

NEW MUSICAL EXPRESS

DEVOTO True Confessions

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NICK GILDER'S 'Hot Child In The City' AMERICA'S NO. 1 SINGLE CHS 2226



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FIVE YEARS AGO

Week ending November 27, 1973

This Week		
1	(1)	I LOVE YOU LOVE ME LOVE..... Gary Glitter (Bell)
2	(2)	MY COO-CA-COO..... Alvin Stardust (Maggus)
3	(3)	PAPER ROSES..... Marie Osmond (MGM)
4	(4)	LET ME IN..... The Osmonds (MGM)
5	(5)	DIVA-MITE..... Mad Lads (Rak)
6	(6)	PHOTOGRAPH..... Ringo Starr (Apple)
7	(7)	WHEN I FALL IN LOVE..... Danny Osmond (MGM)
8	(8)	WHY OH WHY OH WHY..... Gilbert O'Sullivan (MCA)
9	(9)	DO YOU WANNA DANCE..... Barry Blue (Bell)
10	(10)	LAMPLIGHT..... David Essex (CBS)

TEN YEARS AGO

Week ending November 27, 1968

This Week		
1	(1)	FLOESIE..... Barry Ryan (MGM)
2	(2)	THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY..... Hugo Montenegro (RCA)
3	(3)	THIS OLD HEART OF MINE..... Essex Brothers (Tangle Music)
4	(4)	BREAKING DOWN THE WALLS OF MELANCHOLY..... The Beatles (Capitol)
5	(5)	LIVY THE PINK..... Spafford (Parlophone)
6	(6)	AIN'T GOT NO - I GOT LIFE..... Mike Sillars (JCA)
7	(7)	ELEPHANT..... Turtles (London)
8	(8)	ALL ALONG THE WATCHTOWER..... Jimi Hendrix Experience (Track)
9	(9)	SUGAR AND SPICE..... Smothers (Poly)
10	(10)	HARPER VALLEY P.T.A..... Dennis C. Riley (Polydor)

15 YEARS AGO

Week ending November 29, 1973

This Week		
1	(1)	SNIP LOVES YOU..... Beatles (Parlophone)
2	(2)	DON'T TALK TO HIM..... Cliff Richard (Columbia)
3	(3)	YOU WERE MADE FOR ME..... Freddie & The Dreamers (Columbia)
4	(4)	SECRET LOVE..... Kathy Kirby (Decca)
5	(5)	I'LL KEEP YOU SATISFIED..... Billy J. Kramer (Parlophone)
6	(6)	SUGAR AND SPICE..... Smothers (Poly)
7	(7)	BE MY BABY..... The Ronettes (London)
8	(8)	MARIA ELENA..... Los Indios del Tiro (RCA)
9	(9)	I ONLY WANT TO BE WITH YOU..... Dusty Springfield (Poly)

CHARTS



SINGLES

Week ending December 2, 1978

This Week	Last Week			
1	(1)	RAT TRAP..... Boomtown Rats (Ensign)	7	1
2	(4)	DO YA THINK I'M SEXY..... Rod Stewart (Rive)	3	2
3	(2)	HOPELESSLY DEVOTED TO YOU..... Olivia Newton-John (RSO)	5	2
4	(7)	DARLIN'..... Frankie Miller (Chrysalis)	7	4
5	(6)	PRETTY LITTLE ANGEL EYES..... Showaddywaddy (Arista)	4	5
6	(5)	MY BEST FRIEND'S GIRL..... Cars (Elektra)	3	5
7	(3)	INSTANT REPLAY..... Dan Hartman (Blue Sky)	6	3
8	(10)	HANGING ON THE TELEPHONE..... Blondie (Chrysalis)	3	8
9	(—)	TOO MUCH HEAVEN..... Bee Gees (RSO)	1	9
10	(13)	I LOVE AMERICA..... Patrick Juvet (Casablanca)	4	10
11	(14)	ALWAYS & FOREVER/MIND BLOWING DECISIONS..... Heatwave (GTO)	4	11
12	(17)	LE FREAK..... Chic (Atlantic)	2	12
13	(12)	BICYCLE RACE/FAT BOTTOMED GIRLS..... Queen (EMI)	5	12
14	(23)	PART TIME LOVE..... Elton John (Rocket)	3	14
15	(—)	MARY'S BOY CHILD..... Boney M (Atlantic Hansa)	1	15
16	(—)	Y.M.C.A..... Village People (Mercury)	1	16
17	(9)	SUMMER NIGHTS..... John Travolta & Olivia Newton-John (RSO)	11	1
18	(—)	GREASED LIGHTNING..... John Travolta (Midsong)	1	18
19	(25)	IN THE BUSH..... Musique (CBS)	2	19
20	(8)	SANDY..... John Travolta (Midsong/Polydor)	9	3
21	(21)	I LOST MY HEART TO A STARSHIP TROOPER..... Sarah Brightman & Hot Gossip (Arista Hansa)	2	21
22	(27)	DANCE (DISCO HEAT)..... Sylvester (Fantasy)	2	22
23	(28)	GERM FREE ADOLESCENCE..... X Ray Spex (EMI Int)	3	23
24	(20)	TOAST..... Street Band (Logo)	4	19
25	(15)	BLAME IT ON THE BOOGIE..... Jacksons (Epic)	10	6
26	(—)	SHOOTING STAR..... Otelia (EMI)	1	26
27	(—)	PROMISES..... Buzzcocks (United Artists)	1	27
28	(30)	LYDIA..... Dean Friedman (Lifesong)	2	28
29	(—)	LAY YOUR LOVE ON ME..... Raye (Rak)	1	29
30	(—)	RAINING IN MY HEART..... Leo Sayer (Chrysalis)	1	30

BUBBLING UNDER...
JUST TO BE CLOSE TO YOU — Commodores (Motown).
DR WHO — Mankind (Pinnacle). I LOVE THE NIGHT LIFE — Alicia Bridges (Polydor). YOU DON'T BRING ME FLOWERS — Barbara Streisand & Neil Diamond (CBS).

U.S. SINGLES

Week ending December 1, 1978

This Week	Last Week			
1	(1)	YOU DON'T BRING ME FLOWERS..... Barbra & Neil		
2	(2)	HOW MUCH I FEEL..... Ambrosia		
3	(5)	I JUST WANNA STOP..... Gino Vannelli		
4	(3)	MACARTHUR PARK..... Donna Summer		
5	(8)	SHARING THE NIGHT TOGETHER..... Dr Hook		
6	(4)	HOT CHILD IN THE CITY..... Nick Gilder		
7	(10)	I LOVE THE NIGHT LIFE (DISCO ROUND)..... Alicia Bridges		
8	(6)	KISS YOU ALL OVER..... Exile		
9	(12)	TIME PASSAGES..... Al Stewart		
10	(13)	(OUR LOVE) DON'T THROW IT ALL AWAY..... Andy Gibb		
11	(18)	TOO MUCH HEAVEN..... Bee Gees		
12	(15)	STRANGE WAY..... Firefall		
13	(17)	MY LIFE..... Billy Joel		
14	(14)	ALIVE AGAIN..... Chicago		
15	(16)	SWEET LIFE..... Paul Davis		
16	(7)	READY TO TAKE A CHANCE AGAIN..... Barry Manilow		
17	(27)	LE FREAK..... Chic		
18	(19)	DON'T WANT TO LIVE WITHOUT IT..... Pablo Cruise		
19	(21)	STRAIGHT ON..... Heart		
20	(25)	HOLD THE LINE..... Toto		
21	(26)	Y.M.C.A..... Village People		
22	(24)	CHANGE OF HEART..... Eric Carmen		
23	(23)	THE POWER OF GOLD..... Dan Fogelberg/Tim Weisberg		
24	(9)	DOUBLE VISION..... Foreigner		
25	(—)	OOH BABY BABY..... Linda Ronstadt		
26	(29)	HOW YOU GONNA SEE ME NOW..... Alice Cooper		
27	(—)	PART TIME LOVE..... Elton John		
28	(—)	I'M EVERY WOMAN..... Chaka Khan		
29	(11)	YOU NEEDED ME..... Anne Murray		
30	(—)	PROMISES..... Eric Clapton		

