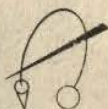


THE NINE BOOK OF



MUSIC



ADAM & THE ANTS

The fag-end of punk rock, or so at least one headline has claimed. This pack of milk-reared boys preen through a silly pastiche of all things mondo — S & M, whips, vaseline, black leather and daft eye make-up. Amoral rules, baby, as Adam, a pudgy reprobate and as sinister as Billy Bunter in biker drag, throws cheap Iggy Pop poses while mouthing the usual clap-trap about dominance and submission.

A definitive line-up run-down of The Ants is hard to produce, since members are constantly leaving. What can be factually ascertained is that the band is a product of Megalovision, the company that provided us with the equally dire punk futurama flick *Jubilee* (which von Adam appeared in) and that last year's girl, the picaresque Jordan, was their manager and featured singer before she bailed out of what looks disturbingly like a fast-sinking ship. The art of fooling all the people all the time has again been proven a redundant concept.

No single or album although two tracks on *Jubilee* soundtrack (E.G./Polydor '78).

ADVERTISING

Simon Boswell—guitar, vocals. Tot Taylor—guitar, keyboards, vocals. Dennis Smith—bass. Paul Buttitude—drums.

Self-styled pioneers of New Pop, they hail with tunes of lightweight romance that turn tackiness into an art form. Eminently bright both in melodies and lyrics, their whole act is instantly accessible, sometimes memorable, and custom-made for singles and

radio-play. Since dropped by EMI.

Singles—*Stolen Love* (EMI '77). *Lipstick* (EMI '78). Album: *Advertising Jingles* (EMI '78).



Gaye Advert

THE ADVERTS
T V Smith—vocals. Howard Pickup—guitar. Gaye Advert—bass. John Towe—drums.

Ramshackle garagepunk band formed early 1977 by songwriter Tim Smith and his girlfriend Gaye, both attracted to London from their native West Country by the exploding punk scene. Very much one of the early Roxy Club bands, they released the ironic *One Chord Wonders* single before charting the macabre *Gary Gilmore's Eyes*. Sadly, they failed to capitalise on the hit, due largely to their own technical inadequacies. Their debut album on the specially-formed Bright label in February '78 showcased Smith's witty, engaging songs, but again suffered from those inbred musical shortcomings. Original drummer Laurie Driver was replaced by ex-Gen X'er John Towe after the album, while Smith has recently been writing with Doctor of Madness Kid Strange.

Singles: *One Chord Wonders* (Stiff



'77). *Gary Gilmore's Eyes* (Anchor '77). *No Time To Be 21* (Bright '78). *Safety In Numbers* (Bright '78). Albums: *Crossing The Red Sea With The Adverts* (Bright '78). One track on *Live At The Roxy* (Harvest '77).

AKRON

Devo aside (and they're old men anyhow) these Akron kids are great! Immortal teen country, the Mid West, where they go wild and have fun, they want to be rich and famous and they say *East Coast/West Coast/You can jump in the sea!*

They're so much younger than the rest of America, even their girls — Harry and Ronstadt will jump in the sea if ever they hear this record because *Rachel Sweet* (a kind of amalgam of them both) is just fifteen years old. *Jane Aire*, who's even better, is somewhere around 20. The future sounds nicer all the time.

There is no tangible Akron sound (Jane Aire and her *Belvederes* are hot-fox Orthodox Light Rock, *The Bizarros* are like Lou Reed before he started school; *Tin Huey* are wacky psycho-delics; *Rachel Sweet* sings miniature Madonna country roll and *The Waitresses* are gauche, conceited twisters) but they do seem to have a certain fresh wisdom in common, and their influences went in one ear British. Even their hippies (*Idiots Convention*, *Terraplane*, *Chi Pig*) you wouldn't mind patting on the head. Their one Brit-punk soundalike is *The Rubber City Rebels*, now signed to Sire, but their sensibilities are all pretty English. (Liam Sternberg prepared, recorded produced and wrote much of the Akron Compilation).

Album: *The Akron Compilation* (Stiff '78).

ALBERTO Y LOS TRIOS PARANOIAS

Bob Harding—guitar, bass, vocals. Jimmy Hibbert—vocals, guitar. C.

P. Lee—vocals, guitar. Bruce Mitchel—percussion. Simon White—guitar and pedal steel.

Manchester based outfit who spent years slogging round the clubs and colleges with a chaotic mixture of rock, theatre, amateurishness and humour (an inventive blend of traditional British zaniness and sharp American satire) until the production in 1977 of the unique and visionary *Sleak* musical satire. The overall concept of *Sleak* gave the Albertos direction and purpose, and encapsulated their anger and affection for rock within a superficially flimsy plot. Its success suggested it may have become a *Tommy*-like millstone, but the Albertos have avoided the perils, both through individual members outside interests and because they have used the *Sleak* theme as an outlet for parody outside its original concept. Film production is under way and there are plans for New York production, no doubt slightly modified and Americanised.

The Albertos have rarely come over well on record, their music never particularly adventurous, their humour relying on accompanying visuals for impact. Consequently they have decided to cease recording albums and concentrate on releasing quick impact singles with additives. The double single *Heads Down No Nonsense Boogie* is significantly a lame parody of Heavy Metal and punk, something the group did to far better effect on the Nick Lowe produced *Snuff Rock* EP (four tracks from *Sleak*). Their concentration on rock music for their attacks is wearing the humour thin, and Lee's next project *Skite* perhaps looks outside rock for some of its inspiration.

Singles: *Snuff Rock EP* (Stiff '77). *Heads Down No Nonsense Mindless Boogie* (Logo '78).

Albums: *Alberto Y Los Trios Paranoias* (Transatlantic '76), *Italians From Outer Space* (Logo '77).

WILLIE 'LOCO' ALEXANDER AND THE BOOM BOOM BAND

Willie Alexander—vocals, keyboards and percussion. Severin Grossman—Fender bass. David McLean—drums and percussion. Billy Loosigian—guitar.

Ugly Willie's band are the second best thing (after Marc Thor) to come out of Boston's Rat Club. Willie takes Glam Rock, very mild r'n'b, Heavy Metal and pop and makes it all sound brand new. He does have the disadvantage of a guitarist who thinks he's Mick Ronson and a producer who did The Ramones first album, but nevertheless Willie and the Boom Booms have made the most histrionic, likeable and mysterious album (well, Side 2's O.K.) to come out of the American mire this year.

Single: *Kerouac* (Garage '77).
Album: *Willie Alexander and The Boom Boom Band* (MCA '78).

ALTERNATIVE TV

Mark Perry—guitar, voice. Mark Lineham—guitar. Dennis Burns—bass.

Formed in March 1977 by Mark Perry, who through his fanzine *Sniffin' Glue* had become a cult, media hero and punk spokesman. Looked set to be pertinent example of a 'star for 15 minutes' but, always a frustrated musician, Perry used ATV to put his rapidly forming philosophy of change into more satisfactory and tangible action.

In the early months of ATV's existence his cynical, indulgent, blunt, often oblique methods and attitudes drew constant scorn, but the growing strength of his personality meant his group's music was always potent, if erratic. His stubborn determination to experiment in obvious manners meant peculiar changes, including his decision to sack Alex Fergusson, often considered the force in ATV.

The *Image Has Cracked* bravely depicted chronological growth of

the group. The opener *Alternatives* dealt with discouraging audience response, the problems of compromise, the paradoxes of growth. Much of the rest was superficially conventional songs written with Alex Fergusson, though side two concludes with pieces closer to Perry's ideals; the shaky *Red* and the nervy *Splitting In Two*.

Perry is arrogant, but one of the few rock people to qualify his outspoken word (of change, turnover) with action.

Singles: *Love Lies Limp* (Flexidisc free with *Sniffin' Glue* '77). *How Much Longer* (Deptford Fun City '78). *Life After Life* (Deptford Fun City '78). *Action Time Vision* (Deptford Fun City '78).
Albums: *The Image Has Cracked* (Deptford Fun City '78). *Live with Here and Now* (one side each) (Deptford Fun City '78).

ASWAD

Brinsley 'Chaka B' Forde—vocals and guitar. Donald 'Dee' Griffiths—lead guitar. Tony Robinson—organ. George 'Ras' Oban—bass. Angus 'Drummlie' Gaye—drums.

Pioneers of the modern UK reggae sound, Aswad are both the enigma and pride of the scene. Originating out of Harlesden and Ladbroke Grove the group were launched with a flourish by Island's Leslie Palmer in 1976 and introduced to a rock audience via the pub and college circuit the same year.

A promising debut album was followed by the anti-police single, *Three Babylon*—a classic

production—but tribulation with their record company, plus inconsistent onstage performances, thwarted this initial potential and '77 was a quiet year for the group.

Leaving Island and recruiting Brimstone's Tony Robinson in place of departed organist Courtney Hemmings in '78, the group signed with black company Grove and issued a well-received 12" *It's Not Our Wish/Stranger*, between working on their second LP and regularly gigging.

Projecting a political 'anti-politricks' stance, Aswad are, on their night, the most dynamic and exciting reggae group in the country.

Singles: *Three Babylon* (Island '76). *Back To Africa* (Island '76). *It's Not Our Wish* (Grove 12" '78).
Album: *Aswad* (Island '76).

THE AUTOGRAPHS

Reggy Lewis—guitar. Chris Gent—sax, vocals. Dave Spicer—bass. Jim Ward—guitar. Paul Tulley—drums.

Arising with fresh-faced conviction from the ashes of The Stukas, they play driving, catchy R & B in pop format and conspicuous stage garb. This recent line-up has some great sax, greater vocals, much width, little depth, and an overall restraint that should loosen, given time.

Single: *When I'm Still Young* (Rak '78).

BACK ROOM LABELS

It's a long-standing truism in rock that the most dynamic creative thrusts come from the outside. In the '50s it was shoe-string local labels catering to supposedly minority tastes that generated easily half of the R&B and rock'n'roll hits. Next decade, in the '67 spirit, indie labels like Island and Harvest flowered. Lately, thanks to impetus given by a few hardy individuals, small is once again beautiful.

It began in '75 with the American Beserkley label, infant upstart Matthew Kaufman. An inveterate gambler, Kaufman took the long-shot approach to commercial success and put his race-track winnings behind pressing up a few hundred copies of singles by bands and artists who had somehow come under his wing, people branded commercial non-returns by the big companies. Betting, above all, on his belief in these people, loading the odds with some witty and stylish merchandising, Kaufman may not have immediately broken the bank, but he broke enough ground to prove that there was indeed a viable alternative.

Borrowing his ideas but adding their own flair a year or so later came Stiff, preceded by Chiswick, who were actually the first of the new British independents, evolved out of the small Rock On chain of specialist record shops and catering initially to that market with R&B and rock'n'roll issues and re-issues.

Chiswick went their level-headed, grass-roots way but never matched the glamour of Stiff, who proceeded to soft-sell themselves in a big way, recycling one-liners from Firesign Theatre

albums and redefining the concept of packaging.

By spring '77 the successes of Stiff-Wick and a small part of the punk ethic had combined to produce the first brace of independent singles. Suddenly making a record was no big secret anymore. Anybody with a relatively small amount of cash could do it. A lot of them did. Small labels and distributors sprang up, run more often on energy and enthusiasm than cashflow: Raw, Rabid, Sensible, Small Wonder, Bizarre, Step Forward (who also operated a booking agency and all-round clearing house). Plus there were the one-offs — the plucky, nervous front-room four-track hopefuls, hundreds of them.

Inevitably the big labels realised what was going on and stuck their fat fingers in the pie. They copied the independent labels' style and in the process discovered the now burgeoning gimmicks market.

'78 saw a re-assessment of aims and terms. The bandwagon rolled by but the principle was established, and fewer, but better, singles came out on indie.

The flow of small label singles and albums from America has maintained an equilibrium since '76 and the first Richard Hell and Television singles on Ork, and the Pere Ubu singles on the Hearthan label. The even more regressive mentality of the US companies has left plenty of room for independent moves, from biggies like Sire to small-fry like Dangerhouse, Cer, Big Sound, Clone, Bomp, down to the ubiquitous one-offs.

But amidst all the glorious disasters and unlikely triumphs there's a lifeblood, recent examples being Jilted John, The 852s 'Rock Lobster' and Edinburgh's Fast Product, that must be kept open and tapped.



THE BANNED

Pete Fresh—guitar. Ben Dover—guitar, vocals. Tommy Steele—bass. Alex—drums.

Merchants of power pop rock, they play a slick, entertaining set — part originals, part re-vamped old classics. They shatter few musical horizons, and featured a drummer noted for his incessant inter-song banter, who has since left.

Single: Little Girl (Harvest '77).



CAPTAIN BEEFHEART

Almost as much as it is the year of the individual, '78 is the year of Captain Beefheart, and they don't come any more individual. Openly acknowledging a debt to the Captain are The Tubes, Devo, Tin Huey, Vox Humana, and The Residents, and taking a furtive lead from his *Trout Mask Replica* are The Pop Group, The Soft Boys, Wire and Pere Ubu.

Beefheart taught his Magic Band to play virtually from scratch, and then taught them to play *Trout Mask Replica* — in which swamp blues roots broke stride on fidgety syncopation and John Coltrane horn licks, and Beefheart locked horns with the dilemma of expressing his delirious perception of the world in something so stifling as the English language.

The Magic Band crumbled and changed through a series of increasingly straightforward though still awesome albums. They broke up in '75, and Beefheart has since released two very ordinary albums on Virgin and worked sporadically with Frank Zappa, whom he has known since the early '60s.

Unable to find an outlet for *Bat Chain Puller*, a return to his finest fettle with a new Magic Band, Beefheart's visionary presence now exists only in spirit and not, sadly, in flesh.

Albums: *Safe As Milk* (Buddah '67). *Trout Mask Replica* (Straight '69). *Lick My Decals Off, Baby* (Straight '70). *The Spotlight Kid* (Reprise '71). *Clear Spot* (Reprise '72).

BETHNAL

George Csapo - vocals, violin, keyboards. Nick Michaels - guitar. Everton Williams - bass. Pete Dowling - drums.

Formed in 1972 when the four members attended the same comprehensive school in North London. A multi-racial band comprising two Greek Cypriots, one Jamaican and a token English WASP. Bethnal served a long, hard apprenticeship and began by playing youth clubs, school dances and social clubs, providing anything from waltzes to hard

rock, from reggae to tangos.

As one of the promising new names to emerge in '77, it soon became apparent that Bethnal straddled both the Old Wave and the New. Though the same age as the punks and in sympathy with most of the high-energy, social-commitment stances, Bethnal disassociated themselves from the movement because they never denied one of their major aims was musical proficiency.

Their hard-edged rock owed much to mid-period Who, guitarist Mick Michaels displaying a penchant for quasi-Townshend power chords and economical solos, while much of George Csapo's violin work owes a heavy debt to the *Who's Next* album (a point emphasised by *Baba O'Riley* in Bethnal's set). And while Bethnal include self-written songs in their set, like their Anti-Nazi tirade, *Who Dat You Talk To*, they offer no apologies for including Zeppelin's *Rock And Roll* in their repertoire and readily admit that Deep Purple were a major influence in their formative years. Meet the New Wave that don't hate the Old Wave.

Single: We Gotta Get Outta This Place (Phonogram '78).
Album: Dangerous Times (Phonogram '78).



BIG IN JAPAN

Jayne—voice. Bill—rhythm guitar. Phil—drums. Key—voice. Holly—bass.

Blustered into being mid-'77, an unlikely combination of friends and roadies of Yachts and Deaf School. A delightful, decadent crew who revelled in the far reaches of punk incompetency, given regular access to shambolic performance by a sympathetic Roger Eagle of Liverpool's Erics Club. Their set at the time was a continual noisy blur occasionally focusing on an energetic repetition of their theme tune 'Big in Japan'. A barely coherent single of this theme was released on Eagle's Erics label, a useless example of f-anarchic rock equalled only by The Negatives' unreleased *Bringing Fiction Back To Music* EP and John The Postman's LP.

At the turn of the year B.I.J. had learnt control of their instruments and were playing strong, individual rock that followed a vaguely similar growth to The Banshees. Apparently signed to Jet, but current activity unknown.

Single: Big in Japan (Erics '77).

BIG STAR

Alex Chilton—guitar, vocals. Christopher Bell—guitar, vocals. Jody Stevens—drums. Andy Hummel—bass.

Formed in 1971 when ex-Box Tops vocalist, Alex Chilton, joined up with old high school friends, Bell, Stephens and Hummel, members

of a hard rock trio called Ice Water. Operating out of Memphis, Big Star's forte lay in their merging quirky teenage laments to strong American garage R&B. Signed with Stax-associated Ardent label and in '72 and '74 released two accepted classics of the modern pop oeuvre.

Internal arguments, Chilton's own erratic behaviour and poor sales led to their dissolution in 1975 though Chilton and Stephens plus Memphis session men finished a third record, *"Sister Luv"*, posthumously released on Aura.

At time of writing Big Star are rumoured to have reformed.

Single: Kizza Me (Aura '78).
Albums: No 1 Record (Ardent '72). Radio City (Ardent '74). Above re-issued as No 1 Record/Radio City (Stax '78). The Third Album (Aura '78).

BIG YOUTH

Pioneer dub-lyricist — to quote the term coined by Linton Kwesi Johnson — Big Youth has remained one of reggae's most innovative and charismatic masters of the style ever since his deejay debut for Lord Tippetone



sound-system in Kingston back in 1971. Whether delivering devotional paeans to Ras Tafari, urging indignant protest, or merely toasting a rhythm, Jah Youth is invariably exacting in his imagery and dynamic in its exposition.

He had already secured a reputation second to none in Jamaica — with hits like *The Killer*, *Ace Ninety Shank* and *Foreman vs Frazier* — by the time his debut album *Screaming Target* was issued in the UK by Trojan in 1973, and this he furthered with his subsequent Negusa Nagast self-productions *African Daughter*, *Sky Juice*, *Dread In A Babylon*, *Downtown Kingston Pollution* and *Daylight Saving Time*.

Release by Kik of his *Dread Locks Dread* LP in 1975 invested Big Youth with an even more substantial audience, and this he consolidated with follow-up albums *Natty Cultural Dread* ('76), *Hit The Road Jack* ('76) and *Isaiah First Prophet Of Old* ('77). His observations of violence in Jamaica — as exemplified by recent singles *Six Dead Nineteen Gone To Jail* ('77) and *Green Bay Killing* ('78) remain among the music's most powerful evocations.

Singles: Six Dead Nineteen Gone To Jail (Third World '77). The Upful One (Tanasha '77). Green Bay Killing (Nichols Delita '78).
Albums: Screaming Target (Trojan '73). Natty Cultural Dread (Trojan '76). Isaiah First Prophet Of Old (Front Line '78). Dread Locks Dread (Front Line-reissue '78).



THE BISHOPS

Dave Tice—lead vocals. Johnny Guitar—lead guitar, vocals. Zenon de Fleur—rhythm and slide guitar, vocals. Pat McMullen—bass. Paul Balbi—drums.

Apart from Dr Feelgood, no band has done more than The Bishops to pioneer the current R&B revival in Britain. Formed in 1975 by Zenon de Fleur and singer Mike Spenser, they were soon joined by American guitarist Johnny Guitar, drummer Paul Balbi and bassist Stevie Lewins to record the *Speedball* EP, the first release of Chiswick Records.

Originally known as The Count Bishops, they continued as a four-piece after Spenser's departure and Dave Tice came in from Australia to bring the band up to strength. The final line-up change was when the band's token Englishman Steve Lewins (Tice and Balbi are Australian, de Fleur is Polish) quit to join Wilko Johnson's Solid Senders and was replaced by Irishman Pat McMullen. This international quintet are distinguished by their raucous, good-time energy and their easy balance between rough-house R&B and high-powered but melodic pop-rock.

Singles: Speedball EP ('76). Train Train ('76). Baby You're Wrong ('77). I Take What I Want ('78). I Want Candy ('78). (All Chiswick).

Albums: The Count Bishops ('77). The Bishops Live ('78).

BLACK SLATE

Keithroy Drummond—vocals. Tony Brightly—keyboards. Desmond Mahoney—drums. Ras L. Roy Bailey—bass. C. Fenton—rhythm guitar. Chris Rogers—lead guitar.

Having worked the North London reggae circuit since the mid-'70s, Black Slate struck gold circa 1977 with their anti-mugging *Sticks Man*.

Based around the multi-instrumental talents of Ras L. Roy the group were one of the most popular of the UK reggae groups during 1977/8, playing a large number of gigs and earmarked for focus by the music press. Lacking a recording contract, however, their popularity began to wane towards the latter part of 1978.

Singles: Sticks Man (Slate '77). Piano Twist (Slate '77).

BLAST FURNACE AND THE HEATWAVES

Blast Furnace—lead guitar, vocals. Skid Marx—harp, vocals. Blitz Krieg—rhythm guitar. Kevin Allen—bass. John Mackie—drums.

Quixotic attempt to fuse traditional black R&B out of Muddy Waters/Albert King school with

spirit and pace of UK new wave, the group have a singular place on current pub/club scene, if only because they are fronted by former enfant terrible of rock journalism, Charles Shaar Murray. Name originally used for one-off gigs circa 74-75, group proper forming summer '77, since when rhythm section has altered to present line up. Issued *Blue Wave* EP shortly afterwards, featuring characteristic mix of traditional R&B material and lively Furnace-penned originals. Ferociously good time on stage, their gusto and strength of original material remain their main assets. Currently in dispute over name with US disco band Heatwave.

Single: Blue Wave EP (Nighthawk '78).

BLONDIE

Debbie Harry—vocals. Chris Stein—lead guitar. James Destri—keyboards, vocals. Clement Burke—drums. Nigel Harrison—bass. Frank Infante—guitar.

At one point the best band to emerge from the whole Max's demi-monde, fronted by the most photogenically (being the operative word) beautiful blonde to emerge in the '70s. No band yet has been as dependant on their singer-as-selling-point as Blondie are on Debbie Harry.

After getting the key of the door to her New Jersey home, Debbie Harry took off to New York as a small dark hippie squaw, where she chirped and clinked finger cymbals in a psychedelic disaster called *Wind In The Willows*. They released one loser album on Capitol and split—Debbie to tacky Max's Kansas City, dying her hair white to celebrate the '70s.

She waited tables there, became a Bunny girl and an acquaintance with heroin became a once-in-a-lifetime love affair. After several years she came clean at a Woodstock commune and went back to the City, where she became a "follower" of the New York Dolls.

In 1973 she began messing around in various glitzy girl groups formed in the powder room of Max's such as Pure Garbage, The Stilettoes and various three-girl incarnations of Blondie. Hitting thirty, Debbie decided there was room for just one X-chromosome in her band, and in 1975 the first recognisable Blondie was born—Debbie's steady Chris Stein on guitar with Gary Valentine instead of Harrison and Infante. Destri and Burke were already there.

At early New York gigs, Debbie Harry would often freeze with fear, either dancing to keep from cracking or hiding behind amps until the audience had gone. She gained confidence when David Bowie asked her to support Iggy Pop on an American tour, and in early '77 put out a great debut album—sounding like a Shangri-La trifling with Bruce Springsteen's affections, her transistor plugged into The Seeds.

Their first British visit in the summer of '77, supporting Television, found them still synthesizing everything around them into one unique sound. Endearing, enthusiastic and proud, Debbie Harry showed herself as the best-dressed chanteuse ever shaking her fear and pouring her tension into her Blonde Little Egypt stage-show. She ridiculed cat-calls and went down badly with the critics.

Somewhere between this and their return to Britain at the end of the year, Blondie were swayed, gave way, and made it. Chrystalis bought them and promptly started touting Debbie in an unashamedly exploitative way. Still, it sold records: Gary Valentine, an essential sense of humour and melody that Blondie could do with these days, was replaced. There was talk of heavier rock and group democracy, and the second album was a disappointment.

They came back, more serious and plagiaristic. Debbie was headlining, but not dancing, not charming. She was ingratiating, and was repayed by an approving male market with one hit album and three hit singles. From victor to victim in two easy British gigs. Debbie Harry (the wrong side of 33) was last seen dressed as a schoolgirl for *Daily Mirror* readers. *Singles: X-Offender (Private Stock '77). In The Flesh (Private Stock '77). Rip Her To Shreds (Chrystalis '77). Denis (Chrystalis '78). I Am Always Touched By Your Presence, Dear (Chrystalis '78). Picture This (Chrystalis '78). Albums: Blondie (Private Stock '77). Plastic Letters (Chrystalis '78). Parallel Lines (Chrystalis '78).*

BLUE OYSTER CULT

Donald (Buck Dharma) Roeser—guitar, vocals. Albert Bouchard—drums, vocals. Joe Bouchard—bass, vocals. Eric Bloom—vocals, guitar. Allen Lanier—keyboards, guitar.

The early period of Blue Oyster Cult (formerly Soft White Underbelly, Stalk Forrest Group) has been well documented. BOC escaped the limitations of being an extreme heavy metal parody with idiosyncratic intellectual overtones and with *Agents Of Fortune* in 1976. Though their fifth album, *Agents* contained BOC's first worldwide hit in Don Roeser's pop classic, *(Don't Fear) The Reaper*, a single which broke the Cult for a larger audience. *Agents* was followed by the likewise critically acclaimed *Spectres*.

Their manager, father figure and image svengali Sandy Pearlman has now become involved with The Clash.

SINGLES: *(Don't Fear) The Reaper* (CBS '76). *Goin' Thru The Motions* (CBS '78). *I Love The Night* (CBS '78).

Albums: *Agents Of Fortune* (CBS '76). *Spectres* (CBS '77). *Some Enchanted Evening* (CBS '78).

MARC BOLAN

The influence of Bolan with T. Rex in the empty early '70s was conveniently overlooked at the time. In a time of pomp, seriousness, heavy metal and 'progressive' music—all with minimal youth charm—Bolan's pop embodied the almost lost spirit of rock and roll. His hits were colourful, sexy, cheerful, mysterious and for many potential young musicians were the first real contact with rock and roll. Though there were no obvious stylistic references, much of Bolan's drive and arrogance was evident in the punk upsurge that followed the end of his reign.

Albums: *A Beard of Stars* (Regal Zonophone '70). *Electric Warrior* (Fly '71). *The Slider* (T.Rex '72).

**BOOMTOWN RATS**

Bob Geldof—vocals. Gerry Cott—guitar. Garry Roberts—guitar. Johnny Fingers—keyboards. Pete Briquette—bass. Simon Crowe—drums.

After seeing the Feelgoods, seven Irish lads were inspired to form a band. After seeing the Rods, they knew exactly what they could get away with. The fact that they were all on the dole (cue mawkish Chieftains chews) was further incentive; the fact that one of them, Fachtna O'Kelly, couldn't



Bob 'The Mouth' Geldof

play an instrument meant he was the manager.

So in Eire, in 1976, The Nitelife Thugs were born, for half a gig. After reading Woody Guthrie's *Bound For Glory*, leader Bob Geldof—who had previously been a rock writer among other things—changed the band's name to the evocative Boomtown Rats and the best, most popular of the post-Feelgoods R&B outfits were on their way. To Germany via London, to be precise, where they cut the first album—a self-assured, shamelessly plagiaristic mixture of Springsteen and Stones, spiced with a smidgen of 'punk', Geldof delivering the goods in the style of fellow Micks Morrison and Jagger. Every record they have released so far has been a hit.

The Rats' straightforward R&B approach won them many friends, their unshowy musicianship a neat riposte to any detractors put off by some of 'Modest' Bob's calculatedly asinine proclamations. An accomplished media manipulator, Geldof (as writer/lyricist/performer) is able to take risks by virtue of his disarming arrogance. Thus, despite some dodgy 'art-rock' pretensions on the best-selling second album, the Rats remain capable of producing good music for all of the people most of the time—an R&B pop band with punk credibility.

Albums: *Boomtown Rats* (Ensign

'77). *A Tonic For The Troops* (Ensign '78).

Singles: *Looking Out For No. 1* (Ensign '77). *Mary Of The Fourth Form* (Ensign '77). *She's So Modern* (Ensign '78). *Like Clockwork* (Ensign '78).

BOSTON

Aerosmith and The Modern Lovers were the last signs of night-life spotted in Boston until Maxine Sartori started playing punk on W.B.C.N at the end of 1976, and **Willie Alexander's** Boom Boom Band released a single called *Kerouac*. Then the bands down the Rat Club began breeding like vermin.

A year previously, it's doubtful that a compilation composed of the best bands to play at your local dive would have been anything worth releasing, but punk was a big thing and every Max's CBGB and Roxy was churning the sub-standard un-doctored live stiffs out. And so *Live At The Rat*, a double album that would have made a neat epee, happened. It was pushed as punky, but **Thundertrain** had been doing the HM rounds for ages, and **Sass**, **Third Rail** and **Susan** were going the same way. Happily, they are still unloved by major labels, as are the promising, pathetic **Boize** and **Infilktors**.

Willie Alexander, **The Real Kids** and **DMZ** have all signed with

major labels, but only Alexander lives up to and beyond his promise. **The Real Kids** and **DMZ** are unrecognisable as the young, dumb ingenues on the *Rat* album.

Record companies being as vacuous as they are, the biggest find of the album remains unsigned; **Marc Thor**, whose one frail silk-cut *Circling LA* made nonsense of everything else thrown up, and who could well be the next Jilted John if brought up properly.

Album: *"Live At The Rat"* (Rat '76).

DAVID BOWIE

Impressive, inspired even, though David Bowie listless manoeuvring through the old rock-god game may have seemed at the time, the virulent narcissism of the Ziggy Stardust blueprint remains as callous as it was calculated.

Much the same could and should be said of the sterile stylisations of Bowie's immediately preceding and ensuing work. *The Man Who Sold The World* and *Hunky Dory* or *Aladdin Sane* and *Diamond Dogs*—once glittering prizes, they now seem no more and no less than glib products of Bowie's sheer sleight of hand and mind, wonders of inbuilt obsolescence.

But if any constant can be traced through Bowie's work, good, bad or indifferent, it's that of theatricality, of a disconcertingly



Pennie Smith

conscious confusion of image and identity. *Young Americans* however intimated that even Bowie might sometimes feel the need to clarify this ambivalence. His first soul album and, aptly enough, his first album of the heart and soul, it saw Bowie attempting to come to terms with himself and his own implications instead of an image and its implications. An album of rare (for Bowie) integrity, it coincidentally proved its maker as capable of developing a musical medium as of draining one off; the call and response vocal arrangements of *Young Americans* were startlingly original.

Station To Station returned to (a) form. In all probability a lyrical soundtrack for Bowie as Thomas Jerome Newton himself in Nicholas Roeg's *The Man Who Fell To Earth*, it remains a very contemporary rock album, its sheer musical strengths fortuitously relegating Bowie's then current Thin White Duke persona into insignificance with little effort.

More recently, the 'controversial' *Low* and *Heroes*. *Low* was decisively timed, perhaps the ultimate anti-rock album, released at a time when it seemed vitally necessary for the rock audience to divest itself of any inanely romantic notions (illusions) about rock or roll as a saviour machine. Bowie's only conceptually radical album. An accident?

Meanwhile much has been made of the 'breakthroughs' scored by Bowie and Eno on the largely instrumental second sides of both these albums, whereas Bowie — although admittedly

taking commercial chances — has simply continued to filter influences (anything from Can to Penderecki) with his usual incisiveness.

New music? Not really, since others have been there and beyond before. But then that's Bowie's method — to backhand, to pass on, to pass down, to make previously inaccessible information accessible: a gift he may well have abused.

As for the song sides of both albums — the contentiously throwaway neuro-cameos of *Low* were their own means to their own ends, whilst the more conventional narratives of *Heroes* indicate a return to the pressurised posturing of *Aladdin Sane* and *Diamond Dogs*. Hardly forward motion.

The generally unquestioning acceptance of Bowie's 'leadership' is finally as depressing as the near-total failure of the music press to take the man to task for his apparently neo-fascist display at Victoria Station in early '76.

Indeed, the very fact that Bowie could conceive the Ziggy print and succeed with same hardly augurs well for the much-touted (by some) impregnability of the rock ethic. More so than any of his peers, Bowie engenders a debilitating fascination for gamesmanship, for emotional and intellectual dishonesty and for vicarious experience of high-life hedonism (not so cheap thrills).

As a soundtrack for the so-called modern world or for the long overdue collapse of the Western Way and its myopic emphasis on consumerism, Bowie's oeuvre is unparalleled. As a soundtrack for

humanity and humanism, it's totally deficient. Yes, we tend to get what we deserve.

Singles: Young Americans ('75). *Golden Years* ('76). *Sound And Vision* ('77). *Heroes* ('77). *Albums: Young Americans* ('75). *Station To Station* ('76). *Low* (RCA '77). *Heroes* ('77). *Stage* ('78). *All* (RCA).

THE BOYFRIENDS

Pat Collier—guitar, vocals. Chris Skornia—keyboards. Mark Henry—bass. Steve Bray—drums.

Formed by ex-Vibrator Collier in December 1977, who moved off bass to become frontman. Considering his contribution to his previous group's first LP, it was no surprise he should pursue a snappy, happy beat-group style with The Boyfriends.

A series of personnel reshuffles led to present lineup in April '78. They've veered between so-called Power Pop and simple beat-group nostalgia, hence their support sets under the guise of The Backbeats.

Entertaining on stage, but obviously too influenced by others on record; their first single was disappointing because of its blatant Elvis Costello imitation.

Singles: I'm In Love Today (UA '78). *Don't Ask Me To Explain* (UA '78). *Jenny* (UA '78).

THE BOYS

Matt Dangerfield — guitar, vocals. Casino Steel — piano, vocals. Kid Reid — bass, vocals. Honest John

Plain — guitar. Jack Black — drums.

Hard working, tacky pop band. Formed in London, October 1976, around the Steel/Dangerfield songwriting partnership. Quickly signed with NEMS, and finished messy debut album in three days. Failed to achieve breakthrough with much better second album, due as much to unsympathetic management as to their own shortcomings. Just completed third album.

Singles: I Don't Care (Nems '77). *First Time* (Nems EP '77). *Brickfield Nights* (Nems '78). *Albums: The Boys* (Nems '77). *Alternative Chartbusters* (Nems '78).

BRITISH REGGAE

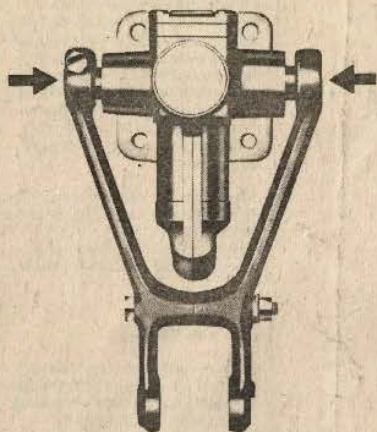
Even though there has been an indigenous UK reggae scene for the past fifteen years — yielding music from such as Dandy Livingstone, Tito Simon, Laurel Aitken, Owen Grey, Alton Ellis, Winston Groovy, Sir Collins, The Classics, The Pioneers, and Cimarrons, among others — it is only within the last three that the British reggae movement has evolved its own style and remark.

One major reason for its rise has been the emergence of London, England — in succession to Kingston, Jamaica — as the world reggae capital, and this in turn has prompted the surface of second-generation black British groups to cater for UK audiences' desire for live entertainment. Among the best of these has been Matumbi, Aswad, Black Slate, Zabandis, Steal Pulse and Santic, plus an ever-growing number of second-wave acts such as Misty, Tribesman, Pressure Shocks, Brimstone etc.

Recording-wise, British reggae has been pioneered by producers like Dennis Harris, Clem "Man Ah Warrior" Bushay, Larry Lawrence, David Tyrone, Delroy "Success" Witter, Bill Campbell and Winston Curtis, and record companies like Dip/Eve — precursors of lovers-rock — Third World, Burning Sounds, Ethnic-Fight, BB, Tackle/Orbitone, Empire, Golden Age and Venture. Engineers such as former Studio One stalwart Sid Bucknor and Dennis Bovell out of Matumbi must also take credit for innovative work in this capacity, and the burgeoning scene has also benefited from the growth of independent distribution and one-stop services like Lightning, Mojo, Black Wax, Soundoff and Hawkeye (Channel One).

Apart from the elsewhere discussed groups and lovers-rock protagonists, the movement has groomed a number of potentially interesting solo performers as well, most promising of whom include Delroy Washington, Aston Gayle, Errol Campbell, Sidney Rogers, Joy Mack and Linton Kwesi Johnson, as well as homegrown toasters Johnny Mahoney, Militant Barry, Ras Prince Murray and Banking Reuben.

Still nascent in its development, the British reggae scene looks like providing a healthy base for the music's future and, with notable exceptions, may already be touted as more interesting than its JA counterpart — inna Inglan, inna dis yah time yah!



Pamela Smith

DENNIS BROWN

Long time hero of Jamaican and British black youth, Dennis Emmanuelle Brown merits proper consideration as reggae's No. 1 star, status such as he has earned not by virtue of any hyperbolic, sloganeering press office deodorisation, but on the strength of his charm/warmth/frankness/integrity/spirit.

—insert your own superlative—doubleplus possession of the music's most heartfelt voice; a voice that unerringly contrives to express an echo of the deep-seated hopes, fears and desires of the people its owner unswervingly serves. Nobody finds cause to speak disrespectfully of Dennis Brown.

Born on the ghetto side of town, Dennis has been singing professionally since puberty, and knows every trick in the book, a fact borne out by the manner in which he conducts his affairs. His songs project themes of love, unity, tribulation, righteousness, socialism and concern for the poor and oppressed in both statement and delivery.

Following early spells with Studio One and Joe Gibbs, the singer struck up a mutually fruitful relationship with Niney, singer and producer giving each other the hitherto biggest hits of their careers on *Westbound Train*, *Cassandra* ('73); *No More Will I*

Roam, *So Long Ras Tafari Calling* ('74); *Wolf And Leopard*, *Whip Them Jah, Have No Fear* ('76) etc. between whilst setting up his own DEB self-productions and self-controlled centres in JA and the UK with the money earned from Niney and Joe Gibbs, with whom he cut the vast-selling *Visions* LP in '76, and singles *Hope We Get To Love In Time*, *Ghetto Girl* ('76) and *Equal Rights* ('77). For himself he went on to record *Created By The Father*, *Children Of Israel*, *My Time* and *Emmanuelle* ('76); *The Half*, an album *Wolf And Leopard* ('77), and also concentrated on producing unexposed talent like Junior Delgado and Lennox Brown.

Singles: Wolf And Leopard (Third World '77), *Whip Them Jah* (Hawkeye '78), *Party Time* (Morpheus '76), *Here I Come* (Morpheus '77), *The Half* (DEB 12" '78), *Equal Rights* (Lightning '78), *How Can I Leave?* (Joe Gibbs '78), *Money In My Pocket* (Joe Gibbs 12" '78).

Albums: Visions (Lightning '78), *Wolf And Leopards* (DEB '77), *Westbound Train* (Third World '78).

BURNING SPEAR

Currently the outstanding voice of Jamaican music, Winston Rodney took his performing name from the late Kenyan leader and

statesman Jomo Kenyatta. Despite his singular eminence in JA music, he has paradoxically not been a large-scale influence, other than in his championing of Marcus Garvey. Rather, Burning Spear music is self-defining, elemental, its spirituality and majesty from primal roots.

The heart of Burning Spear music is the voice of Winston Rodney — its lyrics simple and resonant, fragmentary, chantlike, echoes from the subconscious and everyday life — barely 'songs' at all. Successive records have not 'progressed' as much as refined, this approach, rhythm and mood increasingly dense, fluid.

Spear's early recordings with Studio One remain classics, much of their material subsequently reworked. *Marcus Garvey* and *Man In The Hills*, produced by Jack Ruby, featured Rupert Willington and Delroy Hines on back-up vocals. Garvey also spawned indifferent dub album *Garvey's Ghost*. *Dry And Heavy* was self-produced, its title self-descriptive, though it lacked the exuberance of *Hills* or mysticism of *Garvey*. *Live* is from celebrated performances at London's Rainbow in late '77, backed by Aswad.

Natural Institution and *Social Living / Civilised Reggae* are discomix tasters of Spear's new album, his most adventurous, primal and metaphysical yet, its

dubs deep and shimmering. At the time of writing, this exceptional slab of modern music looks unlikely to be released here.

Singles: Door Peep (Studio One '71), *Zion High* (Studio One '72), *Natural* (Roots '78), *Sound Living / Civilised Reggae* (Island 12" '78), *The Whole A We Suffer* (Spear '78), *Albums: Studio One Presents Burning Spear* (Studio One '72), *Rocking Time* (Studio One '73), *Marcus Garvey* (Island '75), *Man In The Hills* (Island '76), *Dry And Heavy* (Island '77), *Live* (Island '78).

BUZZCOCKS

Peter Shelley—vocals, lead guitar. Steve Diggle—guitar, vocals. John Maher—drums, vocals. Steve Garvey—bass.

Conceived late 1975 by Howard Devoto and Peter Shelley who were expressing a similar dissatisfaction with rock music. Their thoughts coincided with much being decided by Malcolm McLaren and his boys. Devoto arranged for The Sex Pistols to play Manchester in June '76, originally with Buzzcocks, who Devoto decided should use similarly direct tactics of confrontation, but Buzzcocks weren't ready. Devoto arranged a second date a few weeks later, on



PETE SHELLEY

Leader Buzzcocks

which Buzzcocks played, with Shelley plus sixteen year old Maher and Diggle. Buzzcocks with Devoto played key punk dates in the movement's ascension, and were managed by Richard Boon. The classic opposition of Devoto and Shelley and intellect and emotion meant both an ecstatic balance and tension. Inevitably Devoto quit, publicly because of cynicism at punk exploitation and redundancies, privately perhaps because of the ultimate uncontrollability of the Devoto-Shelley relationship. *Spiral Scratch* and the bootleg *Times Up* are tangible evidence of the period, and remain the best examples of Devoto and Shelley on record.

After Devoto's departure Buzzcocks became a different group. With Shelley as leader, they moved away from quick riff patterns and situation commentating and began to direct their music into two different directions: (in that way keeping the necessary opposition intact) pop and experimental, whilst Shelley's lyrics concentrated on people lovers and friendship, romantic and visionary.

With determined patience they resisted signing to a major label until specific demands were accepted. Eventually signed to UA they stubbornly released sweaty Devoto remnant *Orgasm Addict* following it with a string of close short hits, *What Do I Get?*, *I Don't Mind*, and *Love You More*. Their album *Another Music In A Different Kitchen* was an inconsistent chronological representation of the growth from Devoto flatness, through fuller, more realised songs, into jump-pop and mild teutonic endeavours, significantly enclosed within snatches of their once relevant humour statement *Boredom*.

Their new music is texturally similarly light and restless, stylised in certain respects, innovatively merging conventional structures with internal speculations. In terms of image, presentation, relationships, attitude, control, spontaneity, they could be the perfect pop group, but smugness sometimes interferes.

Singles: *Spiral Scratch* (New Hormones '77), *Orgasm Addict* (UA '77), *What Do I Get?* (UA '78), *Moving Away From The Pulsebeat* (UA '78), *I Don't Mind* (UA '78), *Love You More* (UA '78), *Ever Fall In Love* (UA '78). **Albums:** *Another Music In A Different Kitchen* (UA '78), *Love Bites* (UA '78).



CABARET VOLTAIRE

Chris Thompson - organ, tapes, treatments, voice. **Stephen Mallinder** - bass, tapes, treatments, voice. **Richard Kirk** - guitar, tapes, treatments, voice.

Intriguing experimental outfit, formed 1974 in Sheffield with sole intention of recording cassettes, large numbers of which have gained them cult reputation in Britain and America. Started serious gigs in '77. Music either completely improvised or (deliberately monotonous) rigidly repetitive drum-machine based constructions, as on their single. They have also dabbled in systems music and interpretations of conceptual pieces. An interesting but often frustrating group.

Single: *Extended Play* (Rough Trade '78).

JOHN CALE

Producer, pianist, composer, Welsh-born and classically-trained at prestigious music colleges, John Cale was co-founder of the inspirational Velvet Underground, wherein he brought avant-garde influences — John Cage, Lamonte Young, amplified jet engines — to offset Lou Reed's ugly streetwise rock'n'roll. Produced albums by The Modern Lovers and The Stooges in the early '70s, and Patti Smith's *Horses* in '75. A potent but hopelessly erratic figure whose albums veer from elegiac beauty to vicious white rock, he will surface in unusual groundswells of musical activity (the latest being *Step Forward*) and then disappear just as abruptly.

Albums: *Church Of Anthrax* (with Terry Riley) (CBS '70), *Paris 1919* (Reprise '73), *Fear* (Island '74), *Slow Dazzle* (Island '75).

CALIFORNIA

The fault line hasn't swallowed it yet, and it hasn't entirely fallen prey to the homogenizing process that typifies the broad bulk of American rock over the past few years. While the quality of records from the record industry's hub still seems largely dependent on the amount of good coke around at the time of recording, there are those who have abandoned the Hotel California in search of other, hopefully less vicarious, thrills.

Inveterate local crackpots won't stop chasing their ego fantasies — notably Kim Fowley and Rodney Bingenheimer. The latter, always open to a British influence, plays punk on a radio show and in his disco. The former, always quick to spot a fast buck, put a few pet obsessions together and started *The Runaways*.

The slow filtration of British records and literature kindled some kind of spark in kids bored with cars, surf and sun. Then *The Damned* went over in spring '77. That confused them. Certainly from the records that followed a lot of the groups merely took *The Doomed's* cheap outrage and set about out-grossing it.

In fact, the overall impression gleaned from fanzines such as *Slash* and *Search & Destroy* and the records out on the local Dangerhouse label is one of superficiality. Many of the groups are either on one long bombed-out weekend search for funtime, or else given to useless polemic about the social politics of art, punk and anarchy, most often found in the pages of *Search & Destroy*.

Still, they've picked up the style if not the content, there's places to play, mainly the Mabuhay Gardens, and they seem to like *The Clash* a lot. There are also interesting outposts of '60s experimentation in bands like Chrome and The Residents.

The Pistols played their last gig in front of 5000 people at San Francisco's Winterland. Devo have just moved in, Becker and Fagen have moved out, and Neil Young still lives there. Draw your own conclusions.

Discography: *The Dickies: Paranoid* (A&M '78), *Eve Of Destruction* (A&M '78), *Wierdos: Destroy All Music EP* (Bomp '77), *We Got The Neutron Bomb* (Dangerhouse '78), *The Zippers: He's A Rebel* (Back Door Man '77), *The Twinkeys: Aliens In Our Midst* (Twirp '77), *The Furies: Jim Stark Dark* (Double R '77), *Black Sheep* (Double R '78), *The Nerves: Hanging On The Telephone EP* (Nerves '77), *The Dills: 198 Seconds Of...* (Dangerhouse '78), *Leila And The Snakes: Rock'n'roll*

Weirdos (Asp '77). *The Zeros: Beat Your Heart Out* (Bomp '78). *X: Adult Books* (Dangerhouse '78). *The Deadbeats: Kill The Hippies EP* (Dangerhouse '78). *Others: The Avengers, Daddy Maxfield, The Nuns, The Screammers, The Rands, Backstage Pass, Crime.*

CAN

Irmin Schmidt—keyboards.
Michael Karoli—guitars, violin, vocals.
Jackie Liebezit—drums, percussion.

Often mistakenly brushed under the same mat as the dread German cosmicists (Tangerine Dream et al.), Can remain one of the most consistently innovative continental bands.

Theirs is emphatically not an electronics-dominated sound, but one that uses conventional instrumentation to unconventional ends. Based in Cologne, Can have their own studio in Inner Space and may be held responsible for an impressively vast body of work there, most of which will sadly not see general release, remaining logged in the band's private tape library.

The otherworldly eeriness of their early work is often cited as an influence by rock musicians of all disciplines, and the delicate aural impressionism of such albums as *Future Days* and *Soon Over Babaluma* is unlikely to be surpassed. In more recent years, Can's uneasy search to achieve a more 'commercial' bias has diluted their undoubted strengths and the band has been dogged by personnel problems. However their latest album, *Out Of Reach*, shows signs of a return to form, and the participation of prodigal bassist Holger Czukay on the imminent *Can!* must augur well for the immediate future.

Albums: *Monster Movie* ('70), *Togo Togo* ('71), *Soundtracks* ('73), *Ege Bamyasi* ('72), *Future Days* ('73), *Limited Edition* ('74), *Soon Over Babaluma* ('74), *Cannibalism* ('78), *All (United Artists)*, *Landed* ('75), *Flow Motion* ('76), *Unlimited Edition* ('76), *Saw Delight* ('77), *All (Virgin)*, *Out Of Reach* (Lightning '78).

THE CARS

Ric Ocasek—guitar, Benjamin Orr—vocals, bass.
David Robinson—drums, vocals.
Elliot Easton—guitar, vocals.
Greg Hawkes—keyboards, sax, percussion, vocals.

Absolutely recent model formed by ex-Modern Lovers drummer Robinson plus Boston college graduates. The Cars debut album has caused a reaction in the press with lavish promotion and Roy Thomas Baker (as in Queen) producing. An avant-garde rock throwback to glamour pop or a genuinely progressive outfit? Too early to say, the prototype has a glossy veneer and a stop-start quirkiness reminiscent of Talking Heads. Devo and a cast of thousands. Worth watching for.

Album: *The Cars* (Electra/Asylum '78).

CHEAP TRICK

Rick Nielsen — guitar, vocals.
Robin Zander — vocals, guitar.
Tom Petersson — bass, vocals.

Bun E. Carlos—drums.

Came into being in 1976 when Illinois native Rick Nielsen (formerly fronting the Sick Man Of Europe and a brief spell as Todd Rundgren's replacement in the Nazz), joined with Petersson as the two sojourned, workless, in the South of France. Stopping over in Scotland they picked up the youthful Zander and met Carlos back in Rockford as final part of the team needed to put Nielsen's tongue-in-cheek pop sensibilities into operation.

