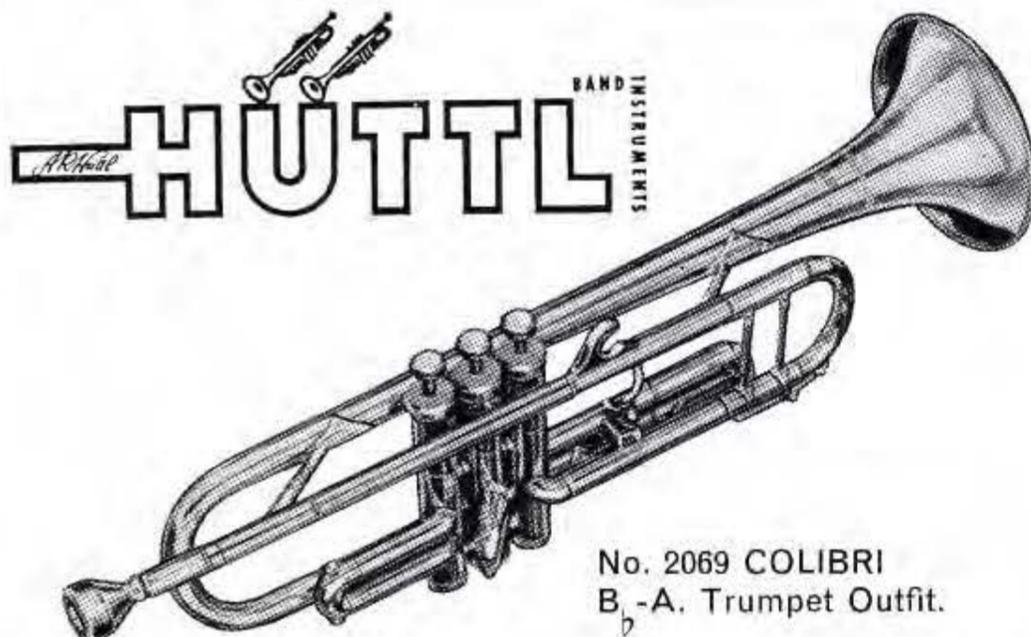
Leslie unit

Dear Gary,

As a member of a group based in New Zealand, I find it virtually impossible to obtain English gear. Because of this, I wonder if you could explain the basics of a Leslie unit, and, if possible, how one could be built.

IAN HEWITSON,
Wellington, N.Z.

● Basically, a Leslie tone cabinet allows a continuous sound—e.g. an organ note—to be transmitted only intermittently at varying speeds, giving a wobble or reverb sound. To achieve this, the most common procedure is to mount a speaker behind a rotor in an enclosed cabinet. This rotor is slit at one side, so that during its rotation it momentarily covers the speaker, exposing it after a fraction of a second. Another system, based on the same principle, rotates the speaker itself to give the same effect.



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SONG- WRITER'S COLUMN

When one looks down the list of songwriters who have penned the songs which are in this month's charts, what strikes one immediately is that a very large percentage are written by the artists who have also made the hit record.

Ninety per cent of the Beatles material, of course, has been written by John Lennon and Paul McCartney. But then, recently we have had *Dizzy* by Tommy Roe; *Frozen Orange Juice* by Peter Sarstedt; *Living In The Past* by Roy Wood; *Oh Happy Day* by Edwin Hawkins; *Tracks Of My Tears* by Smokey Robinson; *Way Of Life* by Roger Cooke and Roger Greenaway; *Honky Tonk Woman* by Mick Jagger and Keith Richard—the list is endless.

The reasons for this trend are obvious. The songwriter normally receives almost the same amount of money from a hit as the artist—although the artist does increase his earnings enormously from personal appearances—and it's simple arithmetic for the artist to work out that if he can also write the song that he is recording, he doubles the money he will receive from a hit.

Accepted

So many people have been so successful at penning their own material, that it is now an almost accepted thing. Music publishing has also followed the same trend. If an artist is going to write his own song, then he forms his own publishing company and, once again, more or less doubles the amount of money he receives from his songwriting efforts.

On top of this trend, comes the fact that British hits are now seldom confined to these isles. Any record that gets into the British charts has an excellent chance of also making the Top 30's of America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and many of the continental countries as well, with the result that, whereas a British hit ten years ago which was confined to this country might earn the writer between £3,000 and £5,000 now it can earn him anything from £5,000 to £100,000. Figures which will keep many a songwriter firmly glued to the difficult road to chart success.

THE A & R MEN

MIKE D'ABO

'I feel my job is part of an artistic exercise'



MIKE D'Abbo in thoughtful mood—"I have, as a producer, somehow seemed to dabble in revitalising the careers of people—for example, the Fortunes, Chris Farlowe and, most recently, Twinkle. And I feel, as a producer, that I have to be involved in the arrangement and the presentation as well as just the production."