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

ALBUMS

Week ending December 2, 1978

This Week	Last Week			
1	(1)	GREASE..... Original Soundtrack (RSO)	21	1
2	(6)	NEIL DIAMOND'S 20 GOLDEN GREATS..... Neil Diamond (MCA)	3	2
3	(22)	GIVE 'EM ENOUGH ROPE..... Clash (CBS)	2	3
4	(7)	NIGHT FLIGHT TO VENUS..... Boney M (Int Hansa)	20	1
5	(2)	EMOTIONS..... Various (K-Tel)	5	2
6	(13)	JAZZ..... Queen (EMI)	3	6
7	(—)	MIDNIGHT HUSTLE..... Various (K-Tel)	1	7
8	(8)	IF YOU CAN'T STAND THE HEAT..... Status Quo (Phonogram)	5	3
9	(5)	A SINGLE MAN..... Elton John (Rocket Records)	5	5
10	(9)	WAR OF THE WORLDS..... Jeff Wayne (CBS)	22	2
11	(4)	TONIC FOR THE TROOPS..... Boomtown Rats (Ensign)	16	4
12	(14)	IMAGES..... Don Williams (K-Tel)	18	2
13	(3)	ALL MOD CONS..... Jam (Polydor)	4	3
14	(10)	MANHATTAN TRANSFER LIVE..... Manhattan Transfer (WEA)	5	10
15	(12)	25TH ANNIVERSARY ALBUM..... Shirley Bassey (United Artists)	5	12
16	(—)	BLONDES HAVE MORE FUN..... Rod Stewart (Rive)	1	16
17	(—)	BOOGIE FEVER..... Various (Ronco)	1	17
18	(16)	LIVE & MORE..... Donna Summer (Casablanca)	7	11
19	(15)	EVERGREEN..... Acker Bilk (Warwick)	2	15
20	(18)	THE AMAZING DARTS..... Darts (Magnet)	4	18
21	(28)	LION HEART..... Kate Bush (EMI)	2	21
22	(10)	OUT OF THE BLUE..... Electric Light Orchestra (Jet)	50	3
23	(—)	SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER..... Various (RSO)	31	1
24	(21)	PARALLEL LINES..... Blondie (Chrysalis)	11	7
25	(—)	THE SINGLES 1974-1978..... Carpenters (A & M)	1	25
26	(25)	BROTHERHOOD OF MAN..... Brotherhood of Man (K-Tel)	8	5
27	(—)	EVITA..... Original London Cast (MCA)	1	27
28	(—)	THAT'S LIFE..... Sham 69 (Polydor)	1	28
29	(19)	INNER SECRETS..... Santana (CBS)	4	19
30	(27)	HEMISPHERES..... Rush (Anthem)	2	27

BUBBLING UNDER...
BOTH SIDES OF DOLLY PARTON — Dolly Parton (RCA).
INCANTATIONS — Mike Oldfield (Virgin). THE COMMODORES GREATEST HITS — The Commodores (Motown). THE SCREAM — Siouxsie & The Banshees (Polydor).

U.S. ALBUMS

Week ending December 1, 1978

This Week	Last Week			
1	(1)	52nd STREET..... Billy Joel		
2	(3)	A WILD & CRAZY GUY..... Steve Martin		
3	(2)	LIVE AND MORE..... Donna Summer		
4	(5)	DOUBLE VISION..... Foreigner		
5	(4)	GREASE..... Various Artists		
6	(6)	LIVING IN THE U.S.A..... Linda Ronstadt		
7	(9)	TIME PASSAGES..... Al Stewart		
8	(8)	SOME GIRLS..... Rolling Stones		
9	(7)	DON'T LOOK BACK..... Boston		
10	(15)	BROTHER TO BROTHER..... Gino Vannelli		
11	(11)	PIECES OF EIGHT..... Styx		
12	(13)	COMES A TIME..... Neil Young		
13	(12)	WHO ARE YOU..... The Who		
14	(17)	A SINGLE MAN..... Elton John		
15	(10)	HOT STREETS..... Chicago		
16	(20)	WEEKEND WARRIORS..... Ted Nugent		
17	(14)	TWIN SONS OF DIFFERENT MOTHERS..... Dan Fogelberg & Tim Weisberg		
18	(28)	LIVE BOOTLEG..... Aerosmith		
19	(23)	CHAKA..... Chaka Khan		
20	(22)	CRUISIN'..... Village People		
21	(16)	THE STRANGER..... Billy Joel		
22	(—)	BARBRA STREISAND'S GREATEST HITS VOL. 2..... Barbra Streisand		
23	(24)	THE MAN..... Barry White		
24	(18)	DOG & BUTTERFLY..... Heart		
25	(—)	GREATEST HITS..... Steely Dan		
26	(21)	LET'S KEEP IT THAT WAY..... Anne Murray		
27	(—)	ELAN..... Firefall		
28	(—)	WAVELENGTH..... Van Morrison		
29	(19)	ONE NATION UNDER A GROOVE..... Funkadelic		
30	(—)	TWO FOR THE SHOW..... Kansas		

Courtesy "CASH BOX"



The four headliners of the forthcoming Beggars Banquet package tour, T'Charabanc Trip, in an informal pose! See below for details.

BEGGARS' BANQUET, the independent label recently given a substantial boost when it signed a licensing deal with the giant WEA combine, is now challenging Stiff's stronghold in the package tour field. Four of the label's most promising acts, headed by Ivor Biggun who's already tasted chart success, join forces in the New Year for a 30-date nationwide itinerary whimsically described as the "Beggars Go Stiff Tour".

In fact, the tour's official name is "T'Charabanc Trip", because the entire entourage will be travelling the country by coach — unlike the "Be Stiff" package, who did the rounds by train! Additionally, this is also the title of the final track on Biggun's newly-released debut LP "The Winkers Album", which the tour will be part promoting.

The full line-up comprises Ivor Biggun & The Red

NEWS

BEGGARS PACKAGE TOUR: IT'S A BIGGUN!

Nosed Burglars, Johnny G, John Spencer and new signing Duffo. Spencer also has a new LP on release, while the other two acts will have albums out to coincide with the tour.

Label co-director Nick Austin explained that this won't follow the usual package pattern of one act appearing after another. All the singers and musicians involved will be on stage for most of the time, because the entire two-hour show is set in the "Greasy Spoon Cafe", somewhere off the M1.

The tour goes on the road in February, and full details of dates and venues will be announced shortly. Meanwhile, as a warm-up, it's playing a couple of London dates this month — at Kensington Nashville this Saturday (2) and the Marquee Club on Tuesday, December 12.

And at these preview gigs, Biggun will be performing his new single — out this week — on which he duets with Miss Amelia Blowhard in "Hello My Baby". Biggun says that promotional



Pictured for posterity: the night the Chancellor of the Exchequer stood in for Wreckless Eric in the "Be Stiff" package tour. Lining up outside Leeds Queens Hall are (from left to right) LENE LOVICH, JONA LEWIE, RACHEL SWEET, WRECKLESS ERIC and MICKEY JUPP.

activities surrounding the tour will be the heaviest they have ever undertaken.

FREE PICTURE DISCS FROM THE LURKERS

THE LURKERS offer a Christmas bonus to everyone attending their concert at London Camden Electric Ballroom on Sunday, December 10, reported last week. They are giving away a picture flexi-disc of their "Fulham Fallout" album to every member of the audience, plus their first chart single "Ain't Got A Clue" which came out in May. It's believed not only to be the first time a free picture disc has been handed out, but also the first time this normally expensive process has been produced as a Himsy record. The gig is the final date of the band's extensive tour, and tickets are now available.