Justly famed for prolific studio output — three solid albums in fourteen months — and the hardest gigging American circuit band, a '78 European visit affirmed Trick's personality and popular merit. Nielsen, fronting the band with a mixture of crazed showmanship, plectrum spinning and amusing guitar work, is supported in his crimes by the good looks of the Zander, Petersson team.

Providing their output continues in its rhythmically assured manner, the Trick can win a large following in America and here, regardless of hype and well earned by their dedication. A genuinely entertaining band with full knowledge of the '60s hook dictionary, they produce uncanny originals in a Beatles, Anglophile vein, and weld the technique to American professionalism. Cheap Trick are ludicrously big in Japan, but that's another story.

Albums: *Cheap Trick* (Epic '77), *In Colour* (Epic '77), *Heaven Tonight* (Epic '78), *Singles:* *I Want You To Want Me* (Epic '77), *Surrender* (Epic '78).

CHELSEA

Gene October—vocals.
James Stevenson—guitars.
Dave Martin—guitar.
Jeff Miles—bass.
Steve J. Jones—drums.

When the original Chelsea folded up and guitarist Billy Idol and bassist Tony James went on to form Generation X, Gene October was left with nothing but the name. Since then he's had various line-ups but done little but bellow the same hot air with as much conviction as Child (indeed they once tried for the same market, toying with the name 'Love and Kisses' before the wheels fell from that particular bandwagon). Trotting out any cliché that may bring publicity or interest, Mr. October's ailing unit, in close on two years, have done no more than work up from nothing to a state of redundancy.

Singles: *Right to Work* (Step Forward '77), *High Rise Living* (Step Forward '77), *Urban Kids* (Step Forward '78).

CHINA STREET

Martin Pilkington—lead guitar, vocals.
Adam Williams—bass, vocals.
Dusty Hall—lead vocal, sax.
Dave Willan—drums.

A Lancaster quartet, a mature blend of enthusiasm and experience, who borrowed much of the basic attitude of the punk purge to savagely update their directionless music. Independent and idealistic, their music straddles fast rock and white



reggae, and support has come from Steel Pulse.

China Street's ordinary single *You're A Ruin* was thoughtfully produced and marketed on their own label, the procedures involved outlined in *NME*. Recently signed to EMI; Hall quit, replaced by Chris Sugden (keyboards).

Singles: *You're A Ruin* (Criminal '78), *Rock Against Racism* (EMI '78).

THE CLASH

Joe Strummer—rhythm guitar, vocals.
Mick Jones—lead guitar, vocals.
Paul Simonon—bass.
Nicky Headon—drums.

Until The Sex Pistols disintegrated and The Clash assumed complete control in the punk leadership by default, the latter had always been the movement's number two band.

The germs of the Clash grew from two early rock genres, glitter and pub-rock. Mick Jones had played with New York Dolls-derived London SS and Joe Strummer was part of pub-rock combo The 101's (the name taken from the torture chamber in George Orwell's *1984* — The Clash members were always into political statements, even before they had come together, though their rhetoric was often artistically glib, preferring the dramatic, flourishing gesture to cold, hard specifics).

Jones and his friend/tyro bassist Simonon met Strummer down the Portobello Road while taking their constitutional with Glen Matlock. They told Strummer they thought he was great but his band was shit. Strummer told that he liked their clothes (King's Road military corps chic). Politics and fashion... Strummer met now ex-manager Bernie Rhodes and The Clash were born.

The band had all experienced a satori upon witnessing The Sex Pistols and their early endeavours in both songwriting and performing were all heavily influenced by that band. Malcolm McLaren's spare rib?

With Terry Chimes on drums, they played the tight London club/pub circuit until the punk purges of late '76 and early '77 forced them into semi-retirement. When Chimes proved unsuitable ("not political enough") they spent months auditioning potential drummers. Their distaste for Chimes, however, did not extend to a complete ban on the hapless Terry, who was used whenever The Clash wanted to play a one-off gig (eg their set at the Roxy cinema in Harlesden), or cut demos to be touted around the record companies, or to record their first album when they eventually landed a six-figure recording contract with CBS.

Even more than anything the Pistols ever did, The Clash's first album was to epitomize the punk stereotype. What were later to

become clichés were, at the time, angry young innovations. The dole queues of *Career Opportunities*, the boredom, amphetamines and tower blocks of *London's Burning*, the unleashed bitterness, hatred of establishment and revolutionary attitude-dancing of *White Riot*, *Remote Control*, *What's My Name?* and *Cheat*... within a year they would all seem as quaint as anything to come out of Merseybeat, but in early '77 The Sound Of The Westway never left the discerning punk's turntable.

Chimes was ditched once and for all in favour of Nicky 'Topper' Headon and The Clash embarked upon a series of UK tours. They had promised apocalypse. The Clash, kids and critics all had to come to terms with the fact that it wasn't going to happen — Armageddon was off the menu, will you settle for a superior rock 'n' roll band? There was some bitterness, of course, especially when it transpired that The Clash were as powerless as anyone else to break the establishment's stranglehold on venue control, the radio airwaves and music through the cathode tube.

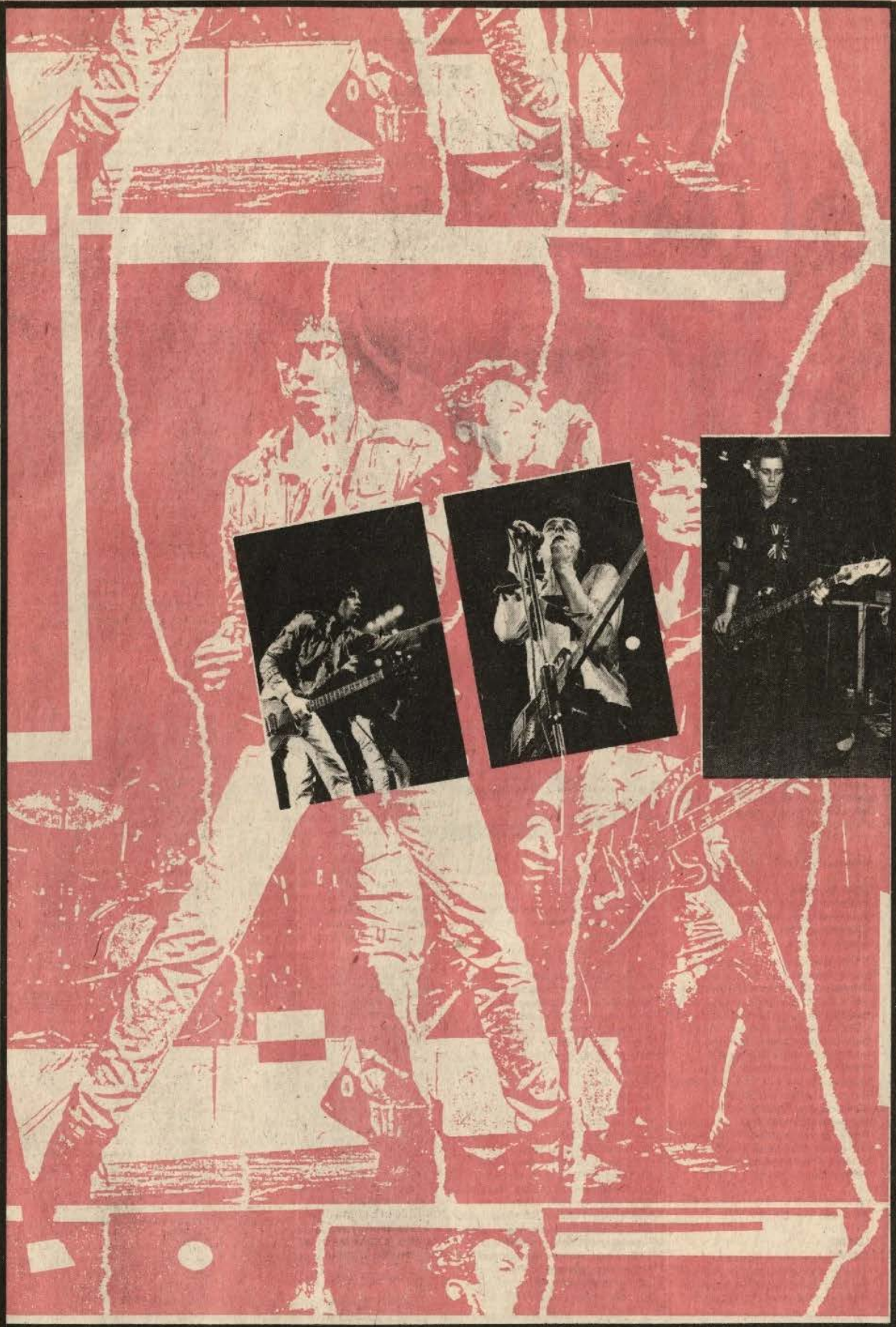
An even more bitter pill to swallow was that, inevitably, The Clash had become part of the establishment themselves. CBS put out *Remote Control* without the band's permission and The Clash were livid; they thought they'd been made to look ridiculous. They retaliated by putting out *Complete Control*. It was a good single. No more.

And they had songwriting problems — they were as tired of Tower Block Amphetamines Boredom as everyone else and seemed confused about what direction they should take. Their newer songs like *Jail Guitar Doors*, *The Prisoner* and *Clash City Rockers* were garbled, directionless, tedious even. Mick Jones wanted to be Keith Richard again. They seemed tired. It was only when they cut some *Rockers Rebel* Music that they seemed on form, and *White Man In The Hammersmith Palais* was possibly their finest moment ever.

But they stuck, on the whole, to rock 'n' roll. In spite of all the contradictions, talk of sell-outs and paradox inherent in their stance, they seemed to feel they owed it to their fans. The Clash always tried to treat their audience like human beings. On other occasions, like the time Simonon and Headon were caught and convicted of shooting racing pigeons from a roof with an air rifle, they just seemed pathetic. Especially when they called their subsequent tour *The Clash Out On Parole* and wrote a song about the incident called *Guns On The Roof*.

But then The Clash were always more concerned with impressive symbolism than anything else. When they hooked up with Blue Oyster Cult's syngali Sandy Pearlman to record their second album, it was hardly anything to raise one's cropped, peroxided, vaseline-spiked eyebrows about. They probably deserve each other. **Singles:** *White Riot* ('77), *Remote Control* ('77), *Complete Control* ('77), *Clash City Rockers* ('78), *White Man In The Hammersmith Palais* ('78), *All (CBS)*. Also: *101's* — *Keys To Your Heart* (Chiswick '76). **Albums:** *The Clash* (CBS '77), *Give 'Em Enough Rope* (CBS '78).

David Wainright/Paul/Slattery/Steve Davis





Mick Beaufey—guitar, Colin McFaul—vocals. Charlie Bruce—drums. Garrie Lammin—guitar. Steve Burgess—bass.

*Singles: Runnin' Riot (Decca '77).
We Love You (Decca '77).*

The last few years have seen not only an increased penetration of the real world into the content of the contemporary mainstream

By the turn of the decade, DC had begun not only to emulate Lee's policy of blending traditional superheroics with mild social satire, soap-opera, self-doubt and problem-page psychology, but to employ freelance writers and artists with no longterm loyalty to either Marvel and DC. The decline of the 'staffman' did as much to blur the stylistic distinctions

Howard The Duck, on the other

Still, comic-book themes have entered the nation's cultural life to an extent unprecedented since the days of the old *Superman*, *Batman* and *Captain America* movie serials of the '40s. However, it is vital for the TV and movie boys to reflect the intensity, vitality and realism of the new comic books, or else this new boom could be as temporary as the last.

After years reading his wordy poetry in Manchester folk clubs a chance encounter on a bill with Buzzcocks had him rapturously acclaimed by the punks in the audience, appreciative of the bitterness in his winding words, surprised by the rhythm of his inimitable delivery, glad of the light relief. Reputation snow-balled; a 'punk poet' was sure of attention and coverage. After a Rabid EP with unsure musical accompaniment, and many performances with anyone from The Fall to Sad Cafe, he signed to CBS and inconspicuously toured with BeBop Deluxe. Bill Nelson has consequently produced his debut single and album, poetry with disco/new music backing. It's live that Clarke comes into his own, the perfect support act, a whining absurdist commentator. And, as with all populist poets, will be enormously popular for a short time, or until nipples appear in the *Daily Express*.

Singles: *Innocents* (Rabid EP 177).
Post War Glamour Girls (CBS '78).
Albums: Two tracks — *Last Night At The Electric Circus* (Virgin '78).
Disguise In Love (CBS '78).

THE CORTINAS

Jeremy Valentine — vocals. Mike Fewins — guitar. Nick Sheppard — guitar. Dexter Dalwood — bass. Daniel Swan — drums.

Talented but directionless teenage garageband from Bristol. Began Summer 1976 playing straight R&B, and got first break supporting Stranglers at The Roxy, returning as headliners shortly afterwards. There spotted by Mark Perry and signed to Step Forward. Two disappointing singles later, snapped up by CBS on a five-year contract. Determined to stay in music, though Swan quit to return to school studies.

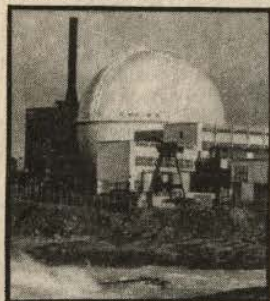
Singles: *Fascist Dictator* (Step Forward '77). *Defiant Pose* (Step Forward '78).

Albums: *True Romances* (CBS '78)

ELVIS COSTELLO & THE ATTRACTIONS

Elvis Costello — guitar, vocals. Steve Nave — keyboards. Bruce Thomas — bass. Pete Thomas — drums.

Arguably the new wave's most potent songwriter and easily the movement's most mysterious figure, Elvis Costello rose from complete anonymity in 1977. As Stiff's first outside inking coupled with management courtesy of the volatile Jake Riviera, Costello exploded upon the late '70s scene with a force equalled only by the sheer incongruity of his ungainly



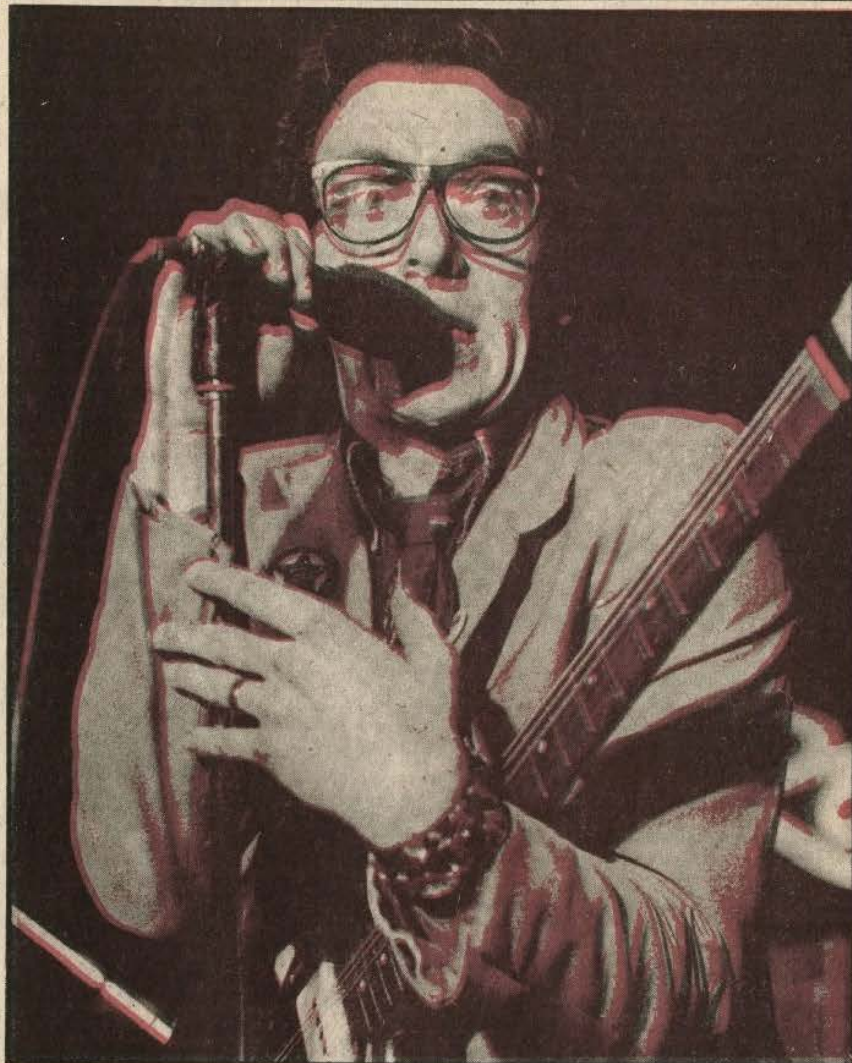
Atoms with knobs on

Buddy Holly-cloned physical demeanor.

Costello himself proved to be intensely stubborn in regard to providing info on his past exploits, although it was quickly discovered that his real name was Declan MacManus, that he was the son of Ross MacManus, a professional singer for many years with the Joe Loss Orchestra. Declan, born and raised in Liverpool, had graduated to performing with pub-rockers Flip City while he supported his wife and child by working in a computer factory run by beauty expert Elizabeth Arden.

During and immediately after his sojourn with Flip City, Costello/MacManus set hawked demo tapes of his songs around the record companies to no avail. Finally, as the first applicant to a talent ad placed by the barely-christened Stiff Records, Costello — horn rims, three button mohair and insect paranoia visage replete with bulging eye-balls — found his niche and was put in the studios under the production aegis of Stiff acolyte and artistic mainstay Nick Lowe.

Less Than Zero, his first single was a damning indictment on England's canonization of '30s



Minting Modern Neuroses Mk 2

fascist Sir Oswald Moseley.

All manner of comparisons followed fleet-foot — Van Morrison, Dylan, even Graham Parker, who'd actually been recording his first demos at the same time as Costello had been working on his — but these were promptly shelved when *My Aim Is True* was released in the late summer of '77, proving conclusively that Costello was no mere sum of his influences but an incendiary talent set on seizing his time in no uncertain terms. The sentiments of this first startling instalment produced again by Lowe spotlight a tormented soul, obsessed with vengeance and guilt, an underdog who was made as hell and wasn't going to take it anymore — a cuckold who matched his downtrodden hapless lack of feminine appeal by pinpointing all the perversities inherent in his role as all-purpose loser.

"Love... I don't even know what the word means... Revenge and guilt are the only emotions I can understand," he claimed to *NME* and the quote became an instant lynchpin for his leering foreboding persona.

Backing up the venom were the

hallmarks of a startlingly powerful songwriter capable of matching a ferocious perspective with music that borrowed fearlessly from the best hook-line shots from '60s rock, with all manner of irrepressible modern sleights of hand.

By the time *Aim* was released, Costello brusquely assembled a band, The Attractions, with ex-Chilli Willi drummer Pete Thomas, ex-Sutherland Bros. bassist Bruce Thomas and a callow youth fresh from the Royal College of Music named Steve Nave. With this rivetting rhythm section and Costello's staccato rhythm guitar as the basis, Nave's eerie organ playing provided the songs with their perfect foil and this alliance was given a startling vinyl baptism with *Watching the Detectives*, a sinister reggae sneer that was Costello's first single hit.

The second album *This Year's Model*, released in early '78 on Radar Records after manager Riviera, Costello and Nick Lowe had split from Stiff, utilized The Attractions totally (the *Aim* sessions had mated El with West Coast session band Clover) and again spotlight a marriage made in

heaven. The band matched Costello shot for shot on *Model* while the Costello's perceptions were even sharper.

He's always been as merciless to himself as to the objects of his prey, be they the dictates of fashion, or The National Front. Also, he moves at a startling pace, refusing to be bagged. Most important perhaps has been the measure of his success. His albums have sold in chart-blazing quantities in the UK whilst he can claim to be the only New Wave artist to crack the US top 30. Truly his tenacity and intensity are contagious.

Albums: *My Aim Is True* (stiff '77) *This Year's Model* (Radar '78). Singles: *Less Than Zero* (Stiff '77); *The Angels Wanna Wear My Red Shoes* (Stiff '77) *Watching the Detectives* (stiff '78). *I Don't Want To Go To Chelsea* (Radar '78). *Pump It Up* (Radar '78). Also free single with album: *Stranger In The House* (Radar). Miscellaneous: Two live tracks *Live Stiffs* (Stiff '78).

9

WAYNE COUNTY

This likeable transvestite began his journey to fame and enough fortune to afford his imminent sex change as DJ at New York's Max's Kansas City club. He began performing first backed by The Backstreet Boys and later The Electric Chairs, and moved to London in early '77 to capitalise on the emerging punk scene. At first he was hilarious — appearing on stage in full drag and performing brilliant parodies of Patti Smith lamenting the death of Jim Morrison as well as butch little ditties like *Toilet Love* and *If You Don't Wanna Fuck Me, Baby, Fuck Off*.

Predictably, Wayne soon decided he'd like to be taken seriously and dropped the drag act, attempting to play it as straight as anyone with hormone enlarging mammary glands possibly can. He lost his quaint charm, the jokes sounded hollow and Wayne ended up unbelievably corny by the time he moved to Berlin for the final stages of his operation. He would never camp on the kitsch side again. **Shame! Albums:** *The Electric Chairs* (Safari '78), *Storm: The Gates Of Heaven* (Safari '78). **Singles:** *Blatantly Offensive EP* (Safari '78), *Trying To Get On The Radio* (Safari '78).



KEVIN COYNE

An unfailingly credible chronicler of the less comforting or comfortable aspects of our society, Kevin Coyne's very insistence on confronting the listener with such themes has denied him widespread acceptance.

However, Coyne's continued involvement in the rock field is vital, serving as it does to remind us that the vast bulk of rock 'product' is massively irrelevant in social terms, being little more than tacit encouragement to accept ingrained prejudices and discriminations.

Coyne's double live in *Living Black And White* is probably the most complete and satisfying introduction to his work; it details most angles of his hitherto largely thankless crusade on behalf of the lonely and lunatic, the downtrodden and misbegotten.

Coyne's ability to communicate the essence of everyday as seen through the eyes of both 'normal' and 'abnormal' (pointless distinctions, as he readily points out) people is forcibly cauterised by its conviction, compassion and humour.

His recent *Dynamite Daze* album, his various collaborations with playwright Snoo Wilson and his recent *Babble* stage event underline the continuing strengths of Coyne's work.

Albums: *Case History* (Dandelion '72), *Marjory Razorblade* ('73), *Blame It On The Night* ('74), *Matching Head And Feet* ('75), *Heartburn* ('76), *In Living Black and White* ('77), *Beautiful Extremes* (Virgin Import '78), *Dynamite Daze* ('78). All (Virgin) unless stated.



CULTURE

Joseph Hill—lead vocals. Ralph Walker—tenor vocals. Kenneth Dayes—alto vocals.

Culture emerged at the tail-end of the Channel One 'militant rockers' movement towards the latter part of 1976 with a quartet of singles that transcended the style in its vocal accomplishment — *This Time*, *See Them A Come*, the prophetic *Two Sevens Clash* and *I Am Not Ashamed* — plus an LP also entitled *Two Sevens Clash* (all produced for Joe Gibbs).

Discomixes *Baldhead Bridge* and *Trod On*, their first for Sonia Pottinger, consolidated the group's reputation during 1977, as did their subsequent Pottinger 45s *Fussing And Fighting* and *Natty Never Get Weary*.

Signed to Front Line in 1978, Culture proved themselves one of the truly progressive outfits in reggae with two superlative albums, the bootleg *Africa Stand Alone* and *Harder Than The Rest*, and a tour of the UK in the summer was received with an almost unqualified success.

Singles: *Two Sevens Clash* (Lightning '77), *Fussing And Fighting* (Sky Note '77), *Trod On* (Sky Note '77), *Natty Never Get Weary* (High Note '78). **Albums:** *Two Sevens Clash* (Lightning '77), *Africa Stand Alone* (April '78), *Harder Than The Rest* (Front Line '78).



THE DAMNED

Brian James—guitar. Dave 'Vanian' Letts—vocals. Ray 'Captain Sensible' Burns—bass. Chris 'Rat Scabies' Miller—drums.

THE SEX PISTOLS may have put the fury back into rock 'n' roll, but The Damned were responsible for putting the slapstick into punk. Vanian stalked the stage in Vampire-chic straight out of a Christopher Lee wet dream; Captain Sensible threw fits dressed as an airline hostess or a ballerina or (worst of all) nothing at all; James played a Johnny Thunders clone and Scabies (a portly chap with a beer-bust to match his beer-gut) was the instigator of the unsavoury punk-ritual of "gobbing". This to be the only innovative act of his life.



The Damned were one of the first bands to appear in the wake of the Pistols and made up for their chronic paucity of imagination by playing standard Heavy Metal fare souped up to a breakneck speed of 78rpm's.

The Damned's mercenary tendencies soon became apparent in late '76 on The Pistols "Anarchy" tour when they declared that, even if Local Councils succeeded in censoring the Pistols' performances, The Damned would still be prepared to play. They were thrown off the tour and upon realising they had been blackballed by the rest of the punk community attempted to make the transition from hardline punk to a pubescent pop audience.

They did everything first and worst: first punks to sign a recording contract, first to release a single and album, first band to appear on television (*Supersonic*), first band to lose their recording contract, in early 1978, first band to disband. The late Damned remain unlamented, their demise no more than they deserved. The Damned deserved even less. **Singles:** *New Rose* (Stiff '76), *Neat Neat Neat* (Stiff '77). **Albums:** *Damned, Damned, Damned* (Stiff '77), *Music For Pleasure* (Stiff '77).

DARTS

Rita Ray, Bob Fish, Griff Fender—vocals. George Currie—guitar. Mike Deacon—piano. Horatio Hornblower—saxes. Thump Thomson—bass. John Dummer—drums.

RESPLENDENT in Oxfam Shop suits, tennis shoes and winkpickers (excluding the lovely Rita, of course — give us a twirl, love), Darts give good doo-wop, revering and upholding a street music tradition in a manner which only transcends the crass plundering practised by more cabaret-style outfits which also has a remarkably wide appeal thanks to their straightahead, no crap/no condescension approach.

Four Top 5 singles in one year, and just because your mum and dad like them shouldn't detract from the achievement.

Darts were formed in '76 by basso profundo "Mad" Den Hegarty after the tearful demise of Rocky Sharpe And The Razors, with the addition of John Dummer Blues Band's rhythm section to add ballast to the ballads. Hornblower plays a mean white plastic sax and everybody loves the stage show. Whether or not Darts can survive the loss of Hegarty and pianist Hammy Howell should be weighed against the fact that five writers remain in

the band and that over half their material (including current hit "It's Raining") is original composition.

Singles: *Daddy Cool* (Magnet, '77), *Come Back My Love* (Magnet '78), *The Boy From New York City* (Magnet '78), *It's Raining* (Magnet '78).

Albums: *Darts* (Magnet, '77), *Everybody Plays Darts* (Magnet '78), *The Amazing Darts* (Magnet '78).

THE DEAD BOYS

Stiv Bators—vocals. Cheatah Chrome—lead guitar. Jimmy Zero—rhythm guitar. Jeff Magnum—bass. Johnny Blitz—drums.

Abysmal heavy metal mongers who moved from hometown Cleveland to New York and passed themselves as punks by cropping their hair and simpering a synthetic sadism soundtrack where the size of a mucho-macho-man's erection was gauged by the length of his cat o' nine tails.

Their frantic though stunted libido is recorded for posterity on their brace of closest-rock albums that both last for under thirty minutes (the only good thing about 'em).

Albums: *Young, Loud And Snotty* (Sire '77), *We Have Come For Your Children* (Sire '78).

DEAD FINGERS TALK

Bobo Phoenix—vocals. Jeff Persons—guitar. Andy Linklater—bass. Tony Carter—drums.

A tightly-knit rock unit from Hull who have led an interrupted existence for around eight years. Taking their name from a William Burroughs novel, the present incarnation came to London in '76 and began scratching out a reputation the hard way. Bobo Phoenix's fierce portrayal of gay resentment in *Harry* strongly influenced Tom Robinson's coming out, and as a stage performer Phoenix can be highly compelling.

An album was produced by Mick Ronson, but the band are dogged by unresolved output consistency, being one night excellent, the next irritating.

Album: *Storm The Reality Studios* (Pye '78).

DESPERATE BICYCLES

Danny Wigley—vocals. Roger Stephens—bass. Dave Papworth—drums. Nicky Stephens—organ.

Originally formed as an exercise in seeing how little a band could spend in recording, releasing and distributing their own records, the Desperate Bicycles put out all their material on their own label and are one of the most independent bands working within rock 'n' roll.

They are political without spotting dromatic rhetoric, committed without ever losing their wry sense of humour, and combine wry, incisive social comment with low-profile punk. Caustic, contagious and commendable.

Singles: *The Medium Was The Tedium* (Refill '77), *New Cross*, *New Cross* (Refill '78).

DEVO

Gerry Casale—bass. Mark Mothersbaugh—synthesiser, guitar, vocals. Bob Casale—guitar. Bob Mothersbaugh—guitar. Alan Myers—drums.

The idiot bastard offspring of Roxy Music and the collected sour grapes of the '70s, Devo are a bitter and caustic piece of science fiction; a fantasy distillation of a peculiarly American reality.

Guided by Mark Mothersbaugh and Gerry Casale, Devo have existed for six years within the narrow confines of Akron, Ohio. Their present prominence began with their debut single *Mongoloid/Jacko Homo* on their own Booji Boy label (whence emanated 'Are we not . . . etc') and David Bowie's introducing them on their New York debut, both around early summer '77. It continued through their spectacular manipulation of image and images, playing — along with their lyrical bizarreness — on the audience intrigue factor. It culminated with the release of a potent redefinition of the Stones' *Satisfaction* in the US in Dec '77 and in Britain by Stiff in April '78, about which time they made live UK debut at the Roundhouse and recorded an album in Germany with Brian Eno, released August '78. It played like clockwork and professed to tick like a time bomb.

Stiff released a third single in the meantime, but interest in Devo caused spate of bootlegs, amongst them *Workforce To The World*, live in US '77, and excellent four track EP *Mechanical Man*, reputed to be the '76 demos which gained Bowie's attention.



Cloaking their music in the admittedly obscure ideology of Devolution (hence Devo), they are, if nothing else, pure provocation. Humourless closet reactionaries have found them either fraudulent or else guilty of making fun of mankind. Devo, in fact, take themselves a lot less seriously. They are manipulators in more ways than one. Apart from the media and rockbiz, they also reflect and manipulate what they see around them, which is the suburban relapse, the subject of John Waters' *Pink Flamingos*; looting the supermarket turned to supermarket depravity.

Devo are reacting to a state of mind you can sense by simply reading the newspapers; the immutable, impersonal weight of a world out of control.

Singles: *Jacko Homo/Mongoloid* (Booji Boy '77, re-issued Stiff '78). *Satisfaction/Sloppy* (Booji Boy '77, re-issued Stiff '78). *Be Stiff/Social Fools* (Stiff '78). *Come Back Jones/Social Fools* (Virgin '78). **Album:** *Q. Are We Not Men? A. We Are Devo* (Virgin '78).



DEVO! future the into backwards going evolution.

THE DICTATORS

Adny Shernoff—bass, keyboards, vocals. Ross The Boss—guitar. Top Ten—guitar. Ritchie Teeter—drums. Handsome Dick Manitoba—vocals.

Formed by rockcrit Adny Shernoff and various Bronx neighbourhood chums in the mid '70s as the logical extension of his *Teenage Wasteland Gazette* fanzine. They played some early gigs under the inspired monicker of Beet The Meatles before giving their cook cum roadie Handsome Dick the vocal chores and settling on The

Dictators.

In '75 they released their first album, produced as are all their albums by Krugman and Pearlman, a hard rock comic reflecting their obsession with wrestling and American adolescent pastimes. They captured two years too early the teenage degenerate aura that was later defined by The Ramones and New York's *Punk* fanzine. The critics were actively hostile and the public indifferent, hence the next two years were spent in relative limbo as the house band for the

Miss Nude America Contest.

A second album *Manifest Destiny* was released in '77, and a third *Bloodbrothers* in '78. Both aim for commercial streamlining and prove Adny Shernoff a clever and versatile tunesmith, but the conflict of interest between the broader rock market and The Dics and all they stand for looks insoluble.

Albums: *The Dictators Go Girl Crazy* (Epic '75). *Manifest Destiny* (Asylum '77). *Bloodbrothers* (Asylum '78).

DIRE STRAITS

Mark Knopfler—guitar, vocals.
David Knopfler—guitar. John
Illsley—bass. Pick Withers—drums.

Ironically, in the summer of '77, when modern rock found its social and political conscience, Dire Straits emerged as an old-fashioned blues band. Yet there was an audience ready and waiting, and for all their influences — JJ Cale, BB King and Dylan particularly — the rare talent of Mark, the elder Knopfler brother, was seldom denied. A virtuoso guitarist, treble 'n' grit vocalist and a superb songwriter, Mark is undoubtedly Dire Straits.

Their big break came when their demos were broadcast on Radio London's *Honky Tonk*. So impressed was the music biz that Straits were quickly signed, and before releasing their first LP, appeared on *Hope & Anchor Front Line Festival* set, alongside XTC, The Stranglers and X-Ray Spex.

Their first album requires patient listening but stands up as a fine debut while their first single, a popular stage number, never achieved the commercial success it deserved. Jerry Wexler will produce second album.

Singles: *Sultans Of Swing* (Vertigo '78).

Albums: *Dire Straits* (Vertigo '78).

DISCO

The butt of most rock people's scorn and yet, ironically, the most popular teenage music in the country. The trouble stems from Disco tending to be regarded as an extension of '60s soul in rock minds (and therefore a commercial smudge on rose-tinted memories), or else as the symbol of hip manipulative business and of unintelligent punters (and therefore a threat to rock's private clubs and snooty cliques).

What rock chooses to ignore in the Disco sound is the absolutely joyous, meaningless fun for which the records are solely created (much in the same way as early Beach Boys discs were) and also — in the integration stakes — that in no other form of music is racial harmony as successful as on the Disco floor (and what is true of the followers is true of the artists).

At the time of writing, we have, in the selling stakes, two heavyweight gunners: **Boney M** and **The Bee Gees**.

To a serious Disco collector, the idea that Boney M should be classed along side such dance hardware as **Stargard**, **Bootsy** etc. is outrageous, and laughable, but the three daughters and one son of the Caribbean Isles have turned up in nearly every pub club and juke-box since the colossal success of *Rivers Of Babylon/Brown Girl In The Ring*.

The band had left their native shores and were in that home of much Disco Produktion, Germany, when Atlantic/Hansa Records snapped them up. It was for AHR that Boney M began recording their string of more conventional disco singles that were to culminate in *Rivers, Me Baker, Daddy Cool, Sunny* and the atrocious *Belfast*.

Boney M remain fairly anonymous, lacking the charisma and style of, say, Abba, but with a TV campaign making sure their third album stays at No. 1 and their



Babylon in Berlin

previous company Creole (ironically a predominantly reggae company), releasing the M's back-packs in 12-inch, it seems as though The Bee Gees have competition for the next six months at least.

However, Boney M will stay unpallatable to all but the most lightweight discotheques.

This can't be said of the sublime melodies and textures of Bee Gees Maurice, Robin and Barry — the brothers Gibb. Discs like *Staying Alive*, *You Should Be Dancing* and *Night Fever* cut it on all levels — severe choons, irresistible bass and drums and the greatest choruses in town.

It was in '75 that the boys came into the care of the excellent Arif Mardin, with whom they cut the album *Main Course* for Robert Stigwood's RSO label. From the album was lifted the super *Jive Talking* and so began the snowball which even after the massive *Saturday Night Fever* shows no sign of cracking just yet.

The only considerable rival, commercially, to the big two is the electronic rhythm rider herself, **Donna Summer**. Like Boney M, it took a journey to Germany for the breathless one-to, er, come right, An American in Munich, she was signed to Casablanca Records and achieved a worldwide hit in the schmorgasmic ecstasy of *Love To Love You, Baby*, a track that took an entire side of her debut album.

After this things began to level out, and it wasn't until producers Giorgio Moroder and Pete Bellote, who must take equal credit in Donna's success, got her to whine prettily across their repetitive synthesizer programme on the monumental and exquisite *Feel Love* that Ms Summer and also the Euro Disco scene (noted for its not always successful couplings of electronics and piercing strings) got underway.

From there, Summer, Moroder and Bellote collaborated to produce the highly ambitious and near faultless *Once Upon A Time*. While Disco singles score eight times out of ten, great disco albums are as rare as hens' teeth, yet this one's an essential LP, made all the more remarkable because it is a double set.

These days, though, Summer's material is less interesting and her

involvement in the lame 'disco' movie *Thank God It's Friday* suggests she may be aiming at becoming an allround entertainer à la Diana Ross.

OK, so above are the cash register kaisers, but 80 per cent of disco will never chart and is largely sold on import. Earlier in the decade it was names that were trusted and buyers were loyal to the big guns like **Ohio Players**, **Kool And The Gang**, **Brass Construction**, **JB's**. But now singles and producers — extremely influential in Disco — are only as big as the opening 15 seconds on the latest 12-inch, though a few of the order refuse to be moved (notably Norman Whitfield, doing great things with **Rose Royce** and **Stargard**).

The word disco is an umbrella for a hundred forms of mood, attitude and dance. From John Travolta through **The Commodores** and **Evelyn 'Champagne' King** to the hardware in **George Clinton's** **Parliament/Bootsy** set up, taking in the outrageous antics and electronics of **Sylvester**, is a bleedin' long way and a lot of ink.

Through inbuilt prejudice you probably don't care about these people anyway, but if you ever get out of it enough to get up on the floor and react the way the records want you to, sometime during the deft conversation you'll be holding with the girl you've just paired off with your body'll send a message up to your brain.

It'll say, 'THIS is what it's all about...'

Git Doowwwwwnnn!!!

Like asking, give me ten good rock tracks, it's impossible to simply jot down essential Disco cuts. There are few consistent albums but countless singles all of which demand attention. With that in mind here is a totally random selection which compile an imaginary album so good it'd make your head spin:

You Make Me Feel (Mighty Real) — Sylvester (Fantasy). *Dreaming a Dream* — Crown Heights Affair (DeLite). *Slippery When Wet* — Commodores (Mowtown). *Which Way Is Up* — Stargard (MCA). *Do Whatever It Takes* — Olympic Runners (RCA). *Shame* — Evelyn 'Champagne' King (RCA). *You*

Should Be Dancing — Bee Gees (RSO). *Gimme Your Lovin'* — Atlantic Starr (A&M). *Disco To Go* — Brides Of Funkenstein (Atlantic). *Boogie Oogie Oogie* — Taste of Honey (Capitol). *Rumour Has It* — Donna Summer (Casablanca).

DISCOMIX

Loud, commercial 12" singles introduced to a reggae audience during mid-1977 and, by the end of the same year, the most potent, salesworthy items on the UK market, eclipsing both ordinary 7" singles and LPs in their popularity.

Normal feature of a discomix is a straight singing track segueing into a toast or dub of the same rhythm, although this can be extended to include vocal, toast of the vocal, concluding with a dub of the toast. Other titles like *Sons of Jah's Save The Children* and *Tradition's Alternative 3* provided room for experimentation of a more complex nature within the framework.

Most popular, however, were the standard vocal efforts — usually culled from Studio One originals — featuring the modern barking DJ styles of toasters like Trinity, Ranking Trevor, Clint Eastwood and Prince Mohammed, all of whom built their respective reputations with the arrival of the discomix.

Currently, the format dictates the reggae market. In spite of its seemingly prohibitive cost (some pre discomixes retail for as much as £4.50), as well as providing easily-accessible fodder for the lazier and more commercial sound-systems that have sprung up within the past year.

Recommended: *Yabby You & Trinity* — *Chant Down Babylon Kingdom* (Vivian Jackson '77). *Jayes & Ranking Trevor* — *Truly Different* '77. *The Gladiators* — *Pocket Money* (Virgin '77). *Sons Of Jah & Ranking Reuben* — *Save The Children/Modern Day Slavery* (Natty Congo '78). *Trevor Hartley & U Brown* — *Selassie I/Skip Away* (Matumbi Music Corp '78). *Errol Dunkley & Jah Strich* — *Hard Luck Story/To Hell And Forward* (Anies '78). *King Sounds & Trinity* — *Spend One Night In A Babylon* (Grove '78). *Gene Rondo & Militant Barry* — *Jah Jah Workers* (Burning Sounds '78).



Joseph Stevens

Wilko Johnson (now in The Solid Senders) and Lee Brilleaux (now in The Brewers Arms)

DOCTOR FEELGOOD

Lee Brilleaux—lead vocals, harp, slide guitar. **John Mayo**—lead guitar. **John B. Sparks**—bass. **The Big Figure**—drums.

'The best local group in the world' is probably the most apposite one-liner ever applied to Dr. Feelgood. In their early days, they were the ultimate pleasant surprise for any casual punter who dropped into London's rock pubs: a stupefyingly mean, tough, raw-edged R&B group playing short, sharp bursts of supercharged rock and roll.

Not only were they musically excellent, but visually charismatic beyond belief. Clad in soiled suits, shirts and ties with haircuts that looked as if they had recently been administered in prison or in one of the nastier sections of the army, they possessed the superb visual dynamic of the interplay between

guitarist Wilko Johnson (during his stay in the band the composer of much of their material), rocketing around the stage like an epileptic robot with a machine gun, and gentleman bruiser vocalist Lee Brilleaux.

The uncompromising 'street' appearance and no-bullshit musical attack predated the first stirrings of Britpunk by a good twenty months, and they were the undisputed catalyst for the present generation of R&B bands (though they never achieved the kind of singles success scored by fellow Canvey Islanders Eddie And The Hot Rods, who began their careers as blatant Feelgoods imitators).

Their first album *Down By The Jetty* was as totally uncompromising as could be expected: largely at Wilko Johnson's instigation, it was recorded in mono (a fact that precluded its release in the US) and featured a black and white

cover. While it captured the sound of the band perfectly, their playing sounded a little subdued and the non-production meant that no attempt was made to compensate for the lack of the band's overwhelming visual presence. *Malpractice*, the follow-up, was less rigid in its approach, but it was the live album *Stupidity* which united the Feelgoods' following and gave them an LP chart-topper.

Relations between Wilko Johnson and the rest of the band had been steadily deteriorating for some time, and when the band went into the studios for the third time to record *Sneakin' Suspicion*, Johnson departed from the ranks under less than amicable circumstances. The album, produced by US soul man Bert de Coteaux, was slicker than customary Feelgoods fare, but still produced neither a hit single nor an American success.

Johnson was replaced by

guitarist John Mayo, and the group rushed out the lacklustre *Be Seeing You* to consolidate their new identity, but without Johnson's presence and material, it seemed as if the Feelgoods had had it. However the evidence of a series of rather unimpressive gigs was belied by an impressive single and album towards the end of '78.

The Feelgoods' energy and appearance — not to mention their ferocious impact — was of vital importance to the emergence of the New Wave, and the current revival of interest in R&B is largely due to the Feelgoods' revitalisation of a music that most fans and musicians had written off as a vehicle for anything more ambitious than public-bar bopping.

Singles: *Roxette* (UA '75). *She Does It Right* (UA '75). *Back In The Night* (UA '76). *Sneakin' Suspicion* (UA '76). *She's A Windup* (UA '77). *Baby Jane* (UA '77). *Down At The Doctors* (UA '78).
Albums: *Down By The Jetty* (UA '75). *Malpractice* (UA '75). *Stupidity* (UA '76). *Sneakin' Suspicion* (UA '76). *Be Seeing You* (UA '77). *Private Practice* (UA '78).

DOLL BY DOLL

Jackie Leven — vocal, guitar. **Jo Shaw** — guitar. **Robin Spreafico** — bass. **Dave The Drummer** — drums.

London band known for their support of the Philadelphia Association, an organisation set up by R. D. Laing to allow people branded insane to lead free lives, Doll By Doll come across as intense individuals pursuing the make-people-think-and-dogs-howl school of latter-day rock terrorism. Just signed to former EMI A&R man Nick Mobbs' newly formed Automatic Records.

THE DOCTORS

Kid Strange—vocals, guitar. **Stoner**—bass. **Peter Di Lemma**—drums.

Launched '75 by former Twiggy manager Justin de Villeneuve and ex-Floyd/Bolan manager Bryan Morrison, totting Velvet-influenced music, grotesque make-up and silly names, some people (principally Kid Strange) would claim The Doctors (formerly Of Madness) to be an influence on early punk rock. This is most unlikely, but they're certainly a better band than the tacky image would suggest.

Their music is a curious depressing brew concocted of Strange's dolorous, quasi-psychodelic songs — very wordy, but often touchingly honest — and the rasping violin of Urban Blitz, who quit the band after completing their most recent album.

Ex-Damned singer Dave Vanian tagged along for a couple of months. Have recently disbanded.

Albums: *Late Night Movies*, *All Night Brainstorms* (Polydor '76). *Fragments Of Emancipation* (Polydor '76). *Sons Of Survival* (Polydor '78).



675000 domes from Pangbourne

DRUGS

Rock music has been inextricably linked with drug (ab)use in the public imagination ever since the mass media discovered the use and existence of cannabis, LSD and assorted psychedelics in the second half of the '60s.

However, cannabis, heroin and cocaine had been in use in jazz circles for some decades and cheap amphetamines had been the principal fuel for the mod era.

Fashions in drug use have changed as the mood of the times (and hence the mood of the music) have undergone assorted modifications and mutations. After the initial psychedelic euphoria of the late '60s when anything and everything seemed feasible and the millennium floated mirage-like just one more toke/tab away, the mood of paranoia and depression that set in after Altamont and the turn of the decade, created an atmosphere too chilly and hostile for the intense openness and vulnerability created by extensive use of acid. The trips went bad and the drugs became more brutal and extreme.

The early '70s saw the upsurge of bass-heavy downer rock, accompanied by the increasing use of zombifying pig drugs of the barbiturate variety: the numbing anaesthetic effect of drinking cheap wine to wash down depressants like Mandrax (in the UK) and quaaludes (in the USA) meshed all too well with the music of bands like Black Sabbath and Grand Funk Railroad. Drugs of the downer variety were also the principle causes of the deaths of musicians like Jimi Hendrix (Mandrax), Janis Joplin (heroin) and Canned Heat's mastermind Al Wilson (quaaludes).

In the meantime, among the wealthier denizens of the musical

fraternity, cocaine and heroin became the vogue drugs: cocaine as a smooth upper that led to paranoia, aggression and ultimate depression when taken to excess (luckily, very few people can afford to take cocaine in excessive quantities) and heroin as the ultimate soothing anaesthetic (leading to addiction, retreat and ultimate paralysis of the personality, not to mention general physical, mental and spiritual degeneration).

In the days when the staple drugs were cannabis and LSD, the kids in the audiences could be fairly sure that they and their heroes had 'their heads in the same place' (or words to that effect), but the unpleasant expensive-hard-drug-chic aura that came off some of the superstar bands was just another alienating factor (The Rolling Stones were among the principal culprits).

With the advent of the new wave, it seemed as if amphetamine sulphate (a massively brutal stimulant in crystalline form usually taken by inhaling or "snorting") was the house drug in much the same way as the psychedelics were to the hippie subculture of a decade before. It was cheap, it was effective and functional (for awhile, anyway: after a few months of concentrated abuse speed became almost as mentally and physically debilitating as heroin); and the mood of aggression, paranoia, furious energy and rage that it created was tailor-made for early punk rock.

Indeed, it now appears that just about every form of contemporary rock music has its 'house drug' (though the hardy perennial cannabis crosses all the boundaries as easily as alcohol).

Amphetamine and alcohol fuel punks and disco kids alike, reggae is virtually inconceivable without marijuana ('erb, ganja...). Psychedelics are by no means extinct (remember 'Operation Julie') and — sadly — neither are barbiturates, tranquilisers, sleepers and their ilk.

Currently, though, the greatest abuse of the latter variety of chemical is not the illicit hedonism of the young rock fan, but the legal, medically sanctioned abuses committed by ordinary housewives (who probably frown upon dope-smoking and would turn their kids in if they caught them with a joint), who are addicted (in the most clinical sense of the word) to uppers and downers prescribed by negligent GPs and subtly promoted and marketed by the *real* 'major pushers' of the world — the giant pharmaceutical corporations.

Other oddball kicks and variation include amyl nitrate (a powerful stimulant used medically to provide a massive jolt to patients whose hearts have stopped), which is popular among the US disco crowd (needless to say, it's incredibly dangerous and could create the very heart attacks that it was originally developed to cure) and animal tranquilisers (used in the early '70s in a manner so mindless as to make the use of Mandrax seem almost healthy and civilised) like Angel Dust.

Under the influence of the Carter administration, many American states have 'decriminalised' the use and possession of small quantities of marijuana to the extent that a dope bust is now no more serious a matter than a parking ticket. Considering the massive electoral appeal of repressive legislation (particularly in matters relating to sex and drugs), it seems highly unlikely

that an equivalent adoption of less punitive attitudes could prevail in the UK within the foreseeable future.

DUB

Reggae instrumental style that grew out of Jamaican practice of using the 'B' side of singles for a 'version' of the top singing side minus the vocals. Sound system DJs could then add their own talking and exhortations to their audience.

By the early '70s King Tubby, an electrical wizard who built and operated sound systems, had started to distort discs with home-built treble, echo and distortion devices on his system, this proving a great attraction. From there it was a short step to studios recording 'versions' with special effects, dropping out not only the vocals but passages of other instruments, leaving a heavily boosted bass and drums on their own — reggae 'rydims' became minimalist.

More complex studio technology gave Jamaican engineers and producers unfettered by preconceived notions of studio 'sophistication' the chance to develop their instrumental versions — by now called the dub side — to new heights of weirdness and neo-psychedelic variety, the rydim always forming the backbone of the piece.