He added: "I feel my job is part of an artistic exercise."

Mike D'Abbo, successful with Manfred Mann, successful as an actor, has now set up his own production company. He also has a business manager, Lawrence Myers, who also handles Geoff Stephens, Mickie Most and so on. As a producer, Mike works as an independent; but he also has a publishing company which goes through Immediate Records.

"Producing started for me when I was with Manfred—we'd just cut *Just Like A Woman*. I had a call from United Artists who told me of a continental group, the Hootenanny Singers, and wanted me to produce a record for them. I didn't tell the Manfreds because I was new to the group and wasn't even sure if I was allowed to do this kind of outside work. But I went over to Sweden for the session. And the record got to number one there.

Singer-writer

From that point, Mike produced for the Circus, which then featured Philip Goodhand-Tait, now a solo singer-writer and responsible for recent Love Affair hits. Said Mike, in reflective mood: "I've also noticed that I have a strange tendency to provide, as writer, songs just before a singer makes it big. That is to say, I had the Long John Baldry song before he really made it big. And the same with Bobby Goldsboro' prior to *Honey*."

"In fact, I lost quite a lot of money on my early productions, because the artists didn't have the right contracts and so on. But I put it down to experience."

There were other artists. Rod Stewart, for instance. And an effort, via *The Last Goodbye*, to get Chris Farlowe away on the big ballad scene. But, says Mike: "My trouble in the studios is my difficulty in actually hearing the end product. I know what I want very clearly at first, then find myself getting lost, and then get back to the right track eventually. I suppose I'm a very expensive producer. Sometimes I don't think I really put my foot

down strongly enough in the studio.

"But, as I said, it all goes down to experience. When I look ahead, I realise that as a producer I want most of all to go through the whole spectrum of sounds. There's nobody special in mind, but I saw an Irish band at Camden Town and if I could come up with a really good folk tune, then I'd like to record them. Then, maybe I'd like to find a good soul singer and come up with a Tamla-type record. Or a C and W artist—a kind of new Jim Reeves. The point is this: it's stupid just to say that Ken Dodd is terrible, or whatever.

Put down

"Nobody should be put down for anything as long as it is well done. And at the moment, I'm producing my own first single record. At first, I thought I shouldn't do anything but an album, but this song *Woman In My Life*, which I wrote with Tony Macaulay, seems just right for a single. But producing for oneself creates its own special problems.

"Where I differ from some producers is that I start with going out for the right musicians. It's not a set arrangement, just a getting together and adding different bits and pieces. I'm not like Tom Jones. With Tom, the weight of his own voice and personality carries the thing right through, so that one doesn't worry too much about anything else. But I need more. I've played piano on all the records I've made, which is a personal thing . . . but I wouldn't use piano if it wasn't exactly the right instrument.

"With me, I use Albert Lee, who used to be guitarist with Chris Farlowe, and Pete Gavins, who is one of the best drummers I've met, and Pete Donaldson on bass. But if you start with a complete arrangement, then you can finish a session in two hours. But I start with rhythm, or guitar and drums, and then start building. It could take me two months—which is why I'm expensive.

"I enjoy production, but I must stick to my own ideas. And when you're producing yourself, the strength lies in knowing if something is not coming off properly—and then calling it a day."

P.G.

IF ALL his fans among the professional and semi-professional ranks of musicians bought each record, then Booker T's name would rarely be out of the Top Ten. Instead he—and the MGs—are best summed up as “occasional” hit-makers . . . though the recent big-time ratings on *Time Is Tight* give a hint that the group could now find consistency.

Talk about Booker T and one tends to talk mainly about *Green Onions*. This was a 1962 recording which sold round the world. But that is by no means the end of the story. For Booker T is very much the man behind most of the Stax-Volt hits of recent years—fronting, on organ, one of the tightest yet swiftest rhythm sections ever.

When Booker T. Jones was here in London last time, he and I spent many hours talking over the music scene—on many occasions with the white guitarist Steve Cropper, another great (but often unheralded) musician in the Stax scene. I'll fill in the purely factual details on Booker T later on, but first recall his approach to music.

He told me: “People say we play with soul. Well, that's true, but it should be true of all musicians. We, as a group, work together because we dig each other's abilities. But soul, as such, goes out the window when you try to become too contrived, too forced. They tell me that most groups in Britain work in the studios according to the clock. You got two hours, so you time things so you're finished right on the spot. In Memphis, we just wander in the studio, fool around a while to get the atmosphere going, then carry on working until it's ah just right. This could be 14 hours. Time, I guess, stands still, and this is because we're all totally involved in what is going down on that tape.