SHAM'S XMAS BEANO

SHAM 69 are now officially confirmed for a benefit show at London Rainbow Theatre on Wednesday, December 27, plans for which were exclusively revealed by NME two weeks ago. Official support acts are Merger, Doll By Doll, The Invaders, punk comedian Johnny Rubbish and "Monty Python" stalwarts Michael Palin and Terry Gilliam.

But a number of all-star guest appearances are also expected — Steve Jones and Paul Cook of The Sex Pistols have promised to take part; members of The Jam have agreed to jam (!); The Clash have been invited and it's hoped they'll be involved in an impromptu set; John Peel will be doing a few introductions; and various other surprises are anticipated.

The show, which starts at 7.30 pm and continues "for as long as it takes", is in aid of One-Parent Families. And because all seats are being removed from the Rainbow for this gig, entry is at the one price of £2.50 — not £3.50 as originally planned. Tickets should already be available at the box-office.

Sham were forced to cancel concerts last week at Bradford St. George's Hall (Wednesday) and Derby King's Hall (Thursday), following Jimmy Pursey's collapse on Tuesday night, after an encore at the band's Manchester Apollo gig. There were initial fears that he might be suffering from glandular fever but, after undergoing blood tests, Sham were able to pick up their tour itinerary at the weekend. It's now hoped to re-arrange the cancelled shows for early in the New Year.

● Siouxsie & The Banshees' gig at Liverpool University was suddenly re-scheduled for Wednesday of last week, after being cancelled three weeks earlier due to industrial action by electricians and porters. The union members apparently had a change of heart, after being given assurances of proper security measures.

RUBINOOS GIGS SET

THE RUBINOOS have finally made it to Britain for a short December tour. Their visit was forecast by NME several weeks ago, but was only confirmed at the last minute. With two or three more gigs to be finalised, confirmed dates are Edinburgh Tiffany's (December 4), Preston Polytechnic (6), Leicester University (7), Birmingham University (8), Manchester University (9), Wakefield Unity Hall (12), Sheffield Polytechnic (13), Newcastle Polytechnic (15) and London Strand Lyceum supporting David Johansen (17).

HOLIDAY SPECIALS

Hot Rods, Johansen

EDDIE & THE HOT RODS are to headline a special one-off Christmas show in London — it's at the Electric Ballroom in Camden Town on Sunday, December 17, and tickets costing £2.50 go on sale this weekend. It's the band's first London appearance since they played two nights at the Lyceum, as part of their spring tour. The Members are also on the bill, and promoters Straight Music have still to confirm a second support act. The Hot Rods will have a new single, still untitled, released by Island in January — and they are lining up a full-scale British tour to open in the early spring.



DAVID JOHANSEN GROUP return to Britain after their current European commitments to headline promoter Harvey Goldsmith's last pre-Christmas concert at London Strand Lyceum on Sunday, December 17. Johansen, the former New York Doll now fronting his own band, recently completed a short debut U.K. tour — including a much-acclaimed appearance at the Venue in London's Victoria, which was primarily responsible for Goldsmith inviting him to return for one final date. Tickets at £2.50 are expected to be on sale by this weekend.

● The Sunday before Johansen's appearance, December 10, Ultravox headline at the Lyceum. It's their first London show since they played five consecutive nights at the Marquee in August. Support bands are The Skids, Snips and Anglerax, and tickets are now available priced £2 (advance) and £2.50 (doors). Ultravox also guest in BBC-2's "Old Gray Whistle Test" next Tuesday (5), and play Wolverhampton Polytechnic (December 7) and Northampton County Ground (9).

Greedy Bastards, Otway

THE GREEDY BASTARDS, the all-star pick-up band, are playing one of their occasional concerts shortly before Christmas — at London Camden Electric Ballroom on Saturday, December 16. The line-up on this occasion comprises all four members of Thin Lizzy, Steve Jones and Paul Cook of The Sex Pistols, and Fingers and Bob Geldof of The Boomtown Rats. Advance tickets are expected to be available next week priced £2.50, and on the night they will cost £3. The gig is the night before Lizzy's own Christmas

concert at Hammersmith Odeon.

JOHN OTWAY has also confirmed a Christmas show in London — it's at The Venue in Victoria on Saturday, December 9 (admission £3). He'll be appearing with a specially selected band of well-known musicians, who will subsequently back him on his first solo album, to be recorded in December and January. The gig, in which many surprises are promised, will be Otway's last until April when he begins a world tour.

DARTS headline a one-off Christmas concert in London at the Hammersmith Odeon on Monday, December 18 (tickets £3.50, £3, £2.50 and £2). It's their first major gig with their revised line-up, now featuring new members Kenny Andrews (bass vocals) and Mike Deacon (keyboards). In fact, the band are making their stage comeback sooner than expected, because they've fixed an Irish mini-tour opening at Belfast Ulster Hall (tonight, Thursday).



The Adverts' T.V. SMITH

Adverts: ten in December

THE ADVERTS headline a ten-venue mini-tour this month, mainly to boost promotion of their recently-released RCA single "Television's Over". Promoted by John Giddings of MAM, they visit London Hendon Middlesex Polytechnic (tomorrow, Friday), Manchester Russell Club (December 7), Sheffield Limit Club (8), Oxford College of Further Education (9), Bristol Locarno (10), Weymouth Pavilion (11), London Camden Music Machine (14), Northampton County Ground (16), Redcar Coatham Bowl (21) and Lincoln Technical College (22). Wayne County & The Electric Chairs are special guests at Bristol, Redcar and Lincoln.

Tour off after farewell gigs

REZILLOS SPLIT UP

THE REZILLOS have broken up, just after the start of their major British tour which was to have lasted until just before Christmas. The Scottish band, who've already tasted chart success with both their debut single and album for Sire Records, decided on the split "due to members of the group having different expectations of their involvement in the music industry".

At present a new band is being formed around three Rezillos members — John Callis, Simon Templar and Angle Patterson — which will function around the songwriting of Callis, who wrote all The Rezillos' material. The new outfit will still be managed by Bob Last, who says that everyone wants to start working as soon as possible.

The Rezillos' tour was suspended after five days, when singer Fay Fife temporarily lost her voice, and it was during this break that the decision was taken not to continue. It means the scrapping of the rest of the tour itinerary running up to Christmas, though the band will still play four of the dates as farewell gigs — Newcastle City Hall (tonight, Thursday), London Lyceum (this Sunday) and December concerts in Glasgow and Edinburgh.

Where possible, remaining dates are being re-arranged with either a new headline act or with The Undertones — who were supporting The Rezillos — playing some of the smaller venues as headliners themselves. Details are expected next week.

STOP PRESS

PARLIAMENT/FUNKADELIC revue have added another date to their British tour — at Birmingham Odeon on Friday, December 15. Tickets go on sale tomorrow (Friday) priced £4, £3.50, £3 and £2.50. Promoters are Straight Music.



THIS MAN WILL BE BACK ON THE STREETS BY DECEMBER 8TH

Here & Now's free tour: where & when

HERE & NOW have made several changes and additions to their free tour, now halfway through its autumn itinerary. Remaining dates are Aberystwyth College of Librarianship (tonight, Thursday), Bangor University (Friday), Manchester Poly (Saturday), Liverpool Pickwick Club (Sunday), Bolton Institute of Technology (December 4), Nottingham Uni (5), Middlesbrough Rock Garden (6), Glasgow Strathclyde Uni (7), Dundee Uni (8), Stirling Uni (9), Newcastle Uni (11), Hull Uni (12), York Uni (13), Leeds Fforde Green (14), Huddersfield Poly (15), Coventry Warwick Uni (17), Norwich East Anglia Uni (18), Birmingham Bournbrook Hotel (19) and Colchester Essex Uni (20), plus a big Christmas party at a still-to-be-announced London venue (21).

On sale at all gigs is the official live bootleg featuring Here & Now and Alternative TV, titled "What You See Is What You Are" (price £1) and Here & Now's studio album on the Charly label "Give & Take" (£2 as opposed to shop price of £2.25). Patrick Fitzgerald appears on most of these gigs, and the final five dates also feature a solo set by David Allen, plus his wife Gilli Smyth's band Mother Planet Gong.