The style has continued to develop and currently still holds as great an attraction as it ever has. Rock caught onto the idea around '77, and 'rock dub' seems an inevitable and intriguing development. Generation X did a dub side to their *Wild Youth* single, co-opting some of the gimmicky special dub effects that rock tastes favour to the simply elegantly stated and subtly

IAN DURY & THE BLOCKHEADS

Ian Dury—vocals. Chas Jankel—guitar. John Turnbull—guitar. Mickey Gallagher—keyboards. Davey Payne—sax. Norman Watt-Roy—bass. Charley Charles—drums.

EMBATTLED but not bitter, sassy but not cynical, Mr. Ian Dury's "comeback" is as remarkable as it is entirely welcome—the beauties must not be brief this time around.

After several frustratingly thin years with the fondly remembered Kilburn And The High Roads, Dury bounced back so fit, fat and fractious with his Blockheads that the *New Boots And Panties!!* album has clung in the charts longer than anything else this year, excepting the inevitable Abba. Rarely has such an uncompromising work been so justly rewarded.

New Boots And Panties!! (references to the requisite Dr. Martens and a predilection for crotchless unmentionables) places

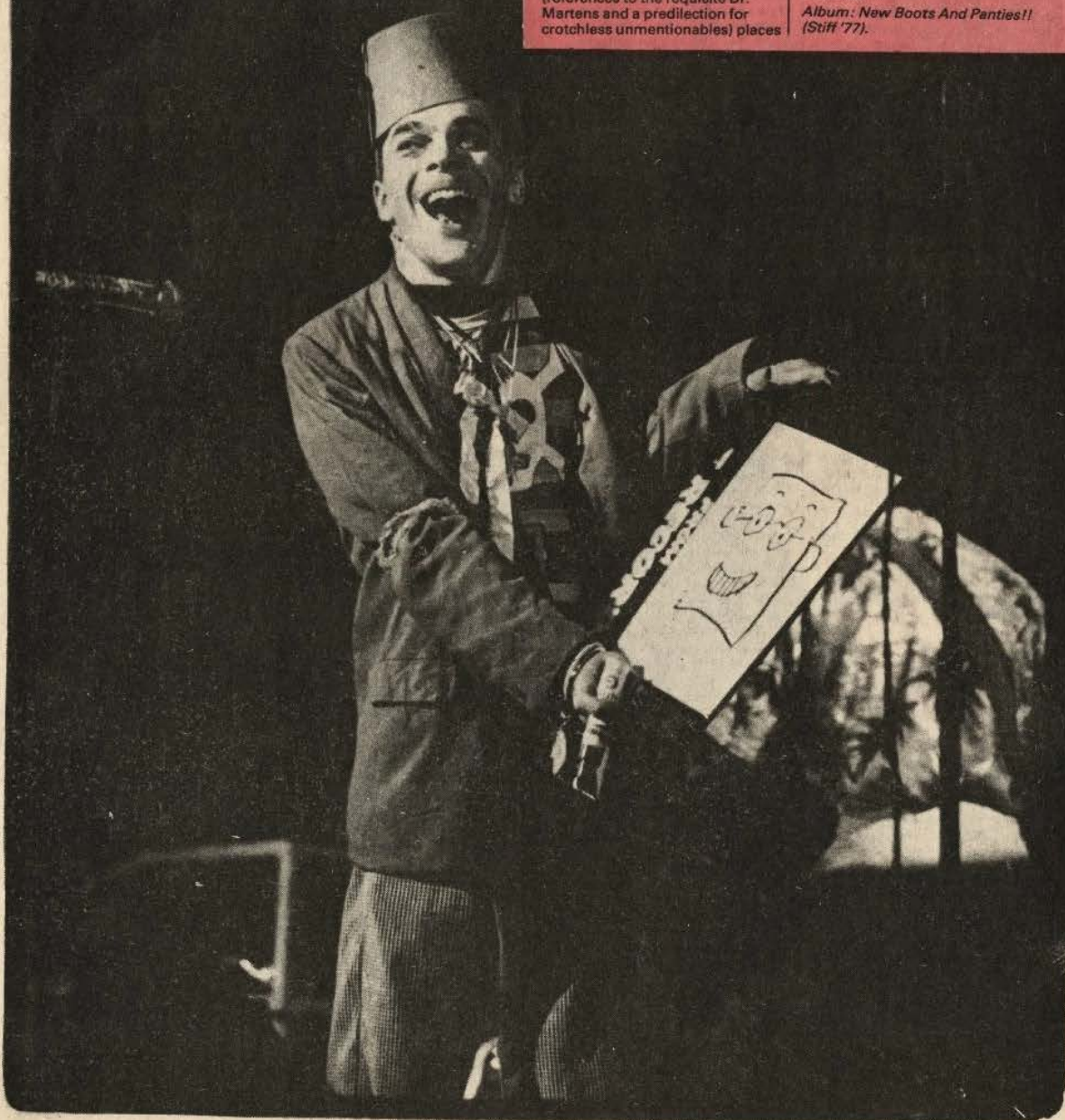
Dury's Cockney fixations—principally women, blockheads and his father, which covers just about everyone—and ambiguous characters like Clever Trevor and Billericay Dickie in a seductive, unique rock environment.

Dury's word-mongering, his facility with outrageous rhyme ('hyena' with 'obscener'), is lent powerful persuasion when allied to music (particularly Chas Jankel's) which is often as redolent of decrepit Music Hall as it is true to the spirit of rock and roll (*Billericay Dickie*, *Razzle In My Pocket*, the *Sex And Drugs And Rock And Roll* anthem).

Struck down by polio when seven, Dury has such humour and strength of character that he would be a star if he were selling squashy tomatoes.

Singles: Sex And Drugs And Rock And Roll (Stiff '77). *Sweet Gene Vincent* (Stiff '77). *What A Waste* (Stiff '78).

Album: New Boots And Panties!! (Stiff '77).



BOB DYLAN

Like those other king-pins from the old guard (The Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan's last few years have witnessed a hiatus of personal grief and artistic backstabbing. In 1977, Dylan was bogged down in a heartrending series of divorce proceedings whilst his main creative passion — the exhaustive making of his first film, the 4-hour long *Renaldo and Clara*, when completed and screened in early '78 was greeted with a brutal thumbs-down from the critics.

In defiance of these circumstances, Dylan chose to tour Europe (and later in September, the US) with a professional unit — Ian Wallace on drums, Alan Pasqua on keyboards, Jerry Scheff on bass, Billy Cross on lead guitar, Steve Sales on guitar and David Mansfield on violin — unlike his previous shambling Rolling Thunder troupe. With the aforementioned collective, Dylan recorded *Street Legal*, an album that successfully recreated the smoky near-gothic funk of his positively 4th Street sound but with added accompaniments like Steve Douglas' gritty sax and a wailing girl trio evidently modelled on Bob Marley's I Threes.

His London concerts and appearances at Blackbushe in '78 showed a mature and powerful performer able to draw on a prolific catalogue of modern classics spanning everything from virgilio protest songs to complex excursions into personal psychosis, all given a musical face-lift that sometimes elevated the works to new heights and elsewhere presented familiar messages in new guise.

Though some critics still doubt the nature of his commitment, pointing to the vast sums of money involved in his '78 world tour and calling his new music into question, Dylan remains a mysterious and compelling figure and one of the few artists to enter rock and roll middle age with any semblance of dignity.

Singles: Hurricane (CBS '76). *Baby Stop Crying* (CBS '78). **Albums:** *Blood On The Tracks* (CBS '75). *Desire* (CBS '76). *Hair* (CBS '77). *Street Legal* '78).



EATER

Andy Blade—vocals. **Brian Chavette**—guitar. **Phil Rowland**—drums. **Ian Woodcock**—bass.

In another age, a band fresh from the garage with an average age of 15 would have had their fame confined to the usual circle of friends, family and the more impressionable members of the local Girl Guides troupe.

Eater, however, appeared in 1979 at the Apex of initial media interest in punk rock and, as such, attracted considerably more interest than their immature mediocrity warranted. But with lack lustre cover versions of songs like David Bowie's 'Queen Bitch' and Alice Cooper's 'Eighteen' (changed, as if you couldn't guess, to 'Fifteen') plus their own

uninspired punklet tirades, once the early furore had passed Eater were stranded on the interminable circuit of small club gigs.

Eater approached young age wondering if they shouldn't have taken those apprenticeships after all.

Singles: *Thinking Of The USA* (The Label '77). *Outside View* (The Label '77). *Look A Up* (The Label '77). *Get Your Ya-Yes Out* (The Label '78). **Album:** *The Album* (The Label '77).

ED BANGER

Surfaced in mid-'77 as vocalist with Ed Banger and the Nosebleeds, an underwhelming as their name suggest. Cut the unwieldy, forgettable *Ain't Birl To No Music School* with true bandwagon grace, discreetly splitting towards the end of the year. In '78 two members helped form the contrived Gira, the rest formed the basis of a new Nosebleeds fronted by minor legend Steve Morrison.

Ed Banger could be found lonely, improvising with a guitar, leaning towards the ludicrously comic. Eventually he used Rabid sessionmen, Group Therapy, for live performances of uncontrollable, unforgiving wrecklessness, and the single *Kinell Tommy*, an oddball easy-listening football anthem. Currently searching for new name, which could signal commercial breakthrough.

Singles: (with Nosebleeds) *Ain't Birl To No Music School* (Rabid '77). (with Group Therapy) *Kinell Tommy* (Rabid '78).

EDDIE AND THE HOT RODS

Barrie Master—vocals. **Dave Higgs**—guitar, vocals. **Graeme Douglas**—guitar, vocals. **Paul Gray**—bass, vocals. **Steve Nicol**—drums.

Originated alongside the Canvey Island / Southend pub rock boom, first came to notice playing support to the Kursed Flyers. Originally included harp player Lew Lewis until he quit to form his own band.

Like Dr. Feelgood, the Rods' initial performances and recordings had a ferocious speed rush which predated punk / new wave and was an obvious influence on the emergent new music. In early '78 the Rods and Pistols ran a long standing feud — fights, broken equipment — but in '78 the Oil City boys had the ascendancy. *Writing On The Wall* and *Woolly Bully* were a breath of fresh air, streamlined, foot-shaking hard pop. A live EP confirmed their status as a big drawing live band and soon their name was linked with Pete Townshend and ex-Roxy sex man Andy Mackay, though they stayed with avengell, manager and songwriter Ed Hollis.

Their album *Teenage Depression* was a fair indication of band potential but grew stale after the initial buzz. Aside from the title track (a singles hit), a succinct prediction about the maidie negative side of punk, the numbers were mostly old stage favourites and lacked spontaneity.

As punk gained momentum the Rods were accused of many failings. They refused to conform to new wave fashions, had a



A Touch of Salt

dedicated following of Rods lookalikes anyway, played on prestige tours and admitted they were interested in the money.

The Rods never quite recovered their early thrust with the charts or the press. In '77 they added ex-Kursed Flyer Graeme Douglas on guitar and the results were encouraging. The second album *Life On The Line* showed Higgs maturing as a writer and player while the Douglas sound added to Hollis' production technique.

Singles: *Writing On The Wall* (Island '76). *Woolly Bully* (Island '76). *Teenage Depression* (Island '76). *I Might Be Lying* (Island '77). *Do Anything You Wanna Do* (Island '77). *Till The Night Is Gone* (W/Rob Tyner) (Island '77). *Quit This Town* (Island '78). *Life On The Line* (Island '78). **Albums:** *Teenage Depression* (Island '77). *Life On The Line* (Island '78). *EPs:* *Live At The Marquee* (Island '76). *At The Sound Of Speed* (Island '77).

DAVE EDMUNDS

STUDIO whizz-kid and dedicated upholder of long extinct musical forms, Dave Edmunds has been playing in bands for longer than he dare think about. In '68 with Love Sculpture he had his first hit, *Sabra Dance*, retiring soon after to his native Wales to build Rockfield studio with Kingsley Ward. The next half dozen years were spent recreating the sound of Sun, Chess and Phil Spector records and creating a near legend, which would surface occasionally under its own name (in '70 *I Hear You Knocking*, in '72 *Baby I Love You*, in '73 *Born To Be With You* and as producer for others (Brinsley Schwarz, Deke Leonard, Ducks Deluxe, Shakin' Stevens and the Sunsets, Del Shannon and The Flamin' Groovies). In '74 he wrote music far and had a cameo part in David Essex's *Stardust* movie, a year later he released his second solo album, and the year after that began reprieve with a benefit gig at the Hope & Anchor that also featured Nick Lowe and Ian Dury. Always a bashful presence on

stage, he currently enjoys modest success with Rockpile, co-led by his songwriting companion of long standing, Nick Lowe, and complemented by Terry Williams (drums) and Billy Bremner (guitar). Together they purvey a melting pot of Edmunds' diverse rock 'n' roll and country forms with wit and a vengeance.

Albums: *Dave Edmunds Rockpile* (RCA/Concord '78). *Subtle As A Flying Mallet* (RCA Rockfield '75). *Geri* (Swan Song '77). *Track On Wax* (Swan Song '78).

Singles: *Here Comes The Weekend* (Swan Song '78). *New York's A Lonely Town* (Island '76). *I Know The Bridge* (Swan Song '77). *Ju Ju Man* (Swan Song '78).

BRIAN ENO

Ever since his untimely but inevitable departure from Roxy Music, Brian Eno has continued to cast himself as rock's most compleat (sic) conceptualist and polymath.

His own solo recordings have been erratic in quality. Largely prescribed by the random routines of his Oblique Strategies, they've repeatedly veered between the satisfyingly novel and the infuriatingly avowed.

An agreeably verbose interviewee, Eno seems really fascinated by 'systems' (of thought, of method, etc) for their own sake, and appears largely unable to grasp the wider implications of many of the concepts he so eagerly embraces.

The incoherence of *Before And After Science*, his most recent solo album, seems to underline his failure to put his dabblings in the currently fashionable areas of soft science and technology to any dynamic use. Similarly, the artistic disappointments of his praiseworthy attempt to set up an experimentalist outlet in Obscure Records cast doubt on Eno's purported interest in genuinely radical music; the majority of the Obscure catalogue has to date



Chalkie Davies

been pointedly unadventurous (muzak for minds?). That said, his forthcoming *Music For Films* represents the most convincing aspect of his solo work, the album comprising unpretentiously atmospheric mood pieces, a focus in which Eno excels.

Meanwhile his work with Bowie on both *Low* and *Heroes* indicate that he operates best as a catalyst, supporting and servicing rather than controlling any artistic undertaking — and much the same could be said of his involvements in record production.

'77). *801 Live* (Polydor '76). As producer: Talking Heads — *More Songs About Buildings And Food* (Sire '78). Devo — *Q. Are We Not Men? A. We Are Devo* (Virgin '78).

Solo albums: *Another Green World* (Polydor '75). *Discreet Music* (Obscure '75). *Before And After Science* (Polydor '78). *Music For Films* (Polydor '78).

With Robert Fripp: *No Pussyfooting* (Polydor '73). *Evening Star* (Polydor '75). With Cluster: *Cluster And Eno* (Sky Import '78). As collaborator: David Bowie—*Low*; *Heroes* (RCA

THE EXTRAS

John Lake—vocals. Robin Markin—keyboard, vocals. Simon Anderson—guitar. Andy Quick—sax. Rob Allen—bass. Mark Anderson—drums.

Formed April 1977 and single-handedly responsible, through a prodigious number of free gigs, for the rejuvenation of the Sheffield music scene in '77. Early style heavily influenced by Roxy/Bowie. Replacement of original drummer Cliff Face with jazz-rock Anderson enabled more imaginative arrangements to be undertaken and 'glam' tag to be dropped. Have yet to receive due recognition. Present line-up now resident in London.



FABULOUS POODLES

Tony De Meur—vocals, guitar. Bobby Valentino—violin, mandolin, voice. Ritchie Robinson—bass. Bryn Burrows—drums.

A true dead-end. Hardworking London humour quartet, with wily wit and surprising musical incision. Their act buckles under the weight of shameless allusions to teenage growth and rock'n'roll myth, frontperson De Meur's details of absurdity at times more touching than apparent. Hopelessly futureless, their act and records relying on notoriously impermanent humour and beat, with no socially redeeming factors, the highspots of their career have been incongruously touring with U.K. and Meatloaf, the lowspot signing with Pye.

Albums: *The Fabulous Poodles* (Pye '78). *Unable* (Pye '78).

THE FALL

Mark E. Smith—vocals. Martin Bramah—guitar. Marc Riley—bass. Yvonne Paulette—keyboards. Karl Burns—drums.

FORMED Manchester 1976 by Smith, Bramah, and bass player Tony Friel (who went on to play with Howard Devoto's Magazine and The Passage). Harsh, commendably unadorned; at present undeveloped. Torn between moral resolve and the paraphernalia of a medium which ultimately they despise, they could

prove — with ATV and Slits — to be strict fulfillment of the original promise and premises of New Wave.

Singles: *Bingo Master's Breakout* EP (Step Forward Records '78). Albums: *The Fall* (1977 line-up) contribute two tracks to *Live At The Electric Circus* (Virgin '78).

FANZINES

A fanzine must be passionate, hectic, glorious and inconsequential. It can then either be a mirror to the times or a repository for them. The best fanzines are all of these things at once.

Times was when fanzines were the domain of dedicated archivist, store-houses of trivial information on minor cult figures. A few, like *Teenage Wasteland Gazette* and *Back Door man*, got hold of a set of rock'n'roll ideals and went in for drunken, eager editorialising. The majority, the *Bomps* and *Zigzags*, stayed in their arid, cloistered worlds until such time as reality looked a bit more promising. Others, notably *New York Rocker* and *Trouser Press*, struck a balance, on the one hand factual, discursive, on the other, impish, irreverent.

Then early in '76 a few copies of John Holstrom's *Punk* drifted across the transatlantic grapevine, a caricature of a punk lifestyle myth about to be popularised by The Ramones. It was at first both seditious and funny, later only funny, and finally not even that any more.

By the end of the year the axis had shifted some 3000 miles and a young bank clerk from Deptford, inspired by the Ramones debut and the Pistols' nationwide catharsis, took a few sheets of paper, scrawled on them, copied them, stapled them and then sold them at the next gig he went to.

Mark Perry's *Sniffin Glue* implored its readers to action, to translate some of this new-found energy themselves. It inspired a few bands but more directly spawned the xerox generation of fanzines. Soon a gig wasn't a gig without somebody accosting you with their coarse, excitable home-grown literature. These fanzines were chronicles of atmosphere rather than event, sometimes stirring and subversive, often more form than content. The names were like graffiti serving notice of intention: *48 Thrills*, *London's Burning*, *Garageland*, *Ripped & Torn* amongst many.

As with a lot of the bands, so with the fanzines. Their energy dissipated, they became disillusioned, clinging to past glories or just giving up and going home. The death-knell came just in time for the Christmas '78 market: a glossy, coffee-table edition of the 'best' of *Sniffin Glue*, available at W. H. Smiths and other leading bookstores.

Meanwhile the perennial *Zigzag* picked up a new lease of life from the fanzine style and the established U.S. 'zines grew steadily, San Francisco's *Search & Destroy* adding to their ranks.

But if the boom days are over the idiom is still there to be used. For positive information look no further than Ohio's *Teenage Rampage*, Scotland's *Next Big Thing* and Ireland's *Heat*. The titles alone are poetry.

**DO NOT DELAY
MORTUARY
VEHICLE**

FASHION

MADE BY
Slave Labour

BRYAN FERRY

What do you do when you're the leader of the most important band to have emerged from the glitzy early '70s when the combo falls apart at its sequined seams? Bryan Ferry became just another twee solo singer, bastardizing Otis Redding classics with Twiggy and doing dumb duets with Cilla Black and her ilk (any half-baked female cabaret singer with her own TV show, in fact).

After his initial flirtation with the prime-time cathode tube, Ferry then took to recording mawkish nostalgia albums; his syrupy sentimentality that had been kept in check within the confines of Roxy Music now being permitted to run riot.

But, after lengthy periods of retirement in Los Angeles and then Switzerland, Ferry returned in the summer of '78 with the superb, self-written single *Sign Of The Times* and an erratic but sometimes moving album proving there was still some life left extant in the ol' Lounge Lizard.

At the time of writing Roxy Music had reformed and were rehearsing.

Singles: Let's Stick Together EP (Island '76). What Goes On? (Polydor '78). Sign Of The Times (Polydor '78).

Albums: In Your Mind (Polydor '77). Let's Stick Together (Polydor '77). The Bride Stripped Bare (Polydor '78).

PATRIK FITZGERALD

The first (and only) folk-punk artiste, this acoustic-toting East End poet injected more humour, verve and trenchant social comment into his songs than most punky-wavers could muster on their first few albums.

Banging And Shouting documented New Wave love

before anyone had heard of Jilted John; *The Back Street Boys* documented captured the terror of being outnumbered and followed down a midnight alley; *Lewisham* was among the most savage attacks on the National Front and *She's Growing Up A Trendy Like All The Others* was about the punkette next door growing up wrong — bitter, hilarious, and deftly accurate, a punked-out Modern World Giga.

Patrik Fitzgerald is a weird and wonderful amalgamation of Jilted John, Tom Robinson and Bob Dylan before he got fat. Mesmerizing.

Singles: Safety Pin Stuck In My Heart EP (Small Wonder '78). Back Street Boys EP (Small Wonder '78).

FLAMIN GROOVIES

Cyril Jordan—guitar, vocals. Chris Wilson—guitar, vocals. George Alexander—bass, vocals. Mike Wilhelm—guitar. David Wright—drums.

Formed in California's Bay Area in '65 as The Chosen Few, though with only Jordan and Alexander left from original line-up, the Groovies have stayed doggedly true to their Anglophile R&B beginnings. With a handful of cult classics to their name (notably *Teenage Head* and French *Grease* EP) the current band minus

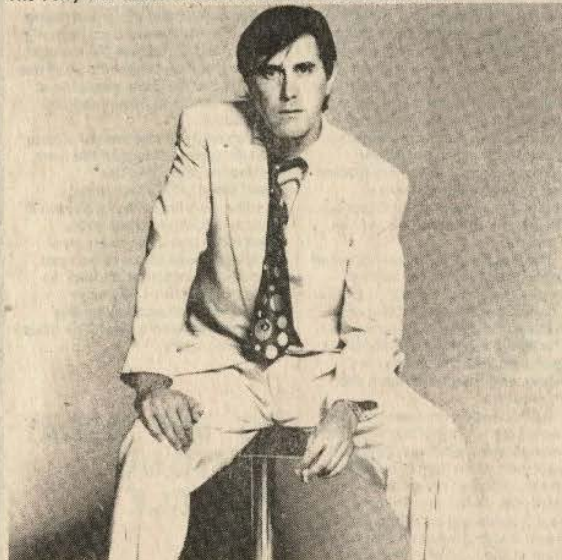
ex-Charlatan Mike Wilhelm cut *Shake Some Action* with producer Dave Edmunds in '76, and appeared at Roundhouse supported by fledglings Ramones. Despite the frozen Merseybeat aura, they embodied the back-to-basics currents that were then crackling in the air.

Live they were often inspirational, on disc rarely. Success continues to elude them, but they remain utterly diehard.

Singles: Sneakers EP (Snazz '69). Slow Death (UA '72). Teenage Head EP (Kama Sutra '71). Grease EP (Skydog '75). You Tore Me Down (Bomp '76).

Albums: Shake Some Action (Sire '76). Now (Sire '78).

The Ferry will travel in both directions at the same time



FLEET STREET

Generally speaking, the attitude of the popular press towards modern rock music has been regrettably narrow-minded.

Its basic policy has been to treat any major stylistic innovation (particularly when connected with an upsurge of cultural and social dissidence, like the hippies in '67 or the punks in '66) with horror and contempt. If, after a certain period of time has elapsed, the public has demonstrated a less hysterical attitude towards the new music and the new style and taken some of its practitioners into charts and hearts, the papers will then gradually change horses in midstream and lavish much space (if little understanding) on such figures, be they Hugh Cornwell or Ian Dury.

The 'quality' papers generally possess a far greater cultural and intellectual sophistication, and rarely sink to the kind of censorious bellowing beloved of the *Daily Express*, *Sun* or *News Of The World*. In *The Observer* or *The Guardian*, you will find a far more informed and sympathetic commentary, but it is invariably presented in such a manner as to reassure their readers that what's going on is nothing to do with them. However, the detachment of the quality papers is still preferable to the hysterical rabble-rousing or mealy-mouthed patronising of the tabloids.

FOOTBALL



FRANCE

Traditionally something of an arid zone for rock music, with few bands of note to its cultural name, the new wave has brought changes. These days France has groups — modern groups, many of whom sprang into existence after the initial powersurge of punk had been quelled. 1978 saw the emergence of a determinedly 'modern' movement of young Parisian artists, illustrators and musicians, ready to forget about their barren rock and roll past — or rather accept it — and step forward into the future. Groups include *Marie Et Les Garçons* (*Mary And The Boys*) who play Disco Punk as on recent single *Re Bop*. *The Brigitte Bardots* have never played a gig, never

rehearsed, never recorded though with a strong cult following in Paris. Others include *Starshooter*, *Marquis De Sade*, *Asphalt Jungle*, *Henry S Flesh*, *Stinky Toys*.



Evan Parker — a good blow job

FREE MUSIC

A loose term for 'anonymous' movement of positive, radical, contradictory, indulgent, prejudiced, open-minded musicians, whose actions, arguments, theories, yearnings can be chronicled in *Music* magazine, put together by a cross-selection of the musicians themselves, read by the musicians themselves, and indicative of the involuntary incest and isolation of the music. *Musics*, up to its eighteenth issue, is available from 42 Gloucester Avenue, London NW1 and despite inevitable faults the best (useful, spiteful, provocative) way to ease into this enormous ocean.

Improvising musicians roots are often straight jazz or classical, their closest relations jazz, modern classical, experimental, ethnic: the strands often overlap. Most of the musicians need day jobs to finance their exploration. Free musicians need to constantly re-think. Free musicians never agree. It is music of action.

Despite itself it remains elitist. It isn't easy music to listen to, but is only as hard as Captain Beefheart, Talking Heads, Pere Ubu, Abba, Fleetwood Mac and can often be quite beautiful. It can be anything.

Record releases and national performances are numerous, but overlooked by the weeklies. It would be interesting to see how the effect of attention on free music activity would change and distort the music and its practitioners. Maybe groups like *Cabaret Voltaire*, *The Passage*, *This Heat* and *Alternative TV* can drag an audience towards the evolving, involving improvisation scene. The clash could be shocking.

Albums: The Incus label offers albums by combinations of musicians like Derek Bailey, Evan Parker, Steve Lacy, John Stevens, Nigel Smith, Tony Oxley, Barry Guy, Antony Braxton, often under the moniker Company or Spontaneous Music Ensemble. Ogun, Ictus, Bead, Vinyl are all labels producing well packaged records of improvised music. Musics regularly lists new releases and live performances (usually inexpensive).

Valerie Wilmer



Generation X: Clone chromosome rock meets the XYZ Factor.

Shelia Rock

PETER GABRIEL

In May '75 Peter Gabriel rejected the might of the '70s rock machine by quitting Genesis, the group he'd fronted since their emergence in the late '60s. Genesis were about to become one of the decade's biggest money-spinners, so Gabriel's move was hardly a case of deserting the sinking ship.

In creative terms his courage has paid dividends, but while Gabriel's drawing power as a live performer is considerable, he has yet to sell records on a large scale. Well over a year after its release, his first solo single "Solsbury Hill" — in part an outline of why he left Genesis — remains his only hit.

Musically he's travelled a long way from Genesis's lengthy, grandiose keyboard-drenched work-outs and few of the songs on his two albums exceed four minutes. Yet Gabriel's work has lost none of its ingenuity, and never lapses into the whimsicality of Genesis. A gifted melody and lyric writer and always innovative on stage, Gabriel is an intelligent and stimulating force in late '70s rock. One feels he's only just begun.

Singles: *Solsbury Hill* (Charisma '77), *Modern Love* (Charisma '77), *D.I.Y.* (Charisma '78).
Albums: *Peter Gabriel* (Charisma '77), *Peter Gabriel* (Charisma '78).

GANG OF FOUR

Andy Gill—guitar. John King—vocals. Hugo Burnham—drums. Dave Allen—bass.

Punk-inspired and university-bred, the Gang Of Four were one of the earliest new bands operative in the Leeds area, and for a time ran the first local new wave venue. Currently the cause of much favourable noise for their hard and sassy musical approach and enlivening mental outlook.

Single: *Damaged Goods* (Fast Product '78).



GENERATION X

Billy Idol—vocals. Tony James—bass. Derwood—guitar. Mark Laff—drums.

By the autumn of 1976 Tony James was frustrated in his attempts to get London SS off the ground with one Mick Jones, later of The Clash.

Following an initial contact through a music press ad he bumped into Sussex University

English scholar Billy Idol (nee William Broad) in London's West End. The pair disappeared into a cinema together to talk and by the end of the first feature it was decided that Idol — already one of the 'Bromley Contingent' of Pistols fame — should leave university and join up on guitar with James in Chelsea, a group that also featured Gene October on vocals and John Towe on drums.

By December '76 October had left the other members of the band and taken the name with him. With Derwood (nee Bob Andrews) on guitar — Idol had discovered him playing in a Fulham youth club — the others renamed the outfit Generation X, after a tacky '60s paperback study of swinging London. That month they played their first gig, supporting The Stranglers at the Nashville.

Later they were the first band to play the Covent Garden Roxy before a lengthy lay-off early '77 as they searched for a drummer to replace Towe, who had been deemed unsatisfactory. In May Subway Sect drummer Mark Laff joined the band.

Signed in summer '77 to Chrysalis Records, Gen X quickly released their first '45, *Your Generation*, a minor hit that was followed by two more singles that just failed to crack the Top Thirty, *Wild Youth* (featuring the experimental — for a bunch of white rockers, anyway — *Wild Dub* on the flip) and *Ready Steady Go*, a track lifted from their first album, which, produced by Stranglers' producer Martin Rushent, was released in April '78.

Although frequently condemned

as poseurs — early on in the band's career Idol's teen heartthrob cute looks gained the band photo spreads in the likes of *Pink* — Generation X, and particularly the songwriting team of Idol and James, are a talented team with much of their potential unrealised.

Singles: *Your Generation* (Chrysalis '77), *Wild Youth* (Chrysalis '77), *Ready Steady Go* (Chrysalis '78).
Albums: *Generation X* (Chrysalis '78).

GLORIA MUNDI

Eddie Maelov—vocals. Sunshine—keyboards, vocals. Beethoven—guitar. c.c.—sax. Mike Nicholls—drums. Ice-Bass.

Product of the 'campus' university consciousness, Gloria Mundi have undoubtedly always been 'into' modern theatre representation of urban neurosis, sexual insecurity, etc and it's easy to question how they have been dropped into the new wave lucky dip bag. More in common with group-therapy, street theatre, blah blah, they inspire love or hate, period, with very heavy stage presentation and... well, their debut album *I, Individual* sounds like a necessarily acute picture of your modern life or an oppressively clichéd R D Laing cut-up rip off.

1979 nervous breakdown??? Convenient headache? Practising schizophrenics.

Single: *Fight Back* (RCA '78). **Gloria Mundi** (RCA '78).
Album: *I, Individual* (RCA '78).

DAVE GOODMAN

The first producer of The Sex Pistols and their close associate since their third gig supporting the 101ers at The Nashville. He's without doubt the most sympathetic producer the Pistols ever had, being responsible for the raw, definitive versions of the songs that appeared on the *Snunk* bootleg, although his recording methods were considered too primitive for the Pistols' record companies and Chris Thomas sanitised the band for mass-consumption on *Anarchy* and *Bollocks*.

Goodman is head of The Label record company and his work has ranged from the laudable to the laughable — apart from the Pistols he has also produced Ester and the pathetic *Moors Murderers*. *Free Myra Hindley* while his most recent recording is Paul Cook and Steve Jones under the guise of David G. & Friends on the commendable documentation of Liddle Towers' death *Justifiable Homicide*.

ROBERT GORDON

First gained attention as front man with minor league New York punkers Tuff Darts (featured on CBGB's compilation), though it wasn't until he switched direction from '70s rock to the original '50s brand that he enjoyed any real measure of popularity.

With a new hairstyle, veteran rock guitarist Link Wray (with whom he shared co-billing) and producer Richard Gottschler, Gordon set about revamping '50s American rockabilly material like *Red Hot and Flyin'*, *Saucers Rock & Roll* with a certain degree of empathy on his debut album. Despite a commendable interpretation of Jack Scott's *The Way I Walk*, the second Gordon-Wray album lacked both humour and the primitive urgency invariably associated with his chosen genre.

Gordon recently severed his partnership with Wray and is believed to be collaborating with British guitarist Chris Spedding.

Albums: *Robert Gordon with Link Wray* (Private Stock '77), *Fresh Fish Special* (Private Stock '78).

THE GORILLAS

Jesse Hector—vocal, guitar, Alan Butler—bass, Gary Anderson—drums.

As the Hammersmith Gorillas, this surrogate Mod group cut a rework of The Kinks' *You Really Got Me* (Penny Farthing) in 1974: a minor continental hit. Nothing more was heard of the group until late '76 when as The Gorillas (featuring new drummer Matt McIntyre) they cut idiosyncratic Small Faces-derived singles like *She's My Gal* and *Gatecrasher* for Chiswick.

Despite Hector's enthusiastic self-promotion as The Next Big Thing, The Gorillas' blueprint for world domination was short-circuited. Then, with Anderson reinstated in the line-up, The Gorillas recorded a debut album and again insisted that they'd be the first big band of the '80s. Meanwhile, the world holds its breath.

Singles: *You Really Got Me*

(Raw reissue '78) *She's My Gal* (Chiswick '78), *Gatecrasher* (Chiswick '78), *It's My Life* (Raw '77). **Albums:** *Message To The World* (Raw '78).

GRUPPO SPORTIVO

Peter Callacher—keyboards, Meike Touwe—vocals, Hans Vanderburg—guitar, vocals, Josee Van Iersel—vocals, Max Mollinger—drums, Eric Wehnmeyer—bass.

The Dutch band with the Italian name ('Sports Group') with a '50s Amerika Trash Aesthetic. A pop group, Gruppo Sportivo, no more and no less. Their music is infectious though highly derivative, and their satirical lyrics range from the hilarious *I Shot My Manager* to the insomnia-curing and dire *Beep Beep Love*. Perhaps their japes lose something in translation.

Singles: *I Shot My Manager* (Epic '78), *Beep Beep Love* (Epic '78). **Album:** *10 Mistakes* (Epic '78).

H

PETER HAMMILL

Now that the reformed Van Der Graaf (Generator) have again parted ways, Peter Hammill's solo career remains the sole point of contact for those addicted to his and the band's fatalistic definition of rock music.

An incorrigibly self-obsessed songwriter, Hammill continues to explore a stock iconography (isolation, love lost, rarely found, desperation, sex and God confused, rarely separated, etc). Despite frequent lapses into unbelievable self-indulgence, Hammill's output remains oddly attractive, if only for its dogged stoicism. His most recent *The Future Now* shows he has finally come to terms with the late '70s.

Solo albums: *The Silent Corner And The Empty Stage* ('74), *Nadir's Big Chance* ('75), *Over* ('77), *The Future Now* ('78), *All* (Charisma).

With Van Der Graaf: *Pawn Hearts* ('71), *Goodbluff* ('75), *The Quiet Zone/The Pleasure Dome* ('77), *All* (Charisma).

HEAVY METAL

Whatever happened to Heavy Metal? Like the good dinosaur it is, its body just got more and more flabby, it gave up eating meat, and — most important — its brain got progressively smaller until it simply vanished in a puff of blue smoke. The body lives on, headless and useless, obsolete, an anachronism — but the brain ... mourn for that.

Back to 1976. Ignoring heavy metal UK for the moment (it never had a brain anyway), look at the States.

Aerosmith released their masterpiece of swank n' sass *Rocks*. Boston suddenly appeared out of Tom Scholz's cellar with a debut album of extraordinary power and grace and their classic single *More Than A Feeling*. *Blue Oyster Cult* had already wrapped

up their cataclysmic live show with *On Your Feet Or On Your Knees* and were striking off into sublime territories with *Agents Of Fortune* and the deathless *Don't Fear The Reaper*. Best of all, Starz were about to put out almost the perfect heavy metal concept album, *Violation* — a record crackling with neat ideas, scything melodies and Jack Douglas's most brutal production ever.

And that was just the good groups! Elsewhere, even the shyesters were on form — Kiss relentlessly pursuing their path to superherodom, matched in more human style by Ted Nugent.

Others — Derringer, Rush, Frank Marino — loomed on the horizon, form relatively unknown, promise high.

So what went wrong? Nothing tangible — just a communal failure of inspiration.

Aerosmith's 1977 offering, *Draw The Line*, was a mess — albeit relieved by occasional sparks of magic. (As for their involvements with Sgt Pucker, the less said the better.) Boston took nearly two years to come up with their second album, and it was a turkey. The Cult just sounded washed out on *Spectres*. Starz attempted a half-assed crossover into heavy power-pop on *Attention Shoppers*, and just lunked out. Bring back Jack Douglas...

As for Kiss, they got ready to unleash their simultaneous solo albums — fair enough, good gimmick — but word has it the masterplan also calls for their retirement...

Rush arrived in the UK a fully fledged mass-marketable underground rumour and proceeded to mop up the ravening headbanger hordes and totally offend everyone else with their pompous rock operettas in the cause of laissez-faire capitalism, while Mahogany Rush turned out to be deafening wimps.

Meantime, Johnny Winter went fulltime bluesman. Lynyrd Skynyrd met their maker, Derringer never managed to transcend their spartan game-plan, and Wildman Nugent just got incredibly tedious. The new packages — Foreigner, Rex, Van Halen — are strictly production line.

In fact, in terms of creative activity, the two and only bright sparks in the entire American heavy metal frontier (which, as far as any kind of mass

US audience is concerned, means pretty well the whole of American rock'n'roll) are the phantasmagoric Iggy Pop — artistically totally divorced from anything else that falls under the banner of the US HM 1978 — and Cheap Trick, whose occasionally brilliant (and often mundane) heavy pop hardly makes up for the current sad state of the rest of the nation.

And in the UK? You really want to know?

First the good news. Deep Purple are no more, Black Sabbath broke up (and unfortunately re-formed). For all their activity, Led Zeppelin, Bad Company and Nazareth might as well have quit too. SAHB is also defunct. Budgie have emigrated, Uriah Heep are on permanent loan to Europe.

Status Quo drudge along as ever, matched for popularity by Ritchie Blackmore's awful Rainbow. Late arrivals Judas Priest, UFO, Lone Star and Aussie smut-rockers AC/DC have yet to perform a single halfway decent song between the lot of them.

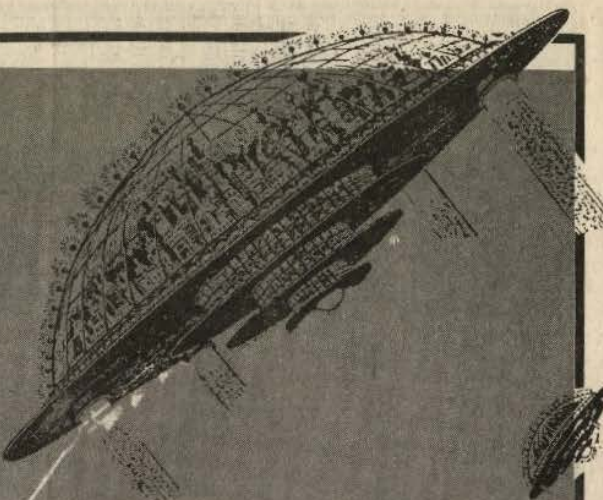
In fact the only British band who appeared to have anything new to say in heavy metal — The Motors — abandoned the genre after one album.

Lemmy's Motorhead are now the only UK band who actually pursue the traditional booze'n'brain-damage lifestyle — hence their growing roots following.

Of course, these are hard times for budding guitar crushers. Many of those who three years ago would have formed HM power trios now form three-chord wonder speed machines. Even so, considering its huge poterie of fans just itching to buy buy buy, the entire heavy rock field is remarkably devoid of either new blood or fresh inspiration.

The one exception, of course, is Thin Lizzy, who, despite Brian Robertson's comings and goings, show no sign of weakening.

The one convincing explanation for the popularity of most HM records remains the most insulting to its fans: lowest common denominator. Those below are most of the worthwhile ones. **Albums:** *Thin Lizzy* — *Live And Dangerous* (Vertigo '78), Starz — *Violation* (Capitol '78), Sex Pistols — *Never Mind The Bollocks* (Virgin '77), Iggy Pop — *TV Eye* (RCA '78), The Stranglers — *Black And White* (UA '78).



RICHARD HELL

Modern rock owes Richard Hell a sizeable dowry. Born in Kentucky, Hell, under his given name of Richard Myers, attended a private school with one Tom Miller, later known as Verlaine. The pair in later life conceived of Television in New York (the name was Hell's) and the first post NY Dolls glitter backlash was born. Hell's style of dress — prickly hair and torn clothes — was used by Malcolm McLaren (who tried to become Hell's manager in '75) as the blueprint for the burgeoning punk look. In Television, Hell's most famous songs — *Love Comes in Spurts* and the immortal *Blank Generation* were unveiled, but ego friction 'twixt Verlaine and Hell caused the latter to exit, emotionally scarred by the episode.

A short liaison with ex-Dolls Johnny Thunder and Jerry Nolan in The Heartbreakers kept Hell active although sheer incompetability dissolved them after nine months.

In '76 Hell stepped out with his band, The Voidoids, Bob Quine on guitar, Ivan Julian ditto, Marc Bell on drums and Hell as always on bass. By this point, his cult status had elevated him above the narrow confines that a half-baked version of *Blank Generation* recorded in '45 form on Ork records could simply satiate, and soon Sire Records inked him for an album deal. Taut, neurotic, perverse and relentless in its mood of testy despair, his first album was a nonetheless rivetting look into the world of a figure who'd mated poetry and left-field rock action, honing the songs out with razor blades.

Not unnaturally, Hell's a highly charged, temperamental sort and last year brought strong rumours of his retirement from rock 'n' roll. Since then he's made a film while Voidoid drummer Marc Bell has been seduced away to join The Ramones. Hell's future is uncertain right now but should he return for just one second vinyl shot, it'll be more than worth the wait.

Singles: *Blank Generation/You Gotta Lose/Another World* (Stiff '76). Also: *You Gotta Lose on Hit's Greatest Stiff Album* (Stiff '77). **Album:** *Blank Generation* (Sire '77).



Blank as Hell

KEITH HUDSON

One of reggae's ambient and most under-rated personalities, Keith Hudson began his career as



Chairman of the bored

producer before revealing his unique talent as a performer with albums like *Entering The Dragon*, *Flesh Of My Skin* and *Torch Of Freedom*.

In '76 he was responsible for one of the year's most successful bass and drum LPs, *Pick A Dub*, before signing a short-lived contract with Virgin Records that produced the curious US *Too Expensive* set revealing the private life of Keith Hudson on the River Hudson. 1977 was relieved by the appearance of his stepping *Brand* dub LP, the rhythms of which later furnished *Rasta Communication*, arguably the best album of '78.

Singles: *Rasta Country* (K&B '77), *Barbican Heights* (with *Shorty the President*) (K&B '77). **Albums:** *Torch Of Freedom* (Atra '75), *Pick A Dub* (Atra '76), *Too Expensive* (Virgin '76), *Brand* (Brand '77), *Rasta Communication* (Joint '78).

THE HUMAN LEAGUE

Ian Marsh—synthesiser, devices. Martin Ware—synthesiser, vocals. Phil Oakley—vocals. Adrian Martin—visual technician.

A Sheffield group whose use of electronics is far less po-faced and superficial than their avatars, Kraftwerk. Live performances are enthralling, with a sound like Giorgio Moroder meeting The Ronettes and a message of 'allying technology to humanity and humour' — the inflammatory contents of which have made it wise to employ home-made riot shields.

Single: *Being Boiled* (Fast '78).

IGGY POP

Arguably the most disarming success story of the late '70s has to be James Jewel Osterburg's — better known as Iggy Pop — return from the tanks of the living dead to be wreathed a bonafide modern hero and primo influence on the new music.

After 1975's *Raw Power* Iggy & the Stooges fought a loser's battle with the rock-market place which could only end in self-destruction. The actual point of collapse is in fact harrowingly documented on the second side of the Stooges' live album, *Metallic K.O.*

Iggy himself ended up strung out in Los Angeles — a perfect living replica of the Marlon Brando "I coulda bin a contender" slouch — and descended further into the pit until he was placed in a mental hospital. This move may well have caused his fortunes to change, in that David Bowie, a friend who'd helped produce *Raw Power*, came to visit him and together the pair formulated a plan to remove him from his hideous state of existence.

Bowie and Pop teamed up and during '76 and early '77 an album eventually entitled *The Idiot* was released. In the place of phalanges of the raging Stooges guitars so beloved by the punks was the mind-numbing drone of 'mekanik rock' — music as compelling as it was disturbing. Bowie and Pop

toured Europe together, the former quietly playing keyboards alongside Rick Gardiner, bassist Tony Sales and drummer Hunt Sales, while the Ig strutted his stuff before an audience who only knew of him through legend.

After this success, the pair returned to the studios for the more rocky, up-orientated *Lust For Life*, a superb rock album that proved that Pop had lost nothing from his years in the quicksand, gaining instead a steely perspective that cut like a knife.

After the *Lust For Life* tour — Bowie dropped out to be replaced by ex-Stooge Scott Thurstun while guitarist Gardiner made way for Stacey Heydon — Ig ceased operations temporarily, only to see the market flooded with a plethora of questionable Stooges vinyl memorabilia. One exception to the usual dreadful product bearing his name was *Kill City* on Radar Records, the album that Ig and James Williamson had tried to make in LA after *Raw Power*. A superb effort, it even outclasses the lacklustre official RCA live album *TV Eye*, featuring both *Idiot* and *Life* combos to little avail.

Meanwhile Iggy has shown his face only once of late on a short live tour featuring members of Fred "Sonic" Smith (ex-MC5)'s *Rendezvous Band*. While he rests, however, awaiting the next hot move, one can only sit back and marvel at the enormous influence the man virtually everyone had pegged as a loser now has had on late '70s rock.

Albums: *The Idiot* (RCA '77), *Lust For Life* (RCA '78), *Kill City* (Radar '78), *Metallic K.O.* (Skydog '76), *T.V. Eye* — Live (RCA '78).

INDEPENDENCE

The midpoint of this decade saw the most profound alienation between the consumers and creators of rock music that has existed in the entire history of the field. A small but significant section of the rock audience found that it had no choice but to create its own entertainment independently of the established bands, record companies and publications. The result, in 1976-8, was the upsurge of myriad hordes of groups; independent backroom labels and fanzines: amateurish, sure (that was almost the whole point) but inventive and committed.

In the wake of the attention paid these cultural dissidents by the industry at large, many of the new writers, musicians and entrepreneurs have been co-opted by/infiltrated/taken over (delete where most/least applicable) their mainstream equivalents, and many have returned to what they were doing before, but the principle has been established: nothing in rock and roll is so firmly entrenched that it cannot be challenged and modified by an influx of determined new talent.

THE INDUSTRY

In the 1970s the Music Business turned into the Music Industry, expanding to a global concern with a £2.3 billion annual turnover. Once run by amateurs and old men, it became a highly complex, professionally run operation and, in the process, power became concentrated in fewer hands.

In the UK, whose influence far outweighs its 6% share of the world market, the industry is dominated by five corporations — EMI, CBS, Warner Communications Inc, Polygram and RCA — which between them have 66% of the album market and 66% of the singles market. They own the pressing plants, the distribution chains, the music publishing companies, the electronics firms and more besides.

Corporate control has resulted in the breakdown of the barriers between differing forms of popular entertainment. EMI own the major cinema circuit in the UK as well as half of Thames TV, squash courts and bingo halls. CBS own one of the giant US TV networks as well as publishers and musical instrument makers. RCA owns NBC, one of the other two TV networks, besides being active in satellite communications and weapons technology. Warner Communications control Warner Brothers films and the New York Cosmos football team. Polygram (Polydor and Phonogram) are owned by Philips and Siemens, two giant European electronics firms, and are active in all areas of entertainment.

There is no question that musical innovation comes from smaller outfits like Stiff, Step Forward and the like, but in the overall context of the industry, they merely serve up their product to be manufactured, marketed and distributed by the majors.

An understanding of the thinking and operations of the music industry is provided in an essay by Leslie F. Hill, Director, Group Music, EMI Ltd who admits: 'The ever-increasing complexity of the business, combined with intense competition, demands a

The Corporate Cage

degree of professionalism and technical and commercial sophistication undreamed of even 15 years ago.

This professionalism involves gambling with increasingly high stakes. With the cost of recording an album ranging from £15-60,000, a company may have to invest £200,000+ before the artist sells records on any large scale. Hill claims, moreover, that of some 2750 singles released in '78 only 400 will make Top 50.

In addition artists are pushing for bigger and better deals, particularly once they have a track record. Arthur Mogull, president of United Artists told *Business Week*: 'I used to think artists signed contracts based on personal relationships they have with their company, but I've concluded that it almost always comes down to money.'

The contract has become of prime importance. Hill comments: 'It is crucially important for each contract to be negotiated efficiently and firmly with a high degree of commercial and legal awareness. This is one of the reasons why one finds so many lawyers and accountants at every senior level in major record companies.' He continues: 'There are now firms of specialist record business auditors who do nothing but audit the royalty receipts of their clients, the record company often having to bear the heavy costs of such audits if any material error is found.'

The corporations allow others to create trends and then they buy them out — punk being only the latest of this phenomenon. TV albums is another good example. In 1975 merchandising companies like K-Tel held 80% of the market;

by 1977 their share had fallen to 22%. CBS, Warners, EMI and Polygram had grabbed 68% of a market that had shot from total turnover of £8 million to £28 million in two years.