'It comes from the heart'

“Maybe we just have the bare idea of a melody line. Maybe we can't even start until the tune is complete, there in the studio. But it could start with me, then somebody else takes it up, then we all jam together. I know exactly what the other guys are capable of, and that means we don't have to waste time kinda introducing each other. You can call it intuitive, but it comes from the heart. Without heart, anyway, you're nothing. Sounds kinda corny, but we believe we are all part of a great big family. That that family makes millions of dollars through records is merely incidental.”

This “intuitive” skill, this group togetherness, showed through when Booker T was asked, recently and for the first time, to write the soundtrack for the Jules Dassin movie *Uptight*. The film company told him to take his time, to employ as many musicians as he wanted—



to, above all, get it right—and hang the expense. Booker T wasn't even interested . . . he relied entirely upon the skill of his own group. From that soundtrack came *Time Is Tight*.

Now the Booker T story itself is pretty complex. There had been a group called the Mar-Keys, founded by Steve Cropper, along with a school-mate Donald Dunn, a bassist, but it toured for only a few months. Steve was fed up with the touring—but eventually met Booker T, a piano-organ student, just out of university. Steve, drummer Al Jackson, bassist Louis Steinberg and Booker T got together—originally as the Memphis Group, later shortened just to the MGs. They recorded *Behave Yourself*, but the flip *Green Onions* was the biggie—and that set the group off on the road to national fame. “Duck” Dunn returned on bass and the group became resident at Stax. Says Booker T: “We could have been much bigger much longer if we'd accepted all the touring dates. But like I said, it's a family thing—and so we spend the bulk of our time right there in the studios, working on backing tracks.”

Backing tracks, incidentally, that have paved the way to the charts for dozens of artists, including Sam and Dave, the late and great Otis Redding, Eddie Floyd, Carla Thomas, William Bell and Judy Clay.

Even so, *Soul Limbo* was a US number one for the MGs last year and Booker T himself recently branched out as a vocalist, singing on

television with Carla Thomas.

So it's a group of four, all rhythm, for the MGs. But sometimes the Stax brass line-up of three comes in, and the group then becomes the Mar-Keys. Sounds complicated, maybe, but mere titles and tags mean nothing to these dedicated musicians. All that matters is the music. There have been changes of personnel, notably among the brass boys, but everything stems from Booker T and that distinctive rhythm team.

Strong control

The main strength of the Booker T approach is this ability to submerge a strong personality in the interests of front-line vocalists. This implies a strong control of temperament. And Booker T really does have control. “I rarely blow my cool,” he said. “Life's too short for people to kick over at every little thing. But then I guess I'm lucky in that I have guys round me I'd trust with my life.”

It's easy enough in pop to become a hit-maker. Much harder to become a real trend-setter. And despite the infrequency of their own hit records, Booker T and the MGs have become just that . . . a team which originated something entirely personal.

If only disc-jockeys in Britain (or their producers?) could squeeze out a lot more time for straight instrumentals. But then that's a different subject altogether.

P.G.



“So relaxed right now”

BLIND FAITH IN THE STATES

VIOLENCE in America. A sensational debut concert in Hyde Park, with an equally sensational reaction of “fors” and “againsts”. Controversy again over that album cover showing a picture of a nude 11-year-old girl. Blind Faith, as a group, haven’t been with us long, but their impact has been—sensational.

And their long American tour has given them more headline exposure than any British group since the Beatles originally crossed the Atlantic. “Acclamation by riot” screamed one American trade headline. And the writer went on: “Blind Faith’s rumbling, churning sound conjured up the colorings of a full rock symphony in the throes of a disaster scene . . .”

Ginger Baker has, in America, become the High Priest of percussion. “His drums were impossible to hide from, spelling out messages and moods on the instrument he has received as a medium . . . he can actually play a song on the drums.”

America even got their first album before the British fans—and it had an advance order of half-a-million, which qualified it for a Gold Disc literally before the buyers had a chance to get to the shops.

Perhaps because of the type of music laid down by Blind Faith, the violent outbursts were commonplace. In Madison Square Garden, for example, 23,000 fans in the audience kept up a non-stop barrage of noise—and a similar barrage of coins, bottles, and seats. This was where Ginger Baker was grabbed by fans and had one of his sticks nicked. This was a signal for the police to move in and manhandle the offending fan. Ginger leapt in, pleading with the police to “go easy on the kid” . . . and was walloped himself for his pains.