Supercharged Christmas

SUPERCARGE spend the greater part of December on the road, including special seasonal gigs at Leeds Fforde Green Hotel (Christmas Eve), Liverpool Eric's (Boxing Day) and London Camden Music Machine (New Year's Eve Party). Other dates are Birmingham Barbarella's (tomorrow, Friday), London Woolwich Thames Polytechnic (Saturday), London Marquee (Sunday), Chippenham RAF Station (7), London Hampstead Westfield College (8), London Chelsea College (9), London Fulham Golden Lion (10), Durham New College (12), Preston Polytechnic (13), Fife St. Andrew's University (14), Dundee Technical College (15), Dumfries Stagecoach (17), Blackpool Technical College (18), Plymouth Metro (20), Bristol Granary (21), Newport Village Club (22), Dudley J.B.'s (23) and Redcar Coatham Bowl (29).



DAN McCAFFERTY of Nazareth

EXTRA DATES BY NAZARETH

NAZARETH have now confirmed the remaining four dates, including a major London concert, in their New Year tour. The band's dozen gigs in January were reported two weeks ago, and they have now added Southampton Gaumont (February 3), Wolverhampton Civic Hall (3), Birmingham Odeon (4) and London Hemmersmith Odeon (5).

They have now finished work in Montreux on their new album "No Mean City", planned for January release by Mountain, and Manny Charlton has flown to Montreal where he is producing sessions by Canadian group Sweetheart. Singer Dan McCafferty flew to Los Angeles this week to begin a 12-city promotional tour, in connection with the release of his first solo album. The band reunite in Scotland on December 12 to begin rehearsals for the U.K. tour.

OFF THE RECORD

Rundgren produces TRB

TODD RUNDGREN is to produce the next album by the Tom Robinson Band. At the suggestion of TRB drummer Dolphin Taylor, Robinson met Rundgren in Toronto earlier this year, and the partnership was agreed. Todd flies into London in mid-December to play a week with his band Utopia at The Venue in London's Victoria, and recording sessions will take place in daytime hours during this stint, with mixing to follow in the States. When asked why he suggested Rundgren, Dolphin explained that "he's got the same initials as Tom Robinson" — but, in fact, he's already proved his worth as producer of Meat Loaf's "Bat Out Of Hell" and The Tubes' next album.

Elton newie

ROCKET Records are rushing a new Elton John single this weekend in response, they say, to numerous requests. Taken from his current album "A Single Man", it's the instrumental track "Song For Guy" — written by Elton after the death of Rocket's 17-year-old messenger Guy Burchett, who was killed in a motorbike accident. The B-side is a new John-Taupin composition "Lovesick", which is not included on the LP.



● The first single to be issued by Polygram after Christmas, on December 23 — their only release for that week — is "Get Up And Dance" by the Steve Gibbons Band, who are expected to play a few New Year gigs to promote it.

HOW TO PRODUCE YOUR OWN DISCS

RAW Records have set up a division specially to help up-and-coming bands issue their own records. The company will assist with the business side — pressing, distribution, securing reviews — as well as the actual production, recording, sleeves, labels, artwork and even coloured vinyl. They also offer free advice on royalties, copyright and legal aspects. They say that, with their large number of contacts, they can virtually guarantee helping to sell enough records to make a profit. Those interested should contact Raw at 48 King Street, Cambridge (0223-54897).

● Midlands rock band Scene Stealer, whose debut Rebel Records album "First Offence" has had its release delayed until mid-January by pressing problems, are importing copies from Belgium and Germany — where it's already a big seller — for sale this month.

● British Lions spend the greater part of December in the studios recording their new Phonogram album, titled "Trouble With Woman". February release is planned.

● Metro, the five-piece contemporary rock band who were formerly with Transatlantic, have signed a long-term deal with EMI. They go into the studios this month with Mike Thorne, producer of the last Wire and Shins LPs, with a view to releasing a single at the end of January and an album in late February.

● The Good Time Band has been launched by former F.B.I. members Root Jackson and Rafi Pereira, who have also founded their own label — Umbrella Records, distributed by Pye — to showcase their product. Their first single, out this week, is "The Bad Good Time Band" on which they're joined by several members of Kokomo.

● Songwriter and producer Christopher Rainbow has signed with EMI, and will be recording his own album in January, for release in the spring.

Labritain dials 999!

999 were on top of the world last week, when they returned from a highly successful Scandinavian tour, and were immediately booked for next week's BBC-2 "Old Grey Whistle Test". But they were quickly deflated when they lost a "Top Of The Pops" spot, and drummer Pablo Labritain was admitted to hospital with a broken arm!

With their new single "Homicide" knocking at the chart door, the TOTP booking was an unexpected bonus, as radio stations have been reluctant to play it because of the

controversial title — even though it is an anti-violence song. But in the event, they were cut out of the show, due to an industrial dispute shortening the programme.

Labritain's accident occurred when he was involved in a crash in the group's van, resulting in concussion, severe grazing, fractured ribs and a broken arm. He is now in Whittington Hospital, North London, and has been temporarily replaced in the band by unknown Ed Case — who claims he only took up drumming after seeing Pablo play!

Gen X tour hassles

GENERATION X, who opened their U.K. tour last weekend, have run into the usual batch of problems they've come to expect. Dates at Hertford Castle Hall (December 5) and Birkenhead Hamilton Club (7) have been scrapped, and their projected gig at Brighton Top Rank on December 15 is in jeopardy, because of extensive damage at a recent Buzzcocks concert there.

The band are also having

difficulty in fixing dates in Scotland, where there is a distinct shortage of bookable halls, due mainly to councils' opposition to new-wave orientated acts. They now play Dunstable California on December 5, a venue originally set for December 12, when instead they've slotted in York Grey Hall. It's understood that Gen X are also lining up a special Christmas show — details hopefully next week.

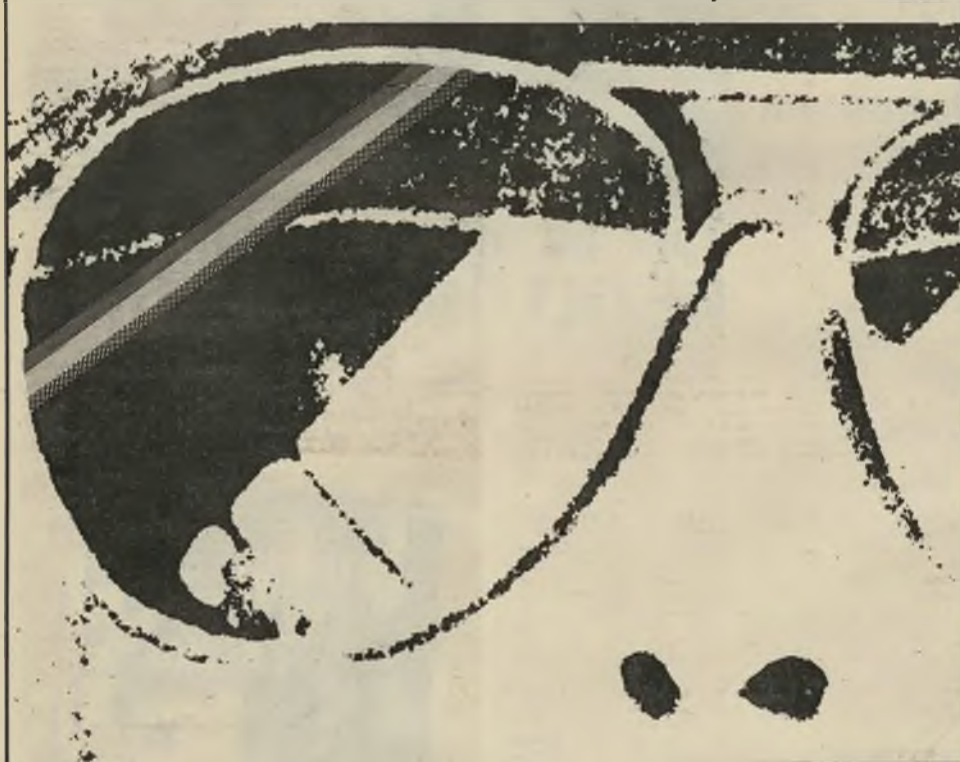
Doomed line-up change

THE DOOMED have sacked bass player Henry Badowski, the only member of the band who was not previously with The Damned, and have brought in former Saints man Alisdair Ward in his place. They say that Badowski is out because "we hated him and he hated us", while the choice of Ward is due to the fact that "he was born in Croydon".