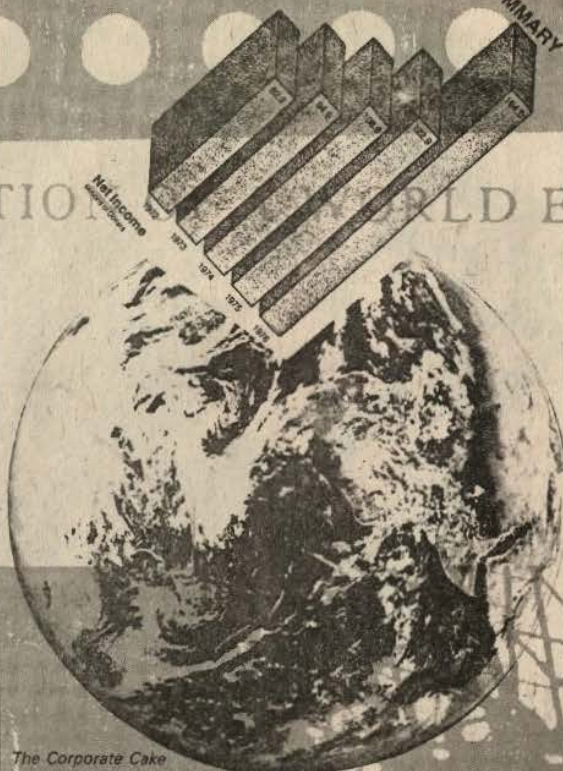
The corporations insist they do not control the market, that there is always room for the successful independent. For a while this is true but always, somewhere along the manufacturing/distribution/marketing line, the majors are taking their cut.

Do they have an unfair advantage? Hill comments: 'Good repertoires, although the main ingredient, is only part of any record company's recipe for success. The ability of a company to market and promote effectively is almost as important as the basic repertoire strength. It is not always the best repertoire which makes the charts. Careful campaign planning, image-building and dedicated record plugging often give an ordinary record a chart placing over a better record less professionally handled.' It's worth mentioning that the US Monopolies Commission is currently investigating CBS, WEA and others.

Abba, Osmonds, Bee Gees and the like point one direction things are heading in. Bands forming corporate empires of their own, which sell music rather than oil or valium. The corporate mentality remains the same.

One result of all this is the middle has dropped out of the market. You're either huge or operating on a small level and there's precious little inbetween. Music should never become just a commodity — but that, like it or not, is just what we're faced with.

CBS FIVE-YEAR FINANCIAL SUMMARY



GREGORY ISAACS

In the tradition of vocal precepts laid down in the rock-steady era Gregory Isaacs has emerged as prime exponent of the poignant lyric in the latter years of the decade, eclipsing former favourites like Ken Boothe, John Holt, Pat Kelly and Delroy Wilson.

In 1976 Isaacs had hits with *Black A Kill Black*, *Rasta Business*, *Rock Away* and *Extra Classic*, maintaining his popularity the following year with *Mr. Cop*, *Slave Master*, *Let's Dance* and *Lady Love* and issue of his third set *Extra Classic*.

A monster discmix smash with *Mr. Know It All*, release of his *Mr. Isaacs* and *The Best Of Albums* by Deb and GG led to the fulfilment of his earlier promise and a Front Line contract in 1978. *Singles*: *Look Before You Leap* (Third World '76), *Black A Kill Black* (Morpheus '76), *Extra Classic* (Morpheus '76), *Mr. Cop* (Golden Age '77), *Let's Dance* (Nationwide '77), *Slave Master* (Third World '77), *Mr. Know It All* (DEB 12" '78), *John Public* (Hawkeye '78). *Albums*: *Extra Classic* (Conflict '77), *Mr. Isaacs* (DEB '78), *The Best Of* (GG '78).

VIVIAN JACKSON

Vivian Jackson aka Yabby You aka Jesus Dread, roots producer of the highest quality and one of the few locksmen in Jamaica to dispute the divinity of Ras Tafari, ascended as a pioneer of the new heavier music circa 1975 with fulfilment of startlingly original reggae/fundae hymnals, in his role as Isiah, backed vocally by The Prophets, and issued through his label of the same name: *Conquering Lion*, *Jah Vengeance*, etc.

During 1976 Yabby You turned his hand to the production of other artists, especially protegee youth vocalist Wayne Wade, but also a slew of DJs toasting his endurable rhythms: Trinity, Tapper Zukie, Devon Russell, Big Youth, King Miguel, Jah Stitch, Dillinger, Prince Pampado, followed by newcomers Jah Scons, Jah Baba and Jah Pops in '77.

Also in '77 came the release of his second and third LPs, *Chant Down Babylon Kingdom* and *Deliver Me From My Enemies* plus an instrumental set with Tommy McCook and Bobby Ellis (*Blazing*).

1978 was relatively quiet for his releases, even though Vivian Jackson was still working as hard as always, with a number of tapes awaiting issue in the vaults of UK licensee Grove.

Singles: *The Prophets and Trinity — Blessed Are The Meek* (Grove 12" 1978), *Vivian Jackson and Trinity, Babylon Kingdom Fall* (Vivian Jackson 12" '77), *Trinity — Peace Conference In A Western Kingston* (Vivian Jackson '78), *Jesus Dread* (Grove '78). *Albums*: *Ram A Dam* (Dip '76), *Chant Down Babylon Kingdom* (Nationwide '77), *Deliver Me From My Enemies* (Grove '77), *Beware* (dub) (Grove '78).



Elaine Bryant

THE JAM

Paul Weller—guitar, vocals. Bruce Foxton—bass, vocals. Rick Buckler—drums.

In the wake of The Sex Pistols, The Damned and The Clash, The Jam came to prominence in spring 1977. Unlike their peers, The Jam didn't go in for denouncing '60s icons. Instead they promoted their love — or rather Paul Weller's obsession with — The Who and the mod cult of those heady times. At this point The Jam's set included early Who classic *So Sad About Us* and '60s soul classics *Sweet Soul Music*, *Ride Your Pony* and *In The Midnight Hour* all performed at break-neck speed, but without hurling musicality to the winds. The Jam could play, and were proud of it. 'Fire and Skill' boasted Weller's amp.

Visually, their image was pure '65 Carnaby Street — mohair suits, button downs, ties; Weller even composed an elegy to the London mod fashion mecca. Their onstage aggression, however, was second to none, punctuated by flying leaps from Weller and Foxton.

The Jam were formed by Buckler and the precocious Weller while at school in Woking, a grey netherland on the outer reaches of London's suburbia, around '75. Originally a four-piece pop-orientated group, The Jam had paid their dues on the local scene by the time they hit the London pub circuit in early '77. Six months earlier the group had thinned down to a trio, Foxton switching from guitar to bass.

In *The City* and the subsequent album of the same name marked an auspicious debut. Apart from the tight aggressive up-tempo material, of particular note was Weller's doleful Whoish *Away From The Numbers*.

The superlative *All Around The World*, The Jam's next single and a chart success, confirmed their stature. They're yet to come up with records of similar force, despite their almost too prolific output. Though hailed as a masterpiece by Weller, *This Is The Modern World* was perhaps too hastily assembled and was poorly received. The title phrase stuck.

The Jam's initial welter of good material has apparently run dry, although live they are still one of the most powerful of the new wave groups, though in need of fresh direction. Time alone will reveal their depth.

Singles: *In The City* (Polydor '77), *All Around The World* (Polydor '77), *The Modern World* (Polydor '77), *News Of The World* (Polydor '78), *David Watts* (Polydor '78), *Down In The Tube Station At Midnight* (Polydor '78).

Albums: *In The City* (Polydor '77), *This Is The Modern World* (Polydor '77), *All Mod Cons* (Polydor '78).

JAMAICA

Small, Caribbean 'Isle of springs', former colony of Spanish and English imperialism, now the dominion of African slave descendants, Jamaica (pop. five million) has generated the most pervasive — and certainly the most remarkable — influences on modern popular music through its development of ska, rock-steady and finally reggae.

Of the latter, the emergence of the rockers sound — based on Studio One and Treasure Isle rock-steady rhythms — pioneered by Augustus Pablo and Channel One has been the major style in the music throughout the past three years, generally leading to an increased commercialism and decline in quality. Other factors of deterioration have been the rise in vinyl prices and increased session



Kate Simon

fees — actuated by reggae-interested big record companies — both of which have had a crippling effect on the small producer and a dearth of true creativity in the music.

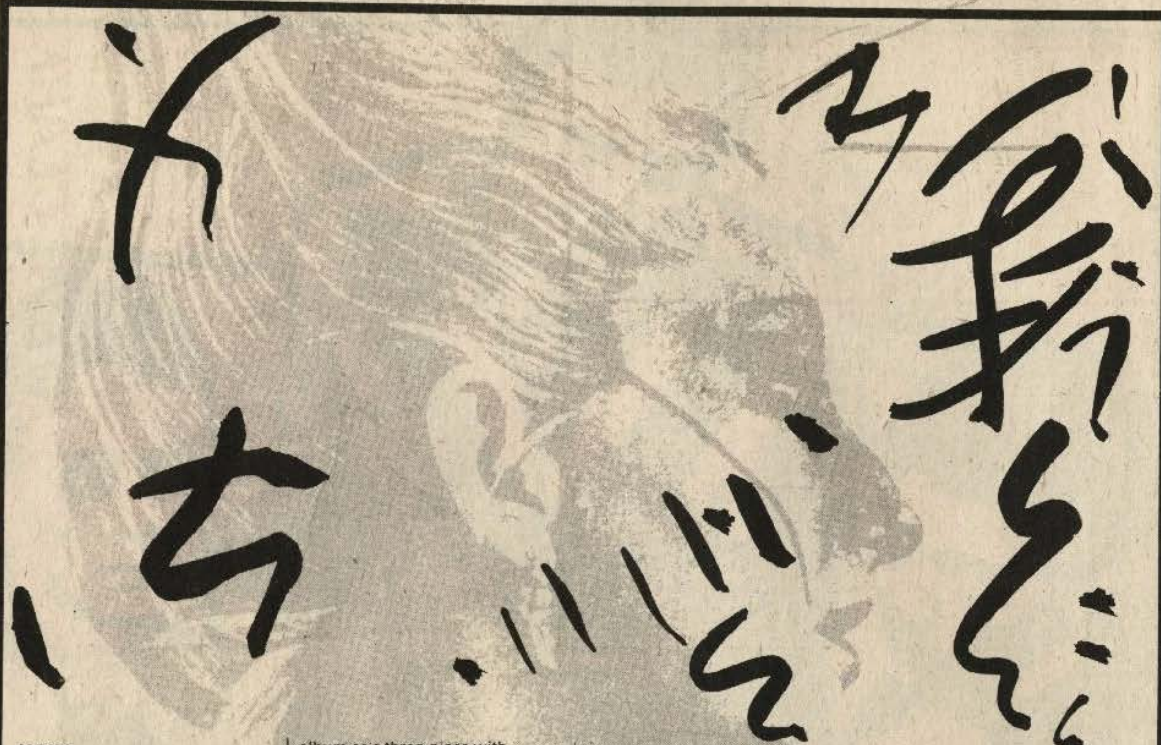
From a previous era, names like John Holt, Delroy Wilson, Bob Marley, Cornel Campbell and Sir Coxsone have continued to exert their influence on the modern reggae scene, while newer talents like Burning Spear, Dennis Brown, Gregory Isaacs, Leroy Smart and Keith Hudson have also made their respective personalities felt.

1976 was dominated by the Channel One sound, an extension of the rockers beat innovated by

Augustus Pablo a couple of years previous and brought to fruition by Sly Dunbar and The Revolutionaries musicians.

Following the success of The Diamonds and Dillinger out of Maxfield Avenue, other producers began imitating the style, in particular Joe Gibbs and Errol Thompson — another pioneer — as 'the Mighty Two', plus Bunny Lee, Winston Riley and Sonia Pottinger, and newer lights like Jah Wally, Vivian Jackson, Ja-Man and Prince Jammy.

The Peace Movement in 1978 brought a temporary spark to the tired music, since when it has regressed to its former aridity.



Jordan/Pennie Smith

JAPAN

Dave Sylvain—guitar, vocals. Richard Barbieri—moog. Rob Dean—guitar. Mick Karn—bass. Steve Janson—drums.

The most flamboyant, cosmetically-assisted bunch of poseurs this side of The New York Dolls, their image is so over-the-top that they're almost entertaining. Lovers of heavy metal onslaught, and visually dynamic teen fantasy fodder, have a rare treat in store. They clobber sensitivity, but defy indifference.

Album: *Adolescent Sex* (Ariola Hansa '78).

Singles: *The Unconventional* (Ariola Hansa '78).

JILTED JOHN

Jilted John (aka: 19 year old Manchester drama student Graham Fellows) shot from obscurity to overnight national superstardom via *Jilted John/Going Steady*. Originally released on Rabid records, the disc was licensed by EMI before becoming a smash of summer '78. Julie, Gordon the Moron and Jilted John himself became household names. Whether JJ has an entire Wurlitzer of classic seven-inchers inside him remains to be seen.

Single: *Jilted John/Going Steady* (EMI '78).

THE JOLT

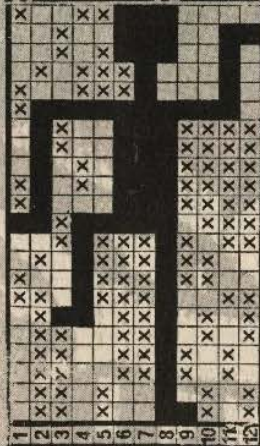
Robert Collins—lead guitar, vocals. Iain Shedden—drums. Jim Doak—bass, vocals. Kevin Key—guitar.

Glasgow-based band formed 18 months ago. Originally a four-piece, but recorded debut

album as a three-piece with guitarist Key added in summer '78. Like label-mates The Jam, The Jolt are besotted with '60s Mod fashions, and well tailored suits, while the only non-original song in their set is The Small Faces' *Watcha Gonna Do About It*. Have been criticised for being nothing more than Jam copyists, but while first album is erratic such criticism is premature.

Singles: *You're Cold* (Polydor '77). *Watcha Gonna Do About It* (Polydor '78). *I Can't Wait* (Polydor '78).

Album: *The Jolt* (Polydor '78).



JORDAN

Ex-shop assistant in Malcolm McLaren's King's Road *Sex* shop. The type of young lady that would stand out at a bus stop, Jordan (aka Pamela Hook of Seaport) wore her peroxidized locks in vaselined spikes with dayglo makeup provoking old people to attack her in the street with their pension books. The look was later cloned by multiple Jordan-lookalike punkettes.

Ex-chum of John Lydon ('He was happy just going down the pub until he became a Pop Star') Jordan left *Sex* to manage Adam And The Ants. She played Amyl Nitrate in the Derek Jarman celluloid disaster area *Jubilee*. Later quit managing A&A and expressed a desire to make more films. By late '78 her copyrighted look (which she had now worn for years) was getting a trifle samey.

JOY DIVISION

Bernard Albrecht—guitar. Stephen Morris—drums. Peter Hook—bass. Ian Curtis—voice.

A young quartet formed as Warsaw in mid '77, a spiteful punk group with obvious pretensions. Released poor EP and appeared in Virgin's *Last Night At The Electric Circus* with sloppy, lethargic *At A Later Date*. By mid '78 their motivation, direction, inspiration had sharpened considerably, and as modern metal music makers they rank on the line of Fall, Penetration and Banshees, whilst their philosophy remains hidden and perhaps disturbing.

Single: *An Ideal For Living* EP (Enigma '78). Also one track on *Last Night At The Electric Circus* (Virgin '78).



KRAFTWERK

Ralf Hutter—electronics, vocals. Florian Schneider—electronic vocals. Karl Bartos electronic percussion. Wolfgang Flür—electronic percussion.

The overnight success of the environment *Autobahn* probably surprised Kraftwerk as much as anyone else. Despite even David Bowie's patronage, the Dusseldorf band's moderately interesting forays into electronic soundscaping had made little impression, either here or in America.

Subsequently Kraftwerk have redirected both music and image, now presenting themselves as inheritors of a 1930's New Art sensibility. This has found them favour among the acolytes of high fashion chic, although Kraftwerk's precise motives—doubtless tongue in cheek—remain unstated.

Recent albums have become increasingly simplified and stylised, tending in essence towards Euro-disco, a field in which Kraftwerk have massively influenced Munich producer Giorgio Moroder.

Albums: Kraftwerk ('72) *Ralf Und Florian* ('73) *Autobahn* ('74) *Exceller 8* ('75). *All* (Vertigo). *Radioactivity* ('76) *Trans-Europe Express* ('77) *The Man Machine* ('78). *All* (Capitol).

Singles: *Autobahn* (Vertigo '74). *Showroom Dummies* (Capitol '77). *The Robots* (Capitol '78).

LEW LEWIS

Canvey Island harmonica player originally with Eddie and The Hot Rods until Lew's penchant for living the rock 'n' road lifestyle to the excessive hilt proved too much for the other Rods and Lewis was kicked out.

He struck out on his own, frequently having his band augmented by members of Dr. Feelgood, but Lew's R&B based combo was out of time in the punk-conscious year of '77 and they disbanded. Little has been heard of him since, apart from a brief spell helping out The Stranglers in the studio. Singles: *Boogie On The Street* (Stiff '76) *Out For A Lark* (USA '77).

LITERATURE

UNTIL Bob Dylan started putting his poems on his record sleeves in the early '60s, literature and rock had been polar opposites. Even the 'rebel' literary movements of the '50s — in the U.S. the 'beats' and in the UK the 'angry young men' — identified with jazz rather than rock, projecting existential ideas onto the music and lifestyle of the black American jazz musician. Folk poets like Chuck Berry went unsung.

Dylan changed everything. As befitted a folkie protest singer, he allied himself with the beats from the outset, while his literary references and borrowings became ever greater as he transposed into rock poet and idol. He even published an amphetamine novel *Tarantula*. Meantime, John Lennon had published *In His Own Write*, a collection of satiric cartoons and scribbles which certain highbrow critics compared to Joyce's *Ulysses*. At the same time, 'respectable' culturalists were discovering the delights of rock lyrics and culture. By '67, with pot, acid, *Sergeant Pepper* and the rest, the intellectuals had moved in. Rock never recovered. Lyrics became increasingly self-conscious, self-important and worthless. Great folk poets like Smokey Robinson again went unsung (except by Dylan).

The '70s saw a flow of songs and concept albums which plundered and castrated great — and more often mediocre — works of literature for their feeble inspiration. *The Snow Goose*, *War Of The Worlds*, Tolkien, *WaterShip Down* — laughable.

Others paid lip service to literary greatness from Rimbaud to Kerouac while rarely exhibiting the same genius in their own behaviour and works.

Literature influenced rock far more than rock influenced literature, which has continued on its oblivious ride into obscurity. There have been no 'rock writers' in prose. Contemporaries like Jack Kerouac, Richard Brautigan and Tom Robbins are held aloft but the great rock novel has never been written and never will be unless it's Michael Moorcock's Jerry Cornelius quartet.

'Rock Poets' invariably become rock musicians or plain old poets — by definition. The nearest to a fusion was the British 'Pop Poetry'



Nick Lowe explains how to write a song to Andy Williams

movement of the late '60s where poets like Pete Brown, Adrian Henri, Roger McGough and Tom Pickard fooled round with rock bands with varying artistic and financial success.

But finally the rebels remain the straights. *Ulysses* and *Catch 22* are as much rock novels as *Tarantula* and *Gravity's Rainbow*. Rimbaud and Blake as much rock poets as Smith and Dylan. Indeed, it was Blake who became the first classic writer to be set to rock music, courtesy of The Fugs, in 1965.

Mention should be made of William Burroughs, if only because his books have provided so many groups with names: from The Soft Machine to Steely Dan and Dead Fingers Talk.

Currently rock's interest in literature seems to be confined to Patti Smith's expositions of Rimbaud, Ginsberg, Burroughs and Co., and callow youths from the new wave gesturing with lightweight science fiction like J.G. Ballard. Thank Christ for John Cooper-Clarke.

LONDON SS

More important for the collective consciousness it initiated rather than any music it actually made, London SS sank without recorded trace in the summer of 1976 after its protagonists, Tony James and Mick Jones, finally accepted that great friends though they were, they were too alike as people to be able to successfully form a group together.

Overseen from the Sex shop by current Clash manager, Bernie Rhodes, the ever varied cast of the band included, among others, Rat Scabies, Brian James and Paul Simonon — who lasted about ten minutes as vocalist.

NICK LOWE

He maintains the physical appearance and mental outlook of a man who has lived right through the underbelly of the rockbiz — which in fact he has.

Originally a member of pop harmony quintet Kippington Lodge, Lowe's head was turned by the snooze-out singer songwriter

boom of the early '70s and he and a few straggling Lodgers became Brinsley Schwarz. Through six albums and four years they languished in an obscurity they helped cultivate, that of the dance band boozier circuit, known to fossil collectors as Pub Rock.

When the Brinsleys disbanded in early '75 Lowe began touting his talents as producer and song stylist, working on Bay City Rollers cash-ins and the odd Dave Edmunds creation. Then about mid-way through '76 he cast an affectionately cynical eye over the rock behemoth in *So It Goes*, the first Stiff single. He and the other members of the Pubrock Mafia that comprised Stiff have not looked back since.

His production services on Stiff singles and The Damned, Graham Parker and the Rumour and Elvis Costello records, an approach known as whack-it-down-and-turn-it-up, created an enviable reputation. The self-confessed purveyor of 'pure pop for now people' led the cake, though, with his *Jesus Of Cool* album: viciously witty nonsense set to a cunning tongue-in-cheek catalogue of pop licks stolen from everyone from Bowie to The Jackson 5.

A jack of all trades and even master of some, through his working relationship with Dave Edmunds in Rockpile, his solo efforts, and his production work, Lowe's profile is that of a pop machiavelli.

Singles: *So It Goes* (Stiff '76) *Keep It Outta Sight* (Dynamite '76) *Bowie EP* (Stiff '77) *Halfway To Paradise* (Stiff '77) *I Love The Sound Of Breaking Glass* (Radar '78) *Little Hitler* (Radar '78). Also — *Disco Brothers* and Tartan Horde singles from '75 available as Dutch four track EP.

Album: *Jesus Of Cool* (Radar '78). Lowe compositions can also be found on Brinsley Schwarz — *15 Thoughts Of Brinsley Schwarz* (UA '78).

LOVERS ROCK

A term coined by UK producer Dennis Harris in 1977. Lovers Rock

loosely described a sentimental reggae style favoured by London sound systems like Chicken Hi Fi, Soferno B and Success Sound, one that was extremely popular with the local audience.

On his Lovers Rocks label Harris enjoyed big reggae hits during '77 with a roster of mostly female vocalists, notably Brown Sugar, Cassandra, Roland & Carolyn Catlin, and T.T. Ross, while acts such as 15-16-17, Matumbi, Louisa Mark — who had pioneered the movement with her version of Bobby Parker's *Caught You In A Lie* back in '75 — Janet Kay Junior English, and Guardian Angel, plus producers Clem Bushay, Castro Brown, Larry Lawrence, Delroy Witter and Lloydie Coxson also scored in the Lovers Rock genre, as did Jamaican acts like Dennis Brown, Delroy Wilson, Ruddy Thomas and In Crowd. Tim Chandell sold 50,000 copies of his debut *The Loving Moods Of* album — a staggering amount for the reggae market — without the benefit of any national airplay and virtually no promotion.

1978 witnessed the teen deification of 15-16-17 (now 17-18-19) with their *Emotions*, just *My Imagination* DEE discomix titles. Brown Sugar continued their success even though leaving Dip's Lovers Rock stable for Winston Edwards' Studio 16, while Janet Kay improved upon her popularity the previous year with her success productions. Others working the genre included Honey Boy, Revelation, Pauletta Walker, Tyrone David, Aurora York and Bill Campbell, while left-field artists Tim Chandell, Joy Mack, Ginger Williams, Danny Ray, Sidney Rogers and Jimmy Lindsay were also influenced by Lovers Rock.

Singles: Louisa Mark — *Caught You In A Lie* (Safari '75). Even *Though You're Gone* (Bushay's '72 '78). T.T. Ross — *Single Girl* (Dip '76). I Will (Lovers Rock '77). Brown Sugar — *Black Pride* (Lovers Rock '77). Do You Really Love Me? (Lovers Rock '78). Otis and Clem Bushay — *Don't Leave Me This Way* (Burning Sounds '77). Joy Mack — *You Had Your Chance* (Four Sixty '78). Janet Kay — *I Do Love You* (D-Roy '78). Albums: Tim Chandell — *The Loving Moods Of* (Orbitone '77). Honey Boy — *Lovers* (Third World '76). Various Artists — *To Reggae For Lovers* (Dip '76). Reggae Sweet & Smooth (Tackle '77). BB Super Hits Vol. 1 (BB '78).

THE LURKERS

Howard Wall — Vocals. Pete Stride — Guitar. Nigel Moore — bass. Menic Easo — drums.

Raucously Ramonic suburban drone clones. Formed in Uxbridge, December 1976. Despite an almost unanimous critical thumbs down, persisted through '77 with ever-loyal hard-core following, eventually charting with classic third single in June '78. Although their debut album, produced by Mike Glossop, has its moments, they seem unlikely to bridge limitations of their present musical format.

Singles: *Free Admission Single* (Beggars Banquet '77). *Freak Show* (Beggars Banquet '77). *Ain't Got A Clue* (Beggars Banquet '78). *I Don't Need To Tell Her* (Beggars Banquet '78).

Albums: *Fulham Fallout* (Beggars Banquet '78). Also one track on *Streets* compilation (Beggars Banquet '77).

MAGAZINE

Howard Devoto—vocals. Barry Adamson—bass guitar. John McGeoch—guitar. John Spencer—drums. Dave Formula—keyboards.

After seemingly impetuously quitting Buzzcocks, claiming breathlessness and disaffection with the 'monster' punk had become, Howard Devoto sat on a high chair, inactive for some months. He insisted there would be no more musical activity.

Punk became the new establishment and the time was right for Devoto's next assault. In September he choosily gathered together local musicians, his original band containing Adamson and McGeoch, plus Bob Dickinson on keyboards (replaced December '77 by Formula) and Martin Jackson on drums (replaced September '78 by John Spencer). On reputation alone scored a useful Virgin contract before group plans were finalised. Magazine's debut single, the awesome *Shot By Both Sides*, released in January '78, made the top 30. Magazine's debut album recorded after a couple of short unsure tours, was typically multi-levelled, musically overtly glossy and accessible, easily tagged 'art-rock', and saw a smooth shift from cult to name.

A clever manipulator, for Devoto Buzzcocks and Magazine remain experiments, although his old resistance to rock's routines is rapidly melting. Magazine, and through that a will to power, should be his immediate future, but his restlessness and impatience is renowned.

Singles: *Shot By Both Sides* (Virgin '78). *Touch And Go* (Virgin '78).

Albums: *Real Life* (Virgin '78).

MAGMA

Christian Vander — drums, keyboards, vocals. Klaus Blasquiz — vocals, percussion. Stella Vander — vocals. Liza De Luxe — vocals. Benoit Widemann — keyboards.

Entirely dependent on the inspiration of drummer and leader Christian Vander, Magma remain France's most extraordinary contribution to contemporary rock. The rigid guidelines of Vander's interstellar cabalism, as displayed thematically on the band's early albums, seem to have frayed at the edges — or if they still have an inner coherence, only Vander can answer for it — and persistent personnel changes have resulted in erratic release of material. At present bass supremo Jennik Top has again been excluded from the line-up, whilst mystery enshrouds plans for Magma to perform the soundtrack to director Alexandro Jodorowsky's filming of SF writer Frank Herbert's *Dune* trilogy, a work with which Vander's own arcane philosophising has much in common. However, both the recent *Udu Wudu* and latest *Attahk* albums are relentlessly vigorous, intimating that Vander's unfathomable muse is far from exhausted.



Howard Devoto shot by both sides

Albums: *Magma* (Phillips Import '71). *1001 Degrees Centigrade* (Phillips Import '72). *Mekanik Destructiv Kommandoh* (A&M '73). *Kohntarkosz* (A&M '74). *Tristan & Iseult* (Egg Import '74). *Magma Live* (Tomato Import '75). *Udu Wudu* (Tomato Import '76). *Inedits* (Tapioca Import '77). *Attahk* (Eurodisc Import '78).

MANCHESTER

In 1976 the city was dead and inactive. Led by the beckoning shadow of Devoto and Shelley, and the tumbling trail of Slaughter and the Dogs — so naive they weren't aware of any obstacles and provoked by a series of visits by such as The Slits, the Banshees and The Sex Pistols, Manchester people soon realised what was possible and crawled out of their living rooms. By '77 Buzzcocks, The Fall, Warsaw (Joy Division), Ed Banger and the Nosebleeds, the Drones, Slaughter and the Dogs could all be listed, and the Electric Circus became a positive centre of a new community. The scene swelled and settled, never having a specific sound, a vital network of self sufficiency and originality. By mid '78 it shows no signs of abating, activity centring around Rabid Records and the Manchester Musicians Collective.

DURUTTI COLUMN: A fluid, erratic attempt at flighty psychedelia, featuring ex Alberto bassist Tony Bowers and managed enthusiastically by Tony Wilson.

THE ELITE: Hesitant, stark rock music, barren and baffled. A Stockport trio now making music with ex Magazine man Bob Dickinson.

MANICURED NOISE: Intense perfectionists who've tried for a year to make a modern music but yet to get off the ground.

THE PASSAGE: A genuine power trio formed by ex Fall bassist Tony Friel and the classically trained Dick Wits. Drums, bass, electric piano, voices, combine to make driving, hysterical, boisterous music, with the balance of the best improvised jazz and the structure and strength of the best hard rock. A compelling, productive unit.

JOHN THE POSTMAN: After months performing 'impromptu' gruesomely acapella versions of *Louie Louie* after other people's sets, formed Puerile with spotty disheveled drinking pals and made an LP with a long tortuous version of *Louie Louie* on a '33 side and a collection of songs on a '45 side. The record sold over a thousand, and is now deleted.

Follow up in preparation sees the Postman recording a series of standards backed by full orchestra.

PULP: Manchester had its representation of useless comic punk outfits, headed by Slaughter and the Dogs and then down through The Drones, V2, Snyder, Emergency, The Freshies, Panik.

SPHERICAL OBJECTS: Bizarre quintet formed around ex Electric Circus DJ Steve Solomar. Fresh rock music that aims for something precious and lingering. Group released smartly packaged *Past And Parcel* album on their own Object label, a compact, promising selection with unusual instrumental textures and supple if arch melodies.

RABID: Manchester independent label, led by subversive capitalist Tosh Ryan. Marketed Slaughter And The Dogs, Ed Banger and the Nosebleeds, John Cooper-Clarke in 1977 with respectable results. Lurched into 1978 lavishly releasing eccentric records with no apparent quality control and no concern for organisation, produced by house producer Martin (Zero) Hannett with zest and untidiness representative of the label. Jilted John's sublime broadcast of inferiority, was released to widespread incredulity but with the backing of EMI reached top 5. Ed Banger's *Kinnel Tommy* is equally individual and outlandish, though not as inspired, and Giro's insidious *Central Detention Centre* is more than could be expected considering their lifeless stage antics. Rabid's plans are for more 'even wierder' singles, by such as Gordon the Moron, Ryan's own Emperor's Clothes, and free jazz group The Prime Time Suckers.

Singles: *The Drones* — *Temptations Of A White Collar Worker* (O.H.M.S. '77). V2 — V2 (*Bent* '78). Jilted John — Jilted John (*Rabid* '78). Gyro — *Central Detention Centre* (*Rabid* '78). Albums: Various — *Short Circuit* (*Last Night At The Electric Circus*) (Virgin '78). *Spherical objects* — *Past And Parcel* (Object '78). John The Postman — *Puerile* (Big Bent '78).

BOB MARLEY & THE WAILERS

Bob Marley—vocals, guitar. Aston 'Family Man' Barrett—bass. Carlton Barrett—drums. Tyrone Downey—keyboards. Junior Marvin—guitar. Rita Marley/Judy Mowatt/Marcia Griffith—back-up vocals.

Despite everything still King Dread, and the single most powerful force for internationalising and popularising Jamaican music, Bob Marley has suffered a vexed few years since his triumphal UK/US concerts of '75.

An attempted assassination attempt in December '76 prior to his playing a free JA concert — widely interpreted as boost for Prime Minister Manley's election run-up — left Marley and his wife injured, his manager near to death. In exile in Florida and London he recorded extensively, providing him with *Exodus* — perhaps his finest album since signing to Island — and *Kaya*, a disappointing and bland affair. A string of hit singles was culled from these albums. In '77 Marley also had operation on a cancerous big toe, forcing cancellation of US



MALCOLM MCLAREN

There was Col. Tom Parker in the early '50's, Brian Epstein and Andrew Loog Oldham in the early '60's but only the '70s could have created such a bizarre successor to the svengali-hyper-manager as Malcolm McLaren, a self-defined anarchist whose many ploys in bedazzling the media and foisting the band he managed, The Sex Pistols, into the blinding beam of spotlight notoriety, have few competitors in the bizarre stakes.

Born either in the East End or Finchley (no-one is quite certain), McLaren made an impression in art college where he was a stolid Marxist. His vision of rock and roll having snuffed it in the '50s, he made a film about Billy Fury who, alongside the deceased Johnny Kidd, he considered to be the only bonafide British rocker extant.

Needing funds to back up this venture he opened a '50s memorabilia emporium in the premises of the defunct Paradise Garage in King's Road, naming it 'Let It Rock'. The shop gained a reputation not only amongst the Teds who terrorized Jean Machine emporiums in their way to this mecca, but also a number of folk at that point planting the seed of the new wave (unknown to them, mark you).

Iggy And The Stooges, The Flamin' Groovies and The MC5 became regular clients, but MM remained unmoved until one day The New York Dolls one day arrived in all their glitter and gash, impressing him so much with their style and attitude that he accepted their offer to check out their 1973 gig at Biba's.

After Biba's McLaren became hooked and followed the band around Europe, fascinated by these youngbloods and their feisty style which singlehandedly seemed to resurrect the spirit of rock 'n' roll he'd considered dead since the twilight '50s. Indeed he became an obsessive, frantically mugging up on all the bands he'd missed while providing patronage for a motley crew of Shepherd's

Bush nouveau mods who used his shop (now changed from a nostalgic emporium to the subversively mondo-modern 'Sex') as a communal meeting place.

His encouragement of the quartet of Steve Jones, Paul Cook, Wally and Glen Matlock (who worked at 'Sex' on weekends) included paying for rehearsal time, until boredom and wanderlust drove him to New York ultimately to manage the Dolls, now well onto their down-bound days.

McLaren attempted a complete resurrection — decking the band out in red patent-leather uniforms, using a hammer-and-sickel flag as a stage back-drop and forcing the group to rehearse a whole new repertoire. Many old fans claim the McLaren/Dolls gigs were their best ever, but drug problems, girl problems and the smell of defeat killed the group off in Florida mid-way through a tour.

Returning disillusioned, he set about investing his unstoppable energies into the aforementioned scraggly Shepherd's Bush crew — forcing them to improve musically, rejigging their personnel and teaching 'em some of the tricks he'd learned in New York.

One N.Y. figure, Richard Hell, had mightily impressed him with his style of short rat's-tail hair and ripped clothing, and when the final fourth member was located, one John Lydon, the band suddenly came together. McLaren had long ago chosen the name itself — The Sex Pistols. (He even took singing lessons at one point in despair of finding the right component).

McLaren saw in Rotten the perfect human-blueprint for his master-plan and all five set about working their unorthodox way towards finding an audience. After some media coverage and a steady series of gigs, that audience was located — only it wasn't just the expected crowd of Sex Shop habitués and ex-glam rockers but a movement far more potent than McLaren could have imagined.

With McLaren at the wheel, the Pistols notoriety spread like a bush fire, burning up two record contracts, with EMI and A & M, along the way. And around this time McLaren appeared to change dramatically. He seemed to turn against allies for no apparent reason, and where once he envisioned a whole vanguard of young bands revitalising the rock scene he now jealously kept the Pistols away from their peers. At first it seemed like paranoia over the vitriolic public backlash the Pistols' caused — then began to look more like megalomania. His main interest seemed to be in using the band as characters in a film entitled *Who Killed Bambi?*, abetted by the scriptwriter and director of *Beyond The Valley Of The Dolls*.

Finally, internal incompatibility caused the group to split at the end of a two-week US tour and McLaren was left holding the business strings. A once self-proclaimed anarchist, he was now just another high-pressure businessman with all the quirks, paranoia and petty penchant for vengeance that went with the trade. A bitter feud began with Johnny Rotten, whom he refused to pay, while the only remaining proof of his existence in terms of activity is The Sex Pistols' film — no longer *Bambi* but an effort called *The Great Rock 'n' Roll Swindle*, his apparent swansong to the death of rock 'n' roll.

These days he's widely dubbed as punk's number one villain, a scheming character — mostly by those he's done no harm to anyway. It's hip to slag McLaren now, just as it was hip to regard him a visionary and brilliant architect and conceptualist a year back.

When facts are faced, McLaren will be seen as both hero and villain. Without him, it's a fair contention that 'punk' would still mean nothing more than some arcane term for '60' bands playing Farfisa organs in two-chord songs of disposable consequence.

MATUMBI

Glen 'Bagga' Fagan—vocals. Jah Bunny Donaldson—drums. Glaister Venn—vocals. Webster Johnson—keyboards and vocals. Euton 'Fergus' Jones—congas, percussion. Easton 'Jah Blake'—bass. Dennis 'Blackbeard' Bovell—lead guitar and vocals.

Formed in Battersea in 1972, Matumbi (from a Nigerian word meaning 'born again') occupy a singular prominence in the genesis of UK reggae.

Their earliest recordings for Trojan were mostly indifferent, actuated by company policy, but release of their *After Tonight* single for Safari in 1976 brought a change in fortune for the group when it went on to become one of the most popular tunes of the year, despite a Trojan injunction.

Matumbi then recorded under a variety of identities, most notably as African Stone and 4th Street Orchestra; giving birth to a London fashion with their *Ah Who Seh? Go Deh!* and *Leggo! Ah-Fe-We-Dis* Rama instrudub sets for pioneer producer Dennis Harris. Towards the beginning of '77 they came forward with their own Matumbi label, and a further chart-topper, *The Man In Me*. Again, Trojan issued writs. Coupling a re-recorded *After Tonight* with *The Man In Me*, Trojan scored the biggest reggae success of '77, maintaining a top ten entry for six months.

In early '78 scooped the first 'Reggae Awards', voted best group and best single as well as walking off with a number of individual prizes.

Released from Trojan the same year, Matumbi signed with EMI, writing the title song for television series, *Empire Road*. Dennis Bovell, meanwhile, carved himself a reputation as one of the UK's leading reggae engineers with a number of stylised productions.

Singles: After Tonight (Safari '76). The Man In Me (Trojan '77). Empire Road (Harvest '78). Albums: Ah Who Seh? Go Deh? (Rama '76). Leggo! Ah-Fe-We-Dis (Rama '76). Yuh Learn (Rama '77). The Best Of (Trojan '77). Dennis Bovell productions—Singles: African Stone—Run Rasta Run (K&B '76). How Long Must I Wait? (Concrete Jungle '76). Tabby Kelly—Don't Call Us No Immigrants (Unite '77). Errol Campbell—Jah Man (Tempus '78). Albums: Strictly Dub Wize (Tempus '78).



Burning all illusion tonight (All you need is cash)

**Q: DO YOU BELIEVE IN MAGIC?
A: THE PUMPS DON'T WORK
'CAUSE THE VANDALS TOOK THE
HANDLE**

IN THIS godless year of our
ex-Lord 1978, both rock music and
the rock music industry display a
lower hypocrisy count than at any
time since the mid-to-late '50s.

Rock music has always
concerned itself with (and been
represented by) a combination of
money, myth and machine but,
while this unholy trinity has never
held higher sway over rock, its
'benevolent' dictatorship has
never seemed more self-evident.

Currently, we are faced with a
situation that encompasses both
the industrialisation of rock on a
previously undreamt-of scale and
a greater variety of musical choice
than ever before.

On the one hand, new peaks in
multimegaplatinum commercial
success are celebrated almost
weekly by the industry as the latest
Bee Gees / Boston / ELO /
Fleetwood Mac artefact sells
bigger, better and faster than
anything previously known to
human, humanoid or label
executive.

On the other, still newer and
weirder exercises and enterprises
are being released on an ever
increasing number of still newer
and weirder (and smaller) record
labels — to say nothing of the fact
that more traditional modes of
music like jazz, folk and blues are
now better represented than at
any other stage since the invention
of the long-playing record.

You guessed: this is the modern
world that you've heard about. But
is it any different from the ancient
world, except in degree?

**Q: ONE TWO THREE, WHAT ARE
WE FIGHTING FOR?
A: ONLY ONE ROAD TO
PARADISE**

IN THE earliest days of rock and
roll, none of the leading
entrepreneurs (men like Sam
Phillips, Ahmet Ertegun or
Leonard Chess) were concerned
with much of anything save
making money out of the
particular forms of music that they
dug.

Love it or hate it, like it or lump
it, we are living in the Western
World, and most of the Western
World is (in case you hadn't
noticed) organised on
determinedly capitalist lines. To
expect the rock industry to
function as anything other than
competitive capitalism in a
competitively capitalist society is
to crucially misunderstand both
rock and its attendant industry.

Only in Scandinavia have
genuinely radical record
companies managed to thrive to
any real extent, but then Northern
Europe's politics are largely
determined by that area's
idiosyncratic brand of enlightened
socialism — although even
Finland's courageous Love
Records has recently succumbed
to economic pressures and an EMI
International takeover despite its
sensibly supporting a healthily
extreme catalogue by more
obviously MOR signings.

And in the meantime, one notes

the unrelentingly hostile attitude
of the communist world to
anything even vaguely resembling
Proper (therefore 'subversive')
Rock Music — to wit in particular
the post '68 Czechoslovak
authorities' harassment, trial and
subsequent imprisonment of
members of Prague band The
Plastic People.

Rock music remains a
by-product of Western urban
culture, and if our stumbling
Babylon falls — as well it might —
then rock will fall with it. Despite
the naive protestations of
armchair Marxists, there is
absolutely no place set aside for
any such evolving popular music
in the so-called socialist (i.e.
totalitarian) state.

After all, what is rock if it isn't an
insidious, usually hedonistic
indulgence, and therefore a
distraction from The True
Revolutionary Way? So get ready,
Global Kidz, you're gonna have to
weigh your enjoyment of this
particular distraction against the
necessary struggle for what used
to be called a Better World — and
count the cost.

And whilst on the currently
fashionable subject of rock
activism, the only *true* rock
activism is music that encourages
the listener to think creatively
about his/her/its (delete where
most obviously applicable)
relationship to his/her/its fellow
humans and to the environment —
social, political and personal —
with a positive view to improving
same. At best, the work of a Tom
Robinson can promote an attitude
to a specific issue or set of issues
which is vastly preferable to the
type of received swinishness
readily available in the UK in the
Fleet Street trashos, but it's still no
more than teaching people what to
think.

If we are going to be
presumptuous enough to demand
any miracles from rock and roll,
the very least for which we can
settle should be that it teaches
people *how* to think and feel anew
— not *what*.

**WE-E-E-LLLL (pause) IT'S A-ONE
FOR THE MONEY, TWO FOR THE
MONEY, THREE FOR THE MONEY,
FOUR FOR THE MONEY...**

BUT back in the comparatively
Wild West (ho ho), we return to
consider various crucial
misunderstandings. During the
late '60s, it became fashionable
among musicians and corporate
executives alike to foster the
delusion (or even actually delude
themselves) that their primary
objective was not so much making
money as caring for and somehow
'saving' humanity. We're thinking
especially of the slogan coined by
Andrew Loog Oldham's
Immediate label, "Happy to be a
part of the industry of human
happiness", and those instigated
for CBS's Rock Machine sampler
series, "The Rock Machine Turns
You On" and the dreadful "The
Man Can't Bust Our Music"
campaign.

Naturally, anybody who
considers the rock industry to be
anything other than exploitative
(not to mention sexploitative) is a
complete ninny and fully deserves

to be taken for every penny he or
she has got. The modern mind can
but boggle (as indeed do ours at
this precise moment as we listen
to "Saturday Night Fever" and idly
count the flotillas of UFOs silently
whizzing over Islington) at the
amount of hallucinogenic drugs
that must have been consumed
both on and off stage to have
allowed this delusion to survive
for 35 seconds, let alone several
years.

Rock has always been
something of a palliative (to
paraphrase David Bowie, it helps
you *think* you can be like your
dreams tonight — hence its
persistent fascination), but the late
'60s allowed both it and its
industry to perpetrate one of the
most bamboozling and
preposterous hoaxes to which
Western youth has been subjected
in recent times. It's as ludicrous to
bemoan the 'commercialisation' of
rock today as it would be to
collapse in shock because the sun
rose in the east this morning (it
did, didn't it?).

If nothing else, the late '70s have
seen the breaking of a trance and
the dispersion of much of the fog
of mythology created ten years
ago. For better or for worse (and
we say for better), the image of the
music corporations as altruistic,
democratic, public-spirited or even
vaguely nice organisations has
been effectively demolished.

After a fashion, rock music has
experienced its very own
Watergate — although it could
(and should) be said that rock's
very own oil crisis (the alleged
vinyl shortage of '73/'74) hardly
had a sobering or salutary effect;
now there are simply more
records and they're vastly more
expensive (and the world's natural
resources are thus reduced
accordingly, and so it goes, so it
goes and where it's going no-one
knowzzzzzzzz....)

But what helped precipitate this
phony crisis of conscience, this
flood of crocodile tears and regret
at the supposed passing of noble
ideals that had no logical reason to
exist in the first place within this or
any other corporate machine?

Simple, Herbert! It was the
recognition of the almost
complete artistic and emotional
bankruptcy of both rock and the
biz prior to the arrival of (a) Dr
Feelgood in late '74 (or whenever
it was. How should we know?
We're only writing this because
they promised us money) (b) The
Ramones in mid-'75 (c) David
Bowie's "Station To Station" in
early '76 and (d) THE SEX
PISTOLS!!!!!!

**ARISTA SAY THEY LOVE IT BUT
THE KIDS CAN'T DANCE TO IT**

THE Feelgoods played short, sharp
and devastating bursts of mean,
flinty R&B and dressed in soiled
suits, shirts and string ties — and
had short hair. The Ramones
detonated short, sharp and
murderously melodic anthems to
the joys of dumbness from inside
especially scuzzy jeans, sneakers
and leather jackets. Both bands
can be seen as ambassadors of
sanity (don't laugh, Wilko),
sweeping away the pomp and
circumstance that had glutted the

rock arena for what had seemed
like several millennia (cf. Yes, Led
Zeppelin, Jethro Tull and other
bombardiers of bombast), while
Bowie's "Station To Station"
exposed the essential
contradictions facing the would-be
romantic in modern industrial
society (hi! I'm the last sentence
and I'd just like to say that I'm
completely fraudulent and I don't
caaaaaare!).

The aforementioned were the
prologue, but The Sex Pistols were
the entire first act. By taking
Bowie's dictum that "the bitter
comes out better on a stolen
guitar" absolutely literally, Rotten
and his unsavoury business
associates shoved a gigantic
suppository up the vast and
hitherto diarrhoeatic sphincter of
corpus rockus.

The Sex Pistols and their
immediate peers and successors
were essentially Luddites in best
post-Industrial Revolution
tradition, disdaining the niceties of
machine living and life in favour of
nihilistic mayhem.

The resulting enema cleared the
way for the re-establishment of the
guiding principles (or unashamed
lack of same) that had marked the
introduction of Proper Rock And
Roll way back there in the
Fabulous '50s (greed is thuh werd
is thuh werd is thuh werd....)

We are now taking a break to
listen to Dave Edmunds and Wilko
Johnson and suggest you do
likewise. Meetcha back here in half
an hour, okay?

**DON'T CRY FOR ME, PYE AND
DECCA**

ALMOST concurrent with the rise
of the Pistols came the
independent record labels boom,
pioneered by Stiff and Chiswick
(and Beserkly in the US), the first
and best of multitudes, and
considerably more successful both
aesthetically and economically
than the half-assed 'progressive'
labels of the early '70s, which were
little more than corporate
tokenism dating from the period
prior to 'progressive' rock's
degeneration into either
pomp-rock or headbanging.

Suddenly (or so it must've
seemed to Da Biz at large), there
were positive hordes of so-called
punk bands recording on hordes
of odd little labels. The trouble was
that at least one of these labels —
Jake Riviera and Dave Robinson's
Stiff Records — had a nasty habit
of coming up with obviously world
class artists who had — shock
horror — been rejected almost to a
man (or even a person) by the
majors. From the vantage point
available only to cynical Martian
(or Andromedan) observers, it all
seemed too good to be true.

In fact, it was too good to be
true. Whilst the Pistols continued
the systematic slaughter of any
number of terribly meaningful and
totally meaningless 'hippie' sacred
cows that had 'naturally' been
conveniently received into
corporate biz jargon (it is at this
moment that we wonder how
many of Jimmy Carter's present
aides were at Woodstock along
with noted caring human beings
like Crosby, Still and Nash, Joan
Baez, Country Joe, Alvin Lee,

By Angus MacKinnon and Charles Shaar Murray

Swami Satchidananda, etc.), the majors began a totally undignified scramble for 'punk product'.

However, it wasn't only punk bands who gained from this sudden and unprecedented upsurge of artists who were not totally boring and worthless (as in Genesis, ELO, Maria Muldaur, The Rolling Stones, James Taylor, Elton John, Chick Corea, etc. ad maximam nauseum). It was suddenly possible to play rockabilly, R&B, reggae, electronic music... in fact you could be anything or anybody — even Nick Lowe or Pere Ubu — and elicit illicit interest. You could even be D-E-V-O (but we'd rather you weren't).