And so another chapter was written into the major problem of police versus fans versus groups. Said Ginger: “It happens too often in the States but it’s hard to see just who is to blame. Sometimes the mere presence of the police is enough to trigger off violence. The fans tend to resent them even being there.” At any rate, it was a very nasty experience for Ginger—it took him a couple of hours to recover from the lambasting he received in the general struggle.

Rick Grech was the only Blind Faith member to break into the American tour and fly back home for a few hours “peace and quiet.” And he

had to face the critics who feel that the group is far from the “super status” originally claimed for it. What are the criticisms? That it appears to be just Stevie Winwood with a backing group. That they have a lack of basic originality. That the material used shows a shortage of decisiveness.

Bassist Rick IS a bit indecisive when describing the group’s music. He says that basically they are a rock and roll band, playing the music of the people. Relaxed music, as demonstrated on the first album, but music created as a peak of togetherness by musicians who “feel somehow that we simply HAD to band together and create our own scene.”

He said: “One thing is certain. The band has got better and better through the American tour. About Stevie—we read the criticisms but the fact is that he has the best voice of the lot of us, so it would be silly not to use him to the maximum. Some people come along and expect to hear the old Cream and that maybe is where the misunderstandings start.

“Of course there are always people asking when we are going to break up. The point is that we came together because of this basic belief in each

other's abilities, and as long as we swing happily together then we'll stay together. If something comes up to spoil things, to make it an unhappy experience working together, then obviously we'd split and go our own ways.

"But we really are so relaxed right now that it's hard to even think back to the tougher scenes that used to go on. As for me, I'm glad that Family continue to sound so good . . ."

And Rick Grech confirmed: "Though the pickings are so good in the States, of course we want to spend a lot of time touring in Britain. American audiences are fine, generally the over-twenties, but with some younger ones maybe turning up with their parents. But there's a lot to be said for working in your own country.

"The American scene really means stadiums or colleges. It's a matter of personal taste, but I've always felt more comfortable in a smaller place, somewhere where you can get nearer to the audience. But right now it looks as if we'll be recording in America, maybe in the Atlantic studios. But again, I can say that even with fairly limited experience of the scene, it's much tougher playing the American circuits than it is in Britain."

For each member of the Blind Faith, formation of the group has brought personal freedom. This relates back to

a long chat I had with Stevie Winwood, as Traffic was slowing down. "Once the spark has gone, there is really no justification for keeping a group together. Okay so there is money—and there is the question of the fans. But it's kinder to call the guys together and say: 'That's it—we've gone as far as we can'. Then look around and see which new direction you want to face. You can't force these things . . . you just have to keep alert and see when something is better off dead."

Huge following

A sensational first couple of months, then, for Blind Faith. Musically, as yet, not total acceptance from all fans, maybe because each individual Faith has his own huge following—and the emphasis must be more on some than the others.

Remember, though, that the boys are still feeling their way. The Blind Faith that returns from barnstorming in the States is a very different Blind Faith to that launched on a hundred-thousand screams in Hyde Park.

If the musicians can build patiently, then surely the fans can wait patiently.

Certainly the main thing is the basic gentleness of the Blind Faith approach as compared with the heavy violence of the Cream. Ginger Baker obviously

can't be dampened too much, but Eric Clapton has somehow changed his personality in the new set-up.

Another argument against Blind Faith is that they don't somehow add anything to what the Cream were doing. But the unfairness here is simply that this is an entirely new organisation, admittedly stemming from the Cream, but a new mixture based on musicians who happen to think together. And do together.

But where goes Blind Faith? Obviously in a tightly musical bag, but this outfit really personifies the start of the super-group scene. There is Humble Pie to come, and there are others operating in the States. One of the biggest problems is the public attitude that because a favourite performer, say Stevie Winwood, breaks away from his roots and sets up in something else . . . that he has to remain true, entirely, to his beginnings.

It is in this context that the arguments rage. But a group like Blind Faith have to find a "super"-special level of performance, something different. After all, it was that search for something unusual that drove them to leave their original groups. Too many critics, I'm sure, have been too hasty. As Ginger Baker said in front of thousands at Hyde Park: "This is actually the first rehearsal." P.G.



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L.P. REVIEWS

AHEAD RINGS OUT



BLODWYN PIG
ISLAND ILPS 9101

Mick Abrahams' Blodwyn Pig have been building up a good reputation over the months and now their album is here—complete with the most strikingly revolting cover. The material is varied, ranging from the jazzy/rocky *Modern Alchemist* to the quiet *Dear Jill* with a repetitive slide guitar phrase running right through it. The Abrahams humour is there too on the dedication of *Change Song*, followed by a beautiful combination of Mick singing and playing acoustic guitar with Jack Lancaster forsaking his saxes and flute for violin. The combination of sax and guitar is used a lot and most effectively especially on *Ain't Ya Comin' Home Babe?*

Side One: It's Only Love; Dear Jill; Sing Me A Song That I Know; The Modern Alchemist.