The band are planning to give away a free single at their two

London Christmas specials — Electric Ballroom (December 21) and Croydon Greyhound (24) — to the first 250 through the doors at each of the gigs. The record will consist of two of the six tracks they recently recorded at a demo session. Of their other dates announced last week, Aberdeen Ruffles moves forward to December 13, and is now replaced the following day by Dundee College of Art.

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PRISM

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ROD'S PARTY

IT IS NOW officially confirmed that Rod Stewart will complete his British tour by playing a special New Year's Eve Party at London Strand Lyceum Ballroom (8 pm — 2 am). Attendance at the gig — which follows his five nights at Olympia on either side of Christmas — will be restricted to 2,000. Tickets cost £10.80 and are available only at the Lyceum box-office on Saturdays and Mondays starting this weekend.

Osibisa see in New Year

OSIBISA are to headline a special New Year's Eve concert at London Hammersmith Odeon. It's a late-night gig, timed to run into 1979, and it will feature all their latest material from their upcoming tenth album which they are currently recording. The show is promoted by Straight Music, and tickets are on sale now priced from £2 to £3.50. The LP is still untitled, and it's not yet known on which label it will be issued, as Bronze Records say they are no longer associated with the Afro-rock band. The London gig is the first of a series taking Osibisa round the world in 1979, including their first U.S. tour for five years.

FRANKIE MILLER, currently on an extensive debut tour around Britain with his re-shaped Full House Band, is to play two major London gigs during the holiday season at the new-look Fulham Greyhound — on Boxing Day and New Year's Eve. The Greyhound will also be one of the few London venues presenting live entertainment on Christmas Day, when Bob Kerr's Whoopie Band appear.

Costello booking details

DETAILS OF booking arrangements for the New Year tour by Elvis Costello & The Attractions, announced last week, have now been finalised by Straight Music. Admission at Brighton Top Rank, Bath Pavilion, Hemel Hempstead Pavilion, Carlisle Market Hall, Hanley Victoria Hall, Cardiff Sophia Gardens and Bristol Locarno is all set at the one price of £2.50. Tickets are £3, £2.50, £2 and £1.50 at Liverpool Empire, Glasgow Apollo, Aberdeen Capitol and Dundee Caird Hall. And at the remaining 19 venues, prices are £3, £2.50 and £2. Tickets are on sale now at all box-offices. As already reported, support acts throughout the tour are Richard Hell & The Voidoids and John Cooper Clarke.

Richards jail threat

KEITH RICHARDS of The Rolling Stones may, after all, be sentenced to prison on the drugs charges for which he was recently placed on probation in Toronto. The Canadian Government — represented by the Justice Minister, the Attorney-General and former Premier John Diefenbaker — say Richards should have been imprisoned, and that The Crown will appeal against the probation order. Richards was also ordered to give a concert for young blind people, but a Stones spokesman commented: "Keith doesn't have to go back to Canada to face this. They'd better watch it, or they won't even get their charity concert."

More by Penetration

PENETRATION have set ten December gigs, to follow their recently-completed 19-date November tour, all aiding promotion of their new Virgin album "Moving Targets". They play Wolverhampton Lafayette (tomorrow, Friday), Birmingham Mayfair (Saturday), Croydon Greyhound (Sunday), Norwich St. Andrew's Hall (5), Malvern Winter Gardens (6), Derby Kings Hall (7), Recar Coatham Bowl (8), Manchester Russell Club (9), Cambridge Corn Exchange (10), London Woolwich Thames Polytechnic (11) and Newcastle City Hall (12).

Writz: tip for 1979?



WRITZ — the six-piece band formerly known as Fish Co., whose joint lead singers Beverley Sage and Steve Farnie are pictured here — have recently been enhancing their reputation through their original music and bizarre stage appearance. And with their first single "Night Nurse" due out in mid-January, they could well be one of the names to watch for 1979. Gigs this month include Exeter University (tomorrow, Friday), Swansea University (8), Exmouth Rolle College (9), Bristol Granary (10) and Hallow The Hall (23). They begin a six-week tour in the New Year, for which first confirmed dates are Bristol Crookers (January 4 and 5), Birmingham Barbarella's (6) and Worcester College (26).



Marshall & Hain parting company

MARSHALL HAIN are parting company, barely two weeks after the close of their debut British and European tour. Kit Hain and the band are staying together — and in fact, are remaining in this country to audition for a new keyboards player, before recording a new album — and they are already planning a further series of UK and Continental dates in late January and early February. Julian Marshall intends to involve himself in various solo projects.

The split has been described as "entirely amicable" and, although that's a time-honoured cliché, it appears to make sense in this instance — because, even without Julian,

the group is still to be known officially as Marshall Hain! Kit and Julian make their last appearance together next Wednesday, when they record a Radio 1 "In Concert" for broadcast later in the month.

Julie Covington: London concerts

JULIE COVINGTON makes a couple of rare London concert appearances on Saturday and Sunday, December 9 and 10, when she plays at Riverside Studios in Hammersmith. The Albion Band also perform in the shows, which are benefit gigs in aid of the venue's upkeep. Tickets are now available all at the one price of £5.

NME NEWS ROUND-UP

Gillan: further dates

GILLAN, the official abbreviated name for the new Ian Gillan Band, are to play two nights at London Marquee Club during the upcoming holiday season — on December 28 and 29. They have another London date at Camden Music Machine on December 7, and other gigs this month are at Oxford Polytechnic (tomorrow, Friday), St. Alban's City Hall (Saturday), Southampton University (8), Birmingham Aston University (8) and Maidstone Technical College (15).

Bishops on the road

THE BISHOPS follow their dates with Dr. Feelgood by playing a string of December gigs in their own right. So far confirmed are Newcastle University (tomorrow, Friday), Maidstone Art College (8), Hull College (12), Harrow Polytechnic (13), London Woolwich Thames Polytechnic (18), Salisbury College of Further Education (20), Middlesbrough Rock Garden (22) and Scarborough Penthouse (29). More are at present being finalised.

Son Seals in March

SON SEALS BAND — who were forced to call off their projected British tour in October, when they were to have supported B.B. King and played a string of dates in their own right — are now being lined up for an extensive headlining U.K. and European tour in March. Their autumn visit was cancelled when all the members of the band were injured in a train crash in Scandinavia. They are now all convalescing, though it's feared they may have to find a tour replacement for drummer Tony Godden, whose arm injuries are likely to take a long time to heal.

Elkie: London extra

ELKIE BROOKS is to play two more performances at London's Dominion Theatre in Tottenham-Court Road. She is already set to headline two concerts there on Sunday and Monday, December 10 and 11, as reported six weeks ago — and ticket demand has been so heavy that she's now added two early-evening shows on the same days. Tickets for these extra gigs are on sale now at the box-office and through the usual agencies. It's now unlikely that Elkie will be doing any provincial dates this month.

Pirates invade U.S.

THE PHRATES play a tour of America's East Coast during the first half of December, visiting such well-known venues as New York's Bottom Line and Washington's Cellar Door. On their return, they play their last three British gigs of the year — at Bolton Technical College (December 21), London Camden Music Machine (22) and Malvern Winter Gardens (23).