In short, you could be anything whatsoever except Frank Zappa, The New Riders Of The Purple Sage or Sir Arthur Conan The Barbarian Doyle and still make yourself heard, if not understood.

The major multinational corporations were forced to recognise that something musical existed other than Mass Music for Mass Man to buy while shopping in the Mass Market. In this context, it's interesting to note that the majors are continuing to sign what might loosely be termed as 'new' artists less out of a desire to keep up than a desire to be seen to be keeping up. They may well invest large sums of money in these signings, but the fact remains that so far only The Stranglers and Elvis Costello's US leasing have earned large sums of money for a corporate label.

The spectacle of the majors bidding for some sort of credibility (with whom, one might well ask?) by signing and supporting blatantly 'unprofitable' acts must surely have caused consternation in the boardrooms of their American head offices (witness CBS America and their dithering over the release of the first Clash album, one of the few authentic masterpieces of the British new wave).

However, the majors can effortlessly support this tentative and spurious display of courage and conviction by the incredible expansion of their markets in recent years. This has been achieved largely through more efficiently and subliminally co-ordinated promotional devices (buy the cigarette lighter of the belt buckle of the t-shirt of the poster of the cover of the album, etc.). In fact, the majors remain as two-faced (and po-faced) as ever. CBS America (again), for example, have found themselves extremely lucrative pastures to graze in Latin America and unsurprisingly thereby help prop up numerous extremely conservative (read 'fascist') regimes.

Meanwhile, CBS UK have signed The Clash.

MY MIND BEATS TIME LIKE KRAFTWERK

AGAINST this flush of hyper-successful marketing and money-making, the standard of living — at least in the UK — continues to fall whilst the percentage of income spent on entertainment continues to rise. The presumed significance of this

is simply that, although take-home pay is proportionately decreasing, our need for social or anti-social amusement and diversion (records, movies, discos, gigs, sport — name your poison) is increasing. Increased speed of life means increased speed of consumption. Something's got to give: in this case our brains. We are now taking ten minutes (to the millisecond) to listen to Kraftwerk.

Mmmmm, that's colder. Now let's get rational.

Once upon a time rock was content to ponder the ramifications of boy-meets-girl and sundry other universal truths (or lies) and ask questions no more profound than "Why must I be a teenager in love?" or "How can you laugh when you know I'm down?" Alas, no longer...

Yes, apparently dissatisfied with its grandiose and gargantuan 'sociological' pretensions, rock has now become self-consciously technological: a terrible tandem. Hence we find in the luminous red, white and black corner, Kraftwerk the Dusseldorf Dynamos!!!! (applause). And in the green, black, yellow, blue, red and industrial grey corner, Devo the Akron Atavists!!!! (applause, shouts of 'kill the referee,' etc.).

Kraftwerk propose our passive evolution into Mechanical Man; Devo our passive devolution (oh, all right then: de-evolution) into Biological Man. What are we to do? In the same count of the computer, we may as well include Throbbing Gristle and their telling catchphrase "Industrial music for industrial people" (think about it) and Pere Ubu with their absorption in the industrial systems of their hometown Cleveland, Ohio, and their synthesist Allen Ravenstein using his axe to reproduce the sound of the human brain (you remember: that lump of software driven by electrical impulses that you were issued with when you started the course. Check: it may still be inside your skull) thinking.

None of these developments are particularly startling in themselves, more of an occupational hazard of rock (?) exploring the ways and means of passing through an increasingly technological age. But whereas rock musicians at first just appropriated technological devices and made use of them by becoming immersed in either more sophisticated recording and performing possibilities or so-called technorock itself (if not both), now they're prepared to accept technology on its own terms by actually attempting to reduplicate the sounds and systems of machinedom in music (music?), so expect veritable production lines of electronic robobands to shunt onto your doorstep in the immediate future. Hang on, here they come now...

These days Kraftwerk are making machine music and telling us either to be machines or that we're machines already. At the same time, their albums are meticulously mixed by master disco technicians. Is there a moral somewhere in there, or is this just another beeper wheeze on Kraftwerk's part?

Ah, disco... it thickens and it beckons. It can be (and often is) played by machines alone. Is disco therefore the ultimate remote-control music for our remote-control age? Conceptually, yes; actually, no. What else can you say about a form of music where the label copy sometimes informs you exactly how many beats - per - minute the song contains?

POMP IT UP (until you can't feel it)

MIND you, you can at least *dance* to disco (remember dancing?) — which is more than can be said for the other multifarious MassMusic that are inexorably invading our horizons (cat and doorstep, la-la).

How can one dwell within a construct as empty as ELO? It is not inconceivable that their audience includes a large number of generally benign and intelligent persons, but it is painfully apparent that these people — for reasons best known to themselves — are either unwilling or unable to bring their intelligence to bear on the music to which they listen. It was once said that Proper Rock And Roll reaches the intelligence while completely by-passing the intellect, whereas with ELO and their ilk the music makes passing contact with the intellect while leaving both intelligence and emotions safely untouched.

The music of Yes, ELF and acolytes, on the other hand, flatters the listener in an appealingly coy manner by convincing him that he is a pretty intelligent person listening to pretty intelligent music made by pretty intelligent people. What is actually happening is that the listener is being invited to admire the mindless simply because the particular form that this particular breed of mindlessness takes is that of gratuitous complexity: it's difficult to play, therefore it must be good. (We wish that works like "Tales From Topographic Oceans" had been completely impossible). Have we really nothing better to do with ourselves and our (leisure) time than merely compound both the dulling vacuity and/or befuddling complexity of our surroundings? Seems not.

More generally, the net effect of this and much other MassMusic is to convince the listener that society is pretty much alright (which it ain't) and, more directly, that he is pretty much alright (which he probably ain't).

Therefore Da Biz, ever the industry of human happiness, embraces this kind of product with open arms, as does MassMan. In the words of Benjamin J. Grimm: "Sheesh! Wotta revolting development this is!!!"

Or to quote the even more eloquent Howard The Duck: "Waaaauuugh!!!"

At least, however, I and I know what we a deal with these days. And even MassMan doesn't really exist — except as a consumerist (or communist) concept (or slogan).

A MYTH IS AS GOOD AS A MILE IN ROCK AND ROLE...

THE original '50s rock myth was

that of rocker as stud, hedonist, rebel and all-round fun person. To this was added in the late '60s the myth of rocker as sage, spokesman for a generation and concerned human being (not to mention fearless explorer of inner and outer space) and in the '70s, the myth of rock star as martyr and victim with just a whiff of sacrificial goat. Rock, of course, has to feed on a staple diet of mythmaking; it could survive more easily without the Fender Telecaster than without its attendant mythology.

The only thing that can be said for the late '70s is that all these separate strands of myth have either been reweaved or hopelessly confused. To some extent: no change, although artists as disparate as David Bowie and The Ramones have taught us that it is more rewarding and certainly less dangerous to admire expertise at mythmaking than it is to succumb to same. (Is Bryan Ferry a myth without a cause and, if so, how does he feel about it?)

Mind you, the machine men — with their emphasis on negation of personality and, indeed, their denial of the very fact of its existence — are conceivably creating the most dangerous myth of all. While the Western World's hapless obsession with Idom, madom and self-at-all-costs is certainly reprehensible, it is nevertheless vital for us to remain aware that — to paraphrase Robert Fripp — we can still strive to become "small, mobile and highly intelligent units" as opposed to microchips in The Great Silicon Wheel. (Down with Devo!!)

FREEDOM'S JUST ANOTHER WORD FOR SOMETHING ELSE TO BUY (so use it).

IN conclusion (wheeeew!) the weather report is almost favourable. The rock industry has a marked tendency to ignore defiant dissidents until it perceives that they are in some way — however paradoxical — exploitable, whereupon it proceeds with blithe abandon to turn them into the New Establishment and ram them down everybody's throat. There is more dissident rock music seeking an outlet right now than at any other time in this decade, which is all to the good since at worst it is mildly entertaining and at best actively stimulating (as in true rock activism).

The rock industry, however, ain't no charity: you can't have your rock and eat it without someone somewhere somehow paying for it.

Our advice (for what it's worth) is to exploit the industry for all you can get; to seek out and insist on the music of your choice. If you can't find it, play it yourself.

By all means, enjoy rock mythology to the fullest — that's what it's there for — but don't take it seriously — that's *not* what it's there for. You can be like your dreams tonight — just make sure that they're *your* dreams and not some marketing strategist's predigested fantasy.

And if you don't have it now you can still get it.

tour.

In general he has appeared a tortured and confused personality as his status with rock audience — who now comprise mainstay of his following — has increased. The once revolutionary stage show has atrophied into mere ritual, its programming undaunting, the introduction of Marvin on guitar blatant pandering to rock tastes.

In April '78 returned to JA to play 'Peace Concert' in wake of armistice in Kingston's violent and politically warring ghettos, since when public appearances have been scant, though a tour of Africa is projected.

A genuinely unpredictable figure, Marley could as easily disappear from mainstream of rock/reggae activity as become entrenched as rock superstar. His volatile destiny will reveal.

Singles: *Jah Live* (Island '77). *Exodus* (Island '77). *Wait In Vain* (Island '77). *Jamming* (Island '77). *Is This Love* (Island '78). *Black Man Redemption* (Tuff Gong '78). **Albums:** *Exodus* (Island '77). *Kaya* (Island '78).

MC5

Rob Tyner—vocals, harmonica. **Wayne Kramer**—guitar, vocal. **Fred 'Sonic' Smith**—guitar, vocal. **Mike Davis**—bass. **Dennis Thompson**—drums.

Contemporaries of Iggy Pop's Stooges as masters of high-energy Detroit rock and roll, the MC5 both exemplified the social concern and revolutionary / love rhetoric of their time and presaged the amped-up buzzsaw sound of the New Wave. Unlike other bands of the late '60s, there was nothing wimpy or complacent about them; they were more concerned with the lives of the kids on the street than with starships, and their sound was tough, tight, urban and — at their best — almost intolerably exciting. The band broke up in 1972 after an abortive move to the UK.

Nowadays, Thompson and Davis fart about with loser bands like New Order and Destroy All Monsters, Fred Smith leads Sonic's Rendezvous Band and gigs occasionally with Patti Smith, Wayne Kramer is fresh out of jail and considering his position, while Rob Tyner is leading a new MC5.

The MC5 can lay at least as much claim as The Stooges to the title of First '70s Band Of The '60s.

Albums: *Kick Out The Jams* (Elektra '69). *Back In The USA* (Atlantic '70). *High Time* (Atlantic '71).

THE MEKONS

Mary Mekon—bass. **Jon Mekon**—drums. **Tom Mekon**—guitar. **Kevin Medon**—guitars. **Mark Mekon**—vocals. **Andy Mekon**—vocals.

In Spring 1978, amidst the UK's prevailing mood of post-punk disillusion, The Mekons were formed in Leeds. Idealistic purists, they hoped to represent all the positive aspects of punk while striving to avoid the rock-star-rot pratfall that had afflicted the earlier bands.

The Mekons largely avoided doing interviews, using their real surnames and having their photograph taken because they

sought to avoid pushing themselves as individual personalities. They rarely played any gigs other than benefits against racism / facism / sexism.

Musically they were more primitive than Neanderthal Man, boasting a sound redolent of *Spiral Scratch* demos that had been re-recorded by the seminal Velvet Underground if Lou Reed had possessed a sense of humour.

In late '78 The Mekons were the only punk band still extant who could declare that they had no intention of being absorbed into the lucrative music industry without making the listener roar with laughter.

Single: *Never Been In A Riot* (Fast '78).

THE MEMBERS

Nicky Tesco—vocals. **J. M. Carroll**—guitar, vocals. **Nigel Bennett**—guitar, vocals. **Chris Payne**—bass, vocals. **Adrian Lillywhite**—drums.

Highly promising Camberley outfit formed 1977 and now with a hard core following on the London pub and club circuit. Fronted by the animated diminutive Tesco (a politics graduate), their eccentric brand of Punk with its prominent reggae borrowings, is well represented on *Solitary Confinement*, their insidious ode to bedsitterland. Destined for better things, when they find a record company.

Single: *Solitary Confinement* (Stiff '78). Also one track on *Streets* compilation (Beggars Banquet '77).

MERGER

Winston Bennett—guitar, vocals. **Michael Ossei**—keyboards. **Tony Ossei**—drums. **Don Guma**—bass. **Fari**—percussion.

British-based reggae band who mostly dispense with slower, spiritual rhythms in favour of uptempo chants about oppression. After a recent line-up change, they're still a live band of conviction and ability, and much admired by Dylan, who added them to the bill at Blackbushe.

Album: *Exiles In A Babylon* (Sunstar '78).

MINK DE VILLE

Willy De Ville—guitar, vocals. **Louie 'Uptown' Erlanger**—lead guitar. **Manfred Jones**—drums. **Rubens Siguenza**—sax. **Ritch Colbert**—keyboards.

Native New Yorker Willy De Ville was originally a blues-boogie stylist when he formed Mink De Ville in San Francisco 1972. The band played scuzzy S&M leather bars until one night their set was interrupted by a murder in the shower room and Willy & Co. decided to chance their hand in the rapidly emerging CBGB scene back in their hometown.

By this time their music had developed into a melodic Big Apple melting-pot that was a pastiche of New York's myriad cultures; black urban blues and soul, Puerto Rican Hispanic rhythms, white rock 'n' roll and even some West Indian reggae. Their sound was superbly



Willy De Ville

captured on their first album by legendary producer Jack Nitzsche, the line-up of the band brilliantly augmented by the sweet soul music vocal trio The Immortals (whose work on the album earned them their own recording contract). The Nitzsche / Mink De Ville partnership was extended to the band's second album where it worked equally well, though Mink De Ville on stage remain unable to exude the emotive power that Nitzsche's genius provides them with in the confines of the studio.

Singles: *Spanish Stroll* (Capitol '77). *Little Girl* (Capitol '77). *Cadillac Walk* (Capitol '77). **Albums:** *Mink De Ville* (Capitol '77). *Return To Magenta* (Capitol '78).

MISTY

Mas Puck Tyson—lead vocals. **Duxy Tyson**—vocals. **Annette McCalla**—vocals. **Tony Henry**—bass. **Julian Peters**—drums. **Vernon Hunts**—organ. **Delbert McKay**—rhythm guitar. **Dennis Augustine**—lead guitar. **Barry Facey**—lead guitar.

Southall-based Misty outfit were the most promising among the second-wave reggae groups to emerge in 1978.

Formed four years earlier, Misty served their apprenticeship on the local cinema circuit, before branching out with their own label and an itinerary of almost exclusively anti racist and community relations benefits. During this time guitarist Dennis Augustine was sent to prison and temporarily replaced on live shows by Gaylord.

Onstage Misty established their singularity with a set of strong material, militant attire and rivetting performances from lead singer Mas Puck Tyson as 'Pogoing Dread'. Their live gigs were also exemplified by an inevitable guest appearance of one Bongo Danny, rated as among the best UK singers in current activity in some quarters.

Singles: *Six One Penny* (People Unite '78). *Oh Wicked Man* (People Unite '78).

JOHNNY MOPED

Johnny Moped—vocals. **Slimey Toad**—guitar. **Fred Berk**—bass. **Dave Berk**—drums.

If ever a band worked wilfully towards fateful obscurity, Johnny and his Mopeds are it. A total shambles on stage and barely proficient on record, Moped collectively embody the spirit and spunk (especially the spunk) of every urchin and 'erbert who ever broke a string in a garage. They are uniquely brilliant, the best thing to come out of Croydon since the number 12 bus and *Cycledelic*, a terrible beauty of an album, will gather dust in the remainder bins as surely as the colossally anti-charismatic Mr. Moped will continue his awesome struggle to put one foot in front of the other without falling over.

Singles: *No One* (Chiswick '77). *Darling, Let's Have Another Baby* (Chiswick, '78). *Little Queenie* (Chiswick '78). **Album:** *Cycledelic* (Chiswick '78).

MOTORHEAD

Lemmy—lead vocals, bass. **Fast Eddie Clarke**—guitar, vocals. **Philthy Animal Taylor**—drums.

Fronted by notorious ex-Hawkwind bassist Lemmy, Motorhead's potential should not be underestimated. Arguably, the last of the Heavy Metal Power Trios, Motorhead have refined their approach to a primitive all-out sensory assault which has gained them a loyal following and a reputation within the record industry as charismatic underdogs. The recent success of *Louie Louie* is evidence of their ascendancy.

Singles: *Motorhead* (Chiswick '77). *Leavin' Here* (Skydog '77). *Louie Louie* (Bronze '78). **Album:** *Motorhead* (Chiswick '77).

THE MOTORS

Andy McMaster—bass, keyboards, vocals. **Nick Garvey**—guitar, vocals.

The Motors emerged as a hard rock 'n' roll quartet in May '77, led by ex-Ducks Deluxe members, McMaster and Garvey. With Bram Tchaikovsky on guitar and Rick Slaughter on drums, they quickly established a musical style that led to comparisons with Status Quo.

By clever promotion the group still managed to find favour with punk audiences, although all The Motors were decidedly elderly in comparison to New Wave groups. With the release of their debut album, which projected their jack-hammer stage style, they quickly became a popular band. Their second LP showed an abruptly changed style. Most of the songs, including the Top Five hit *Airport* and the follow-up, *Forget About You*, were at least two years old when recorded.

After the Reading Festival '78, The Motors decided to retire for six months, losing Bram, who had formed his own group, Battleaxe, and Slaughter. Beyond a break to write new material, no other plans were known.

Singles: *Dancing The Night Away* (Virgin '77). *Be What You Gotta Be* (Virgin '77). *The Day I Found A Fiver* (Virgin '78). *Airport* (Virgin '78). *Forget About You* (Virgin '78). **Albums:** *The Motors* (Virgin '77). *Approved By The Motors* (Virgin '78).

NEW JERSEY

New Jersey is to New York what Essex is to London: the bright lights, big city is so close but it ain't home.

Noted New Jerseyites include Patti Smith, Debbie Harry, Bruce Springsteen and Southside Johnny.

To discover the true spirit of New Jersey teenagers in the late '70s you need look no further than the *Music To Kill By* album by The Afrika Korps, a collection of spotty garage bands who really do come from garageland. They are the Slicker Boys, The Gizmos, The Look, The Teenage Boys, O. Rex and The Kaiser's Kittens. Their songs have titles like *Creep Skin*, *You're A Tease Baby*, *Jailbait Janet* and *Juvenile Delinquent*. All are feisty, funny, immature, raw and overwhelmingly brilliant. It's only rock 'n' roll, but The Rolling Stones haven't sounded like this for fifteen years.

Album: *The Afrika Korps — Music To Kill By* (Iron Cross '77).

NEW YORK

New York media considers New York refined, cultured — capable of discrimination above and below the national taste plateau. Even their sleazn is affected, whether real or not, with ceaseless panache. After all, the notion of a trash aesthetic was founded here. The New York Dolls' feasting glam postures and pseudo-brash, pseudo-teenage music was regarded as high art, dears, by a lot of the patrons of the Mercer Arts Centre in '73. And the widely mistrusted idea of rock as conceptual art form finds plenty of partisans here.

Speaking of which, amongst those who merely gawked and dug the Dolls was a young Joey Ramone, looking even more gangly in platforms, trying not to rub mascara into eyes sore from not wearing glasses.

A year later the Dolls were going through their final convulsions, about which time Richard Lloyd and Tom Verlaine were walking down the dilapidated Bowery when they passed Hilly Kristal, fixing up his newly-acquired Country, Bluegrass and Blues bar, CBGB's. They talked him into giving them some gigs on slack nights. Chris Stein and Debbie Harry had just split from The Stilettos, deciding to call their new band Blondie because the three girls in the band all had blonde hair.

Meanwhile with a growing following Patti Smith had switched from reciting to singing, and Lenny Kaye, Richard Sohl and herself were looking for gigs outside the poetry circuit, the most receptive of which was CBGB's. They became house raves by the end of the year. David Byrne and Chris Frantz had just moved into a cheap dive about five blocks away, and were looking for a bass player because Tina Weymouth wasn't sure about moving to New York yet.

Detailing the comings and goings that took place between '74 and the avarus explosion in late '76/'77 would take reams. Likewise for the scores of bands who didn't burn quite so brightly — The Planets, The Brats, The Fast, The Miamis, The Poppees, the 15-minute stars of the *Live At CBGB's* and *Live At Max's* albums — and hence missed out on the attention drawn initially by the presence of hip media darling Patti Smith to the founding new underground.

It's too easy to sneer at the role of the media in all this. New York is often accused of being incestuous and pose-ridden. Both of these things it is. The New York scene is confined to a very small clique of blood-givers and leeches; people with ideas and people who hang around them, most of whom have been at it for years. The clientele of CBGB's (a rickety old bar) and Max's Kansas City (a faded glitter palace with all the mercenary ugliness of the Vortex) is made up of very average Americans who drink beer and gape at the aforementioned clique. But without a jaded media frothing up, for probably the first time in years over what it had found, acting like a magnifying glass in reverse, refracting some of the light across the ocean, where in the summer of '76 it made that first Ramones album and those early copies of *Punk* seem much more than they perhaps really were, well who knows?

Cause and effect is a physical law. But the subtle interaction of often unrelated events far and wide is not so easy to pin down.

THE BRATS. Leftover from Mercer Arts Centre days, a mundane hard rock band with an Anglophile bent. Put in comic appearance on second Max's compilation.

BOYFRIENDS. Fast, loud and spikey with pop leanings borrowed on-so-obviously from The Ramones. Unadventurous but saleable. *I Don't Want Nobody* (Bomp '78).

THE CRAMPS. Very original, very effective blend of rockabilly and feedback. Ignored in their home town, they'd be adored here. *Surtin Bird* (Vengeance '78).

THE CRIMINALS. Ex-Doll Sylvain Sylvain's cabaret rock bad joke. *The Kids Are Back* (Sing Sing '78).

ERASERS. Specialize in precious Television / Patti Smith impersonations for the elite crowd. Female front line lends visual distraction while the band searches for their own direction. Bound to be recorded soon.

FLESHTONES. True garage punk. Rumpurs of a deal with Red Star.

THE FAST. An older band rooted in the original '60s power pop. Loud and twee and Anglophiles all. *Boys Will Be Boys* on first Max's compilation. *It's Like Love* (Ram '78).

HELEN WHEELS. Contributes to Blue Oyster Cult repertoire. Her band goes for hard rock guitar domination with biker macho appeal. She goes predictably wild.

HARRY TOLEDO. EP on Spy '77, produced by John Cale.

JUST WATER. Who-influenced band with an album *The Riff* on Branded records spring '77 reviewed favourably in NME. Plus oddball remake of *Singing In The Rain* (Stiff '78).

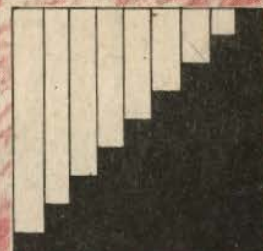
THE MARBLES. An unpretentious, sophisticated pop band with some fine originals, dogged by their visual flatness. *Red Lights* (Ork '77). *Forgive And Forget* (JimBoCo '78).

THE MUMPS. Tight, offbeat and entertaining. *Crocodile Tears* (Bomp '78).

NERVUS REX. Engaging and original four-piece playing somewhere between Flaming Groovies, Left Banke and Talking Heads, whose hesitant stage presence they recall. Unrecorded but promising.

THE PLANETS. Another older band with a strong British influence offering tight and viable hard rock.

STEEL TIPS. Out to shock, confound and surprise, which they do visually but only begin to musically.



New York Adolescent Crime Rate



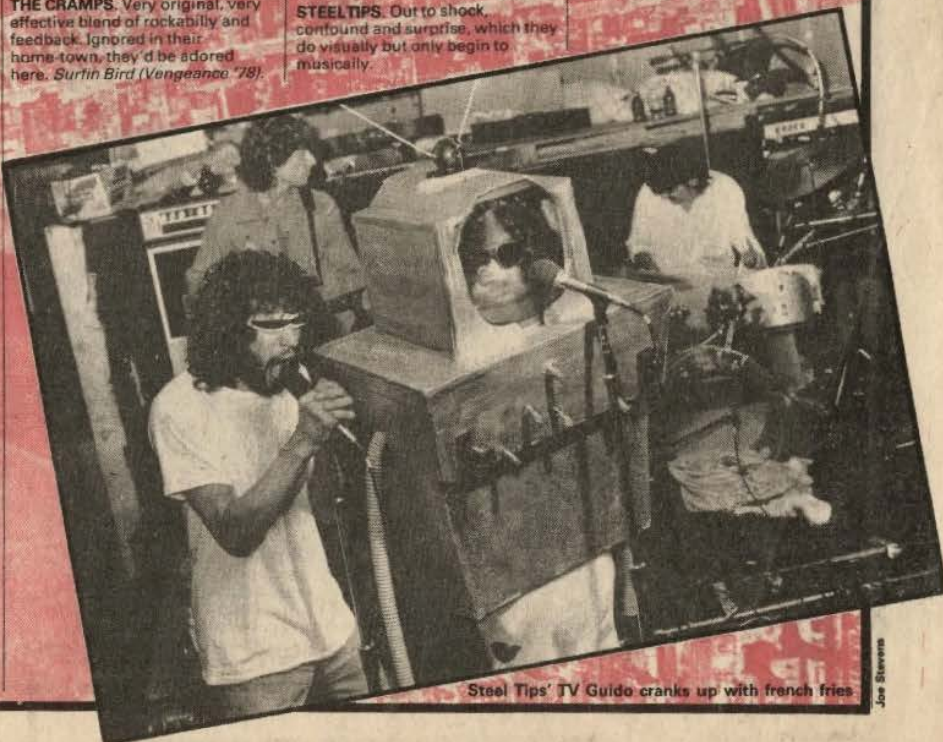
Manhattan Skyline

THE SENDERS. Rhythm'n'blues re-hashers.

SIC F*CKS. Gloriously inconsequential and irreverent send-up. Tunes include *Teenage Abortion*, *Fags On Acid* and *Rock Or Die*.

TEENAGE JESUS & THE JERKS. Cherished by the art crowd for their conceptual content, this band pretend rebellion and affect nothing. Must've seemed a good idea at the time. *Orphans* (Migraine '78).

THE REST. The Contortions, The Feelies, The Miamis, Fuse, TVT, The Fuzors, The Heat, Two Timers, Zantees, The Sorrows, Man-Ka-Zam, The Idols, Corpse Grinders, Shrapnel, Student Teachers, Slender Band, Startoon, Chriscraft, The Rozz, Mars, Mutant Kings, The Invaders, The Testors, The Dots, Birdland, The Rudies.



Steel Tips' TV Guido cranks up with french fries

Joe Stevens



New York Dolls

NEW YORK DOLLS

Johnny Thunders—guitar. **Sylvain Sylvain**—guitar, piano. **David Johansen**—vocals. **Arthur Kane**—bass. **Jerry Nolan**—drums.

Though treated like lepers during their short, spectacular lifespan (1971–75), the star-crossed Dolls are frequently cited as the primal influence on the punk-rock explosion they preceded by five years.

Inveterate poseurs decked out in a glitzy tack of high-heels, belter tops and too-much mascara, the Dolls re-introduced musical incompetence, narcissistic flash and hyperenergised raw, basic rock and roll to a scene stagnating in giant stadiums, self-parody and suffocating technology.

Often described as Renk Xerox Rolling Stones, the Dolls actually had much more in common with Eddie Cochran: their songs documented the everyday concerns of teenagers in the early '70s just as the lamented Cochran had done for his generation in the late '50s. Eddie sang about necking, drive-ins, soda-pop and cheeseburgers — the Dolls of sex, drugs, neurosis and cheeseburgers.

But it wasn't what they played that made them unique, it was the way that they lived it. Their first drummer, sixteen year old Billy Murcia died in a bath from an OD of pills and booze; Nolan and Thunders both received long-term treatment for smack addiction; Arthur Kane was an alcoholic who ended up in the Bowery — not playing CBGB's, but as a bum in the gutter outside.

Ostracised by the music industry at large because of their drug-ravaged excesses and torn apart by their internal bickering (mostly between Johansen and Thunders) the Dolls played their last shot with a relaunch as hammer-and-sickle flying, red-patent-leather wearing communist caricatures, a

desperate plan masterminded by their last manager, one Malcolm McLaren.

Uncle Sam was not amused. Thunders and Nolan quit the band to form the Heartbreakers with Richard Hell and Johansen and the rest struggled on for a while before calling it a day and going their separate ways.

Single: *Jet Boy* (Mercury '74). **Albums:** *New York Dolls* (Mercury '73), *Too Much, Too Soon* (Mercury '74). Both re-packaged and re-released as double in '77 by Mercury.

999 **Nick Cash**—vocals, guitar. **Guy Days**—guitar. **John Watson**—bass. **Pablo Labritain**—drums.

A band that by accident or intent have followed the general drift of surface rock music fads since 1977. Formed early that year around ex-Kilburn man Nick Cash their early material was frantic and aggressive, utilising the necessary devices of paranoia and distaste. By the time their debut album was released in early '78 they were smart, bright, lively, retaining their power, and got hooked in as a power-pop outfit, since when they have become far more ambitious. Despite their systematic development — or because of it — 999 have no distinct identity. **Singles:** *I'm Alive* (UA '77), *Nasty Nasty* (UA '77), *Emergency* (UA '78), *Feeling Alright With The Crew* (UA '78). **Album:** *999* (UA '78). *Separates* (UA '78).

THE NORMAL

Daniel Miller—synthesiser, vocals.

The London-based Normal produced in May '78 one of the first singles from the new school of electronics-based groups. Sporting an inevitable Germanic feel, ripe images of mainlining television signals and sex in

runaway cars (inspired by J. G. Ballard's *Crash*) combine with a perversely attractive digital coldness. The idea isn't as matured as The Human League, but the potential is here to be realised.

Single: *T.V.O.D./Warm Leatherette* (Mute '78).

NUGGETS (Original Artefacts From The First Psychedelic Era 1965-1968)

Any examination of the British New Wave and associated branches must pay some lip service to the forebears of Punk, the mid-'60s American garage bands. While the New York Dolls and Iggy And The Stooges have gained a favourable niche in the hearts of English Punk devotees, this admirable album compilation, programmed, annotated and researched by Lenny Kaye of P. Smith fame and a former rock writer (*Fusion*, *Cream* etc), shows you that there's nothing new under the sun.

You must remember that in 1968 rock and roll bands might just have discovered LSD — in America at least — but they didn't know the meaning of minimalist or self-conscious. In their innocence and their energy you were buying an attitude, a life-style and not a piece of wellwrought product.

Kaye's own immersion in rock and roll is complete. Before playing with The Patti Smith band he worked for Elektra at the end of their golden era and helped run New York's legendary Village Oldies collectors shop.

"I didn't see a connection in genre until we decided to do 'Nuggets' by cities and realised that was too scholarly. The music holds together as a unit, it isn't an exhumation of the '60s. These were archetypal garage bands, second generation from the surf sound and The Ventures. They were the first real American bands as opposed to the instrumental

and vocal groups.

"The English invasion had a lot to do with it but the psychedelic side was original. Garage is an expression of local talent; it was often suburban not big city rock. Bands would play for a week and start creating immediately."

All this should sound familiar to British Punk fans. The continuity of *Nuggets* is remarkably sound and seldom dated. **Roky Erickson And The Thirteenth Floor Elevators** brush quite happily against **Mouse And The Trap**. The one-handed drummer Moulty wins instant notoriety on his eponymous single with **The Barbarians**, while fledgling Stephen Stills and Todd Rundgren compositions fill in some rock history with **The Mojo Men's Sit Down I Think I Love You** and **The Nazz** classic *Open My Eyes*.

The *Nuggets* approach was, "middle ground, not hits or misses but the best cuts we could find which were also indicative of the climate."

As an exercise in style the compilation is perfect, essential listening, definitive entertainment. Later on **Sky Saxon** found religion and Roky Erickson became the maddest human being on the planet Mars but in 1966 even Ted Nugent took a backseat role with the **Amboy Dukes**.

A follow up second *Nuggets* has been promised for a while, and only legal problems delay its progress. Projected inclusions are **Talk Talk** — **The Music Machine**, **A Question Of Temperature** — **Balloon Farm** and alltime favourite from **Richard And The Young Lions** — *Open Up Your Door*.

If you want to find out what pop was like before it became a dirty word, if you're interested in grass roots bubblegum or just basic good time lunacy, then this investment will whet your appetite without drawing too heavily on your pocket.

Album: *Nuggets* (Elektra '72 Re-released on Sire '77).



THE ONLY ONES

Peter Perrett-guitars, vocals. John Perry-guitar. Alan Mair-bass. Mike Kellie-drums.

The Only Ones were formed by Peter Perrett and leads guitarist John Perry, who had both fronted respected but unsigned bands. Perrett won a name for his oddball lyrical vision with London group England's Glory, while Perry was a member of Bristol's Ratbites From Hell. Mair had been a teen-idol in the '60's in Scotland and drummer Kellie came via Spooky Tooth and Peter Frampton.

The Only Ones were signed early in their career to CBS. As yet they have failed to create a sizeable impact outside the press, who have given them near unanimous respect. A debut album met with glowing reviews and their sparse singles output has added to their cult status, still without the larger response promised by their facility in the studio and expertise onstage.

Combining the peculiarly English emotions of Perrett with a two pronged guitar attack, and determinedly apart from any trend or movement, The Only Ones threaten to get somewhere on their own terms.

Singles: *Lovers of Today* (Vengeance '77). *Another girl, Another Planet* (CBS '78).
Album: *The Only Ones* (CBS '78).



AUGUSTUS PABLO

Rockers pioneer, producer and multi-instrumentalist Augustus Pablo made his reputation in the middle of the '70s with melodic-led updatings of Studio One rhythms. He has remained one of the heroes of the youth roots music ever since, and within the past year has turned his activities to productions of artists like Hugh Mundell and Te-Track, maintaining a consistently high quality of output.

Singles: *King Tubby Meets The Rockers Uptown* (Island '78). *Tales Of Pablo* (Tropical '75). *East Of The River Nile* (Hawkeye '77). *Pablo Meets Mr Bassie* (Rough Trade '78). *Te-Track — Let's Get Started* (Hawkeye '77). *Hugh Mundell — Let's All Unite* (Greensleeves '78).
Albums: *King Tubby Meets Rockers Uptown* (Clocktower-US '77). *Hugh Mundell Africa Must Be Free By 1983* (Message '78).

GRAHAM PARKER AND THE RUMOUR

Graham Parker-guitar, sax, vocals. Bob Andrews-keyboards, vocals. Martin Belmont-guitar, vocals. Stephen Goulding-drums, vocals. Andrew Bodnar-bass.

Predating new wave by over a



Pauline asks a question. GP says don't dictate

year, in early '76 Graham Parker and The Rumour stormed into rock like an angry terrier worrying contented sheep. Parker, from Camberley, was a complete unknown who'd had a succession of dead-beat jobs, while The Rumour comprised renowned players from pubrockers Brinsley Schwarz, Ducks Deluxe and BonTemps Roulee. Initially Parker was seen as an upstart, riding on the backs of veterans like Schwarz and Andrews.

Scrawny and rat-faced, Parker was one of the first anti-stars of the '70s; and with a vocal and songwriting talent as big as his own ego, he was soon acknowledged as one of the decade's great white R&B artists.

Howlin' Wind was unreservedly acclaimed, even if Parker blatantly exhibited his Dylan, Van Morrison and Springsteen influences. It established a strong cult following, and before his second LP was released his fans were so eager to get new recordings they'd pay vast sums for the 'official bootleg' *Live At Marble Arch*.

Heat Treatment was very much the companion album to the debut, recorded quickly as a holding operation while they spent their time touring, but *Stick To Me*, originally greeted by mixed and questioning reviews, was Parker coming of age; and although it was badly produced GP has always compared it to the Stones' *Exile On Main Street*, immodestly claiming it too would be an undiscovered classic for a few years.

Within a year of emerging GP&R became a headlining British act, though not a great sales point apart from such isolated hits as the *Pink Parker EP*. It was this lack of success — especially in America where their stage shows were as much acclaimed as in the UK — which has undoubtedly prevented them achieving the major status they deserve.

The Parkerilla was a deliberate attempt to put matters right — only to result in further

disappointment, while the original intention of The Rumour to pursue a parallel career — marked by the release of *Max* — seemed to have been dropped.

But commercial success never truly reflects talent, and it's more significant that at Bob Dylan's Blackbushe Picnic in July '78, GP&R were an undisputable triumph, second only to the old master himself.

Singles: *Silly Thing* (Vertigo '76). *Soul Shoes* ('76). *Hotel Chambermaid* ('76). *Pourin' It All Out* ('77). *Pink Parker EP* ('77). *The Rumour — Do Nothing Til You Hear From Me* ('77). *New York Shuffle* ('77). *Hey Lord, Don't Ask Me Questions* ('78). *All* (Vertigo).
Albums: *Howlin' Wind* (Vertigo '76). *Heat Treatment* (Vertigo '76). *Max* (Vertigo '77). *Stick To Me* (Vertigo '77). *The Parkerilla* (Vertigo '78).

PARLIAMENT

Inc: Funkadelic, Bootsy's Rubber Band, various solo offsprings.

Otherwise known as the Parliafunkadelicment Thang, the Mothership, Parliament were the amorphous brainchild of 38 year old acid fallout George Clinton, who founded them as a vocal group in the mid '50s. Superficially a crazy, surreal circus, culled from the ranks of the James Brown Band, and equipped with overblown characters and a homespun language used to spread the message of (plure) funk salvation, Clinton's operation is almost the only black American musical unit to come forward with a social consciousness in the disco soporific '70s.

A hippy revolutionary who didn't get the fight knocked out of him, Clinton rallies against the consumer lifestyle and related evils screaming 'THINK! It ain't illegal yet' over loud elastic bump rhythms. For a cogent introduction try *Chocolate City*, a wickedly funny and subversive song about

blacks 'not needing the bullet when they've got the ballot'.

Singles: *Chocolate City* (Casablanca '74).
Albums: *Mothership Connection* (Casablanca '75). *Clones of Dr. Funkenstein* (Casablanca '76). *As Funkadelic — Hardcore Jollies* (Warner Bros '77).

PENETRATION

Pauline Murray-vocals. Neale Floyd-guitar. Fred Purser-guitar. Robert Blamire-bass. Gary Smallman-drums.

Feisty, progressive Punk band from Durham pit village of Ferryhill. Formed late 1976, inspired by Sex Pistols, Patti Smith. Played first gig in February '77, supporting Generation X at The Roxy. Content to serve a lengthy apprenticeship, the band gigged extensively throughout '77, but continued to base themselves in the North-East, all but oblivious to the burgeoning London punk scene. Floyd, a fan of the band, replaced original guitarist Gary Chaplin in March '78, while the recent acquisition of Purser has fully fleshed out their sound. Their status — and that of Pauline in particular as an excellent singer and reflective songwriter — has been corroborated with the release of their debut album *Moving Targets*, produced by one-time Gong member Mike Howlett.

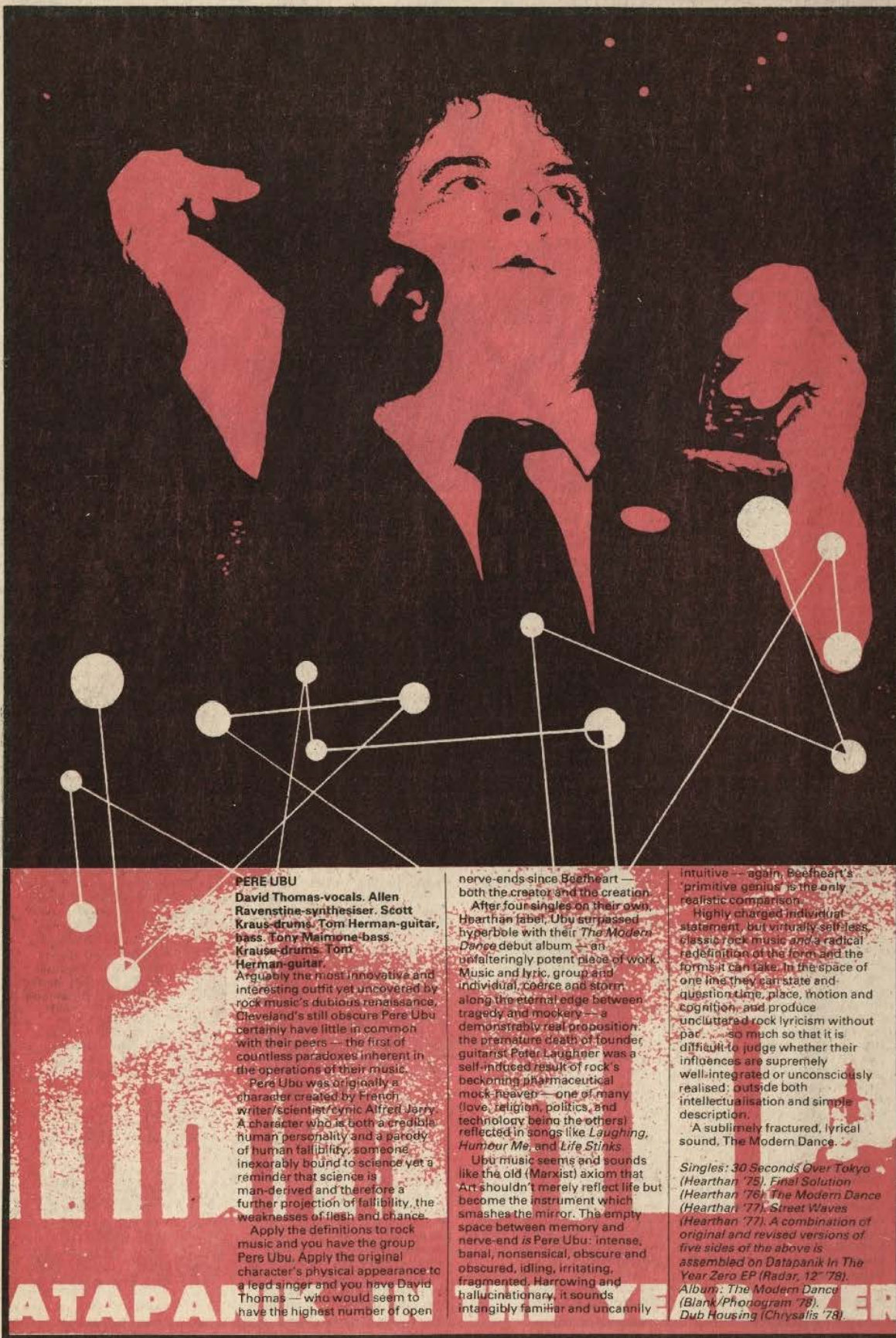
Singles: *Don't Dictate* (Virgin '77). *Firing Squad* (Virgin '78).
Album: *Moving Targets* (Virgin '78).

100% COTTON
BAUMWOLLE

M



Gus Stewart

**PERE UBU**

David Thomas-vocals. Allen Ravenstine-synthesiser. Scott Kraus-drums. Tom Herman-guitar, bass. Tony Maimone-bass. Krause-drums. Tom Herman-guitar.

Arguably the most innovative and interesting outfit yet uncovered by rock music's dubious renaissance, Cleveland's still obscure Pere Ubu certainly have little in common with their peers — the first of countless paradoxes inherent in the operations of their music.

Pere Ubu was originally a character created by French writer/scientist/cynic Alfred Jarry. A character who is both a credible human personality and a parody of human fallibility, someone inexorably bound to science yet a reminder that science is man-derived and therefore a further projection of fallibility, the weaknesses of flesh and chance.

Apply the definitions to rock music and you have the group Pere Ubu. Apply the original character's physical appearance to a lead singer and you have David Thomas — who would seem to have the highest number of open

nerve-ends since Beethoven — both the creator and the creation.

After four singles on their own Hearthan label, Ubu surpassed hyperbole with their *The Modern Dance* debut album — an unfalteringly potent piece of work. Music and lyric, group and individual, coerce and storm along the eternal edge between tragedy and mockery — a demonstrably real proposition: the premature death of founder guitarist Peter Laughner was a self-induced result of rock's beckoning pharmaceutical mock-heaven — one of many (love, religion, politics, and technology being the others) reflected in songs like *Laughing*, *Humour Me*, and *Life Stinks*.

Ubu music seems and sounds like the old (Marxist) axiom that Art shouldn't merely reflect life but become the instrument which smashes the mirror. The empty space between memory and nerve-end is Pere Ubu: intense, banal, nonsensical, obscure and obscured, idling, irritating, fragmented, harrowing and hallucinatory, it sounds intangibly familiar and uncannily

intuitive — again, Beethoven's 'primitive genius' is the only realistic comparison.

Highly charged individual statement, but virtually selfless, classic rock music and a radical redefinition of the form and the forms it can take. In the space of one line they can state and question time, place, motion and cognition, and produce uncluttered rock lyricism without par... so much so that it is difficult to judge whether their influences are supremely well-integrated or unconsciously realised: outside both intellectualisation and simple description.

A sublimely fractured, lyrical sound, *The Modern Dance*.

Singles: *30 Seconds Over Tokyo* (Hearthan '75), *Final Solution* (Hearthan '76), *The Modern Dance* (Hearthan '77), *Street Waves* (Hearthan '77). A combination of original and revised versions of five sides of the above is assembled on *Datapunk In The Year Zero EP* (Radar, 12" '78). **Album:** *The Modern Dance* (Blank/Phonogram '78). **Dub Housing** (Chrysalis '78).

ATAPUNK IN THE YEAR ZERO

Pennie Smith

Group cut up the Pop profile

LEE PERRY

Perhaps JA's best known producer/engineer among rock audiences, Lee Perry aka Scratch The Upsetter has maintained an individual and eminent presence in the island's music in recent years.

One of the pioneers of dub production in the early '70s, Perry's solo expeditions have continued to sporadically delight, though his work on other artists has gained him greater success, notably with Junior Murvin's *Police And Thieves* an acclaimed side in JA during '76's 'State Of Emergency' and a strong fave with the emergent punk movement in the UK. Likewise Max Romeo's *War In A Babylon* of the same year. Elsewhere he has disappointed, though the recent album with The Congos is an instant classic.

A former producer of The Wailers, Scratch has continued to work with Bob Marley, notably on *Jah Live* (76) and the dreadful *Punky Reggae Party*, occasioned by Upsetter's collaboration with The Clash on *Complete Control*. Singles: *Enter The Dragon* (DEB

'74), Bob Marley — *Jah Live* (Island '76). Max Romeo — *War In A Babylon* (Island '76). Junior Murvin — *Police And Thieves* (Island '76). Dreadlocks In Moonlight (Island '77). Green Bay Incident (Upsetter '78). Albums: *Double Seven* (Trojan '75). *Super Ape* (Island '76). *Jah Lion* — Columbia Colly (Island '76). *The Congos* — Row Fishermen Row (Black Art '78).

TOM PETTY'S HEARTBREAKERS

Tom Petty—guitar, vocals. Stan Lynch—drums. Ron Blair—bass. Mike Campbell—guitar. Benmont Tench—keyboards.

Formed in Los Angeles mid '70s, though the band hail from Florida. Yet to crack major league, Petty and Co. were better known (and better liked) in UK until '78 when the situation reversed. After ecstatic reviews for debut album their second offering was less favourably received. Petty, who has the kind of looks teenage girls love (or so he thinks), specialises in short, melodic, sharp rock songs. Best known number *American Girl* is a

Byrds-soundalike (Petty worships Roger McGuinn). Despite Petty's remarks about despising mainstream LA rock, on *You're Gonna Get It* there are signs that his music is going that way.

Single: *American Girl* (Shelter '77). Albums: *Tom Petty And The Heartbreakers* (Shelter '77). *You're Gonna Get It* (Shelter '78).

THE PIRATES

Mick Green — lead guitar, vocals. Johnny Spence—lead vocal, bass. Frank Farley—drums, vocal.

The Pirates are arguably the only British rock band ever to have disbanded and, after well over a decade, reformed with any degree of success. During the interim, The Pirates have not only been extolled as Brit-Rock's seminal R&B combo, but precursors of just about everything from the electric power trio, to pub rock and the frenetic end of punk.

As the backing band for the late Johnny Kidd, Green, Spence and Farley perfected a style modified by innumerable Mersey Beat bands and later emulated by Dr.

Feelgood. Indeed, Wilko Johnson has never attempted to disguise his debt to his mentor Mick Green and his uncanny ability to play both lead and rhythm guitar simultaneously. It wasn't until they re-formed around December '76, that The Pirates capitalized on their enviable reputation as both innovators and one of the most exciting of live bands.

Singles: *Sweet Love* (Warner Bros '77). *All In It Together* (Warner Bros '77). *Johnny B. Goode's Good* (Warner Bros '78). *Shaking All Over* (Warner Bros '78).

Albums: *Out Of Their Skulls* (Warner Bros '77). *Skull Wars* (Warner Bros '78). Also on *Hope And Anchor Festival* (Warner Bros '78).

THE PLEASERS

Steve McNerney—vocals, guitar. Bo Benham—bass. Dave Rotshelle—drums. Nick Powell—guitar.

Denizens of early '78 'beat-boom' — a movement that amounted to little more than a handful of bands on London pub-club circuit emulating their '60s heroes, The Pleasers are, vocally and visually, pre-*Rubber Soul* Beatles copyists. An entertaining novelty, but more worthy of the cabaret scene than anything else... which is where they can often now be found.

Singles: *The Kids Are Alright* (Arista '78). *You Don't Know* (Arista '78). *A Girl I Know* (UA '78).

THE POP

Joel Martinez—drums. David Swanson—vocals, bass, guitar. Tim Henderson—bass. Roger Prescott—vocals, guitars. Tim McGovern—guitars, drums, vocals.

An enigmatic Hollywood band who outgrew their S&M/HM roots to produce something valid. Their debut album is a raucous mixture of glam rock foppiness, avant garde sex and violence and old fashioned garage trauma. Funny and sick, The Pop combine bubblegum intellects with Sky Saxon swaggers.