Side Two: Up And Coming; Leave It With Me; The Change Song; Backwash; Ain't Ya Coming Home Babe?

JOHNNY WINTER



JOHNNY WINTER
CBS 63619

If anyone ever needed evidence of albino Johnny Winter's prodigious technique on guitar, this album is a good showcase although his vocals are rather weak. *Be Careful With A Fool*, a breathtaking 12-bar, takes off in an avalanche of piercing treble resembling Coltrane's "sheets of sound", but, unlike Coltrane, doesn't really seem to be heading anywhere. This is also true of the tracks featuring slide guitar where the changes of tempo on some tracks, notably *Mean Mistreater* tend to weaken the overall effect. However, despite these reservations, the album makes for pleasant listening.

Side One: I'm Yours And I'm Hers; Be Careful With A Fool; Dallas; Mean Mistreater.

Side Two: Leland Mississippi Blues; Good Morning Little Schoolgirl; When You Got A Good Friend; I'll Drown In My Tears; Back Door Friend.

THE B. B. KING STORY



B. B. KING
BLUE HORIZON 7-63216

Sub-titled *Born In Itta Bena, Mississippi*, Chapter One of the B. B. King Story will be welcomed by all Blues Boy's fans, containing as it does the first stage in the development of the R & B singer's career, and beginning with his first big hit, *Three O'Clock Blues*. Most of the tracks are pretty basic blues numbers, co-penned by King with various other writers, but the combination of his sparing use of guitar for breaks and the skilful blending of the brass section creates a good middle-of-the-road R & B sound.

Side One: You Upset Me; Eyesight To The Blind; Beautician Blues; Bad Luck; Troubles, Troubles, Troubles; Sneakin' Around.

Side Two: Sweet Thing; Three O'Clock Blues; Please Love Me; Let Me Love You; The Worst Thing In My Life; Shotgun.

STAND UP



JETHRO TULL
ISLAND ILPS 9103

All the titles on Jethro's second album were written by Ian Anderson and his stamp is on the whole production with his unmistakable voice and a lot of flute, with Glen Cormick on bass and Clive Bunker on drums, etc., Jethro Tull can build up excitement to a climax as on *Nothing Is Easy*, move along at an easy shuffle with *Bouree*, or keep it quiet and beaty like *Look Into The Sun*, or break out with fast bongos and mandolin on *Fat Man*. This is a good representation of what Jethro Tull do and do very well whereas other groups might try it and fail to hang together, but they have not broken through to new ground here.

Side One: A New Day Yesterday; Jef Goes To Leicester Square; Bouree; F To The Family; Look Into The Sun.
Side Two: Nothing Is Easy; Fat Man; We Used To Know; Reasons For Waiting; For A Thousand Mothers.

CROSBY, STILLS AND NASH



CROSBY, STILLS AND NASH
ATLANTIC 588 189

If any "super group" deserves that disastrous tag, it's Dave Crosby, Steve Stills and Graham Nash. Not because of their musical standing (ex-Byrds, Buffalo Springfield and Hollies) but because of the superb album they have turned out. The great impression the album leaves is the Crosby-Nash harmony and the controlled instrumentation, always exciting and right for the song, whether it's the fast moving *Marrakesh Express* that skips along, the sad and resigned *You Don't Have To Cry* or a heavier number like *Long Time Gone*. It's the sort of record that wills you to listen to it and once it's on the turntable it stays there. Undoubtedly one of this year's top three albums.

Side One: Suite Judy Blue Eyes, rakesh Express; Guinnevere; You t Have To Cry; Pre-Road Downs.
Side Two: Wooden Ships; Lady Of The Island; Helplessly Hoping; Long Time Gone; 49 Bye Byes.

SCRAPBOOK



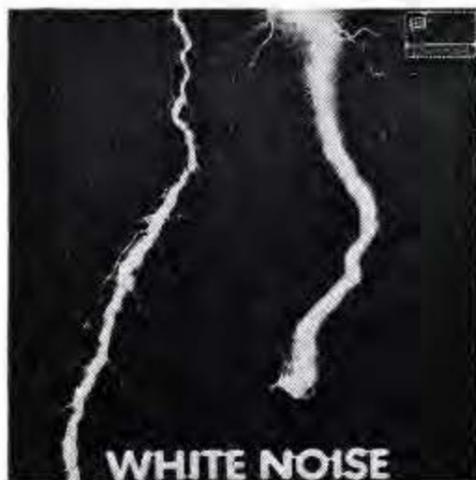
THE CLOUDS
ISLAND ILPS 9100

Despite what the title suggests, this isn't another string of past hits, as this is the first LP from a relatively new Scottish group who travelled on the recent Jethro Tull/Ten Years After package. All the tracks are original compositions, and "reflect their personal feelings to various events in their lives". Although there is a faint derivative-ness about the *sound* of one or two tracks, they have achieved a distinctive mixture of tunefulness and wry humour combined with attractive voicings. The title track, which is being issued as a single gives a good idea of the general standard.