Sylvester + Kokomo

SYLVESTER — who, as reported two weeks ago, plays a pair of London concerts at the Hammersmith Odeon on December 8 and 9 — will be supported in both shows by Kokomo, who are re-forming (yet again!) specially for the occasion. They will feature their usual nine-piece line-up, and NME understands that Kokomo are now on the brink of reuniting on a permanent basis. As already announced, Sylvester's London gigs — promoted by Straight Music — will be his only concerts in this country, though he is also guesting in the World Disco Dancing Championship Final at London Empire Ballroom on December 10 (televised by ITV two days later).

Fabulously Poodling

THE FABULOUS POODLES continue their seemingly non-stop jaunt around the country, by adding a further seven December dates to their itinerary. They are Sheffield Polytechnic (tomorrow, Friday), Ilkley College (Saturday), Manchester Polytechnic (7), London New Cross Goldsmiths College (8), London Roehampton Digby Stuart College (9), Exeter University (11) and London Camden Music Machine (20). Their gig at Reading University last Saturday (26) was cancelled, following a Women's Lib protest alleging that the band's songs are "sexist".

Final tour briefs . . .

SHARLEY BASSEY plays a special charity performance, to be attended by Prince Charles, at Ceepliffy Double Diamond Club on December 15.

BRAM TCHAIKOVSKY and his band will support Roy Gellagher in both legs of his British concert tour — the first opening at London Lewisham Odeon on December 8, and the second section starts at Bristol Collier Hall on January 9.

DEAN FRIEDMAN, already set for his final U.K. appearance at London Dominion Theatre on December 16, is to headline a special charity show at Reading University next Wednesday (8) in aid of Music Therapy.

SORE THROAT continue their "Cold Comfort" tour into December with gigs at Liverpool Eric's (tomorrow, Friday), Glasgow Queen Margaret Union (Saturday), Leeds Florde Green Hotel (Sunday), London Enfield Middlessex Polytechnic (5), London Hospital Medical School (6), Birmingham Repertory Theatre (10) and High Wycombe Nags Head (14).

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TICKETS £9.00, £6.50, £4.00, £2.50 (incl. V&A) ADVANCE: KINGS HALL BOX OFFICE, 30 D'ARCY RD, BELLE VUE, LONDON, E11 1AB. TEL: 011 278 1330. (EXETER: 0392 700001) PAPER CHASE BOOKINGS, PLATE COMPANY, ONE STAR RECORDS, ON ON NIGHT

HAMMERSMITH ODEON

QUEEN CAROLINE ST W4

MON. 11th THRU THURS. 14th DEC. at 8-00

TICKETS £4.50, £3.50, £2.50, £1.50 (incl. V&A) ADVANCE: THEATRE BOX OFFICE, 740 ADELPHI, LONDON W1C 2AD. BOOKINGS: SHAH TESSLEY RD, 439 3371. PREMIER BOX OFFICE, 240 2245. VISUAL AGENTS: ON ON NIGHT

STRAIGHT MUSIC PRESENTS

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QUEEN CAROLINE ST W4

SAT/SUN - 2/3 DECEMBER at 7-30

TICKETS £3.50, £2.50, £1.50, £1.00 (incl. V&A) ADVANCE: THEATRE BOX OFFICE, 740 ADELPHI, LONDON W1C 2AD. BOOKINGS: SHAH TESSLEY RD, 439 3371. PREMIER BOX OFFICE, 240 2245. VISUAL AGENTS: ON ON NIGHT

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WITH GUESTS

THE VIPERS

RAINBOW THEATRE

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STRAIGHT MUSIC PRESENTS

Sylvester

WITH GUESTS

KOKOMO

HAMMERSMITH ODEON

QUEEN CAROLINE ST W4

FRI/SAT 8/9 DECEMBER at 7-30

TICKETS £3.50, £2.50, £1.50, £1.00 (incl. V&A) ADVANCE: THEATRE BOX OFFICE, 740 ADELPHI, LONDON W1C 2AD. BOOKINGS: SHAH TESSLEY RD, 439 3371. PREMIER BOX OFFICE, 240 2245. VISUAL AGENTS: ON ON NIGHT

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The last thing we ever wanted to make was a music centre.



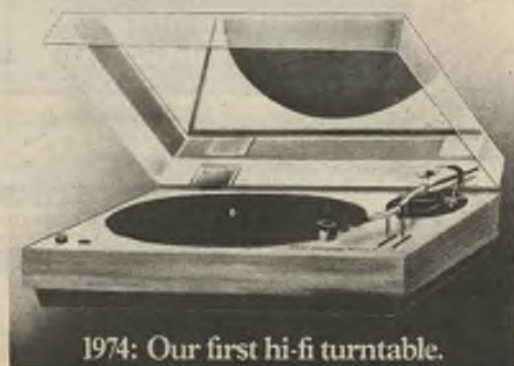
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1970: Our first stereo cassette deck.



1973: Our first hi-fi receiver.



1974: Our first hi-fi turntable.

It had to be last.

Since 1954, our first priority has been the development of hi-fi tape recorders.

We were responsible for many milestones. Not least among these was a new material for tape heads with more than a hundred times the normal life.

Only when we were completely satisfied with our tape decks did we turn our energies to hi-fi amplifiers and tuners.

And only when our amplifiers and tuners were the equal of our tape and cassette decks did we apply ourselves to the development of our first hi-fi turntables.

Consequently, by its nature, a combined hi-fi unit fell last on our list. And because it was last, we were able to incorporate our latest improvements in all four component parts.

We rate the amplifier conservatively at twenty-five watts per channel. (Hi-fi Choice magazine rated it at forty watts per channel.)

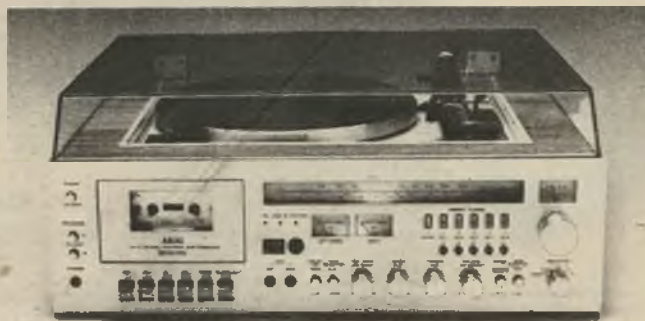
The cassette deck has a Dolby® noise reduction system providing a frequency response Hi-fi Choice rated 'very good'.

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And the two-speed turntable has a precisely calibrated stylus load adjuster to preserve the life of the stylus.

Overall, Hi-fi Choice voted our AC3800L hi-fi centre a 'best buy'.

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IT'S ALWAYS easy to be wise after the event. And the star-crossed career of The New York Dolls is a typical case history.

At the short-lived peak of their cult popularity the Dolls were generally misconstrued as being the last dying spark of the '60s when in fact this dishevelled no-nonsense rock 'n' roll dance band were a slow burning fuse that took five years to eventually detonate the fourth generation rock revolution.

The only thing wrong was their sense of timing.

Except for guaranteeing a posthumous place in rock's Hall Of Fame, as the Dolls failed to benefit from their impertinence in trying to establish some semblance of a New Order when rock was just about to dash for middle-of-the-road platinum coated respectability.

But it took almost as long for them to burn themselves out in time-honoured rock tradition as it originally took to establish their bizarre presence as New York's finest.

The problems were as much external as internal. As a result their Grand Exit from the arena was quite messy.

Things had gone wrong from the start, but the beginning of the end came when two-thirds of the Dolls' management, Leiber and Kriets, ganged up on a third partner, Marty Thau. This in turn further confused Mercury Records, who from the outset had felt both threatened and embarrassed by the presence of such an androgynous bunch of urchins on their label.

Ignoring the fact that the Dolls had already sold close on a quarter of a million albums, Mercury promptly terminated all existing contracts.

Bad news travels fast, and for the remainder of their chaotic career The New York Dolls were label-less.

It was at about this juncture in the Dolls' fast-failing fortunes that soon-to-be-famous Kings Road haberdasher Malcolm McLaren — who guitarist Sylvain Sylvain affectionately remembers as "a little schlepp" — entered the scenario.