Album: *The Pop* (Automatic '78). Single: *Hit And Run Lover* (Back Door Man '78). *Down On The Boulevard* (Back Door Man '78).

THE POP GROUP

Mark Stewart — vocals. Gareth Sager — guitar. Bruce Smith — drums. Simon Underwood — bass. John Waddington — guitar.

The flat, no-clues name is designed to mislead and intrigue. Apart from sharp threads and regular instruments they don't live up to it in any conventional sense. Rather they seek new ways with old means, cleverly deploying musicianship learned on the job (only one member was remotely proficient at their inception in May '77) and deliberately using the seclusion from the spotlight that living in Bristol brought them to cultivate fresh sounds from fresh sources. They have no contemporaries and carry few, if any, comparisons, forcing audiences to respond on immediate instincts. It's a very open music and an unexpected, inexplicable pleasure.

POWER POP

The cause of instant notoriety for those who fell prey to the soubriquet in the early months of '78, notably The Pleasers, whose resurrection of Merseybeat innocence was thwarted by the timely arrival of The Rutles. Others who had just about enough time to get sick of the term before it landed on top of them included The Stukas, The Rich Kids, The Boyfriends, The Banned, The Monos, The Smirks, The Wasps, The Flies, The Young Ones and more. Either strictly or loosely rooted in the R&B based British pop explosion of the early to mid '60s, power pop's connotations of fun, suits, mini-skirts and three-minute singles proved too trivial in the wake of '77s hard-bitten street realism.

THE PREFECTS

Ted-bass. Paul-drums.
Nob-voice. Routs-guitar.

A Birmingham group formed in March 1977. Their music is as bleak, cynical and loveless as their personalities, with a perverse humour. Their relationship to orthodox rock music is tenuous, at the closest a horrendous doppelgänger parody. At its best their music can have a frightening, pulsating intensity. Suspicious and arrogant, they have no friends, want none and despite creating an evolving sound, their potential for recognition is limited.

PRESSURE GROUPS

Like the graffiti on the streets, the number, size and power of pressure groups is an indicator of whether things are shaking or not.

History books like *Play Power* tell us that the upsurge in the '60s was a combination of the New Left and the Underground, the first an amalgam of political groups who had rearranged their philosophy in the light of modern times, the second a freewheeling motley synthesis of radical freaks more interested in subversion than hard politics. Both were unified by the international AntiWar movement and the general turbulent affluence that was the '60s.

Between them they provided a radicalising experience for a generation, enough of whom have remained that way to provide the link with the New Movement beginning to emerge in the late '70s. A new generation is beginning to find its voice and is beginning to concern itself with more fundamental issues than which nostril to stick a pin in this week, though at present it remains fragmented.

The Socialist-led Rock Against Racism campaign demonstrated the strength of Anti-Nazi National Front feeling though many suspect the large crowds for the Carnival would not have showed but for the music. The Campaign motives are often questioned but it has shown it's possible to mobilise public opinion on a large scale for something that mattered.

By comparison the Anti-Nuclear movement remains small and timid, a pale reflection of the highly organised mass militant movements in Europe.

Other campaigns are slowly building up a head of steam. The lobby to change the drug laws, a powerful force in the '60s, is only

now beginning to regroup and come to terms with the still-relevant issues that face it.

Similarly the seeds of the Animal Liberation movement are planted and will take time to develop into the mass movement it will inevitably become.

There are many more pressure groups emerging. Doll By Doll's links with radical psychiatry and The Stranglers involvement with the prisoner's rights movement PROP are just two of the strands.

The pressure is there though, and is building. All that's needed now is new, vital forms in which it can find public expression.

PUBLIC IMAGE LTD.

John Lydon-vocals. Keith Levine-guitar. Jah Wobble-bass. Jim Walker-drums.

After the joys and traumas of life in The Sex Pistols — being the *enfant terrible* of massman and Babylonian culture at large and in Jubilee Year the only man to 'first' (upstage) the queen as Militant Barry was to testify — and after the final harassed tour of America, John Lydon found himself back in London without a band, without any money, and with only a flat, a reputation, and a record company contract to show for his tribulations.

After a three week visit to Jamaica — paid for by Virgin with the ostensible reason that he was sighting up prospective Front Line signings and where Rotten was trailed by Glitterbest camera crews — Lydon, unlike his fellow ex-Pistols, was quick to involve himself in a fresh enterprise and earn himself a Rotten crust as rock musician of this parish.

The artfully named Public Image was the result. Keith Levine had formerly played for six months with The Clash in their early inception, Jah Wobble — The Man From Whitechapel — was an old college crony of Lydon's, while Canadian Jim Walker was recruited via a music press ad.

At the time of writing Public Image Ltd. had not played a gig while their first single, *Public Image*, was about to be released on Virgin. Preliminary earfluffs afforded NME at rehearsals revealed a stark urban electric scenario for Lydon's possessed vocal denunciations with heavy reggaematic bass and crisp surefire drumming — more than a shard or two sharper and more austere than the sometimes ponderous attack of the Pistols. Single: *Public Image* (Virgin '78).

PUBROCK

More a sociological classification than a musical style, pubrock was the first retaliatory blow struck against the elitism and inaccessibility of the mainstream rock of the mid-'70s. Pioneered by Brinsley Schwarz, pubrock was basic rootsy rock of various shades and shapes played in pubs by and for people sick of the pomp and vacuity of bigtime rock and roll.

The leading pub venues (the Hope and Anchor, the Nashville, the Red Cow, the Rochester Castle, the Kensington, etc) have provided the jumping-off point for such major names as Dr Feelgood, Nick Lowe, Graham Parker And The Rumour, The Stranglers, Ian Dury and even The Sex Pistols.



Brian Bond interned in a gilded prison

PULP

Pulp is the word! Originally coined in the 1930s as a catch-all shorthand term for the 'dime novel' magazines popular at the time — modern science fiction and American crime fiction are both linear dependents of the pulp magazines — the term refers to the cheap untrimmed woodpulp paper on which such magazines were printed.

Though the pulp magazines themselves have long since vanished from the newsstands (to become highly prized collectors' items, sources of prestigious reprint anthologies and the subjects of entire books), 'pulp' lives on to describe flashy, trashy, fad-oriented mass entertainment.

In the '70s, movies and television have become the primary source of pulp artefacts: no other media can implant a notion faster or more efficiently into mass consciousness. Pulp fads soon become subject matter for comic books, exploitation records, T-shirts, 'faction' paperbacks, motifs for political cartoonists and — naturally — imitative novels, movies, TV series, etc.

Major pulp fads of the '70s: kung fu, bionics, exorcism and demonic possession, giant sharks, giant apes, the 1950s, discos, sci-fi (the latter an abbreviation for Science Fiction which only applies to the space opera: true SF freaks will heat-ray you to death if you apply the term 'Sci-Fi' to, say, the work of Philip K. Dick) and — coming soon — superheroes (again), Dracula (again) and Ethnic Tribulations (in the wake of such TV agony-and-guilt epics as *Roots* and *Holocaust*, we presume that everyone from the Serbocrations and Irish to the Tibetans and Puerto Ricans will be next if the demographics analysts conclude

that there's an audience for it).

A significant by-product of pulp fiction is pulp fact: witness the proliferation of mass-mysticism paperbacks pioneered by Erich von Daniken, Charles Berlitz and other touts for the mysteries of the Bermuda Triangle, spontaneous human combustion and was-God-a-bionic-astronaut (la-la).

The great thing about pulp is that the more its perpetrators engineer it for speedy obsolescence, the better chance it has of surviving. If the editors of *Black Mask* or *Amazing Stories* back in the '30s had realised how valuable their products would become in the nostalgic '70s, they'd've thrown several kinds of blue fit.

So save these copies of *Star Wars Weekly* and *The Fonzie Scrapbook*. You grandchildren will thank you for it.

PUNISHMENT OF LUXURY

Brian Bond-vocals. Jimmy Giro-bass. Nevil Luxury-guitar. Malacaballa-guitar. Jeff Thwaite-guitar.

Newcastle band formed in November '77 after impromptu pub gig by Bond, Giro, Luxury and various other chums from the local community theatre group, Mad Bongo. Use of theatre is deliberately crude and simple, sometimes deranged, very effective. The music is similarly sparse, strong and emotive — Punilux sound at times like The Stranglers at their most psychotic. They tackle contentious subjects in ways designed to provoke, with sharp senses of both humour and proportion well in evidence. They appear to know what they're after.

Single: *Puppet Life* (Small Wonder '78).



PUNK

Originally, Punk was homemade, do-it-yourself (because nobody else will) instant culture — music, hair, clothes, papers, morality, name it, with nobody calling the shots but YOU. The Sex Pistols instigated the attitude, but if they hadn't done it, somebody else would have. The Heroes had all sold out so long ago that it was hard even to feel bitter anymore. They were beneath contempt. Oh, you, *hated* them, sure, but all that pouncing about with movie stars and royalty, the 'gigs' in giant stadiums, the self-parodying plastic... those multi-million dollar tax exiles weren't in the same dimension anymore, they didn't matter.

And neither did rock music. Until the Pistols, Rock 'n' roll as dirty as pure as it had ever been before, and would be again.

Punk developed into an entire subculture. There were the fanzines instigated by Mark P; the hair cropped to a sensible length (most punks had been skinheads, not the arsehole skinheads of Sham '78, but the quasi-Mods of the late '60s who cared for little beyond looking sharp and acting as hard as painted nails); the clothes, any clothes you wanted — only the dummies bought 'em from Sex — Oxfam was good enough for most of us, just keep it a shade original and — oh God, NO FLAIRS!

Punk rock had had its young, sharp teeth pulled out by Big Business (who want to make money from rebellious youth) and Authoritarian Establishment (who want to give rebellious youth a palliative). These two bodies are old friends.

Punk shook up the music industry like nothing else ever did and it was fun while it lasted. We all had a great time but the joke

was on us. If you were not there at the beginning and are getting hours of enjoyment from the Third Generation of punk bands still snarling at the camera, then go ahead and enjoy yourself. That's what rock 'n' roll's there for. Punk was more than that. But you go ahead and enjoy yourself. Just don't ask me to pogo.

Even the 'highs' were different in the punk world. Nobody could afford cocaine and wouldn't have it if they could. Dope was for hippies. Downers for Status Sabbath fans. Alcohol for your Dad and Uncles. Acid, well, most punks hadn't even *heard* of acid. Everybody was doing massive amounts of amphetamine sulphate, a tinner a G and easy to score. Keep up all weekend and still have a line a day for the five day drag.

Punk bands were coming out of the woodwork. There was nowhere to play until the Roxy opened. There was nowhere else to go and when Local Councils started punk-pogroms you had a CAUSE. In those early days, you might be down there on a Tuesday night watching Eater or somebody like that with about fifteen other people. Of those other kids you could lay money that they'd be at least three-quarters of the Pistols, the important two from The Clash and Johnny Thunders among them. It was that tight-knit.

Soon the bands who had emerged from under the punk banner had all begun to evolve distinct individual images and the immense diversity of styles, attitudes and *mores* became apparent. The Sex Pistols were always the leaders, the guiding lights, the avatars of punk-scumsurfing, anarchistic yobs, morally depraved, socially deprived and in need of nose transplants.

The Clash were using pop media

to perpetuate radical political views, a cross between the Monkees and the Red Brigade, definitely the new MCS. Their manager designed their urban battle togs from a Battle Garb Through The Ages book stolen from Camden library and their Superpop machine gun the bowler hats image was irresistible.

The Damned were burlesque clowns who owed more to Hammer Horror and Sid James' *Carry On* movies than to rock and roll. Eddie And The Hot Rods were flaired R&B pub-rockers and The Stranglers were organ-grinding, acid-dropping, karate-chopping ugly misogynists and neither of these bands — due to low visual profile and/or advanced years — managed to stay under the protective punk banner for long.

The Jam were Who-derived Mods living in Woking, stalking the stage of the Roxy in their two-piece Mohair whistles like it was The Scene ten years after. The Buzzcocks came out of the flourishing Manchester scene cranking out an infectious staccato buzzsaw drone and being 186 miles away from London meant they were able to retain their Modern World romanticism and individuality though they suffered from lack of media attention and record company patronage from the centralized music biz in London.

Siouxsie And The Banshees were still (though they'd deny it today) Nazi poseurs. The Vibrators were cacophonous cartoon characters, boasting of heavy S&M fetishes like Ronnie Corbett in rubberwear. X-Ray Spex documented the consumer society like Roxy Music tyros and the rest of the pack took their inspiration from one or more of the above front-runners.

Of course, it didn't last long. Why? MONEY and GREED.

Record companies started pouring down the Roxy as punk took off in a big way with the Pistols, and the nationals started running juicy 'exposes' for the benefit of insane Mister Normal.

The euphoria was being polluted by every strata of punk by Spring 1977. Bands with recording contracts started acting the Big Shot. They were on the verge of being Rock Stars. In the beginning it was always said that anyone could get on stage and be in a band. Now, the Roxy was being populated by kiddies who didn't want to do anything but *Idolise*.

And the fanzines — they became more ingratiating than the biggest expense-lunch gorging hack.

And the clothes — Zandra Rhodes and other parasites were flogging 'punk' fashions, and people were *buying* it. Punk had achieved national notoriety and a mass-market.

The Roxy closed. It hardly mattered, it hadn't been a fun place to hang out for months. People like Chelsea, Cherry Vanilla, The Rejects and a million other were riding the bandwagon straight into the knackers yard. They were sucking the lifeblood out of a movement that became a product before anybody noticed. Getting beaten up by Teds, getting refused entrance to a pub because you were wearing a *God Save The Sex Pistols* tee-shirt, these foolish things helped make one defensive about our battered punk. But it didn't last long. Not even with the great records that were released. Punk had promised some kind of youth revolution but all we did was invent a soap powder that you could pogo to for a while. Bands had the choice to refuse going on *Top Of The Pops* or going on *Top Of The Pops* and it was no choice at all.

Mick Young



Radio Stars. Above: Angle of Ascension. Below: Angle of Dissension.



THE RADIATORS

Phil Chevron—guitar, vocals. Pete Holliday—guitar, vocals. Mark Megaray—bass. Jimmy Crash—drums.

A Dublin-born new wave band, whose progress was slowed by their tendency to comply with sub-Clash English punk, and by the release of an unsensational debut album. Their recent material is far more impressive, and the production work of Tony Visconti on their forthcoming album ought to do it justice.

Albums: *TV Tube Heart* (Chiswick '77) Singles: *Television Screen* (Chiswick '77), *Enemies* (Chiswick '77), *Million Dollar Hero* (Chiswick '78).

RADIO

"Radio is in the hands of fools who try to anaesthetise the way that you feel" — Elvis Costello ("Radio, Radio")

"Then one fine morning she tuned into a New York rock 'n' roll station and she couldn't believe what she heard at all" — Lou Reed ("Sweet Jane")

The fact and the fantasy at (an imaginary) twist of the dial. Lou Reed's transistor treat would be all of ours too were it not for the corporate commercial exigencies that prompted Costello's broadside.

Radio in America sees too many stations competing for the same space and having to all use the lowest common denominator to get it, the worst aspects of Capital and other British commercial stations multiplied. The multiple

choice of stations has become really no choice at all. Hopefully our commercial stations — since they don't actually compete — will avoid this trap. Few have so far.

Radio in Britain fares much better. The BBC may give short shrift but at least they have some hours of open, speculative airtime. This means, principally, Gillett and Peel.

Despite his long tenure and arid tones, Peel's show remains a constant source of fresh news, and it is arguable that the new wave cause would be several points down without his frequent — and at the time unthanked — pleading.

RADIO STARS

Andy Ellison—vocals. Martin Gordon—bass, keyboards. Ian Macleod—guitar. Steve Parry—drums.

Revolving around the on-stage callisthenics of Andy Ellison and the bright facetiousness of Martin Gordon's songs, Radio Stars stand or fall by their material. An adequate middle-weight rock outfit, the Stars were formed by Ellison and Gordon after the unlamented demise of daft glam-band Jet two years ago.

Consistently well received touring has attracted sizeable belts of support, not entirely reflected in sales of potential mini-classes like *Dirty Pictures* and *No Russians in Russia*. At their best, Gordon's songs — usually major conceits — exude an affable silliness and admirable disregard for contemporary *mores*, both musically and narratively (mostly the wrong side of 'tasteful'.) If The Rutles were a proper group, this is what they'd sound like.

Singles: *Dirty Pictures* (Chiswick '77), *Stop It EP* (Chiswick '77), *Nervous Wreck* (Chiswick '77).

From *A Rabbit* (Chiswick '78). *Radio Stars* (Chiswick '78). Albums: *Songs For Swinging Lovers* (Chiswick '77), *Holiday Album* (Chiswick '78).

PHIL RAMBOW

Onetime member of charismatic pub-rock band The Winkies circa '74-5, this Canadian ex-art student folkie returned to London Town in the summer of 1977 following a year in New York and appearances at CBGBs and so forth. Following impressive London appearances with a band that included Mick Ronson on guitar, Rambow disappeared from live work towards the end of last year following assorted disputes with record company, management and musicians. Now signed to Blackhill and with Chrysalis holding an album's worth of recorded songs he looks about to finally live up to his much threatened promise.

Album: *One track on Max's Kansas City Vol II* (Max's '77). Two tracks on *Bionic Gold* (Big Sound '77).

THE RAMONES

Joey Ramone—lead vocals. Johnny Ramone—guitar. Dee Dee Ramone—bass. Marky Ramone—drums.

Conceptually, The Ramones are the most perfect group in the entire history of rock and roll. Sociologically, they are one of the pioneer punk bands, whose sound, philosophy and style has inspired countless hordes of imitators (all — you guessed — totally inferior) on both sides of the Atlantic. Musically, their blend of '60s teen melodicism, '70s wall-of-Marshalls souped-up heavy-metal power and punk speed, brevity and attack has taken many existing strands of

rock and roll, jumbled them into a new whole and kicked the whole thing into hurtling overdrive.

Gabba gabba heeeyyyyyy!!! Surfacing out of the depths of the New York suburbs in 1975, The Ramones were four comically ill-assorted youths (Joey, Johnny, Dee Dee and Tommy, who has since reverted to his name of Tommy Erdelyi and his real profession of record producer and engineer) who for some unaccountable reason pretended to be brothers, played 25-minute sets of 13 songs each fired off in quick succession and cued in by strangled shouts of '1-2-3-4' from Dee Dee, and dressed in uniform biker jackets, ripped jeans and evil-smelling sneakers.

Their songs were (dis) ingenuous teen love songs admirably suited to singer Joey's quavery, Anglo-inflected vocals, or sardonic black comedies based on dumbness, sadism and violence and delivered with a perfect sneer. Johnny kept up a remorseless barrage of powerchords controlled perfectly as to merge into one melodic drone, while Tommy and Dee Dee laid down a fool-proof sledge-hammer beat. The songs were so deadpan/witty and melodic/moronic that everyone's initial impression was of four cretin/geniuses with a limitless supply of lucky accidents.

In '76 and '77 they whacked out three albums, each one more stupidly sophisticated than the next, and on each successive visit to Britain their status increased, though their native America continued to ignore the fact that The Ramones were a singles band who made The Bee Gees look like The Grateful Dead. In the UK, they scored a reasonable-sized hit with *Sheena Is A Punk Rocker* and reached a scale of acceptance that allowed them to effortlessly sell out major venues like Hammersmith Odeon or The Rainbow.

In '78, Tommy Ramone quit as drummer (though he continues to be associated as producer - in residence and songwriting collaborator) and was replaced by Marky Ramone. Unfortunately for The Ramones' fabled conceptual continuity and unflawed myth-making, Marky could not be presented as Mrs. Dolly Ramone's fifth retard son, since he had a well-documented past as Marc Bell, drummer with Richard Hell & The Voidoids.

Whither The Ramones? They continue to do what they do better than anyone else, succeeding where many supposedly intelligent people have signally failed, but sceptics — and even some long-time admirers — feel that the initial formula is wearing thin. Their continued ascendancy over the rest of the original punk pack would seem to depend on a phasing-out of the cretin-hop/blitzkrieg bop/pinhead mythology in favour of a development of their already awesome pop skills to actually get some real live hits with their hitherto unsuccessful pop-classics — that — flopped.

Singles: *Blitzkrieg Bop* (Sire '76), *Sheena Is A Punk Rocker* (Sire '77), *Rockaway Beach* (Sire '77), *Don't Come Close* (Sire '78). Albums: *Ramones* (Sire '76), *Ramones Leave Home* (Sire '77), *Rocket To Russia* (Sire '77), *Road To Ruin* (Sire '78).





RAS TAFARI

'It's a new name Jah got!' — *Ras Michael*.

'Ras Tafari is a generic term describing divergent, Pan-Africanist cults of a millenarian nature, peculiar to Jamaica; espousing Ethiopia as Zion, and Emperor Haile Selassie I (Ras Tafari) as the Living God.' — *Penny Regal*.

'Ras Tafari is not a religion, it's a reality.' — *Bob Marley*.

'The Ras Tafari is a Jamaican millenarian cult... an outlet, rather than an agent, for revolutionary social action. It functions far more in maintaining the status quo than in disturbing it. The millenarian cult may be defined as a pseudo-revolutionary social movement in which the overwhelming desire of the members to change their position in the order of the social system (rather than the system itself), so as to be accepted by it, is expressed in and displaced through the medium of group fantasy...' — *Orlando Patterson*.

'The fundamental and most crucial aspect of Rasta is the promotion of the Black identity as a salient and positive characteristic.' — *David Stensfield*.

'Until the philosophy which holds one race superior and another inferior is finally and permanently discredited and abandoned, and until there are no longer first and second class citizens of any nation. And until the colour of a man's skin is of no more significance than the colour of his eyes. And until the basic human rights are equally guaranteed to all without regard to race, and until that day, the dream of lasting peace, world citizenship, the role of international morality, will remain but a fleeting illusion to be pursued but never attained. And until that day, there will be war, not only racial war, but war of many kinds. Because man is a destructive force to himself.' — *Haile Selassie I*.

'I-man a Rasta.' — *Freddie McGregor*.

THE REALISTS

Paul Astles—guitar, vocals. Ralph Holden—guitar. Alan Dunn—bass. John Conroy—drums.

Four exiled northerners who chanced upon the burgeoning Deptford scene in 1976, liked what they saw and stayed. The Realists make up in enthusiasm and fun what they lack in polish. Astles and Holden are their strong point so far, the rhythm guitarist wields a fierce Fickenbaker and recalls Big Star's Alex Chilton at times in his vocal delivery. Had an acclaimed single debut with Stiff but have yet to gain the following they need to improve. A band with a community conscience.

Single: *I've Got A Heart* (Stiff '78).

THE REAL KIDS

John Felice—vocals, guitar. Alan Paulino—bass. Howard Ferguson—drums. Bill Borgeolli—guitar.

The Real Kids emerged from the sewers of Boston (at least, the local punk club) in '76 with two tracks on *Live At The Rat*.

Once a Modern Lover and Jonathan Richman's next door neighbour, songwriter and leader John Felice's one great moment came on *All Kindsa Girls*. Later released as their first Red Star single, the A-side was good but the B-side, *Common At Noon*, is still the only song thrown up by Yankee punks that could break your heart. In '78 The Real Kids signed to Marty Thau's Red Star label and put out their first album. Fast, crackling and mostly twelve-bar, the odd trite song could be ignored in the face of the guts and gusto they so effortlessly exude. They seem unhampered by fashion and style mandates. They're ugly as sin, too.

Single: *All Kindsa Girls* (Red Star '78).
Albums: *The Real Kids* (Red Star '78).

THE RECORDS

Will Birch—drums. John Wicks—guitar, vocals. Huw Gower—guitar, vocals. Phil Brown—bass, vocals.

The Records are relatively new to the London pub circuit though drummer Will Birch is an old familiar from the Kursaal Flyers. Wicks was also a Flyer for a brief spell while Gower emanates from Bristol band Ratbites From Hell (as does Only Ones guitarist, John Perry and Wilko drummer Alan Platt).

Litigation has prevented The Records issuing the obvious but their early demos and live performances mark them as one of the most accomplished and potentially exciting British bands of the moment. Borrowing from '60s genres The Records nevertheless produce modern music in keeping with songwriter Birch's love of melody and emotion.

LOU REED

Once expressed a desire to do for rock what Ornette Coleman did for jazz. Despite formidable contributions with the Velvet Underground — not quite revolutionary but still broadening the scope a little — his only move in that area since leaving the Velvets in 1970 was '75's *Metal Machine Music*, four sides of formless feedback, some move. The rest of the decade has been spent in a state of virtual if not actual self-parody, milking his debauched and wasted myth for as much as it was worth (not a lot, as it happens). Occasional renouncements of indulgence and promises of getting down to business have proved worthless, though it is possible to listen to his latest waxing without laughing.

Singles: *Walk On The Wild Side* (RCA '72).
Albums: *Transformer* (RCA '72). *Rock 'n' roll Animal* (RCA '74). *Coney Island Baby* (RCA '76). *Street Hassle* (Arista '78).

REGGAE REGULAR

Alan "King Pin" King—lead vocals. Tony Rookwood—vocals. Patrick Donnegan—guitar and vocals. George Clarke—keyboards. Norman Ebanks—guitar. Errol Francis—drums. Trevor Salmon—bass.

Hard-working front runners of the UK reggae scene, London-based Reggae Regular came together in 1977 and carved a niche for themselves on the local circuit under the guidance of publicist Lloyd "TCB" Patten.

Somewhat repetitive in their live act, the group were able to compensate for any shortcomings with the huge popularity of the *Where Is Jah?* single in '77—a reggae chart-topper—and the follow-up *Black Star Liner*. Currently, the group are looking for a major record contract, having completed work on an album that contains the bulk of their onstage repertoire, including favourites such as *Victim Of Life and Fate*.

Singles: *Where Is Jah?* (Greensleeves '77). *Black Star Liner* (Greensleeves '78).



Project at Eighteen

THE RESIDENTS

Personnel unknown.

The Residents surround themselves with secrecy whilst making records which demand investigation of the makers. Supposedly formed in Louisiana in the late '60s / early '70s, they now reside (!) in San Francisco. Aided by former Chilli Willi front-man Phil "Snakefinger" Lithman, they produce music which bears the marks of influences as diverse as Zappa (for whom *Santa Dog* was originally recorded), Beefheart, Sun Ra, Harry Partch and Top 40 pop. *The Third Reich Rock 'n' Roll* is a suite of alternative versions of '60s hits embodying "a love of the music with a hatred of the culture which surrounds it". *Satisfaction* from the same sessions, is an ugly masterpiece, *Duck Stab* and *Fingerprince* being their most accessible works. They are also said to have produced a film, *Vileness Fats*.

Quite unlike any other band in existence, The Residents deserve to be heard at least once.

Singles: *Santa Dog EP* (Ralph '72). *Satisfaction* (Ralph '76). *The Beatles Play The Residents And The Residents Play The Beatles* (Ralph '77). *Duck Stab EP* (Ralph '78).

With Schwump: *Aphids In The Hall* (Ralph '78). **With Snakefinger:** *The Spot* (Ralph '78).

Albums: *Meet The Residents* (Ralph '74). *The Third Reich 'n' Roll* (Ralph '79). *Fingerprince* (Ralph '77). *Not Available* (Ralph '78).

THE REZILLOS

Eugene Reynolds—vocals. Fay Fife—vocals. John Callis—guitar.

Angel Paterson—drums. Simon Templar—bass.

The result of bored yet fevered imaginations at work in Edinburgh in '76, the group initially were anywhere up to eleven crypto-musicians playing classic, usually basic, pop trash ranging from Little Richard to Lulu to The Sweet and trying to look and act as outlandish as possible. Early Rezillos gigs involved mania and sheer nerve on a scale rarely seen in the often staid Led Zep / AWB dominated atmosphere north of the border.

The line-up almost stabilised by '77 and a debut single on local Sensible records, *Can't Stand My Baby*, amongst the first and also amongst the best of the independent singles, drew rave reaction. By the end of the year the line-up had stabilised and the band had signed to Sire, releasing second single. Like most of their songs it was penned by the droll John Callis (aka Luke Warm) and came across funny, fresh and furiously commercial.

An album was recorded under uneasy circumstances early this year in New York, but both it and the band spent six months on the shelf while their record company changed distributor. Upon release, critics found that it played at '77 speed while their turntables were set on '78. The group's suddenly legion fans however had no such qualms.

Apart from their gaudy day-glo visual flash, springing mostly from Fashion and Design College drop-out Fay Fife, and their trash fixations, stemming from Reynolds and the comic-ridden Callis, the mark of The Rezillos is their irreverence. They simultaneously love and hate the

pop world and everything related to it, themselves included — witness the blatant cynicism of their first bona-fide hit, *Top Of The Pops*.

Singles: *Can't Stand My Baby* (Sensible '77). *(My Baby Does)* *Good Sculptures / Flying Saucer Attack* (Sire '77). *Top Of The Pops* (Sire '78). **Album:** *Can't Stand The Rezillos* (Sire '78). *Destination Venus* (Sire '78).

RICH KIDS

Midge Ure—vocals, guitar, keyboards. Glen Matlock—bass, vocals. Steve New—guitar. Rusty Egan—drums.

Tight, dynamic rock and roll group matching the talents of former Sex Pistols tunesmith Matlock and ex-Slik frontman Ure. Dormant during the whole of 1977 as Matlock tried in vain to recruit Howard Devoto and then Paul Weller before securing Ure for the band, they only began intensive gigging at the start of '78, a full year after Matlock's Pistols departure. Classy musicians who often border on jazzy unorthodoxy in their playing, The Rich Kids are let down only by largely characterless material, as evinced by their patchy, badly produced (by Mick Ronson) debut album.

Singles: *Rich Kids* (EMI '78). *Marching Men* (EMI '78). *Ghosts Of Princes In Towers* (EMI '78). **Album:** *Ghosts Of Princes In Towers* (EMI '78).

JONATHAN RICHMAN

The original gawky mixed-up kid began his haphazard career by attending more Velvet Underground gigs than the

Velvets can remember playing, writing reams of spotty awestruck poetry about the band, and analysing their music from various odd angles in his home town of Boston's rock press.

In '73 John Cale supervised abortive demos for Warner Brothers of Richman's first *Modern Lovers*: Ernie Brooks, bass; Jerry Harrison, keyboards; David Robinson, drums (now in *The Cars*). A Velvet's influence was plainly heard, but more remarkable were Richman's adonoidal whine and songs of loneliness and desperation; an innocent abroad in what he christened the modern world and the beginnings of a raw, bruised sensibility that would verge from the painfully frank to the embarrassingly childish.

His increasingly unlikely contact with reality led to the break up of the first band, and in '76 he came under the protective custody of Berkeley's Matthew Kaufman, who released a new version of the decade's only true cruise anthem, *Roadrunner*, and some songs about rockin' government centres and falling in love with bank tellers, all on *Beserkley Chartbusters*, backed by Bay Area stalwarts Earth Quake.

The by then legendary demos were released in the spring of '76, followed in Autumn by the second *Modern Lovers* album, with new members Greg Karanen (bass) and Leroy Radcliffe (guitar). Richman's muse had turned to a kind of whimsical rhythm 'n' blues, and reached its anti-electric extreme on '77s *"Rock And Roll With"*, though a re-released *Roadrunner* became a rightful jubilee smash some months later.

The *Modern Lovers* with new drummer D. Sharpe made their British debut (yielding an unsatisfactory live album) in autumn '77, and Richman enchanted everybody. His novelty value with the general public has since worn off, and the latest twist from this idiosyncratic character has been to disband the *Lovers* and go solo.

Albums: *Beserkley Chartbusters* (contributes for songs. *Beserkley '75*). *The Modern Lovers* (*Home Of The Hits '76*). *Jonathan Richman And The Modern Lovers* (*Beserkley '76*). *Rock And Roll With The Modern Lovers* (*Beserkley '77*). *Modern Lovers Live* (*Beserkley '77*). *Modern Love Songs* (*Beserkley '78*). **Singles:** *Roadrunner Once / Roadrunner Twice* (*Beserkley '77*). *Egyptian Reggae* (*Beserkley '77*). *Morning Of Our Lives* (*Beserkley '78*). *Abdul & Cleopatra* (*Beserkley '78*). *Buzz Buzz Buzz* (*Beserkley '78*).

JAKE RIVIERA

Entrepreneur, bon vivant and professional cutter of corners, Riviera started out under the more prosaic name of Andrew Jakeman as manager of Chilli Willi And The Red Hot Peppers and subsequently tour manager for Dr Feelgood. Launched Stiff Records in 1976 with a loan from the Feelgoods and recorded (among others) Nick Lowe, Elvis Costello, Ian Dury, and The Damned, promoting the scrappy-underdog identity of the label almost as much as any of the artists. Left Stiff in '77 to concentrate on the management of Lowe, Costello and now Dave Edmunds.



TOM ROBINSON BAND

Tom Robinson—bass and vocals. Danny Kustow—guitar. Dolphin Taylor—drums. Ian Wood—organ.

Live Rock Against Racism, the Tom Robinson Band (arguably R.A.R.'s Fifth Column) claim to have evolved at the start of 1977 as a red-blooded reaction against the growing number of reactionary rock buffoons. Previous to the forming of this Heavy Metal Vaudeville act, Tom strummed an acoustic guitar and sang coy homosexual love songs in the loser band Cafe Society.

The Tom Robinson Band's music is orthodox White Rock, but their young looks and angry clichés, swept them right along with the good old new wave, and they were signed to EMI in late '77 as a cleaner, better-bred Sex Pistols.

Tom being a much-touted and strident gay, they were controversial as all hell—but their first single 2.4.6.8. *Motorway*, was so safe that it cornered the Christmas market completely. Tom Robinson and his clean-cut band appeared on *Top Of The Pops* and appealed to young heterosexuals of all genders as a cute, catchy, commercial whim.

In 1978, the *Rising Free* EP came out—political, sensible and great—definitely their best offering. The next single was political, confused and shoddy. Both were moderate failures. His most recent release finds him championing nothing but his own neuroses, depressed, depressing and ripping off Van Morrison's *Moondance* something awful.

Although only a bitter and twisted personality could actively dislike the Tom Robinson Band, the righteous amongst his fans have been let down badly. His heart is in the right region, but his sensibility has gone to pot. He cannot be commended too highly for making the fight against fascism, racism and sexism chic—but these days, when he's not being incredibly introverted, he's being a bleeding-heart, lousy liberal, playing benefits for Prisoners Rights and on the B-side of the latest singles, pitying 'football hooligans' as a persecuted minority akin to homosexuals and blacks. He's all clenched fist and no backbone. Get well soon, Tom.

Album: *Power In The Darkness* (EMI '78).

Singles: *Motorway* (EMI '77) *Rising Free EP* (EMI '78) *Up Against The Wall* (EMI '78). *Too Good To Be True* (EMI '78).

ROCKABILLY

Though the years 1976 and 1977 saw the emergence and mass acceptance of several basic music forms, among them punk and

reggae, perhaps the most surprising movement was the resurgence of genuine interest in '50s American Rockabilly.

For almost 20 years, regarded as the sole property of British Teds, the distinctive sound of Rockabilly began to attract a new and much younger record-buying public excited with the brashness of much of the new wave and aware that rockabilly offered a likewise enthusiastic, uninhibited and primitive style of rock. Not only did rockabilly still enjoy die-hard underground cultist status, but it was so old that it sounded brand new to the fourth generation of fans.

Not to be confused with the more commercial 'golden oldies' brand of rock 'n' roll, rockabilly was basically a hybrid of innumerable musical forms: R&B, hillbilly, boogie woogie, western swing, bluegrass etc. For a short period (the early '50s), it was the folk music of both honky-tonkin white Southerners and hedonistic teens: a brief, moderately successful stop-gap between country music and commercial rock 'n' roll. In its most primitive guise, rockabilly still retained the Hank Williams-derived components of fiddle, slapped bass, steel guitar and Stetsons, whilst in a more urban manifestation incorporated pumpin' piano, yakity-sax, Fender bass and drums.

Parallels can be drawn between rockabilly and other ethnic popular music forms such as blues, doo-wop, soul and, more recently, reggae and the new wave: though literally thousands of unknown artists and groups made it onto wax, most were just one-off affairs whilst few ever enjoyed more than one-hit-wonder popularity. Indeed, most labels were regional store-front one-man operations and, unless the master was picked up and promoted by a major label, any success was strictly local.

Though Sam C. Phillips' Memphis-based Sun Records and his legion of artists (including Elvis, Roy Orbison, Carl Perkins, Johnny Cash, Warren Smith, Charlie Feathers, Malcolm Yelvington, Sonny Burgess etc.) are perhaps the most widely known, such labels as King, Dot, Roulette, Mercury, Coral, Brunswick, Capitol, RCA-Victor, Excello, Chess, Meteor, and MGM to name but a few were amongst those responsible for immortalising the work of such artists as Jack Scott, Ray Campi, Mac Curtis, Billy Lee Riley, Al Ferrier, Jackie Lee Cochran, Buddy Holly, Alvis Wayne, Peanuts Wilson, Roy Hall, Don Woody, Johnny Carroll, Buddy Knox... the list is endless.

Ironically, the rockabilly revival has been restricted to Britain and Europe with the result that all the major labels have been quick to put out well-received various artists compilations, whilst such legendary artists such as Warren Smith, Mac Curtis, Charlie Feathers, Ray Campi and Jack Scott have all made at least one successful European trek.

At the other extreme, Brit-based rockabilly rebels such as Crazy Cavan & The Rhythm Rockers, Matchbox, Shakin' Stevens and, more recently, Whirlwind have all enjoyed encouraging record sales, and command a strong following.

Whether or not rockabilly will continue to exist in the same kind



It's all flying saucers in space, in it?

of time-warped, say, traditional New Orleans jazz is debatable. However, before rockabilly (in particular when performed live) can ever hope to ever reach a much wider audience not only depends upon whether or not the Teds vs Punks can settle their differences, but if it's possible for the genre to shake off its peripheral racist stigma.

Finally, it needs a performer who can singlehandedly capture the imagination of the public on the same scale as the music's most legendary performers. Albums: *Elvis Presley—The Sun Sessions* (RCA '77). *Johnny Burnette—Rock And Roll Trio* (MCA '78). Also the many MCA, MGM, ABC, Chiswick, Chess, CBS, Mercury, Imperial compilations.

THE ROLLING STONES

Mick Jagger—vocals. Keith Richards—guitar. Charlie Watts—drums. Bill Wyman—bass. Ron Wood—guitar.

The world of the last two years has not been kind to The Rolling Stones. Indeed 1977 could well be regarded as the most harrowing year in an often harrowing career. The New Wave had caused many, particularly young punk bands, rising angry to caste disparaging slurs on the band's name, lining them up alongside the swelling ranks of canonized boring old farts. Suddenly the new league of young-bloods were not about to have their photos taken with Mick Jagger.

The slings-and-arrows of youthful one-upmanship were nothing though compared to the heroin bust that Keith Richards walked into on arrival in Toronto in early '77, placing the group's future temporarily in doubt.

Unfortunately, the reason for flying to Toronto—to record a gig at the city's El Macombo Club—was hardly worth it as it panned out, the resultant live album being a pretty lacklustre effort with sluggish dynamics and an overall aroma of going through the motions. The band appeared to be

languishing on their laurels and becoming hyper-redundant with the hasty passage of time.

However, 1978 saw a thoughtful twist back into the right direction. *Some Girls*, their first studio album since the dire *Black & Blue*, as well as finding Ronnie Wood a fully integrated member, concentrated on the things the Stones do best. Strong sardonic lyrics and a pristine rock-steady beat (gratis the regal Charlie Watts) were strongly in evidence while the band stripped to its basics and Jagger sang with more conviction than had been noticeable for years.

However, both *Some Girls* and the excellent US tour of '78 have been more concerned with consolidating tried-and-true formulae than breaking new ground. Both successes are still little more than a highly astute holding-action, and as the '80s beckon, one can't help but wonder just how the Stones are going to handle it all, without resorting to the dictates of self-parody. Singles: *Miss You* (Rolling Stones '78). *Respectable* (Rolling Stones '78).

Albums: *Love You Live* (Rolling Stones '77). *Some Girls* (Rolling Stones '78).

ROOGALATOR

Danny Adler—guitar, vocals. Justin Hildreth—drums. Julian Scott—bass.

The property of Daniel Adler, affable native of Cincinnati, Ohio, reared on that city's quality R&B output of the '50s and '60s. He came to Britain in '72, working the session circuit, and started Roogalator in '75, judiciously applying his fatback influences. An initial flush of media enthusiasm somehow never paid off, and Roogalator, now without keyboard player Nick Plytas, remain loved but lost in the cross-country pub slog.

Singles: *All Aboard* (Stiff '76). *Love And The Single Girl* (Virgin '77). Album: *Play It By Ear* (Do It '77).



We aim to please...

THE ROXY

The Roxy was the punk club, situated in a seedy back-street of Covent Garden, London. Around the mid-70s it had done a lot of trade as Chagarama's, a gay bar. The ex-manager of punk-nonentities Chelsea, one Andy Czezowski, was informed of the club's existence in late-1976 when he was searching the dives of London Town for a venue where he could exclusively feature punk-rock bands. At this time the local councils' punk purges were getting into full swing and the number of clubs/pubs/halls that would allow punks through their portals was ever dwindling.

A week before Xmas '76, Czezowski promoted gigs by Johnny Thunders' Heartbreakers and Generation X and the shows were such a success that on the first day of 1977 he persuaded the club's owners to let him lease The Roxy and put on nothing but punk, punk, punk. The Roxy entered 1977 with three nights of The Clash and for a few months it was the only place for kids of the punk persuasion to hang out. The music was mostly dire, but, occasionally someone great would climb up on stage and the place would erupt and the wall-mirrors drip with sweat.

The Roxy soon spoilt; tourists, punk neophytes and A&R men began to flock to the subterranean oven with greedy, vicarious eyes. Kodak instamatics, Zandra Rhodes threads and recording contracts. Those who remembered started to stay away and when the club's owners eventually physically ejected Andy Czezowski from the premises for all time in the spring of '77, then The Roxy was finished and soon lost its place as the number one punk venue to the Vortex in Wardour Street. There were endless difficulties with the GLC about the complaints from local residents caused by the sex, drugs, noise and violence that had always spilled out into the street. Two albums were released — the first patchy, the second merely pathetic.

Albums: *The Roxy, London, WC2* (EMI '77). *Farewell To The Roxy* (WEA '78).

ROXY MUSIC

Bryan Ferry—vocals, piano. Andy MacKay—sax. Paul Thompson—drums. Phil Manzanera—guitar. Brian Eno—synthesiser treatments. Latter replaced by Eddie Jobson—violin, synthesiser.

Formed in '71, splashed in '72, peaked in '74, collapsed by '76.

reformed '78, Roxy Music made pre-occupation with style an end unto itself.

Their initial outright dilettante glam tag was tempered by artsy connotations: mannerist covers, the avant-garde, Eno. A perfect example of this being the opening sound on their first album, the tinkle and chatter of parties or pure noise.

Camp plundering of traditionally unimpeachable rock licks and overall outrageous futurisms earned them the contempt of the James Taylor and Deep Purple sets, who somehow felt as though they were being taken for a ride, a similar reaction greeting Devo at present.

Roxy gradually lost sight of their early possibilities in a storm of ego clashes, while Ferry went on to mere modish display.

Singles: *Virginia Plain* (Island '72). *Pyjamarama* (Island '73). Albums: *Roxy Music* (Island '72). *For Your Pleasure* (Island '73). *Stranded* (Island '73). *Roxy Music Live* (Island '76).

THE RUBINOOS

Jon Rubin—vocals, guitar. Tommy Dunbar—guitar, keyboards, vocals. Royce Ader—bass. Donn Spindt—drums.

Collectively high school age with the looks to prove it, the 'Frisco Bay Area originated Rubinoos were formed in the mid '70s by Rubin and Dunbar to increase their pulling power and give the world back some of the bubblegum pop they felt it sorely missed. Via Dunbar's elder brother in Earth Quake they hooked up to Berserkey, releasing *Gorilla*, an excellent remake of Tommy James' *I Think We're Alone Now*, followed by a debut album in spring '77, and various album-culled singles plus one newie since.

A good live band, though overall too candy cute for their own good, this music demands a hit single or bust.

Singles: *Gorilla* (Berserkey '75). *I Think We're Alone Now* (Berserkey '76). *I Wanna Be Your Boyfriend* (Berserkey '78). *Hard To Get* (Berserkey '77). Album: *The Rubinoos* (Berserkey '77).

THE RUNAWAYS

Joan Jett—vocals and rhythm guitar. Sandy West—drums. Vicki Blue—bass. Lita Ford—lead guitar.

Picked for their ability to fake orgasms while playing a musical instrument by LA entrepreneur Kim Fowley, The Runaways started life as five good reasons for a snigger. In 1976 at the dangerous age of 17, The Runaways played their first gig on top of a Los Angeles apartment block. They soon got a contract.

Their first and second albums promoted them desperately as sex-zombies, their art incidental. Their lead singer at this time, Cherie Currie, proved invaluable to Fowley's vision of the band, what with her corset and tarty platinum hair. Jett, West and Ford's professional approach to the band drove her out in the middle of '77, while too

much touring put paid to bass player Jackie Fox, who attempted suicide before bowing out. She was replaced by Vicki Blue, while rebel queen leader Joan Jett put her sad sweet voice upfront.

Their third album still dealt with sex / drugs / streets / pant / moan / yawn, but Joan Jett sings the most-sex-appealing jailbait-moron lyrics in such a way as to make them seem stunning insights into the teenage psyche. Their glib, teenybopper couplets, Lita Ford's guitar solos and Sandy West's brilliant, workmanlike drumming makes The Runaways a superior, shrill-heavy-pop band, but the presence of Joan Jett puts them in a different league altogether.

Singles: *Cherry Bomb* (Mercury '76). *Schooldays* (Mercury '77).

Albums: *The Runaways* (Mercury '76). *Queens Of Noise* (Mercury '77). *Waitin' For The Night* (Mercury '77). *Live In Japan* (Mercury '77).

TODD RUNDGREN

The original mixed-up glitter kid, Rundgren tackled head-on the uncertainties and traumas of the '70s first generation. Despite his studio monomania, and because of his love for classic pop forms, he was never as charismatic as the David Bowie's and Roxy Music's of this world.

Nevertheless his music was reacting to the same intangible angst. *I watch society crumble and I just laugh* he sang in *Heavy Metal Kids*, *'Because soon they'll all see what it's like to be the other half.'*

He has since become one with his cosmic consciousness and had a divorce, maintaining only a waning relevance to the world around him, which is still more than can be said for a lot of people.

Albums: *Something/Anything* (Bearsville '72). *A Wizard, A True Star* (Bearsville '73). *Todd* (Bearsville '74). *Faithful* (Bearsville '76). *Hermit of Mink Hollow* (Bearsville '78).

... you aim too, please



THE SAINTS

Chris Bailey—vocals. Ed Kuepper—guitar. Alasdair Ward—bass. Ivor Hay—drums.

Brash, hard-assed rockers formed in Brisbane, Australia, 1973. Dramatic debut single (*I'm Stranded* (first pressed on their own Fatal label, June '76) guaranteed cult interest in Britain. Have since failed to live up to their original promise. Bassist Kym Bradshaw left July '77 after first UK tour, replaced by Ward. Broke up recently blaming business and punter apathy.

Singles: *I'm Stranded* (Power Exchange '76). *Erotic Neurotic* (Harvest '77). *This Perfect Day* (Harvest '77). *1-2-3-4 EP* (Harvest '78). *Know Your Product* (Harvest '78). *Respect* (Harvest '78). *Security* (Harvest '78).

SCOTLAND

It's not only North Sea oil and gas which has made Scotland the place it is in the '70s. The Jocks haven't been slow in catching onto the new wave either. As usual, the action has polarised around Glasgow and Edinburgh. Surprisingly, Edinburgh is Scotland's new wave capital.

Most commercially successful of the Scots new wavers are Edinburgh-based The Rezillos. Their debut single, *Can't Stand My Baby* was issued on their former manager Lenny Love's Sensible Records. Current Rezillos' manager Bob Last also has his own label, Fast Products. As far as local talent is concerned, Fast has yet to make its mark.

Hard on the heels of The Rezillos are Dunfermline's The Skids and Glasgow's The Jolt. The former are now signed to Virgin. Originally they recorded for their own Charles label — one EP, *No Bad Label*.

Other contenders are Glasgow's The Zones (Arista), Edinburgh's The Valves and The Questions. Each act has had records released on Zoom Records, the label run by Bruce Finlay, owner of Edinburgh's Bruce's Records. Another Zoom act — some say Scotland's foremost punk outfit — is the now defunct PVC 2. Formerly the teenybop band Silk, PVC 2 was the training ground for both The Rich Kids' Midge Ure and two members of The Zones.

The other 'dead' Scots new wave acts are Glasgow bands, The Subs and The Exile. The latter recorded for Boring Records. Currently hot are Glasgow's Simple Minds — formerly three-quarters of Johnny & The Self Abusers.

Difficult to tell which of Scotland's independents are the most obscure. But in the running are Housewife's Choice — whose acts include Edinburgh's The Cuban Heels — and Dundee's N-R-G label, actually Scotland's first independent label.

SEX

Like so many other vital ingredients of Modern (or, indeed, Ancient) Life, the way sexual attitudes have developed in the '70s seems like the '60s dream gone seriously off the rails.

Coming straight out of a period of gradually relaxing repression, the dreamers of the '60s looked forward to a sexuality free from guilt, jealousy, fear, power-games and other inhibitant, joyless barriers: an atmosphere where humanity could experience all the ecstasy of unfettered sensuality and none of its agony as part of a general liberated spirit where we could care for ourselves and each other as never before.