Side One: Introduction — Scrapbook; The Carpenter; The Colours Have Run; I'll Go, Girl; Grandad; Ladies And Gentlemen.
Side Two: Humdrum; Union Jack; Old Man; Waiter, There's Something In My Soup; Scrapbook.

BY JOHN FORD

AN ELECTRIC STORM



THE WHITE NOISE
ISLAND ILPS 9099

"Combining singers, instrumentalists and complex electronic sound, the emotional intensity is at a maximum." So says the sleeve note, and judging by the atmosphere created on *My Game Of Loving*—an orgiastic crescendo of moans, groans and familiar noises—this is to some extent truthful. However, after the initial novelty has worn off, the record becomes rather monotonous, and turning to the other side does little to dispel this impression. Although the LP follows the current trend of "patchwork"-type records, attempting to create a continuity of sound and expression in a variety of different forms, it lacks the ingenuity and force of contemporary versions.

Side One: Love Without Sound; My Game Of Loving; Here Come The Fleas; Firebird; Your Hidden Dreams.
Side Two: The Visitation; The Black Mass; An Electric Storm In Hell.

TADPOLES

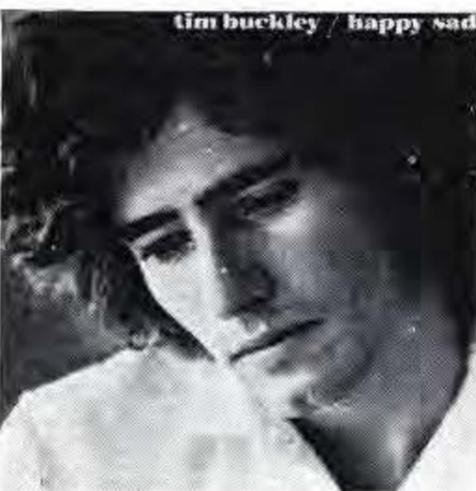


BONZO DOG BAND
LIBERTY LBS 83257

Featuring material already aired on Thames TV's "Do Not Adjust Your Set", this latest Bonzo offering is certainly up to the standard of their previous albums. As well as their hit *I'm The Urban Spaceman*, favourites like *Tubas In The Moonlight* and *Canyons Of Your Mind* give a good example of the Bonzos' tongue-in-cheek humour as well as their undoubted musical ability. Having just returned from the States (see page 33) where they achieved considerable success, the Bonzos should do well with this opportunely released album, even though—or perhaps because—the numbers have all been heard before.

Side One: Hunting Tigers Out In "India"; Shirt; Tubas In The Moonlight; Dr. Jazz; Monster Mash; I'm The Urban Spaceman.
Side Two: Ali-Baba's Camel; Laughing Blues; By A Waterfall; Mr. Apollo; Canyons Of Your Mind.

HAPPY SAD



TIM BUCKLEY
ELEKTRA EKS 74045

The general disappointing standard of these Buckley originals is somewhat offset by the tasteful mellow guitar soloing (by Lee Underwood) and the skilful use of vibes and bass marimba (David Friedman). This is particularly effective on tracks like *Strange Feelin'* and *Buzzin' Fly* where Buckley's singing is at its best. An interesting atmosphere is set up on *Love From Room 109 At The Islander*, with the sound of the sea as a background for what could almost be described as cocktail music. In the 10 minutes 47 seconds this track lasts, however, it only manages to sound funereal.

Side One: Strange Feelin'; Buzzin' Fly; Love From Room 109 At The Islander (On Pacific Coast Highway).
Side Two: Dream Letter; Gypsy Woman; Sing A Song For You.

LETTERS

Violinists

Dear Sir,

A recent development in contemporary pop which seems to have been overlooked is the increasing number of violinists who are cropping up in various groups.

We have Ric Grech (Blind Faith), Richard Koss (Third Ear Band), John Weider (Family), Jet Zaphalia (Pegasus) and Dave Swarbrick (who recently joined Fairport Convention).

I wonder if these occurrences herald a less violent, more wistful trend in new music.

Margaret Foxall,
London, W.14.

S. African scene

Dear Sir,

When British readers air their views on the current pop scene, I wish they would spare a thought for their counterparts in my country, South Africa.