Infatuated with the Dolls' anarchic attitude, McLaren bravely attempted an ill-fated salvage operation for which he adamantly refused to accept financial restitution for services rendered.

It was McLaren who, during February and March, 1974, vigorously promoted The New York Dolls' notorious *Red Patent Leather Show*, an off-target tongue-in-cheek headline-grabbing extreme Leftist image which instantly alienated just about everyone of power within the American music industry.

The alarming spectre of the Dolls — bedecked in bright red — posturing against a massive Soviet hammer and sickle backdrop almost gave syndicated rock society columnist Lisa Robinson a cardiac arrest.

However, she recovered sufficiently enough to pen a vitriolic letter to the band. And the rest of the Red Scourge-fearing American media promptly lined-up behind her skirts.

The New York Dolls had, in their estimation, shown their true colours. They were not All-American guys kicking up a little noise, but a bunch of highly-subversive pinko agitators who were obviously hell-bent-for-(red)-leather on corrupting the innocent youth of The Big Country.

They had to be stopped! "I never liked that particular image from the outset," recalls Sylvain. "Cause, me being Jewish for one thing, I really hate those Commie bastards!"

If The Red Patent Leather Show itself wasn't sufficient to escalate the Dolls' eventual martyrization, McLaren had other problems. He was desperately attempting to get bassist Arthur Kane off the bottle (he showed him in a sanatorium to dry out) and also trying to gain the confidence and friendship of both guitarist Johnny Thunders and drummer Jerry Nolan whose smack-induced paranoia had made them deeply suspicious of his interest in their affairs.

Nevertheless, McLaren was determined not to be put off and tried to clean up the Dolls' act as best he could.

"His heart was really into it," insists Sylvain. "I mean, he even got us a show at New York's Beacon Theatre, which was a big step because by then a lotta people hated our guts. All those shoe salesmen who ran the record business really felt threatened by our very existence."

Down, but not yet out, The New York Dolls were preparing

NEW YORK DOLLS: LIVIN' IN THE AFTERMATH

themselves for one last all-out assault. They assumed that all that was required was that elusive hit single, a return engagement at the Beacon and once again they'd be a force to be reckoned with.

"We'd be stars!" Despite their problems they'd already written a bunch of new material and routinely some oldies: "Pirate Love", "It's On Fire", "Restless Crazy", "Daddy Rollin' Stone", "Somethin' Else", "Heavy Metal Kids", "A Pig's Foot And A Bottle Of Beer", "Red Patent Leather" and two songs scheduled as their grand-slam comeback hit single, "Teenage News" and "The Kids Are Back".

AS A PRELUDE to again taking their home town by storm, the Dolls embarked upon an eight date tour of Florida. By staying at Arthur Kane's family home, they

calculated that after all overheads had been paid they'd come out of the venture with three grand profit — enough to finance studio time for their third album.

The album never got recorded. Half-way through the Florida offensive Thunders and Nolan quit. The reason: they were desperate to fly back to New York so as they could score.

Within hours, Arthur Kane brought in a couple of his friends, including a Thunders clone named Blackie, who gave vent to the rumours that the dolls had been presented with wigs to wear in an effort to pass the new recruits off as bona fide Dolls.

The sudden — though in Sylvain's opinion not unexpected — departure of Thunders and Nolan, and the fact that roadie Peter Jordan occasionally held down the bass gig when Arthur Kane was legless didn't cause the make-shift Dolls line-up the kind of inherent problems one might have imagined.

"Suddenly," says Sylvain, "we were getting encores which, for the Dolls, was like having Christmas come around twice in one year!"

It's often been assumed that Thunders was David Johansen's right hand man. And visually he may have been the most obvious foil. But it was diminutive cork-screw haired power-pack Sylvain (who incidentally thought up the group's name) who, along with David Jo, not only steered the pace but was the Dolls' musical director.

"I used to try and get ten things up. Cut all the songs back to around three and four minutes in length."

Actually, Sylvain had anticipated the Dolls' demise. "It was inevitable," he admits philosophically. "I just knew that those three weren't going to make it."

Armed with this knowledge, he convened a secret pow-wow with both David Jo and McLaren during the Florida expedition to discuss whether or not to break the Dolls up there and

then ("before irrevocable harm was done") or rely on the unreliability of the others.

Seemingly, David Jo was reluctant to carry on without the other three. But within days he had his mind made up for him. Thunders and Nolan were on a plane back to the Big Apple.

In subsequent interviews almost everyone has seized the opportunity to portray a former colleague as villain of the piece.

For instance Thunders and Nolan have repeatedly blamed David Johansen for the split, alleging that he used his cohorts purely as his back-up musicians.

Sylvain insists that such outbursts are childish.

"Look, Johnny had his idea of how my guitar should sound — which didn't always coincide with my idea — and also how much louder he should be than anyone else. And I can say that I didn't wanna play loud. Trouble with Johnny was, he was like an athlete who didn't know how to pace himself. The minute he got on stage he'd get too excited and that was the end of that."

What about the recurring argument that the split was aggravated by Sylvain wanting the Dolls to veer away from rock and roll? Sylvain's words were in R & B.

"Well, I could say that same shit about Johnny. I was writing material he didn't want to hear. For instance, I wrote this song for the Dolls' second album, 'Too Much Too Soon' which wasn't even recorded. If Johnny said, 'that's what David did to him then I could say that from both David and Johnny. But it's all so long ago."

Subject well and truly closed.



And not just livin' but looking hot. Ex-Doll DAVID JOHANSEN, with SYLVAIN SYLVAIN in the band, is currently engaged in a successful tour of Britain. ROY CARR reports.

THE NEW York Dolls were just one of many aspirin brands on the rocks of Leiber and Kriets, and Sylvain recalls that when their managers began to view the Dolls not so much as a musical entity but as a potential Monkees-style merchandise machine through which to market a line of teen queen cosmetics called "The Killery Make Up", he didn't feel too optimistic about the Dolls' immediate future.

To further confuse the issue, one day he caught Leiber and Kriets showing Accostin a large stack of photographs of the Dolls and insisting that if they were ever going to answer to anything then this was the image that Accostin should cultivate.

Seemingly, Steven Tyler and Joe Perry could grasp the logic behind such a suggestion, but bassist Tony Haxby had grave doubts about placing his masculinity in doubt.

However, it was left to the Dolls to seal their own fate. And Sylvain feels it had been predetermined long before they set out for Florida.

"There's nobody to blame 'cept ourselves. We killed the Dolls. Like I said, it was inevitable. We were actually living all this fuckin' stuff and as a result we lost Billy (Marcus) — Victim O.D."

"Now that was a heavy shock to face and completely changed our faith in being a unit. I mean we gonna make your own reflection of what your life was about, then you've gotta reflect when you're on stage and when you're off."

"Sure, we all had each other for the break-up, but I we had retained our initial attitude that we were gonna stick it out then I've absolutely no doubts that the Dolls could have happened."

"Like you were saying to me earlier about the Dolls opening his door for some people and I was holding the handle. Well, the Dolls demonstrated that you didn't have to be Frank Sinatra or Jeff Beck to make it. The best we gave American kids back their faith in rock 'n' roll."

"We didn't plan it that way. It was an accident. New York goes in cycles. When it's hot it's hot but when The New York Dolls came out there was absolutely nothing worthwhile going on. For a time it seemed that we were the only band in the city. Then suddenly, overnight, another 20 bands had sprung up."

"Where the Dolls knew it was when we finally took things into our own hands. My attitude both mentally and physically was, there was no way we were ever going to let go. You've got to have this we're gonna make-it-together-or-else attitude about such things."