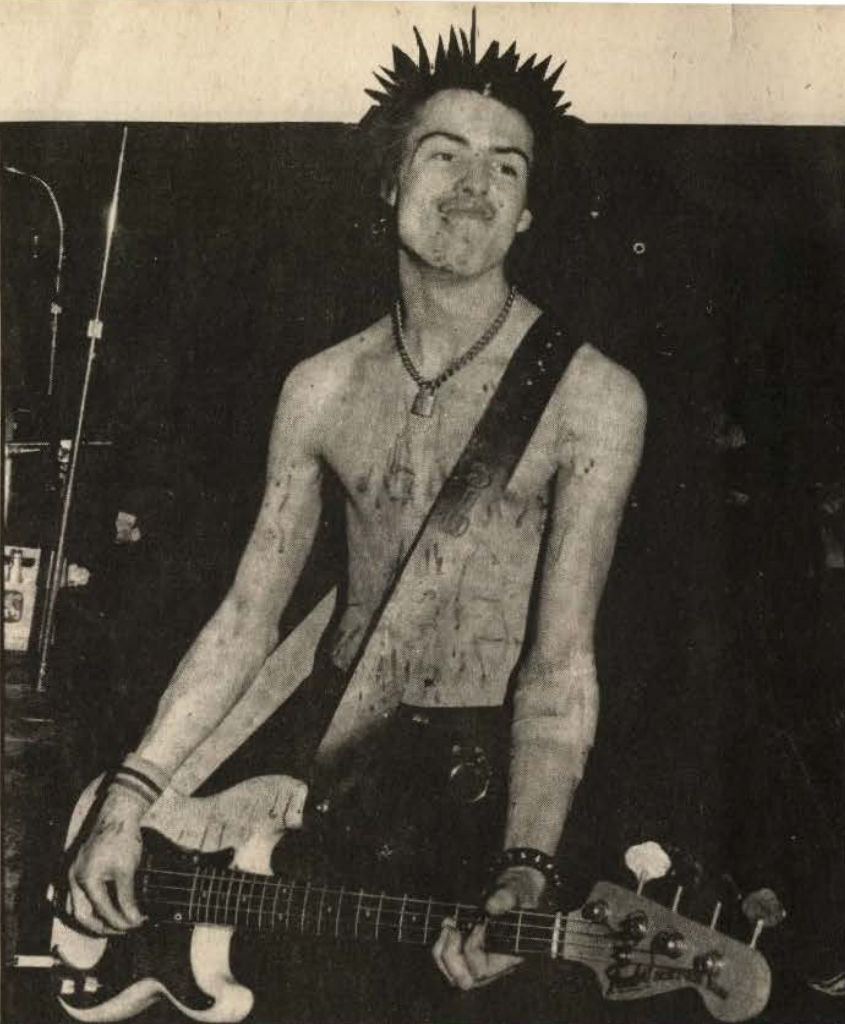
What has happened is that all the old sexual hangups remain, and that old ailments like sado-masochism and rape-fantasies have been ruthlessly and professionally exploited rather than melted away under the warm sunlight of a new freedom. Tits'n ass remain by far the easiest way to sell new (or old) products and the simple fact that these days people are far more willing to casually screw perfect strangers has meant that people who could bed together are far more likely to remain perfect strangers.

The sexual double standard of sexually active male stud = hero while sexually active female = scrubber is still — unfortunately — a mainstay of modern sexual thinking. Women attempting to live their lives the way they want to, and control their own sexual destinies, are finding that many men are in favour of Women's Liberation (whatever that means) as long as it means that women are freer to make advances of their own or say "yes", but against it if it means that women are equally free to say "no". This leads to the kind of thinking whereby women who say "yes" a lot are regarded as nymphomaniacs (an outmoded and abused term, incidentally — there's no male equivalent, significantly enough), while women who tend to say "no" are regarded as frigid.

As homosexuals fight against discrimination and scare tactics in the media (as if having a male homosexual teaching your sons is any more dangerous than having a male heterosexual teaching your daughters), violent attacks on homosexuals are not decreasing significantly.

The old '60s dream of liberated, guilt-free, painless sex seems as distant as ever. In 1978, people are getting laid more frequently (thank you, Lord), but sex is still — to many people — as mysterious as ever. As we dispense with a few of the old sexual hangups, we are reinforcing a few of the others and even inventing some new ones.

What we have learned is that not as many sexual hangups could be dispersed by experience and freer discussion as we thought in the '60s, when the sexual cure-all was thought to be more sex and more openness about sex. Even ten or fifteen years ago Millie Jackson's records would have been considered pornographic and sexual discussion that now appears quite innocuously in newspapers or on radio or TV would have been inconceivable. The gap between sexual illusion (whether romantic/courtly or pornographic) and sexual reality is



No Future

still as great as in more repressed times, and the only way to bridge that gap is — you guessed — through an increased degree of genuine affection between individual lovers.

This situation will remain unchanged except for those (un)fortunate persons of either gender who desire for nothing more than an uncomplicated squirt'n twitch out of their sexual relationships. If you are among this number, then disco sex is seventh heaven.

THE SEX PISTOLS

Johnny Rotten-vocals. Steve Jones-guitar. Paul Cook-drums. Glen Matlock-bass.

SEX was a wonderful thing for a quartet of teenage Swankers haunting the King's Road circa the mid-'70s. Malcolm McLaren's gutter - couture - as - shock - tactics shop was the only den of sartorial opulence where the young budding rock group could hang out without get hassled to purchase the wares. In fact, McLaren positively encouraged the Swankers in their dreams of stardom. He was fresh back from his spell as manager with the late-New York Dolls. He had given up his ideas of performing himself and cancelled his singing lessons. He had not given up his idea of master-minding rock and roll's Ultimate Scummers

(wherever he may find them).

The Swankers huddled like waifs sheltering from the Special Branch in Mal's Fagan's lair. Their PA and instruments had all been ripped off piece by piece. This appealed to McLaren. The Swankers performed covers of Who, Small Faces and Foundations songs. They were: Sex-helper and Paul McCartney fan Glen Matlock; ex-car thief Steve Jones; ex-electrician's mate and brewery worker Paul Cook; and an awesomely ugly Buddy Costello clone called Wally. Obviously he didn't fit the bill as a front man for what McLaren had in mind. Even more obviously, John Lydon of Finsbury Park was perfect.

Rotten teeth, sinus trouble, wearing a Pink Floyd tee-shirt mutilated beyond recognition... they asked him to mime to Alice Cooper's *School's Out* in front of the Juke Box and rock 'n' roll would never be the same again.

Rotten began writing lyrics for Matlock's infectious melodies (de-popified by Jones' guitar-hero raunch) and when they dropped Swankers for The Sex Pistols they were ready to go on stage and have bottles thrown at them. Nevertheless, they built up a hardcore following, the vanguard of which were the inveterate posers of The Bromley Contingent.

McLaren's masterstroke was

to book the Pistols for socialite / sometimes artist Andrew Logan's yearly party in February '76. The Sex Pistols played three drunken sets in front of Babylon's coke-scum elite and splattered them against the walls. The word began to spread...

The heaviest artillery in the Pistols' arsenal was that they had Johnny Rotten and the best thing about Johnny Rotten was that he carried genuine speeding - outa - me - box - maasan brain-scouring fury. For over twenty years rock music had been a metaphor for sex, drugs and violence. But it had always been hinted at, never confronted directly. Rotten destroyed the pose and replaced it with his own version of reality, and it was the most mesmerising spectacle that ever hunched its way onto a stage. Kids began finding a rallying point for their pent-up hostility, for things they couldn't quite put their fag-burned fingers on. There's a place for us — at Pistols gigs. A movement and star were born.

Banned for hostilities at Marquee, Dingwalls, Nashville, name it, the Pistols culminated their residency at the 100 Club topping the two day punk festival in September '76 (the venue proceeded to promptly ban all future punk concerts, largely because of an eighteen year old girl losing her eye the



Ray Stevenson

first night, but also because of the Pistols' growing reputation for instigating boover).

The Pistols signed for EMI, went on prime-time TV and cussed in front of millions, cut and released *Anarchy In The UK* and embarked on a tour. The tour was savaged by local councils, the record was deleted due to pressure from just about every strata of the EMI monolith and the Pistols were kicked out of their first home.

Matlock and Rotten were continuously feuding, Matlock thinking Rotten an unnecessarily savage egotist and Rotten finding Glen a pop-loving wimp. Matlock left and was replaced by Sid Vicious, an old chum of Rotten's. With Matlock gone, The Sex Pistols had written their last great song.

They made the front pages once more when they signed to A&M in front of Buck House and (after a few days of pooping in record company in-trays, speed convictions and assaulting *Old Grey Whistle Test* presenters) got signed off the dotted line once more. The Pistols got £50,000 to leave EMI and £75,000 from A&M. They were pissing themselves. They had shocked the music industry like no-one had ever done before. They eventually found a good home *Chez Hillage* and became Virgins. They put out a string of singles that all tore up the charts. But suddenly the Pistols were laughing through broken teeth. They had always outraged our fair nation and now the UK was taking some retributive justice. Police and public alike freely indulged in Pistols bashing as *God Save The Queen* hit the top of the charts in Jubilee week. It wasn't safe for them to go out on the street. Internal conflicts within the band increased. Mal rubbed his hands. Divide and manage with ease! The album was released and it was a patchy affair. They sounded clumsy without Matlock's melodies to steer them through their fury with a semblance of grace.

The end came in America, at the end of a ragged, FBI-monitored tour. Rotten refused to go along with McLaren's publicity stunts anymore. No, he wasn't going to Rio to record songs with failed criminals. Malcolm said Rotten wanted to be a Superstar. Bitch, bitch, bitch... so that's it then. It was a messy ending to the biggest thing to hit rock 'n roll since... when?

But, as *The Biggest Blow*, *The Great Rock 'n Roll Swindle* and all the other ham-fisted attempts to squeeze the last drop of £sd out of "The Sex Pistols" was to prove, the worst was yet to come.

Ah, yesterday, when we were young...

Singles: *Anarchy In The UK* (EMI '76). *God Save The Queen* (Virgin '77). *Pretty Vacant* (Virgin '77). *Holiday In The Sun* (Virgin '77). *The Biggest Blow* (Virgin '78).

Album: *Never Mind The Bollocks, Here's The Sex Pistols* (Virgin '77).



Sham listed

SHAM 69

Jimmy Pursey—vocals. Dave Treggana—bass. Dave Parsons—guitar. Mark 'Kaka' Cain—drums.

As the Status Quo fans turned to punk so grew Sham 69. The rise took close on two years taking in a bruising route from the tranquil avenues of Hershaw, through the Walton Hop (mimicking to Glitter and the Rollers), countless Roxy support sets, a raw studio debut under the hands of John Cale, growing Skinhead adulation and Polydor Records with top ten hits. And, through many controversial/outspoken often dumb/always honest interviews with Pursey, the band have gathered a reputation akin to that of the Wild Bunch with fans as friendly as an Argentinian defence.

Much liked, Pursey is usually considered to be Sham 69, because of a machine gun pace and rare eagerness whenever in front of an interviewer's cassette. This is unfair to Treggana, (who replaced original handsome Albie Slider), Cain and Parsons who are not as 'household' as their singer simply because they can't get a word in edgeways!

Shams' friendship with rock music, (particularly the 'interlectuals'), is a frail one at best and few new wave bands are facing such a crucial time as they, stuck as they are with a tired political image which they are desperately trying to break from and move toward a more good humoured feel. However such a move would undoubtedly result in upsetting their fanatical followers, who themselves are controversial because of the disturbing, (both to onlookers and the band), amount of right wingers swelling in the ranks drawn through Shams' hard line working class stance.

Currently one of Britain's most in demand bands and with a couple of chart successes in the bag, this particular fifteen minutes of fame couldn't have been laid on a better, more genuine, bunch of rilly nice guys.

And, realist he is, Pursey once said: "I was on the shit heap a year ago, and I know I'll be back on it in a couple more..."

Singles: *Ulster* (Step Forward '77). *Borstal Breakout* (Polydor '78).

Angels With Dirty Faces (Polydor '78). *If The Kids Are United* (Polydor '78). *Hurry Up Harry* (Polydor '78).

Albums: *Tell Us The Truth* (Polydor '77). *That's Life* (Polydor '78).

THE SHIRTS

Annie Golden—vocals. Robert Racioppo—bass. John Criscione—drums. John Piccolo—keyboards. Ronnie Ardito—guitar. Artie Lamonica—guitar.

Classified New York Wave, The Shirts' collective age seems at odds with 'punk' image. Impressed many with 1978 UK tour, but debut album dissatisfying, insipid. Remains to be seen whether The Shirts' identity is strong enough to distinguish them Stateside or on galvanic UK scene.

Singles: *Empty Ever After* (Harvest '78). *Lonely Android* (Harvest '78).
Album: *The Shirts* Harvest '78).

SHOXSIE AND THE BANSHEES

Siouxsie Sioux—vocals. John McKay—guitar. Steven Severin—bass. Kenny Morris—drums.

Non-conformists in a conformist market. Formed September 1976 by Bromley-based Sex Pistol

acolytes Siouxsie and Severin. Made legendary debut with fellow non-musicians Sid Vicious (drums) and Marco Pironi (guitar) at the 100 Club Punk Festival with a chaotic, impromptu version of *The Lord's Prayer*. Under the auspices of manager Nils Stevenson, they again got underway in February '77 with drummer Morris and guitarist Peter Fenton, but only began to find true focus that July when McKay replaced Fenton. McKay's jagged, unorthodox chording — pinned down by the deep precise rhythm section — was the perfect counterpoint to Siouxsie's taut vocal and general austere ambience. By this time, both Siouxsie and Severin were showing a penchant for incisive lyrics clearly transcending earlier hollow outrage associations.

Despite successful tours, including gigs in Holland and France, radio and television appearances, they were universally snubbed by the A&R men until the Polydor signing in June '78. October debut album should confirm their status as the year's most subversively stimulating band, while their debut single was immediately chartbound.

Single: *Hong Kong Garden* (Polydor '78).
Album: *The Scream* (Polydor '78).

SKREWDRIVER

Ian Stuart—vocals. Ron Hartley—guitar. Kevin McKay—bass. Grinny—drums.

After the Lord Mayor's Show comes the horse-shit and after the instigation of the glorious Punk epoch by The Sex Pistols came droves of talentless identipunk as worthy of note as the aforementioned gee-gee excrement. One such group were Skrewdriver.

These inept Carpetbaggers from Blackpool churned out crass three-chord wastelands of earache including original material with titles like *You're So Dumb*, *Anti-Social*, *We Don't Pose* and *Back Street Kids*, plus hamfisted renditions of New York Dolls' classics. Have recently made attempts to lose skinhead image but live performances remain savagely dull.

Single: *You're So Dumb* (Chiswick '77).
Album: *All Skewed Up* (Chiswick '77).



Siouxsie the Ice Madchen

Pennie Smith



Little Darlings

SLAUGHTER AND THE DOGS

Wayne Barrat—vocals, Mike Rossi—guitar, Howard Bates—bass, Mad Muppett—drums

Teenage rebels without aim or realisation. Formed in 1975, a scruffy five piece remnant of the glam-rock with a repertoire ranging from *Both Ends Burning* through to Bowie. Played with Buzzcocks and Pistols in June '76 in full glitter regalia, later kicking out their fifth member. From here blindly stumbled into punk market, and along with The Damned and Eater became the most infamous of the pulp types.

Decca dumbly decided the Dogs were the ones to crack the charts, misunderstanding the intelligence required to shape punk into a commercial commodity. After releasing a trio of no-hope singles, none in the class of *Cranked Up Really High*, and a repulsive, naturally exuberant future collector's item *Doing It Dog Style* they collapsed in confusion. Barrat is now living in Paris. Rossi's single-minded ambition to be a new guitar hero deserves some reward, if only sympathy.

Singles: *Cranked Up Really High* (Rabid '77), *Where Have All The Bootboys Gone* (Decca '77), *Damn To Blame* (Decca '78), *Quick Joey Small* (Decca '78). *Albums:* *Doing It Dog Style* (Decca '78). Also two tracks on *Live at the Roxy* (EMI '77).

THE SLITS

Ari Up—vocals, Palm Olive—drums, Viv Albertine—guitar, Tessa—bass.

To many insiders, the Slits are regarded as the most vitally subversive rock band since The Sex Pistols, but their progress since the first official gig supporting The Clash in early '77 has been exceptionally depressing

to behold. Early gigs were shambolic and puerile with just a hint of something special there that made these silly displays so frustrating.

John Peel and producer John Walters booked them for a radio session and the results on stalwart originals like *New Town*, *So Tough* and *Vaseline* suddenly gained focus, a rivetting maverick form and momentum.

It was a tantalizing taster but the Slits have since promised more than they've delivered, constantly appearing to be hampered by indecision and lack of real direction. Managerial hassles haven't helped — Malcolm McLaren was going to be manager for a while, and after a short spell with others the band have ex-Deaf School manager Frank Silver handling them. Yet shortcomings are as rife as their potential seems boundless (they made The Runaways totally redundant for starters) and their repertoire still isn't bountiful. Certainly the 1980's will provide them with their real niche.

No product forthcoming although a single of *So Tough* is mooted to be forthcoming from Real Records. At time of press original drummer Palm Olive had been replaced by Slits' first male member — Budgie — formerly of Big In Japan.

THE SMIRKS

Simon Milner—vocals, guitar, Neil Fitzpatrick—guitar, vocals, Ian Morris—bass, vocals, Mike Doherty—drums.

Whacky Mancunian offbeat combo dragged to prominence via the vacuous early 1978 Powerpop hype, but survived to become the second UK signing to the American Baserkeley label. The novel *OK UK* debut single is pretty typical with a strong melody and

some silly humour in the patriotic lyrics. Watch for Smirkdance. *Singles:* *OK UK* (Baserkeley '78), *Rosemary* (Baserkeley '78).

PATTI SMITH

A performer and personality whose 'pretension' is an illusion, Patti Smith defies rational comment, and inspires either sycophantic fan club gush or scholarly, supercilious put-down.

Either approach unfortunately seems to spell out bullshit, which is not necessarily the case. She is precocious, she is contentious — a ragbag of contradictions and fleeting rock and roll cameo roles — but she is, above all, that wondrous showbiz thing, a 'natural'.

Volatile, scurrilous, and very adolescent, she juggles ceaselessly with allusions from every art and religion, but unlike predecessors — astute manipulators such as Dylan and Bowie — she doesn't try to disguise or integrate the fact, but thrives off it. She has always been an electric realisation of something Dylan only staggered upon with the Rolling Thunder Review: the romance of high artlessness. Which, as Renaldo found, allows for both great affirmation and ambiguity of character, and even sex.

Unfortunately, her discrepancies and excesses (like most artists really boring when she rants on about being one — keep it in the diary, Patti) have been taken further from resolution with each successive album and tour. *Horses*, her debut, attacked music with cheap psychedelic contempt, took liberties with the form and scored. She herself kept to "singing", attacking vocabulary with the sexual, female violence of a Sylvia Plath, but without the restraint and revision that a university education would have brought — which made her a 'bad'

poet and a great, spontaneous rock performer.

She baptised herself with a convincing 1976 Roundhouse show, in retrospect probably a great inspiration for female participation in the coming New Wave.

On *Radio Ethiopia* however, she overdosed... on herself, opium, religion, Albert Ayler, and Fender Duoasonic. Her 'bad' guitar playing was bad, period, and you had to wonder how much the first album's success was down to producer John Cale — a cool, intelligent *yang* force equal to, in understanding but in opposition to, her increasingly belligerent *yin* exhibitionism.

Accompanying performances confirmed the OD, and, perhaps it was a sign from on high, during her mock-dervish dancing on *Ain't It Strange* she went too far, literally, and dislocated her neck.

Whether this near-fatal event was an omen or not, she seemed to interpret it in typically idiosyncratic fashion, and the comeback album, *Easter*, saw her moving into about six different spheres at once, all tied up in yet another commercially viable production (and cover), with a perfect single, *Because The Night*, to lure the consumer. Only the title track comes over with any appreciable, genuinely emotional feeling.

It remains to be seen whether the current 'be commercial to be subversive' stance is a valid manoeuvre. What would Rimbaud think of this pandering to the masses?

Singles: *Piss Factory/Hey Joe* (Mer '74, re-released Sire '77), *Piss Factory/Hey Joe/Radio Ethiopia Live* (Sire 12" '78), *Gloria* (Arista '76), *Because The Night* (Arista '78), *Privilege EP* (Arista 12" '78). *Albums:* *Horses* (Arista '76), *Radio Ethiopia* (Arista '77), *Easter* (Arista '78).

SNATCH

Patti Palladin—vocals. Judy Nylon—vocals: Keith Paul—guitar. Bruce Douglas—bass. Nick Plytas—piano. Jerry Nolan—drums.

Fluid, sassy brainchild of the vivacious, forward-thinking Nylon/Palladin partnership—both expatriot New Yorkers living in London—Snatch have never been permanent working band. Above line-up played a few select English dates and recorded the spirited *All I Want* single March '77. Presently iced, it remains to be seen whether Nylon and Palladin realise their potential within the Snatch framework or as individual artists.

Singles: *IRT/Stanley (Bomp '77)*. *All I Want (Lightning '77)*. Brian Eno And Snatch—*RAF (Polydor '78)*.

THE SOFT BOYS

Robyn Hitchcock—guitar. Andy Metcalfe—bass, background vocals. Kimberley Rew—guitar, background vocals. Morris Windsor—drums. Jim Melton—vocals, harmonica.

Formed Cambridge 1976 as reaction to nothing much in particular. Co-incidence with New Wave, their scuzzy, sharp visuals, and clever attack of material ensured interest. Prone to complacent arrogance common to new provincial groups: will probably be forever 'under-rated', not even that if forthcoming album proves as uninspired as Radar single.

Singles: *Give It To The Soft Boys EP (Raw Records '77)*. *(I Want To Be An) Anglepoise Lamp (Radar '78)*.

SOLID SENDERS

Wilko Johnson—guitar, vocals. Steve Lewins—bass, vocals. Alan Platt—drums, vocals. John Denton—piano, vocals.

Known as the Wilko Johnson Band until halfway through its second nationwide tour, The Solid Senders is the band formed by guitarist/songwriter/cult figure Wilko Johnson after his ousting from Dr Feelgood in 1977.

After a lengthy period of solitude and retrenchment enlivened by the occasional nervous breakdown, he teamed up with fellow Southender, pianist/vocalist John Potter. Recruiting Steve Lewis from the Count Bishops and Alan Platt formerly of S.A.L.T., they released the excellent but unsuccessful single *Walking On The Edge* (a number that Wilko had recorded with the Feelgoods on his final album with them) and revealed themselves as a fine, exciting band firmly based in R&B and balanced on the tension between Potter's uncompromising Jerry Lee Lewis-based vocals and piano and Wilko's pounding, clamorous guitar and menacing, deadpan singing.

During recording of the band's debut album Potter parted company, and has since launched his own combo Potter's Clay, fronted by vocalist Mike Maynard. On subsequent live appearances, John Denton has depped on piano, but at presstime it was not



ABCD FGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

known whether he was permanent replacement

Wilko's unique stage presence, deft and penetrating songwriting and machine-gun guitar remain undimmed in the Senders, but their future would appear to hinge on whether the Mad Axeman Of Canvey can develop his vocal abilities to match the attributes on which his reputation was originally based.

Single: *Walking On The Edge (Virgin '78)*. Album: *Solid Senders (Virgin '78)*. Two tracks on *Hope & Anchor Front Row Festival (Warner Bros '78)*.



SOUTHSIDE JOHNNY & THE ASBURY JUKES

Southside Johnny—vocals. Carlo Novi—tenor sax. Eddie Manion—baritone sax. Ricky Gazda—trumpet. Tony Palligrosi—trumpet. Richie Rosenberg—trombone. Willie Rush—guitar. Kevin Kavanaugh—piano. Al Berger (Bass). Kenny Pentifallo—drums.

Along with Bruce Springsteen & The E Street Band, the mob-handed Southside Johnny & The Asbury Jukes form the basis of the incestuous Asbury Park Mutual Admiration Society. Not only have Springsteen and his guitarist Miami Steve Van Zandt (the latter produces The Jukes) been instrumental in guiding the group's career, but contribute the bulk of The Jukes original material—*The Fever, You Mean So Much To Me, When You Dance* etc.

The Asbury Jukes style is rooted in late '50s/early '60s black American R&B and they have invited Ronnie Spector, Lee Dorsey, The Satins, The Drifters and The Coasters to guest on their two albums. One of the most genuinely exciting live attractions to have emerged in America on the last few years, The Asbury Jukes have yet to realise their potential in terms of record sales.

Albums: *I Don't Want To Go Home (Epic '76)*. *This Time It's For Real (Epic '77)*. *Live At The Bottom Line (Epic Official Bootleg '77)*.

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN AND THE E STREET BAND

Bruce Springsteen—guitar, piano, vocals. Clarence Clemons—tenor sax. Roy Bittan—piano. Steve Van Zandt—guitar. Gary Tallent—bass. Max Weinberg—drums.

When he first appeared in the early '70s, Bruce Springsteen seemed to be just another tenth-rate Zimmerman clone among the pitiful plethora of youngish singer/songwriters being touted as 'The New Dylan'.

Springsteen's first two albums did little to shake off the albatross-flavoured ten tonweight hanging from his New Jersey neck—interminable rhyming couplets, excessive massed similes and oblique scatter-gun imagery ostensibly documenting the turmoil of urban existence. It was rock and roll purple prose and it didn't work. The artistic and commercial success of his next album was crucial for Springsteen and he remained esconced in the studio for the best part of a year, sharing the production workload with his manager Mike Appel and *Rolling Stone* critic Jon Landau. *Born To Run* was worth the wait.

Springsteen's lyrical loquaciousness was minimized while his romantic visions of New Jersey and New York City backstreets were blown up to celluloid Rock Dream proportions—heroic, panoramic and in glowing technicolour! The highly-choreographed brain-bruising rock 'n' roll was given a suitably epic Spectroscopic Wall of Sound production, in a '70s version of Bernstein's *West Side Story*. Naturally, it was irresistible.

The hysterical hyperbole of the CBS marketing overdrive to promote *Born To Run* only succeeded in convincing consumer and critic alike that Bruce Springsteen was no more than a manufactured Alternative Culture product and the subsequent furor obscured the fact that *Born To Run* was one of the few truly great albums that the '70s had produced.

Things began to fall apart rapidly for Springsteen. He split up with Appel and Landau became his manager. Both Appel and Springsteen filed multi-million dollars law-suits against each other alleging breach of contract.

The litigation lasted over two years and during that time Springsteen was prohibited from touring on recording by court order.

In the summer of '78 he mounted a magnificent comeback with the release of *Darkness On The Edge Of Town* which revealed a Springsteen of added depth, maturity and soul on an album that rates as his most intrinsically powerful work to date.

Singles: *Born To Run (CBS '75)*. *Prove It All Night (CBS '78)*. *Badlands (CBS '78)*. Albums: *Greetings From Asbury Park (CBS '73)*. *The Wild, The Innocent And The E Street Shuffle (CBS '74)*. *Born To Run (CBS '75)*. *Darkness On The Edge Of Town (CBS '78)*.

SQUEEZE

Glenn Tilbrook—vocals, guitar. Chris Difford—vocals, guitar. 'Jools' Holland—vocals, keyboards. Harry Kakouli—bass. Gilson Lavis—drums.

Formed Deptford, South London, 1974, their first waxing was for Deptford Fun City Records, an independent label run by manager Miles Copeland. Produced by John Cale (who also worked on album), the title itself, *Packet Of Three* was an example of composers Difford and Tilbrook's obsession with the seamy side of sex. Squeeze eschew all punk clichés, be they musical or lyrical, and although new wave is an influence, they're really a traditional rock band in a modern setting. High on musicianship, with Lavis and Holland particularly outstanding. Holland's skills are exhibited on solo single, *Boogie Woogie '78*. After signing to A&M, had minor hit with *Take Me I'm Yours* after heavy promotion.

Singles: *Packet Of Three (Deptford Fun City '77)*. *Take Me I'm Yours (A&M '78)*. *Bang Bang (A&M '78)*. Albums: *Squeeze (A&M '78)*.

STEEL PULSE

Basil Gabbidon—lead guitar, vocals. David Hinds—lead vocal, rhythm guitar. Ronnie McQueen—bass, percussion. Alphonso Martin/Michael Riley—vocals, percussion. Selwyn Brown—keyboards, vocal, percussion. Steve Nisbett—drums.

Despite often being the focal point of the British-born-blacks-can't-play-authentic-reggae controversy, this young seven piece Birmingham band (Handsworth to be precise) have, in three years together, firmly established themselves as the most commercially acceptable of the homegrown black new wave. They were among the first reggae bands to play punk gigs, where their lively stage act was well received. After one-off single for Anchor they signed with Island. The controversial *Ku Klux Klan* and *Prodigal Son* gained them even wider cross-over acceptance. However, their sales were to a predominantly white public, and despite a chart album they have little apparent appeal for the black audience.

Singles: *Nyah Love (Anchor '77)*. *Ku Klux Klan (Island '78)*. *Prediction (Island '78)*. Album: *Handsworth Revolution (Island '78)*.



Jill Furmanovsky

THE STRANGLERS

Hugh Cornwell—guitar. Dave Greenfield—organ. Jean Jacques Burnel—bass. Jet Black—drums.

Formed late 1974 after Cornwell returned to England from Sweden where he had led Johnny Sox, a rock band specialising in original three and four minute songs.

When, through a music press ad, Jet Black met Cornwell at the latter's Kentish Town squat the J. Sox guitarist was still in tow. Though the Swede was soon to depart Black persuaded the duo they should go down to Guildford and live in the flat above the off-licence and ice-cream factory he then owned. Shortly after the Swede had departed a friend turned up one evening accompanied by a hitch-hiker to whom he was giving a lift.

An accomplished classical guitarist, Jean Jacques Burnel — for it was he — soon became the Stranglers' bass player and, as a trio, the band played assorted clubs in the South-East. Several demo tracks were also out at TW Studios in London's Fulham

Palace Road, the studio at which the band has subsequently cut all three of its albums.

After Greenfield had joined the band — also through an ad — in May, '75, his keyboards' sound presented The Stranglers with the 'sub-Doors' tag which has hung around the band's neck since.

Taken on by the then fledgling Albion Agency, which also ran both the influential Nashville and Hope And Anchor London venues, the band built up a strong reputation for powerful live gigs — remember: they were on the road a year before the Pistols. The result was that when their first album was released in early '77 it became the first new wave elpee to score a high chart position and hefty sales.

Singles success — there are those who maintain that the '45 is the outfit's true forte — with *Get A Grip On Yourself*, *Peaches*, and *Something Better Change* — plus further hefty live work ensured that although it suffered from all the stock problems of *The Second Album* — hastily written songs and shoddy arrangements too derivative of the first album's finer

moments — *No More Heroes* still equalled the half million sale of the first LP.

Black And White continued the proven commercial formula of the first two records with some nods in the direction of further advancement. By the time of its release The Stranglers had become one of the biggest working groups in the United Kingdom and its success was assured.

Though the band has so far made little impact in the States the members themselves claim to ultimately expect transatlantic success.

Cornwell, however, confidently expects the outfit to break up shortly.

Singles: *Grip* (UA '77). *Peaches* (UA '77). *Something Better Change* (UA '77). *No More Heroes* (UA '77). *5 Minutes* (UA '78). *Nice 'n' Sleazy* (UA '78). *Walk On By* (UA '78).

Albums: *Rattus Norvegicus* (UA '77). *No More Heroes* (UA '77). *Black And White* (UA '78). Also: *Celia And The Mutations: Mony Mony* (UA '78).



STUDIO ONE

Clement Seymour Dodd — "Sir Coxsone" — was foremost the pioneer producer of Jamaican popular music, and may safely lay claim to having been the man most responsible for generating the ska beat out of its roots in US, specifically New Orleans, R&B towards the end of the '50's.

From his Studio One in Kingston's Brentford Road, Dodd continued to issue much of the best in Ja ska, rock-steady and reggae during the '60s, employing the island's leading musicians for sessions.

Many major talents spent their early career at the Studio One training centre, including Bob Andy, John Holt, Ken Boothe, Alton Ellis, Dennis Brown, Delroy Wilson, Bob Marley and the Wailers, Burning Spear, The Heptones, The Gladiators, and many more.

In addition, a great majority of the rhythms in current vogue were originally formulated by the Soul Vendors and Sound Dimension musicians at Studio One, to enjoy a new lease of life in the '70s as refurbished by the likes of Channel One, Joe Gibbs, etc. In fact, almost the complete Heptones catalogue has been plundered in recent years for the emergent lovers-rock audience.

During the past few years Studio One music has enjoyed cult status amongst some idren, mainly on account of its superior mellow production, with outlets like Peckings Studio One Shop in Shepherds Bush and the Clapham Junction Dub Vendors stall specialising in the music; journalists like Chris Lane and Dave Hendley crusading zealously on its behalf, and a cast of thousands of neo-Skinheads rejecting the commercial trappings of reggae-interested companies such as Island and Virgin in favour of the sound.

Singles: Black Brothers — *School Children (Bongo Man)*. Prince Lincoln — *True Experience (Studio 1)*. Alton Ellis — *Black Man's Pride (Coxsone)*. The New Establishment — *Small Garden Ver., (Money Disc)*. Roland Alphonso — *Lee Harvey Oswald (Coxsone)*. The Abyssinians — *Declaration Of Rights (Coxsone)*. The Gladiators — *Mr Baldwin (Studio 1)*. Alton Ellis — *African Descendants (Coxsone)*. Freddie McGregor — *I Mam A Rasta (Money Disc)*. Big Willie — *College Rock (Iron Side)*.

SUBWAY SECT

Paul Myers—bass. Vic Goddard—voices. Rob Simmons—guitar. Rob Ward—drums.

Early participants in the punk

purge, they had no overt controversy for the nationals, weeklies or fans to pick on so steadily evolved with no fuss. As blank, fast rock exponents they played the legendary 100 Club Punk Festival, then transformed into a fuller, more coherent sound. Clash manager Bernie Rhodes, appreciative of Subway Sect's angles of subversion took them under wing — a resultantly strained relationship. Appeared on Clash's '77 White Riot Tour.

Single came out on Rhodes Braik label in March, a poor artefact recorded some months before. Sect's latest metamorphosis sees an apparent loss of democracy — away from four way tension, with concentration on Vic Goddard's solid musical settings and earnest lyrical vignettes of a tradition from Dylan to Verlaine. Consequently, a split seems imminent, Goddard pursuing solo direction. Whatever, Goddard is a major talent in the making.

Single: *Nobody's Scared (Braik '78)*.

SUICIDE

Alan Rev—vocals. Martin

Vega-instruments.

A two-man group formed six years ago in New York who have devised a highly original vehicle for performance and incitement. Former jazz musician Martin Rev plays drum machine and Vox Continental, and also operates the echo chamber through which both vocals and keyboards are fed. The loud, abrasive electronic textures and Alan Rev's edgy, exaggerated theatrics create a visual and musical dynamism hitherto unseen or heard, the recorded version rather flat in comparison. Confronted with such an uncompromising mode, the more regressive audience faction on their debut tour with The Clash responded in the time-honoured ignoramus tradition and tried to destroy. Suicide were delighted to have moved people so strongly.

Singles: *Cheree (Red Star '78)*. **Albums:** *Suicide (Red Star '78)*. Also *Rocket U.S.A. on Live At Max's Kansas City (CBS '78)*.

LITTLE BOB STORY

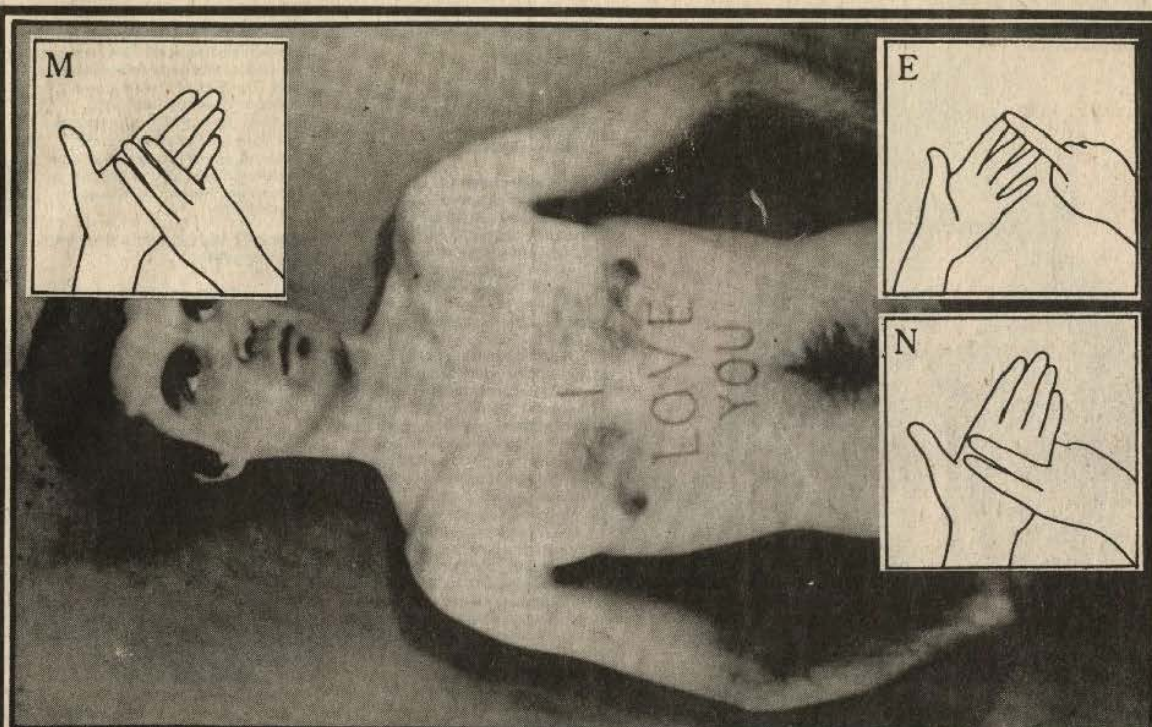
Little Bob Piazza—vocals. Guy George Gremy—guitar. Barbe Boir Lelan—bass. Vico Reblibo—drums. Serge Hendrix—guitar.

French pub-rockers extant in the punk age, their overdrive Rhythm and Blues very much in the Canvey Island mould. What made Little Bob Story more entertaining and endearing than the standard mucho-macho-man posturings of R&B combos was front man Little Bob Piazza. Born in Italy, he grew up in Le Havre and formed Little Bob Story mid-70s. Four feet tall and almost as wide, he resembled Bilbo Baggins on Dodo's, a bespectacled porky little bundle of sweat and blubber, screaming in a hoarse voice that was the marriage of his two idols — Eric Burdon and Steve Marriott.

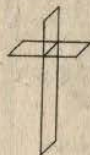
Not even a magical Muppet could prop up a danceable anachronism forever and Little Bob Story soon peaked. They underwent changes of line-up, put out their second album still without the major breakthrough they needed to get them out of the interminable pub-rock circuit. They got tired and remain that way today. Still good value for money for the drunk at the bar.

Singles: *I'm Crying (Chiswick '76)*. *All Or Nothing (Chiswick '77)*. **Albums:** *High Time (Chiswick '76)*. *Off The Rails (Chiswick '78)*.





David Art Talking Byrne Rock Heads.



THE TABLE

Russell Young—bass, vocals. Tony Barnes—guitar, vocals. Kevin Bannon—guitar.

Arrived out of the blue early '77 with the devastating *Do The Standing Still*—a seething turmoil of furious punk rhythms, multi-tracked psychedelic guitars and bizarre comic book lyrics—and promptly (almost) vanished. The Table—then Barnes and Young plus guitarist Micky O'Connor and drummer Len Lewis—played a handful of gigs, accompanying *Standing Still* with a brilliant custom made cartoon film (Barnes and Young are both animators in 'real life'), but never got anywhere as they didn't have any gear. Lewis and O'Connor departed late '77, Bannon joined '78. Album rumoured soon, no doubt put together with elaborate secrecy and laborious care—guaranteed to baffle expectations.

Singles: Do The Standing Still (Classics Illustrated '77). *Magical Melon Of The Tropics* (Virgin '77). *Sex Cells* (Chiswick '78).

TALKING HEADS

David Byrne—vocals, guitar. Jerry Harrison—guitar, keyboards. Chris Frantz—drums. Tina Weymouth—bass.

Formed for their own amusement at the Rhode Island School Of Design by Frantz, Weymouth and the itinerant Byrne as The Artistics,

sometimes known as the Autistics thanks to their playing capacities and the antics of a long-departed fourth member. The trio moved to New York in '74, becoming part of the nascent CBGB's scene, and with a fast-rising though quirky reputation fueled by local press and the interest of Beserkley's Matthew Kaufman released their first single in September '76.

They made a mesmerising British debut at London's Rock Garden in the spring of '77 with new member ex-Modern Lover Jerry Harrison, and toured again in the early autumn supporting The Ramones, coinciding with the release of their much acclaimed first album. Headlining their own tour in February '78, audience response ranged from curious fascination to surrender, but was quantitative enough to put their second album, released in July '78 and accompanied by a one-off London gig, into the British charts. Producer Brian Eno moulded and sometimes dominates the record, dehumanising a sound still best experienced live; tense, rich textures anchored by an amazingly funky husband and wife rhythm section, and given visual focus by the enigmatic Byrne, though clean cut appearance of the band as a whole is hardly indistinctive.

Offstage socially awkward and retiring, yet onstage utterly abandoned, Byrne's idiosyncratic personality and unusual songs—often just pure descriptive prose and bare, shouted emotions—have proved insidious and spellbinding. Talking Heads' popularity, confidence and class grows proportionally.

Singles: Love Goes To Building On Fire (Sire '76). *Psycho Killer* (Sire '77). *I Wish You Wouldn't Say That* (Sire '77). *Albums: Talking Heads '77* (Sire '77). *More Songs About Buildings And Food* (Sire '78).

TECHNOCRATS

The massed arsenal of electronic hardware locks into the night's program with all the functional ease of an IBM computer seeking the lowest common denominator. A phased quadrophonic PA—useful for spatial effects—compensates for the amphitheatre's natural resonance, leaving the view from block 32 only a few milliseconds out of synch with the glittering ants on stage.

Strobe-tuned guitars feed directly into harmonizers, and one note sounds a whole orchestra. Pre-sequenced tapes predict the audience applause on cue. Digital delay allows the group to clone themselves to the power of n. All is keyed via timers and frequency triggers to a water-cooled visual display console, back-projecting selected video-comp graphics, beaming rigid faser light, throwing huge holograms over the heads of spectators. The group's logo appears at the prescribed interval of once every 20 seconds for a two-second burst.

Most people have a shrewd idea of how it started, few have a clue where it will end, others are too busy making hay to care.

Back in the '60s there was improvisation and there were light shows. Even primitive light shows were like candy to the stoned mind. Come the '70s there was heavy metal and there was progressive music—a misguided attempt to rationalize improvisation and come to terms with synthesizers—and there were still light shows.

Yes and ELP charted new depths of quasi-symphonic grandeur and pomp. They discovered that people would enter trance-like deliriums at the mere sighting of a large, semi-circular array of keyboards or a row of effects pedals. So long as it was lengthy, involved, allowed for at least one

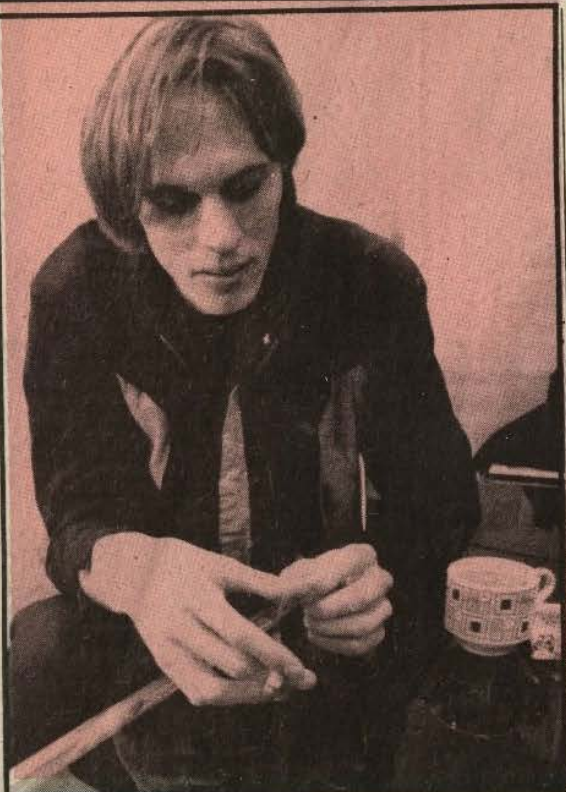
member to solo, and carried a note of cosmic importance, it didn't matter what you played. So long as it was played very fast, employing as many strange timbres as possible, it didn't matter who you were. Of course, the bigger you were, the more guitars and keyboards you could list on your album sleeve, the more strange noises you could make, the more you could baffle with science, the bigger you'd get. Groups like Kansas, Rush, Styx and Starcastle, as well as their aforementioned avatars, are happy to follow this mindless spiral, like the denizens of an Escher staircase.

Then The Pink Floyd made a discovery. They dispensed with the crass trappings of speed and effex and made, instead, muzak. Just as grand, just as pompous, but subservient to the overall spectacle, which by then was becoming a full blown banquet for the (still stoned) mind. Dry ice went out and lasers came in.

Since then the music has been ever more secondary to the event, the spectacle, the circus. New technology allows a group to duplicate live what it sounds like in a 34-track studio, making the idea of live performance near redundant.

The scenario that opened this entry is readily available to any group that can afford it, and while heavy metal bands new and old simply go for a bigger PA progressive bands new and old go for bigger hardware. Most observers confidently predict there will be no digital relapse...





Pamela Smith

Eeny, meeny, mini, mo. Eeny, meeny minim mo. (Poetry in stereo).

TELEVISION

Tom Verlaine—guitar, vocals.
Richard Lloyd—guitar. Billy Ficca—drums. Fred Smith—bass.

Formed by Tom Verlaine nee Miller and school-chum Richard Hell nee Myers in 1974 and later joined by West Coast acolyte Lloyd and Tony Williams fanatic Ficca on drums, Television were arguably the first New York new wave band in terms of style and attitude, even though the band's music has caused many to liken them to a new wave Grateful Dead. When Richard Hell left in '75 taking the beatnik persona of songs like *Blank Generation* he took with him a dimension that the dour Verlaine compensated for by becoming more studious, embarking on shimmering near-jazz free-form rides in the process, taking the twin-guitar sound into new realms of tonal frontier frequented only fleetingly by 5D Byrds and Cortez Neil Young.

Television's music always had an icy demeanour — a sense of distance that either drew you into its imperious whole or else left you cold and cynical. However, the first album *Marquee Moon* is an unimpeachable classic with startling songs spotlighting both Verlaine's flowery poetry and his irresistible full-frontal guitar fluidity. Coming at a time when high-grade musicianship was not the most coveted attribute, it made a deft and dazzling mark on late '70s rock.

Unfortunately, Verlaine failed to follow up the triumph. Apart from touring Europe (where the band were more popular than in the US) he seldom left New York and his supercilious, near-snobbish

attitude made few friends.

A second album lacking the immediacy of *Moon* was consequently seized upon by critics antagonized by the band's image. Although the album lacked the first chapter's vivacity its virtues simply took more time to uncover.

The writing however was on the wall. Shoddy attendance figures on the second English tour, poor sales for *Adventure*, the undeniable feeling of being stuck in one gear forced the band to call it quits in August '78. Though the news has been greeted with little more than apathy, Television were nonetheless an exceptional unit and decidedly ahead of their time. Proper acceptance will be granted through hindsight.

Singles: *Little Johnny Jewel* (Ork '76). *Prove It* (Elektra '77). *Marquee Moon* (Elektra '77). *Foxhole* (Elektra '78).
Albums: *Marquee Moon* (Elektra '77). *Adventure* (Elektra '78).

THE TOURISTS

Pete Dinklage—songs, guitar.
Dave Stewart—guitar. Eddie Chin—bass. Anne Lennox—vocals, keyboards. Jim Toomey—drums.

They dress even more impossibly than regular tourists. Converging on London in Summer '78 from points as far afield as Scotland, Sunderland and Japan, Tourists' music is as eclectic as they look; educated, abstract pop with keyboards by a Looby Lou who tries to look both silly and sexy at the same time. The effect, and the music at times, can be likened to trying to pat your tummy and rub your head: confused.

THIN LIZZY

Phil Lynott—vocals, bass. Scott Gorham—guitar. Brian Downard—drums. Gary Moore—guitar.

Hard rock outfit who escape imitations of genre by virtue of melodic sensibilities and amiable bad boy charisma of Phil Lynott.

After five albums in as many years with only the '73 *Whiskey In The Jar* hit to show for their interminable hard-graft on the road, Lizzy released the ebullient *Boys Are Back In Town*, an irresistible mating of the best aspects of both hard rock and pop, and it became the juke box gem of summer '76. After that they never looked back and went on to shake up the Madison Square Garden dinosaurs while The Sex Pistols were readying themselves to shake up everybody.

Appropriately, Lizzy's leader and major songwriter Phil Lynott was one of the very few name musicians to welcome the arrival of new blood in rock 'n' roll, and he was almost the only established big shot spared the acidic verbal pistol-whipping the punks were dishing out at Rod Stewart, the Stones and their ilk.

Though Lizzy's roots lay in basic hard-rock, they (through Lynott) inject a wealth of unique characteristics into the genre that prevents them straying into the wretched realms of Status, Sabbath, etc. Lynott, despite all his macho-man posturing, is a hopeless romantic and draws heavily on his Celtic heritage for influence. His latest work indicates his mellow, romantic tendencies are blending successfully with the True Grit Warrior Potency that is Lizzy's stock in trade.