The so-called "white" scene is nauseatingly pathetic, with three-guitars-and-drums set-ups playing every third rate "hit" which appeared in the local charts during the last three years. All name group members I have spoken to have privately admitted that they would love to be allowed to do something original, to introduce audiences to a taste of underground music, and to put on a show they would enjoy doing, but the South African public doesn't seem to be ready for this.

The local radio, which is state-owned, does not help at all, as it plays what it considers good for the young people of South Africa. As a result, groups like the Beatles and the Stones are never heard, the former because of the views on Christianity expressed by John Lennon, and the latter because of their association with drugs.

On the other hand, the coloured music scene is rather better, and can be divided into three sections. The first, original tribal music, is very complex, consisting of unusual timings, harmonies and rhythms. The modern music popular among the coloured community is a variation of this, using modern instruments. This type of music usually has a strong guitar figure upon which the rest of the backing is built—rather like the early Stones.

The last type of music in this section is jazz, which is very popular with the city-bred Negro. This is usually mainstream, although *avant-garde* is also represented. Oscar Peterson and Jimmy Smith are very much in favour.

P. N. Watson,
Florida, Transvaal, S.A.

Pop groups

Dear Sir,

I've been reading "Beat Instrumental" for some months now, and my friends and I are getting quite disturbed by the dwindling amount of coverage regarding pop groups.

Every month you seem to go deeper into blues groups, who already receive quite a lot of publicity. But what about some of the lesser known pop groups.

What with the closing of the pirate stations it seems some of them don't stand an earthly, yet for real entertainment, both musically and vocally they far surpass the so-called progressive sounds you write about. Just because they're clean-shaven and wear clean clothes doesn't make them any less creative. I'm sure they would have a lot of ideas and experiences to share to everyone's benefit.

Grant Clifton,
Weybridge, Surrey.

MOOG SYNTHESIZER

by Gerald Chevin



ELECTRONIC music is today still in its infancy, for, despite the wide range of equipment available, few musicians in this medium have been able to achieve the expertise and expression associated with the traditional type of musical performance.

With the development of electronic synthesizers, however, this standard of performance may come within the reach of more composers.

Basically, electronic music is the collection and modification of basic sounds. These sounds may be derived from known sources, or they may be produced by pure electronics. These latter may be of fairly pure tone (sine wave type) or rough tone (square wave) having many overtones. These basic sounds form the pitch to which the final sound is made up.

After selection of the basic sound, a sound wave, say, from an oscillator, a second oscillator is tuned to a harmonic of this base note, which is passed through a filter and mixed with the fundamental to produce a sound comparable with that of a known instrument.

Envelope

This sound may then be given character in the shape of a note by putting it into an "envelope", which is generated by a variable gain device such as a voltage control amplifier and envelope generator.

Several systems for producing this type of music are available, one of the most popular of these being the Moog Synthesizer. A Moog system consists of a collection of voltage controlled oscillators, amplifiers and filters, envelope generators, mixers, reverberation units and fixed bank filters. The voltage controllable devices may be coupled to a control device such as ribbon controller or some other voltage determining device.

Both a computer and a synthesizer are capable of producing any sound the composer knows how to specify, but the two systems should not be confused. Whereas a computer produces sound from a preselected programme, the results of which are not known until the final magnetic tape is played, the synthesizer's programme sound is controlled directly by the composer as it is produced, adding human subtlety to the sound.

The components making up the synthesizer are either for processing or generation, and those items which are continuously variable respond to a DC control voltage. Using oscillators, amplifiers and filters, all of which respond in a particular manner to a specific DC voltage, a number of linked units can be controlled in a predictable way, making it possible to specify a particular sound.

The synthesizer's generating devices are designed to change their frequency very quickly, and to follow the command signal very closely. This design feature is also incorporated in voltage controlled amplifiers and filters.

The filters used in a synthesizer take the form of standard one-, one-third, and half-octave filtering, and voltage-controlled high and low pass filters. The latter have facilities for the variation of slope and operating point. Once selected, the slope usually remains constant, and the set operating point can then be varied by a DC control voltage. By coupling the two types of filter so that they act as "band pass" or "band rejection" filters, it is possible to obtain a sound from a white sound source.

A major feature of the Moog system is that all voltage controlled oscillators, amplifiers and filters respond in a similar manner to an applied control voltage. For a one-volt change in the control voltage, an oscillator or filter will change its operating point by one octave, and an amplifier will change its gain by 12db. Thus, many units may be coupled together and effectively controlled over a range of six octaves.

By having equipment which is designed to respond to a control voltage, it is possible to flow various signals into the control inputs, and mix these together to form some very strange sounds. This is particularly effective when a low frequency is used to modulate an amplifier to produce tremolo, or modulate an oscillator to produce vibrato.

Two systems of manual control are supplied with the Moog—a five-octave keyboard and a ribbon controller. The latter provides a voltage output according to where a finger is placed on it, thereby providing stepless voltage control.

The keyboard is fitted with controls to provide for the adjustment of the voltage change between notes, so that the composer is not restricted to the 12-tone chromatic scale. In addition, there is a switchable memory circuit which enables the keyboard to remember the last key to be pressed, and a *portamento* control to allow the composer to glide from one note to the next, the speed of the glide also being controlled.

Backing tracks

As with conventional music, rhythm backing tracks for synthetic music are usually a repetitive series of chords or notes, or a combination of these. To relieve the composer of the arduous task of adding these, a sequencer can be plugged into the various units within the synthesizer to control the sequences of notes and chords. The composer then uses the manual controls to play along with the sequencer and give the work a "human" touch.

There are three models of the Moog synthesizer currently available from Audiotek Marketing, Bridgfields, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, ranging in price from £2,345 for the basic unit to £4,198 for the largest and most sophisticated. All units are housed in walnut consoles for studio installation, but are in modular form for portability if required.



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BRIDGET: 'I'M NOT A FOLK SINGER'

IT'S taken for granted that there'll never be as many girl singers who make it as there are men—in England, at any rate. But paradoxically, this state of affairs can even make it easier for a really good lady to get herself known and in demand. With any talent at all, she has a certain initial advantage over the men in sticking out from the crowd.

Bridget St. John has been fortunate in this respect. She is what's generally known as a contemporary singer/songwriter in a field with hardly any worthwhile British girls to speak of. She's probably the only British singer to stand comparison with Judy Collins, Joni Mitchell or Buffy St. Marie, and she's rapidly growing in popularity through live appearances at colleges and clubs like Mothers and through radio spots, and she has a fine record to be released in September—*Ask Me No Questions*, one of the first three albums on John Peel's Dandelion label.

Rave notices

Bridget began guitar-playing in 1965, when she left school. She soon had a few songs of her own, but during her first two years at Sheffield University (where she studied French) nothing much happened musically. She drew rave notices for her song as part of a university revue—"the best thing in the show by far" said the local papers critic—she played a couple of tunes at a folk club, and she sang a song on Radio 270 in a students' programme.

"I didn't do any bookings outside college," she says. "Singing and writing was something I did for myself". As she had at this time an 83 year-old anti-musical landlady who got up at six o'clock and retired at 9 o'clock, much of her singing took place in the university ladies' cloakroom.

But the first real step forward came, she feels, when she met John Martyn (a singer/guitarist of note with two albums on Island) in 1967. "I had been living in the South of France for three months where I met an American girl singer. She came back to England with me and introduced me to John in Richmond. When I saw him playing I realised just how much you could do with a guitar."

She and John became close-friends—he plays on her album—



and she continued to improve at a dramatic pace. Her guitar work is now extraordinarily good; she picks precisely but with much feeling with strange bass rhythms and unusual guitar tunings. Her voice is very distinctive and a good deal more confident than her reticent off-stage manner would lead one to expect.

After she had finished her course at Sheffield, Bridget came back to London where she now lives with her parents, sisters, cats and exotic musical instruments—a Malayan *Kronchong*, an ancient German zither, a Cretan *lyra*, a clapped-out banjo, two Japanese flutes, recorders, whistles, and she's looking for a harmonium.

Al Stewart, John Martyn and Peter Roche, one of the Occasional

Word, got together some tapes of hers which were taken to John Peel. He was immediately full of enthusiasm and booked Bridget for a *Night Ride* on Radio One. He spread the good word and she soon found herself doing more gigs, singing on *How It Is*, featuring in a couple of Central Office of Information film shorts between British architecture and turbine engine design for showing in Commonwealth countries.

There are now 35 original songs in Bridget's repertoire, though she doesn't perform all of them publicly. Some of the early ones she can't sing for laughing, some others she sings only to herself. Sometimes she will slip in a Joni Mitchell or Leonard Cohen number; but Bridget refuses to

write about things she hasn't lived and felt. One side of the album is made up of songs about personal experiences; the other is about relationships with people.

She is not a folk singer, though many people still assume that a girl with a guitar is bound to be a sort of Joan Baez figure. "I don't know any folk songs," she says. "One of the reasons I don't write many songs is that I have to pinpoint exactly what I feel about something if I'm to write about it. If I can't, I don't. I'm just writing and singing about me; it's sometimes very strange to think that all my weaknesses are down there on paper. People can find out far more about me by listening than by talking to me."

R.S.

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