Singles: *The Boys Are Back In Town* (Vertigo '76). *Dancing In The Moonlight* (Vertigo '77). *Rosalie* (Vertigo '78).
Albums: *Jailbreak* (Vertigo '76). *Johnny The Fox* (Vertigo '76). *Bad Reputation* (Vertigo '77). *Live And Dangerous* (Vertigo '78).

THIS HEAT

Charles Hayward—drums, percussion, tapes, toys. Charles Bullen—guitars, reeds, tapes. Gareth Williams—keyboards, bass, tapes.

Insistent that their musical pasts

remain undisclosed, This Heat are an obdurately experimentalist rock unit. The bulk of their material takes unprecedented risks, sometimes working, sometimes not. Points of interest include inspired use of pre-recorded tape textures. Sadly but predictably, a recording contract continues to elude them.

GEORGE THOROGOOD AND THE DESTROYERS

George Thorogood—vocals, guitar. Billy Blough—bass. Jeff Simon—drums.

An unabashedly traditional and ferociously energetic trio based in Wilmington, Delaware, George Thorogood And The Destroyers specialise in the rock and roll and R&B of the '50s. An all-stops-out bar band raised in a tough school where you play five 60-minute sets a night, Thorogood became a national and then international breakout when an album that he and his band recorded purely as an aid to getting club work started to pick up national radio play and press attention. Despite his uncompromising dedication to the blues (an intrinsically unfashionable music outside the burgeoning R&B scene), Thorogood's slide-guitar wizardry, blazing energy and unpretentious extroversion make him a notable new performer.

Singles: *Can't Stop Lovin'* (Sonet '78). *Madison Blues* (Sonet '78).
Albums: *George Thorogood And The Destroyers* (Sonet '78). *Move It On Over* (Sonet '78).

THROBBING GRISTLE

Genesis P. Orridge—vocals. Chris Carter—keyboards. Cossì Fanni Tutti—guitar.

Led by ghouliah humourist Genesis P-Orridge, Throbbing Gristle say they play 'Industrial music for industrial people'. At times, the industrial people sound as though they've got their heads caught in the machines. A mixture of white noise and deliberately primitive playing their songs reflect P-Orridge's obsession with death and mutilation as a public spectacle. A gentle, melodic single seems likely to be only a brief respite.

Single: *United* (Industrial '78).
Album: *Music From The Death Factory* (Industrial '78).



Genesis P Orridge.

Denis O'Hagan

JOHNNY THUNDERS' HEARTBREAKERS

Johnny Thunders—guitar, vocals.
Jerry Nolan—drums. Walter
Lure—guitar, vocals. Billy
Rath—bass.

The Heartbreakers were formed in 1975 by ex-New York Dolls Thunders and Nolan with Walter Lure and Richard Hell, though the last soon departed and was replaced by the suitably low-profile Rath.

Severely hampered Stateside by their reputation for unreliable too-much-junkie business, The Heartbreakers came to the UK to support the Pistols on the 'Anarchy' tour and received such a rapturous reception that they decided to base themselves in London. They soon secured a contract with Track and became regular headliners at the Roxy Club.

Their songs were infectious-if-simplistic rock and roll with cryptic lyrics that Thunders described as "love songs for objects" which invariably meant paeans to heroin. Lure, Nolan and Thunders were all on methadone courses to cure them of their heroin addiction but the band appeared on the verge of a major break-through until, in mid '77, the Home Office threw them out of the UK for not having the required work permits.

After this, things rapidly disintegrated. Their album *L.A.M.F.* (a New York street legend — 'Like A Mother-Fucker') was released and sounded as if it had been recorded in a sewer.

Thunders was in New York while the rest of the band, who had sorted out their visa problems, waited for him in London so they could go on the road. A series of singles all failed miserably and eventually the band disintegrated around the same time that their record company went bankrupt. The others returned to New York while Thunders remained in London, jamming with any band that would let him on stage.

He could have been a teen-idol, but both his looks and talent became dissipated through junk. 'I prefer drugs to women, anyhow,' Thunders remarked, and it became his most repeated quote. He talked of forming a band called The Junkies. 'To show that we're a no-holds-barred band'. Instead he gigged with Sid Vicious in a transient band called The Living Dead and ended up going back to his homeland where, ironically, the first person he got on stage to play back-up to was a face from his past — ex-Doll David Johansen.

He recently returned to London for a one-off gig to promote new solo album.

Singles: The Heartbreakers — *Chinese Rocks* (Track '77). *It's Not Enough* (Track '77). *Johnny Thunders — Dead Or Alive* (Real '78).
Albums: *L.A.M.F.* (Track '77). *Johnny Thunders — So Alone* (Real '78).

THE TILLER BOYS

An occasional experiment in electronic confrontation, conceived by Peter Shelley with Buzzcocks aides Fran and Eric. A collage of directed noise built up from pre-recorded tapes, electronics, drum machines and improvised human contributions on guitars and percussion. Challenges normal concepts of

presentations; durations of performance simply as long as possible, demands on audience unspecified. A visionary alternative to support groups and dj's at gigs.

TOASTERS

Regarded by many as the unacceptable voice — and limited vocabulary — of reggae, the DJ toaster nevertheless continues to exert powerful influence on the music, as it has done ever since one Ewart Beckford proceeded to wake the nation with version galore at the beginning of the decade.

Following in U Roy's footsteps a number of talk-over artists arrived in the recording arena, with varying success, among the earliest being Dennis Alcapone, Winston Scotland, Shorty the President, I Roy, Scotty, Prince Jazzbo and Big Youth.

Dillinger emerged in force early in 1976, having recorded a few unheralded sides for Upsetter and Bunny Lee a few years earlier, and set the pace for modern toasting with his "day-in-the-life" skanks to Channel One rhythms, culminating in the invigorating *CB 200* LP and European chart-topper *Cokane In My Brain* in '77, since when he has paraded around the world dressed in red, gold and green pyjamas, earning many deuschemarks and guilders, even while relinquishing much of his former JA popularity to a new generation of sharp talkers.

Chief among these was Trinity, protege of Channel One and Yabby You, whose earliest efforts were dismissed as Big Youth derivatives until he came into his own with *Three Piece Suit* in '77. He has maintained his popularity ever since, perfecting the barking style originated by Dillinger on his discomix toasts, and recording a prodigious output on a freelance basis.

Winston Thompson known as *Doctor Alimantado* made his name with a hard-core following of UK pre-release cultists on issue of his *Best Dress Chicken* single in '75, and has continued to exert fascination ever since, notably with titles such as *Gimme My Gun* ('76) and *Born For A Purpose* ('77). Currently resident in the UK, Tado now maintains his own I.S.D.A. label and celebrated his debut LP release in September '78.

Lesser luminaries include Jah Woosh — also now resident in England — who peaked in '76 and has been unable to rediscover his initial inspiration since; Striker Lee protege Jah Stitch — "The Killer" — who made his name with *No Gun Can Dead* ('76) and owns a distinctive style; and U Brown, a U Roy acolyte who enjoyed a period of popularity during '77/early '78 with a selection of fast talking pleas for black and white unity.

Spanish-tonian DJ Ranking Trevor was introduced in 1977 by Channel One, after both Dillinger and Trinity had departed the studio for greener pastures, and has enjoyed a fruitful relationship thus, especially as regards his discomix titles.

Probably the most popular toaster at the time of writing, however, is teenager Clint Eastwood — younger brother of Trinity — who also emerged in 1977, to consolidate his popularity in 1978 by lending his support to 12" titles such as *The Bold One's*



Minister of 'erb

Dry Up Your Tears and Carol Kalphat's *African Land*.

Singles: Trinity — *Tribal War* (Nationwide '76). *Jesus Dread* (Grove '78). *Doctor Alimantado — Best Dress Chicken* (Sun & Stars '75). *Born For A Purpose* (Greensleeves '77). *Prince Jazzbo — Step Forward Youth* (Count Shelly '75). *Croaking Lizard* (Island '76). *President Shorty — Barbican Heights* (K&B '77). *I Roy — Point Blank* (Third World '77). *U Roy — Runaway Girl* (Virgin '75). *Jah Woosh — Ital Feast* (Sunshot '77). *Walls of Babylon* (Creation Rebel '78). *Clint Eastwood — DJ Jamboree* (Jamaica Sound '78).
Albums: Dillinger — *CB 200* (Mango '76). Trinity — *Shanty Town Determination* (TR Groovemaster '76). *Doctor Alimantado — Best Dressed Chicken In Town* (Greensleeves '78). *Prince Jazzbo — Natty Passing Thru* (Black Wax '76). *U Roy — Version Galore* (Front Line '78). *Prince Far I — Under Heavy Manners* (Joe Gibbs '77). *Jah Stitch — No Dread Can't Dead* (Third World '77). *Jah Thomas — Stop Yu Loafin* (Greensleeves '78). *Jah Woosh — Psalms Of Wisdom* (Black Wax '76). *U Brown — Mr. Brown Something* (Front Line '78). *Clint Eastwood — African Youth* (Third World '78). *Various Artists — DJ Roundup* (Trojan '76). *Rasta Have Ambition* (Live And Love '77).

PETER TOSH

Founder member of The Wailers alongside Bob Marley and Bunny Wailer, Peter MacKintosh has pursued a solo career since the original trio split in 1974. Pursuant to his old claims of 'I Am The Toughest' (he is a karate expert), Tosh has continued to espouse a fiercely militant breed of Rastafarian rhetoric. His '76 demand for ganja law reform *Legalise It*, became an international hit and rebel rallying call, though the album lacked the grace and finesse to lift it above the predictable. *Equal Rights* showed a surer, more commercial touch and was well received by white rock audience.

In '78 Tosh signed with Rolling Stones Records and supported the Stones on their US tour with a band featuring JA's most celebrated rhythm section of Robbie Shakespeare and Sly Dunbar. Though the Stones audience showed little appreciation of their heroes' co-opted rebel music, Tosh's militance, ambition and imposing presence indicate an interesting future.

Singles: *Legalise It* (Virgin '76). *African* (Virgin '77). *Babylon Queenom* (Diplo '77). *Vampire* (Diplo '77). *Don't Look Back* (EMI '78).
Albums: *Legalise It* (Virgin '76). *Equal Rights* (Virgin '77).



TRIBALISM

The end result of the rapid succession of teenage fashions in the last quarter-century has been that in 1978 there are not only numerous surviving adherents of each passing subculture, but a profusion of youths adopting teenage lifestyles originally instigated during their infancy if not before their birth.

Hence: Teddy Boys were first spotted during the late '50s and punk is a development of the late '70s, but many teddy and punks are contemporaries. As are many hippies, beats, skinheads, greasers, glitterkids and Normal People.

Generally, each tribe tends to mind its own business and enjoy its specific tribal rites in specific places until vast amounts of mediebuzz are generated by some new clique. The arrival of punk (in mass terms, anyhow) brought all the previous tribes out of the woodwork and — egged on by the Fleet Street trashos — Punk v Ted conflicts were staged as a rerun of the Mod v Rocker battles of a dozen years earlier.

There is clearly a kind of tribal equilibrium that is maintained until the emergence of a new tribe upsets the balance of power. The punks, by casting aspersions on all other rock forms except for reggae, thereby threatened every body else's identity and insulted all the tribal relics (be they Jerry Lee Lewis, Jerry Garcia or whoever).

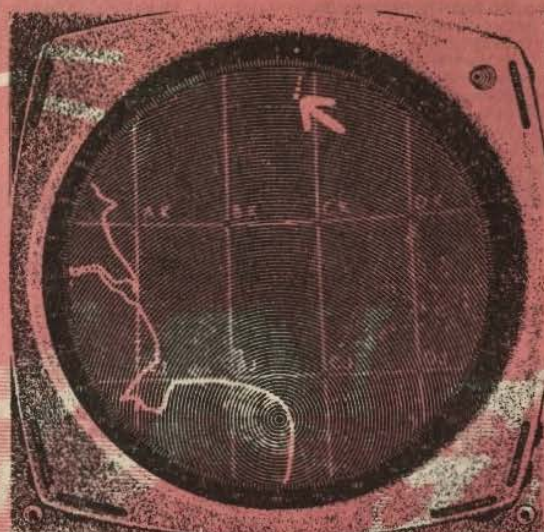
The situation is also confused by the fact that many kids pass through several tribes as time passes, and many commute between — say — punk, ted and skinhead, or adopt costumes that draw on many different styles.

Rock tribalism is good, positive fun as long as it remains as a rallying point for like-minded people to consolidate their ideas and interact creatively, but it can have its drawbacks: too many times it has simply served as a massive reinforcement of collective narrow-mindedness or — worst of all — as an excuse for punch-outs in the same way as football fenhood.

Conforming too closely to a tribal stereotype means that you've unfortunately laid yourself open to negative generalisations on other people's part: it was as misleading to assume that all punk-rockers were violent as it was to assume that all hippies were peaceful and loving.

Each fraction of each generation will, however, discover its own style and even as the more forward-looking (or fickle, depending on your attitude) move on, the conservatives will remain locked into the style that most recalls the time of their lives at which they felt the most content. Simultaneously, each generation will have the choice of adhering to the style of its contemporaries or adopting a style from the past.

This situation will continue as long as people feel the irresistible need to belong.



18.06 First sighting of possible intruder on domestic radar.

THE TUBES

Bill Spooner—lead guitar, vocals. Roger Steen—lead guitar, vocals. Vince Weinick—keyboards. Michael Cotten—Synthesiser. Rick Anderson—bass. Prairie Prince—drums. Mingo Lewis—percussion. Fee Waybill—vocals, method frontman. Re Styles—vocal.

A multi-media outrage begun by Bill Spooner in '72 in California's Bay Area. Little is known of The Tubes early years, but they are said to owe a debt of sorts to the original *Rocky Horror Show*. A constant source of inspiration however is Captain Beefheart, and on their third album they did a cover of a Beefheart song. They were 'discovered' by Al Kooper, who produced their first album, notorious in its time for the aggressive bizzareness of *Mondo Bondage* and *White Punks On Dope*, which introduced the bloated ego of Quay Lawd.

Utilising theatre, dance, mime and closed-circuit video, The Tubes mercilessly lampoon the crass excesses of life, themselves included, as well as sometimes taking a sideways swipe at a few, more serious subjects. Obviously men (and women) of determined vision, they've ploughed more money than they've ever earned into their shows. Realising the futility of this programme, they've now opted to go straight to the ugly heart of the matter and concentrate on TV to crack the so far incomprehending US market. Thus the likes of their sensational '77 British debut aren't likely to be seen again.

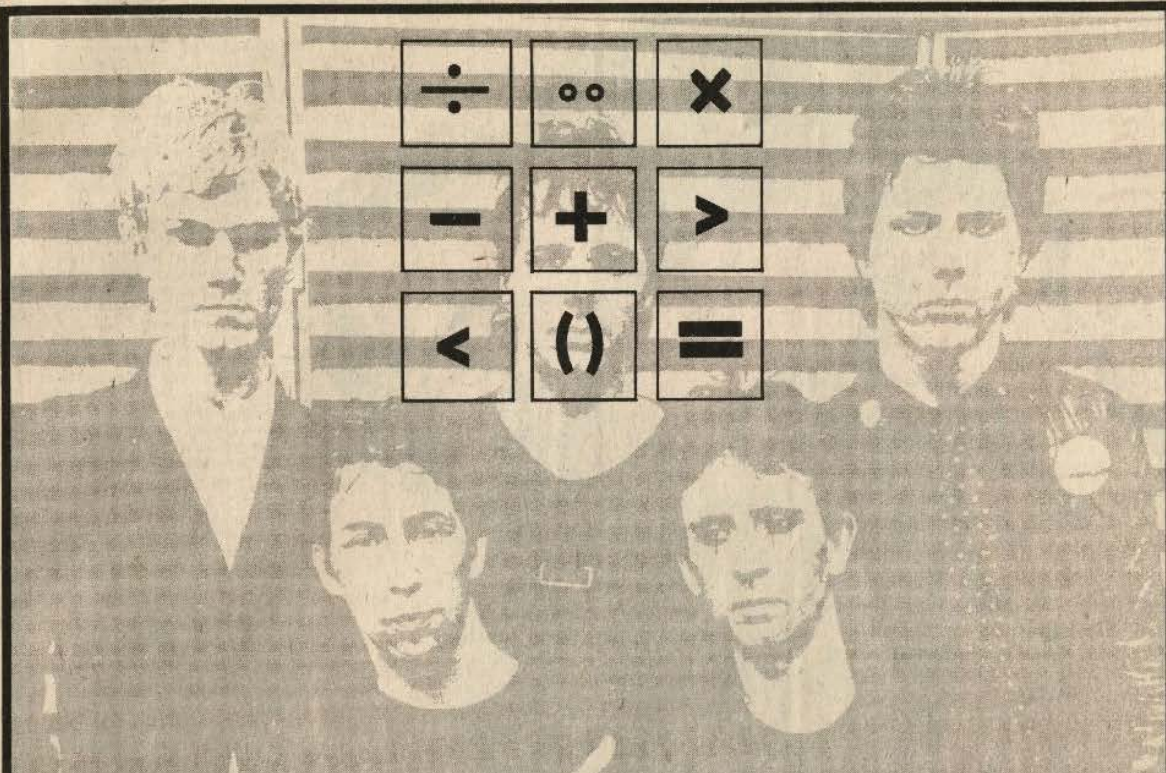
Single: *Don't Touch Me There* (A&M '76).
Albums: *The Tubes* (A&M '75).
Young And Rich (A&M '76). *The Tubes Now* (A&M '77). *What Do You Want From Live* (A&M '78).

TELEVISION

Regrettably, the changes wrought in the music scene of the last three years have yet to be adequately reflected by the visual media.

Those New Wave artists who have come to grips with the singles format sufficiently well to knock down a couple of hits are now reasonably sure of appearing on *Top Of The Pops*, and the liberal dreaminess of *The Old Grey Whistle Test* has been partially relieved by slight changes in style of presentation, but the two most consistent attempts to feature the new bands in a manner appropriate to their music and attitude (Mickie Most's *Revolver* and Tony Wilson's *So It Goes*) have both been hampered by cold.





feet at the networks and relegation to broadcasting at hours when most of the audience at whom they are aimed are out of the house and watching live rock music.

Their ratings have therefore been less impressive than could be desired, a fact to which the networks can point when considering their future viability.

Meanwhile, the upsurge of video technology at a vaguely popular price — paralleling the rise of the cassette recorder a decade ago — has meant that it is now possible for private individuals and small organisations to experiment with the form. In terms of the home screen, only *Revolver* and *The Kenny Everett Video Show* have made any attempt to use videotape creatively, but since the Everett show is more concerned with projecting Everett's cuddly personality (it says here) and politely whacky post-Goon humour, many possibilities of matching the new techniques to the new music go sadly unexplored.

DWIGHT TWILLEY BAND

Dwight Twilley—vocals, guitar, keyboards. Phil Seymour—drums, bass, vocals. Bill Pitcock—guitar. Johnny Johnson—bass.

Tulsa, Oklahoma based but situated mostly around the studio console, the group is really Seymour and Twilley, who combine pop classic influences — The Beatles, The Byrds, Lou Christie — and multi-track whizzkidery learned at home. They met at a Beatles film matinee, released a stupendous single in '75, got caught in record company politics, and finally somehow never lived up to the promise held

forth in their ability to transcend sloppy nostalgia and deliver the goods hard and up to date. Though they helped precipitate the pop resurgence, they've never been able to back it up live. When not gazing in a rear view mirror, Twilley, sad to recount, is often to be found gazing at himself.

Singles: *I'm On Fire* (Shelter '75). *Could Be Love* (Shelter '77). *Trying To Find My Baby* (Shelter '77). *Twilley Don't Mind* (Shelter '78). **Albums:** *Sincerely* (Shelter '76). *Twilley Don't Mind* (Shelter '77). 2-3

Paul Bower—guitar, vocals. Haydn Boyes-Weston—drums.

Formed June 1977 with bassist / vocalist Paul Shaft. Live appearances confined mainly to Sheffield / South Yorkshire area. Early style very much in punk mainstream, although their single displays strong Talking Heads influence. Former *Gunrunner* fanzine editor Bower writes witty, satirical songs, many concerned with cultural decentralisation, and occasionally performs solo. Since departure of Shaft's replacement Terry Gamwells, they have been without a bassist.

Single: *All Time Low* (Fast '78).

TYLA GANG

Sean Tyla—guitar, vocals. Ken Whaley—bass, Michael Desmarais—drums. Bruce Irvine—guitar.

Frontman of pubrockers Ducks Deluxe, Tyla formed Tyla Gang in '76. Sounding like a collision between The Rolling Stones and Mott The Hoople, The Tyla Gang have so far met with a singular lack of commercial success.

Onstage the Gang are dominated by Tyla's hyper-extrovert and rather intimidating presence.

Album: *Yachtless* (Baserkley '77).

U

ULTRAVOX!

John Foxx—vocals. Robin Simon—bass. Warren Cann—drums. Chris Cross—guitar. Billy Currie—keyboards.

Digital, mechanoid 'neu musick' employing the practical application of cybernetics to rock with all its use of 'systems' and 'processes' in the art of creation. By the summer of 1978 there were many musicians using this technique — Devo, Talking Heads, and German bands like Neu, Cluster, La Dusseldorf and Kraftwerk. What many of them had in common was an empathy with Brian Eno.

But what set Ultravox! apart from the others was the hangover from the fag end of glam-rock that pervaded all their work. They evoked nothing so much as an aural version of Bowie's *Diamond Dogs* album sleeve; pseudo-decadence faces imminent Armageddon in too much mascara and reading J. G. Ballard well, rock bands always turn to Science Fiction when they've lost their humanity — well, we've made a mess of this planet so let's try somewhere else instead of trying to help clear up the mess here.

Albums: *Ultravox!* (Island '76). *Ha!Ha!Ha!* (Island '77). *Systems of Romance* (Island '78). **Singles:** *My Sex* (Island '77). *Rockwrok* (Island '77).

CHERRY VANILLA

Cherry Vanilla—vocals. Louis Lepore—guitar. Howie Finkel—bass. Michael Mancuso—drums. She made a bad capitalist, so at the age of 27 in 1970, Cherry Vanilla left her Madison Avenue advertising agency to make a similar mess of alternative capitalism.

Hit the road as a Jefferson Airplane groupie, in 1973 hitched onto Warhol bandwagon playing title role in Warhol farce *Pork*. The whole warped circus soon attracted one David Bowie, at this time attempting to break the States, and Cherry was engaged as Mainman's American adviser/P.R. Around 1975 also wrote for pornographic magazines, and eventually gathering her choice cuts into a book of poetry, *Pop Tart*. Started reading poems backed by a piano in down-beat night-clubs and eventually gathered a band. In 1976, impending new wave scene seemed ripe for cashing in, but after failing to shake off her door-mat past at Max's, Cherry hit Britain with a whimper and flogged her half-dead torso down the Roxy for a while.

Her album is pure barmaid-rock; crass honky-tonk heavy rock vaudeville. When she is not singing jealous, desperate darts at Bowie and Linda Ronstadt, her favourite topic is how "bad" she is.

Single: *The Punk* (RCA '77). **Album:** *Bad Girl* (RCA '78).



Mick Rock



THE VELVET UNDERGROUND

Lou Reed-guitar, vocals. Sterling Morrison-guitar. John Cale-bass, viola. Maureen Tucker-drums.

Cale and Reed first met in '64, and christened the Velvet Underground when they hooked up with Andy Warhol's Exploding Plastic Inevitable mixed media show, a visual record of which being the party sequence in *Midnight Cowboy*. Nico's icy vocal presence came with the Warhol connection, and on their first two albums they acquired much mystique for making savage music when all else was beautiful.

Cale left before the third album, subdued but still powerful, and Reed quit on release of the fourth, a more easily approached rock affair. In '77 the Velvets became one of the names to drop as people discovered in Reed's lyrics of urban debilitation and the psychotic harshness of the group's sound a new sign of the times, not to mention the quintessential amphetamine soundtrack.

Albums: *The Velvet Underground And Nico* (Verve '67). *White Light/White Heat* (Verve '67). *The Velvet Underground* (MGM '69). *Loaded* (Atlantic '70).

THE VIBRATORS

Knox-guitar, vocals. John Ellis-guitar. Pat Collier-bass. John Edwards-drums.

Formed February '76 in north London around 30-year-old Knox, who has been playing in bands since his early teens. They managed to associate themselves with both punk's first flush and pop svengali Mickie Most's RAK label for debut single, followed by a collaboration with Chris Spedding called, opportunely, *Pogo Dancing*, both in the closing stages of '76. Signed to CBS in April of '77, released first album, and made fair mileage out of ostensible punk credentials. Latched onto Nazi chic for second album, *V2*, recorded after short-lived relocation to Germany early '78.

A deliberately coarse but basically dull sub heavy metal outfit, their chameleon changes on the tail of popular fads have delivered nothing of lasting merit, and have been as frequent as personnel shuffles. Gary Tibbs replaced Pat Collier, who left to form The Boyfriends, in summer '77. Dave Birch replaced John Ellis in June '78. The whole band split soon afterwards, but reformed in August with Ben Brierley on bass and Greg Van Cook on guitar.

Late news: Knox Carnochan leaves band mid-October '78.

Singles: *Baby Baby* (CBS '77). *London Girls* (CBS '77). *Automatic Lover* (CBS '78). *Judy Says Knock You On The Head* (CBS '78). Albums: *Pure Mania* (CBS '77). *V2* (CBS '78).

WEATHER REPORT

Josef Zawinul-keyboards. Wayne Shorter-saxophones. Jaco Pastorius-bass. Peter Erskine-drums. Alessandro Arcane-percussion.

The only band to justify complimentary not derogatory application of the dubious "jazzrock" cap. Weather Report have consistently avoided the pitfalls that have enmeshed so many of their peers. The musical vision of co-leaders Zawinul and Shorter is as mature as it is ingenious and as sophisticated as it is accessible. Zawinul is probably the only musician in his field to have considered the use of the synthesiser as an instrument capable of creating an entirely new vocabulary of sound, whilst Shorter's modest incisiveness is always a joy to behear. Persistent upheavals in the rhythm section have resulted in long periods of inactivity but have paradoxically helped Weather Report to pace themselves carefully. Their albums continue to explore an impressively vast sweep of imagery and idiom.

Singles: *Birdland* (CBS '77). Albums: *Weather Report* (70). *I Sing The Body Electric* ('72). *Sweetnighter* ('73). *Mysterious Traveller* ('74). *Tale Spinning* ('75). *Black Market* ('76). *Heavy Weather* ('77). *Mr. Gone* ('78). (All CBS).

WEST GERMANY

To the outside observer at least, West Germany seems something of a paradox. The nation is financially and industrially secure; it is psychologically and geopolitically insecure.

The Deutschmark may lead the European currency 'snake', but West Germany is divided within (between those who accept the accumulated weight of the Nazi past and those who refute it) and without (between East and West). The social tensions created or exploited by Baader-Meinhof/Red Army Faction are symptomatic of the nation's condition.

In the 1920s Berlin was one of the artistic fulcrums of Europe; now it merely bustles, resigned to its political pawnship. David Bowie records (and films) there, hankering after uncertain notions of 'romanticism' and 'decadence'; so do *Tangerine Dream* and their fellow cosmicists, forever programming deeper electro-trances.

Elsewhere, Cologne holds Can, erstwhile explorers now lost for a cause, and Dusseldorf on the industrial Ruhr has evolved *Kraftwerk*, the nu-vogue ideologues of social mechanisation, and the lately great *Neu*, now split into two complementary poles, *La Dusseldorf* and *Michael Rother*.

The Dusseldorf 'sound' panders to both the romantic heart and the machine heart; it is presumed to be archetypically German—as are the disco 'factories' of Hamburg (*Silver Convention*, *Boney M*, etc) and Munich (*Giorgio Moroder*, *Munich Machine*, *Donna Summer*, etc). Never has so much been presumed so witlessly.

Other honourable mentions should be made of *Cluster*, an overrated environmental electronics duo whose paths have sometimes crossed with *Rothemann* al., and the extremely enigmatic *Popol Vuh*, thoroughly modern mystics who've contributed elegiac soundtracks to Werner Herzog's remarkable films *Aguirre* and *Heart Of Glass*.

The indigenous German rock band (*Guru Guru*, *Jane*, etc.) remains a decidedly anachronistic and imitative creature, looking to the Transatlantic mainstream and no further.

West Germany. Never has so much been made of so little.

WHIRLWIND

Nigel Dixon-vocal, rhythm guitar. Michael 'Redhead' Lewis-lead guitar. Chris Hassett-drums. Chris Emu-bass.

Undoubtedly one of the most promising of the burgeoning new wave of teen 'n' twenties British rockabilly bands, Whirlwind are also one of the first aggregations to transcend playing the more ethnic Ted venues to being readily accepted on the contemporary rock club circuit. A debut album for Chiswick corroborated both their adeptness at restyling lesser-known rockabilly classics and scoring their own material. In singer-guitarist Nigel Dixon, Whirlwind have a focal point blessed with charisma of an up-dated Billy Fury. Only a hit single stands between Whirlwind and a much wider audience.

Albums: *Blowing Up A Storm* (Chiswick '78).

THE WHO

Pete Townshend-guitar, vocals.
Roger Daltrey-vocals. John
Entwistle-bass.

Keith Moon's death on September 7, 1978, may result in The Who never going on stage again and effectively, if not officially, the end of the group, though Townshend insists they'll continue, using session drummers.

Moon's fatal drug overdose was a tragedy because it happened so soon after their most important album of the '70s, *Who Are You*, a creative renaissance, particularly for Townshend, and the commercial and artistic success of the album reaffirmed The Who as one of the world's great bands.

Even during their two year retirement from recording and performing while they worked on their two films, *The Kids Are Alright* and *Quadrophenia*, their influence was obvious. While most punks thought it necessary to deride Townshend and The Who, paradoxically they were respectful enough to imitate a style and approach that the Godfather Of Punk first evolved.

The Jam and Bethnal exploited them most blatantly. The former chose to adopt The Who's '60s music as their own, and from the opening

chords of *Art School*, their debut LP was a triumph in those terms. The Jam revived the Mod stance The Who had pioneered over a decade before, while Bethnal took their inspiration mainly from '70s Who, and recorded a replica of the classic, *Baba O'Riley*, and also wrote *The Fiddler*, a direct crib of *The Seeker*.

While '70s remodels may at first have gained some momentum as surrogate Whos, it was typical the group should return with an album as strong as *Who Are You*.

After all, it reminded the new generation who the real gunners are.

Single: *Who Are You* (Polydor '78).
Album: *My Generation* (Brunswick '65). *Quadrophenia* (Track '74).
Who Are You (Polydor '78).

WIGWAM

Jim Pembroke-vocals, keyboards.
Pekka Rechardt-guitar. Mans
Grundstroem-bass. Ronnie
Osterberg-drums.

Wigwam disbanded and after their ninth album, 1977's *Dark Album*—ironically, a relatively optimistic representation.

Unless reunion beckons they will remain forever "underrated", "ahead of their time" (Can, Coyne, Chilton...) due mainly to confused representation: impenetrable, intellectual dalliance for frigid critics only...

Wigwam, more especially Pembroke, were about life, period Dour, unsettling, built upon parable and paradox, yes—but it makes supreme sense to peg them with anyone from Shakespeare through to Wenders and not blush at the company. They are one of few rock outfits who have genuinely evolved—maturity holding sway with attack—and never became too clever for their own good... an adaptable, accessible rock band first and

foremost.

Albums: *Nuclear Nightclub* (Virgin '75). *Lucky Golden Stripes And Starpose* (Virgin '76). *Dark Album* (Love '77). *"Corporal Cauliflower's Mental Function"* (Love Records, 1977).

WIRE

Colin Newman-vocals. Graham
Lewis-bass. B. C. Gilbert-guitar.
Rob Gotobed-drums.

Formed in October 1976, Wire's first gig was recorded for the *Live At The Roxy* compilation (which included *Lowdown*, their first composition). Working with sympathetic producer Mike Thorne, they recorded *Pink Flag*, a superficially dense, monochromatic album of 21 tracks which showed that, even with limited technical ability, Wire had the imagination to produce music

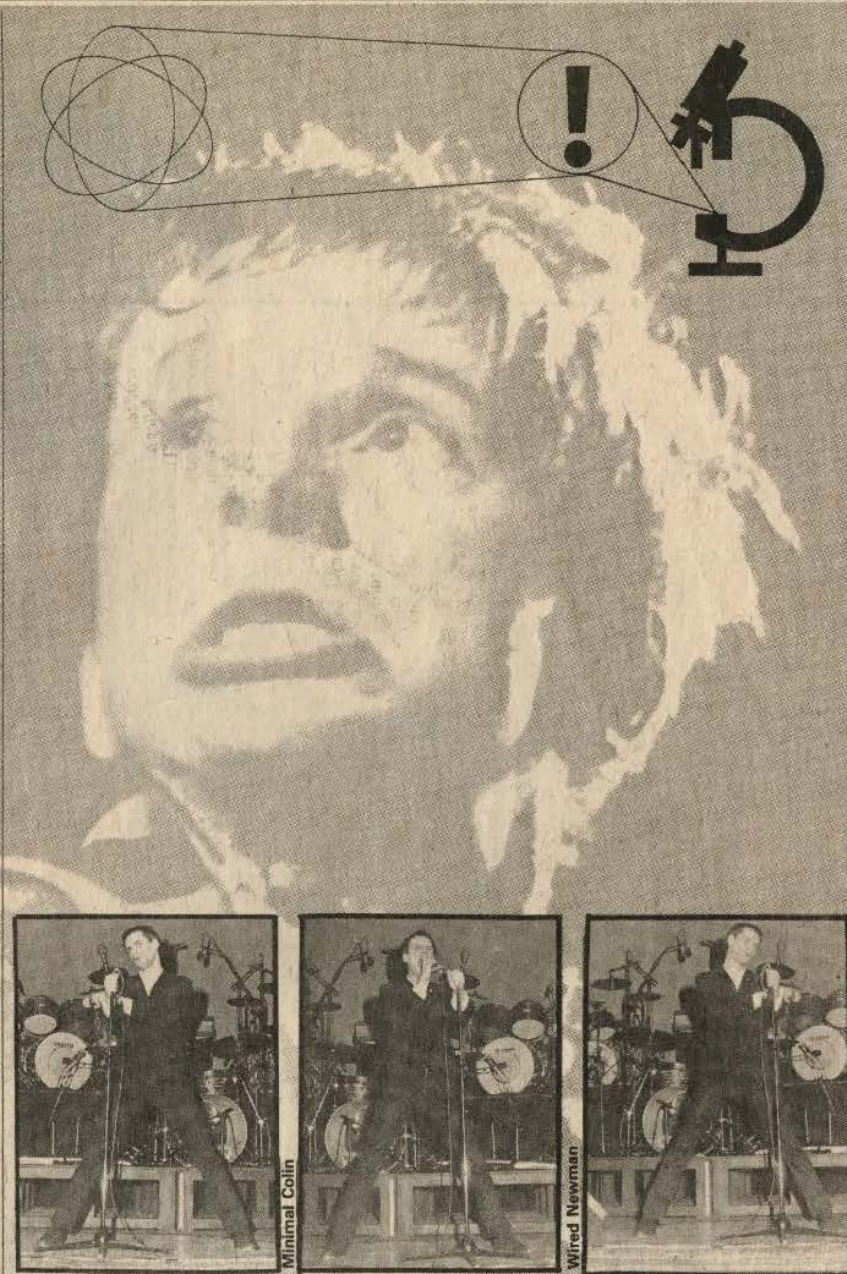
of considerable depth. Unlike many of their contemporaries, they have since managed to progress whilst retaining their original principles of brevity, simplicity and encapsulation. *I Am The Fly* and *Dot Dash* both indicated this progression, and their second LP, a radically different affair from their first, sees them investigating startlingly diverse musical areas and Thorne, besides helping out on keyboards, making far greater use of production facilities. In mid '78, after a short series of British gigs, they played in New York to great acclaim. Both lyrically and musically, one of the most original and promising British bands to emerge in recent years.

Singles: *Mannequin* (Harvest '77). *I Am The Fly* (Harvest '78). *Dot Dash* (Harvest '78).
Albums: *Pink Flag* (Harvest '77). *Chairs Missing* (Harvest '78).

WRECKLESS ERIC

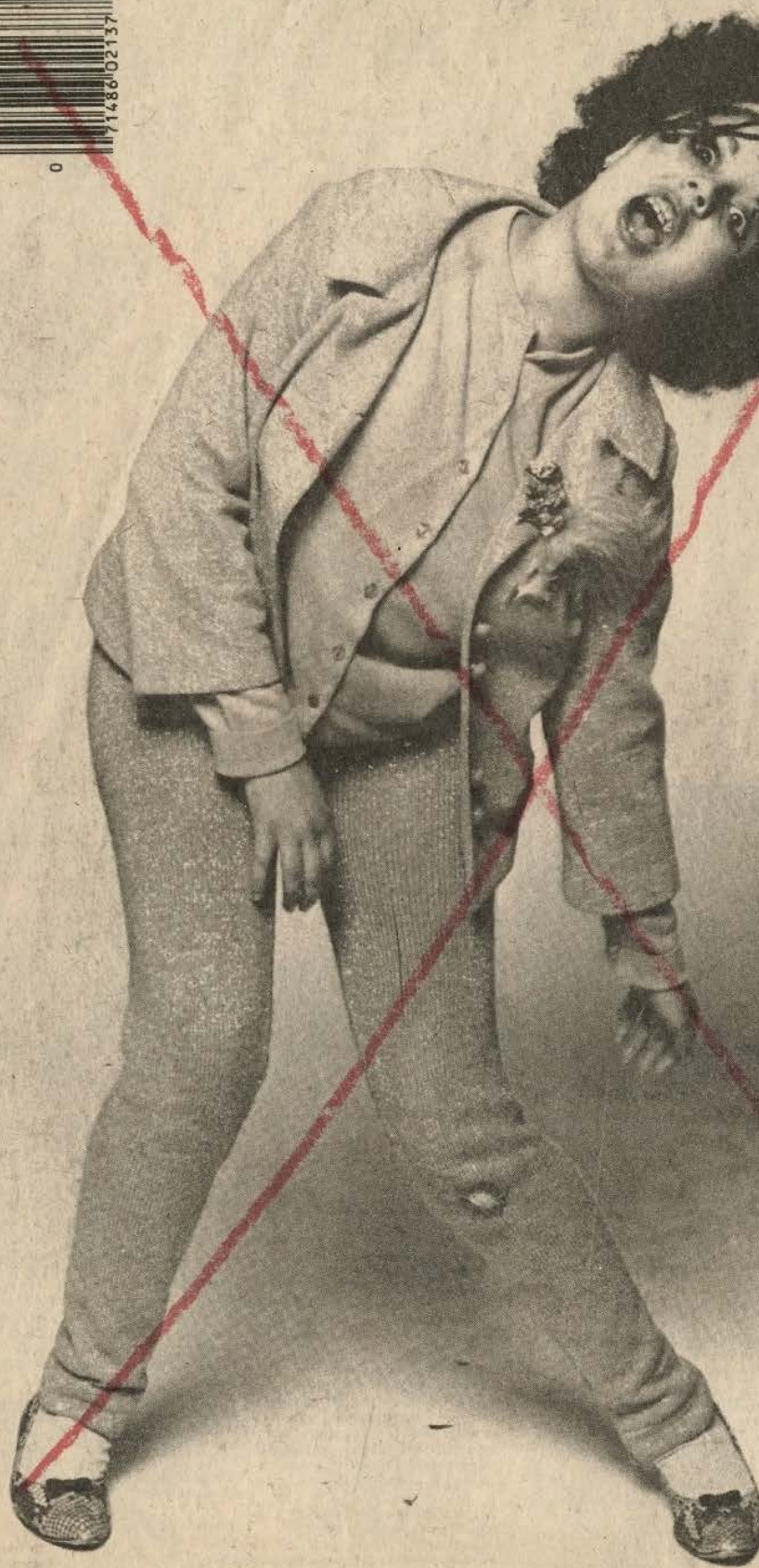
Born in New Haven, Surrey in 1954, Wreckless Eric first came to prominence as one of Stiff Records' original team of rock'n'roll oddballs. Specialising in a highly personalised, if somewhat quirky brand of rudimentary Do-It-Yourself rock, Wreckless delivers it with the minimum of technical expertise, knockabout humour and a voice that could also be used for selling fruit'n'veg off a street market barrow. An unpredictable eccentric, such wacky Wreckless originals as *Semaphore Signals* and *Personal Hygiene* have earned him a loyal, albeit cultist following. File between Ian Dury and the Albertos.

Singles: *Whale Wide World* (Stiff '77). *Reconnex Cherie* (Stiff '78). *Take The Cash (K-A-S-H)* (Stiff '78).
Album: *Wreckless Eric* (Stiff '78). *Wonderful World Of* (Stiff '78).



Adrian Bout

Sven Amstein



X-RAY SPEX

Poly Styrene-vocals. Glyn Johns-sax. Richard 'BP' Tee-drums. Jack Stafford-guitar. Paul Dean-bass.

Emerged from the flourishing Covent Garden Roxy scene in early 1977 and swiftly developed into one of the few punk bands truly innovative enough to warrant the handle New Wave. Their originality stemmed from singer/songwriter nineteen year old Poly Styrene (nee Marion Elliot of Brixton) whose songs sent-up the synthetic excesses of The Modern World's consumer society.

First evidence of the band's worth came on the The Roxy Club album with the inclusion of their classic anti-repression song, *Oh, Bondage! Up Yours!* that was widely misinterpreted as being no more than standard punky pro-bondage propaganda. Musically, the rich cacophony of X-Ray Spex was redolent of a garageband Roxy Music though their series of singles were produced by manager Falcon Stewart with a somewhat unsavoury Heavy Metal frame of reference. This did nothing but aid their commercial viability and a series of X-Ray Spex '45s all found their way into the charts.

As the band's popularity increased, so did the showbiz pressures on Poly Styrene mental and physical health. She collapsed in the studio from nervous exhaustion, was reportedly on the verge of a nervous breakdown and told the *Daily Mirror* she had been visited by an extra-terrestrial being who had ordered her to renounce publicly all her associations with supermarket culture and to forsake her self-created plastic kitsch-chic clothes of many colours.

Poly Styrene has awesome potential if her nerves can withstand the awesome pressures of the music industry in the late '70s/early '80s. Singles: *Oh, Bondage! Up Yours!* (Virgin '77). *The Day The World Turned Day-Glo* (EMI '78). *Identity* (EMI '78).

XTC

Andy Partridge—guitar, vocals, songs. Barry Andrews—keyboards, vocals, songs. Terry Chambers—drums.

A four piece from Swindon who slot together like a musical Chinese puzzle, XTC appear contrived but aren't pretending anything.

They surfaced mid '77, immediately apart from the seas of spikey wavers. They had a sure sense of their own musical definition (even if nobody else had) and were even prepared to own up to previous haircuts under the names of The Snakes and The Helium Kids.

Virgin signed them in the autumn, and released the *XTC 3D EP*, the quirky brilliance and quick fire wit of which was ignored until their first album, recorded in a week and released in January '78, awoke those dormant senses.

XTC play a wild kinetic music related to pop and they play it fast. It's clever, but not too clever for its own good, and addictive, full of lyrical and musical puns, but not camp like Sparks nor cheap like Gruppo Sportivo. The nearest you'll get to Space Dust for the ears.

Their second album, newly released, establishes them as a major force.

Singles: *XTC 3D EP* (Virgin '77). *This is Pop?* (new version) (Virgin '78). *Go Plus EP* (Virgin '78). *Are You Receiving Me?* (Virgin '78). **Albums:** *White Music* (Virgin '78). *Go 2* (Virgin '78).



THE YACHTS

Martin Watson—guitar, voca's. Henry Priestman—keyboards, vocals. Martin Dempsey—bass. Bob Bellis—drums.

Liverpudlians playing tacky organ dominated pop (but not the 'power' variety) who have teenage trauma/high school bop sentimentality down to a fine art. As well-scrubbed and gleaming as their melodic repertoire, they've put out a couple of likeable one-off singles, but haven't yet secured a long-term record deal.

Singles: *Suffice To Say* (Stiff '77). *Look Back In Love Not In Anger* (Radar '78).

NEIL YOUNG

Bruised, battle-scarred veteran of the hippie upheaval who contributed some of Buffalo Springfield's more inspired moments and all of Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young's, then retired to ponder (often obsessively) the breakdown of '60s ideals, whilst most of his contemporaries merely pondered the price of Peruvian flake. *Revolution Blues*—form *On The Beach*—is a frightening overview of the Woodstock generation post-Woodstock, and incidentally gives



XTC

more clues to Devo than have ever emanated from the Booji Boys' own lips. Young's choice of them for his forthcoming film was not random.

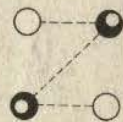
The majority of the old groaner's output has been unremittingly joyless—though surprisingly popular—and his harsh open-heart therapy songwriting technique, especially effective on the anti-drug tirades of *Tonight's The Night*, is at times excessive but usually pretty real.

Albums: *Everybody Knows This Is Nowhere* (Reprise '69). *After The Goldrush* (Reprise '70). *On The Beach* (Reprise '74). *Tonight's The Night* (Reprise '75). *Zuma* (Reprise '76). *Decade* (Reprise compilation '77). *American Stars And Bars* (Reprise '77).

THE YOUNG BUCKS

Pat Rafferty—organ. Archie Brown—vocals. Steve Brookes—bass. Tim Wilder—drums. Tony Wadsworth—guitar.

Newcastle based band who came to prominence in 1977, often playing on same bill as Penetration in their home town. New wave certainly but utilising occasional sax and Doors tinged organ work. London debut at Hope and Anchor failed to confirm initial promise. They seemed just another good time pub band. Simple case of unfulfilled ambitions? Pat Rafferty tipped by many to go further on his own. **Single:** *Get Your Feet Back On The Ground* (Blueport '78).



THE ZONES

Willie Gardner—vocals, guitar. Billy McIsaac—keyboards, vocals. Russell Webb—bass, vocals. Kenny Hyslop—drums.

Raunchy Glaswegian pop group. Arose from the ashes of Silk in mid 1977 as PVC-2. Became The Zones in October '77, when Gardner replaced singer Midge Ure who

singles like *Rockers* ('76), *New Star* ('77) and the phenomenal *Phensic* ('78), the biggest reggae 45 of the year thus far; albums *Man From Bozrah* and *Peace In The Ghetto*, and reissue of his debut *Man Ah Warrior* set via Pat Smith and Lenny Kaye's Mer Label.

During August '78 reports filtered through of various attempts on the young toaster's life by the JA Security Force, and it appears that Zukie's existence remains endangered as long as he remains on the island, despite which he refuses to leave.

Singles: *Tapper Zukie Vengeance* (Hot City '76). *Liberation Struggle* (Achilles '77). *New Star* (New Star '77). *Peace Heroes* (Jammy's '78). *Phensic* (Front Line '78). **Albums:** *Man From Bozrah* (Stars '77). *Man Ah Warrior* (Mer '78). *Peace In The Ghetto* (Front Line '78). *MPLA* (Front Line reissue '78).



had joined Rich Kids. Recorded a typically quirky, but insubstantial, single for Edinburgh-based Zoom label before being signed to Arista for heavy promo-push.

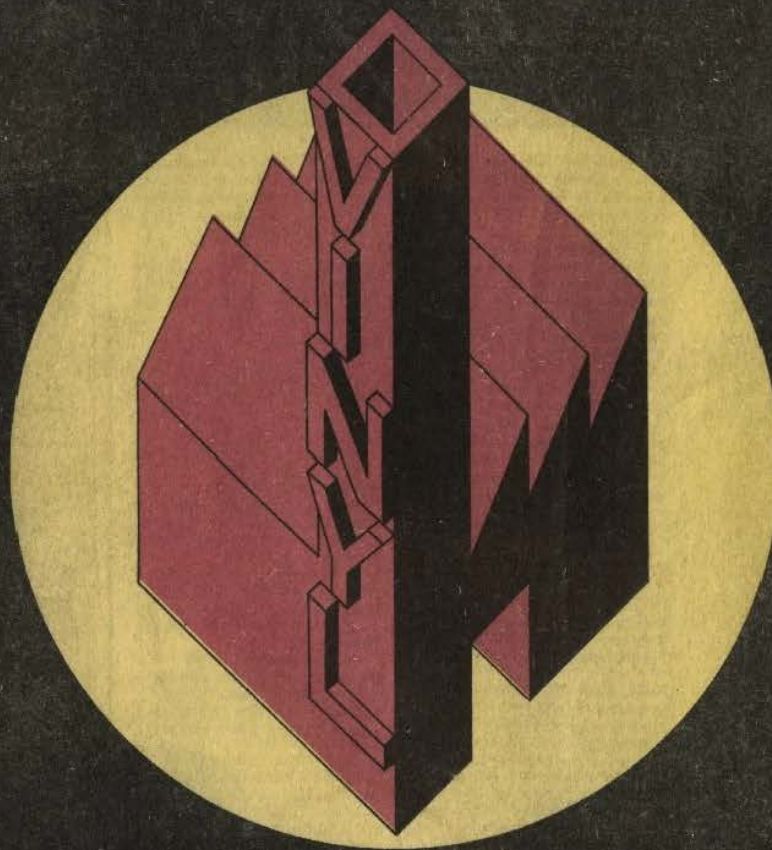
Singles: *PVC-2—Put You In The Picture EP* (Zoom '77). *The Zones: Stuck With You* (Zoom '78). *Sign Of the Times* (Arista '78).

TAPPER ZUKIE

Strident, militant youth toaster Tapper Zukie began his recording career in 1973 but, except amongst a coterie of UK devotees, never realised any appreciable success until the release of his chart-topping *MPLA* title in '76. Since then Zukie has occupied an odd position in the reggae world; probably the best-loved DJ in this country, he remains unacknowledged in Jamaica, where he still lives, a situation dictated mainly by his open support of the Jamaican Labour Party.

His following in the UK, however, particularly with the youth (black and white), has remained constant during the past two years, with issue of





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