Sylvain believes that Malcolm McLaren did wrong his experience of The New York Dolls when preparing the original deal for his Sex New

(Continued over page 8)



MAGAZINE ON TOUR

Wednesday 29th November **Liverpool** Mountford Hall, University
Thursday 30th November **Lancaster** University

Friday 1st December **Newcastle** University
Saturday 2nd December **Derby** King's Hall
Monday 4th December **Sheffield** University
Tuesday 5th December **Leeds** Polytechnic
Wednesday 6th December **Birmingham** Barbarellas
Thursday 7th December **Coventry** Locarno
Friday 8th December **West Runton** Pavilion
Saturday 9th December **Aylesbury** Friars
Sunday 10th December **Cardiff** Top Rank

Special Guests
NEO

■ From previous page

Pistols' world-domination masterplan.

"Unfortunately, neither McLaren or the Pistols learned from our biggest mistake — and that was breaking up when they did. The Dolls really regret breaking up and I expect that no matter what they say in public, secretly so do the Pistols!

"Nevertheless, if you're gonna steal somethin'... argues Sylvain, "then steal from the best. Only trouble was, the Dolls were much too ahead of their time. We were from another era. People looked at The Sex Pistols as The Sex Pistols and not as McLaren's British up-date of the Dolls formula. See, the Pistols grew up with the Dolls in precisely the same way as lotsa kids are currently growing up with Johnny Rotten.

"The only thing that I ever get bitter about is that some of the bands that started out the same time as the Dolls... bands like Kiss... earned the money that the Dolls should have earned.

"Throughout the whole time he was in the band, the only thing that Jerry Nolan was ever correct about was when he kept saying, watch out for Kiss!"

And what was the final nail in the Dolls' coffin lid?

"There were people in the Dolls who just couldn't go nowhere by themselves... it's as if they needed their mother along to hold their hand. But what you really wanna know is what did we do that made so many people angry and hostile towards us?

"Basically they got mad because we weren't afraid of 'em. We weren't afraid of the music industry. We weren't about to kiss ass to get on. And, that's not the easy way to go about things.

"You beat them to it and they get pissed off and do everything within their power to put you in your place. To show the rest of the world that they can do it.

"Well, we said, fuck you too, who needs this shit.

"You know, Krebs said to me, that he learned more from the New York Dolls than making it than from any of his groups that made it.

STUFF JAMES JEWEL Osterburg! If there's one individual who looked capable of stripping the Ig of his self-styled title as The World's Forgotten Boy it was David Johansen.

For the past few years it has appeared as though Johansen's professional career was exclusively restricted to being photographed (usually in tandem with his ambitious ex-lady Cyndie) slumming around Manhattan's latest hot-spots, and posing inanely with the latest whiz-kids of a movement he'd originally helped pioneer.

It seemed like a race to see who could make the society pages of New York's rock press most times in a month — Johansen or Jagger? And invariably Johansen scooped the most column inches.

Was this to be the end for someone who, along with Bruce Springsteen and Joey Ramone had proved he was the only frontman to exude the fundamental ethos of the genre in '70s Rock Americana. There was speculation as to whether, if the opportunity presented itself, David Johansen could still stay the pace.

To the casual observer he appeared to be procrastinating and didn't seem to give a monkey's just so long as someone else picked up the bar tab.

Following the Florida affair, Johansen's professional activities were limited to grabbing Sylvain, Peter Jordan, drummer Tony Machine and organist Chris Robinson for a Japanese junket — where, as fate would have it, they took over the bill-topping spot from a hospitalized Jeff Beck.

Upon his return to America, Bobby Blain replaced Robinson for sporadic — mainly weekend only — bouts of touring.

"We'd made enough money in Japan, and from just working weekends to pay our bills and

hang-out mid-week in Manhattan."

Though this particular line-up which, in retrospect David Jo prefers to tag *The Dollentes*, never officially recorded, tapes exist of both New Year's Eve appearance at the Beacon Theatre and a gig at Cleveland's Agora Ballroom on which is preserved some of the unrecorded material scheduled for the Dolls' third album, plus "Personality Crisis", "Looking For A Kiss" together with three Johansen/Sylvain originals, "Funky But Chic", "Cool Metro" and "Frenchette", which all made it onto David Jo's Blue Sky debut.

It was left up to Sylvain Doll's off-shoot The Criminals to preserve "The Kids Are Back" for posterity.

DAVID JOHANSEN himself sports a familiar American super-cool and self-assured confidence.

He tries to give the impression that he doesn't take himself seriously. His true feelings are open to speculation.

The time at our disposal — between the end of the soundcheck and the first of two exhausting shows at London's The Venue — is not enough for me to reach any real conclusions.

One thing is for sure: he is ultra shrewd and knows how to handle himself in the clinches.

David Johansen plays to win.

Nevertheless, he insists that despite the time spent extricating himself from previous contractual ties he never felt pressured into cutting his solo album are getting back into the fray.

Was he ever in danger of becoming a lost cause?

He smiles, looks you straight in the eyes and replies: "I've never looked upon myself as any kind of cause. I just thought that I could make a good album whenever I chose and that remark speaks for itself."

See what I mean about self-assured confidence?

I mean, has he or has he not presented the public with one of the best solo debuts of the '70s?

He goes on to insist that the passing of time has nothing at all to do with one's ability to cut the proverbial mustard.

After such a lengthy lay-off, did he anticipate that perhaps people may have expected the impossible?

He retorts: "I don't want to sound egotistical but I just figured that I could make a good album and I wouldn't go back into the studio until such time as I knew I was ready."

"And as a result I wasn't surprised by the favourable reaction shown to my first solo album. One thing I can assure everyone is that my next album is gonna be that much better."

Judging on his present form both on plastic and in public, I for one, wouldn't make book on his chances of failure.

He refutes any suggestion that, recording-wise, he intentionally kept a low profile so as to avoid comparisons between his current activities and his work with The New York Dolls.

"My main concern was that I didn't wanna go back out on the road to promote any record until I felt like it."

"Four years of terminal touring with the Dolls left its mark. During that time we must have hit almost every town across America. So I just wanted to stay at home for some time."

When you come home after so long on the road you're loud and obnoxious and your closest friends don't particularly want to know you. So you've got to take time off to re-adjust. To dig yourself and to dig life.

"As far as I'm concerned life itself is far more important than any rock 'n' roll band... the chance to be able to enjoy life. I mean, if you're in a highly successful rock band and, never mind anyone else, if you can't dig yourself, you're well and truly fucked... absolutely nowhere."

"Right from the time I was a kid my parents taught both me and my family to always believe in ourselves. The most

important thing in life is the ability to dig yourself and if you can't do that, why the hell parade yourself around in front of an audience.

"Some people take the whole thing far too seriously."

He laughs. "Like, my father never took the insurance business that seriously."

Though he admits to being artistically ambitious, David Jo apparently doesn't harbour the kind of cut-throat ambition that seems to be the stock-in-trade vice of so many contemporary American rock singers.

"Maybe," he replies laughing, "that's been my biggest problem?"

Furthermore, he argues that he isn't at all concerned about so many other bands capitalising on what The New York Dolls innovated.

"I'm not that capitalistic anyway!"

I aim the same Bo Diddley analogue at him, in much the same way as I put it to Sylvain. He finds it amusing and in many ways accurate.

"However, I never really thought of the Dolls in that way. The Dolls were a good band and a lot of kids picked up on them and lots of 'em didn't. We proved that it could be fun to be in a rock band. That it didn't have to be a drag and that you didn't have to be full of shit at the time."

"Really, it's hard to be subjective about the Dolls and as to who copied what from the Dolls. If you can grasp what I'm saying... I never really saw the Dolls because I was just up there on stage being one fifth of it. It's difficult for me to say what the Dolls were. It was a mess of many things other than just entertainment."

He lights a cigarette. "But, I do think it's good that we helped to create a whole new burgeoning scene which didn't exist when we first started out."

"In fact, if anyone wanted to open a club in New York, they'd always booked the Dolls to play the launch. We must have opened almost every club in New York."

"I suppose it's semi-gratifying to look around and see what we helped to start — not that I'm into that kind of gratification, but I never felt frustrated to see other bands come up and make it where the Dolls didn't."

"See, I was doing what I wanted to do, not what other people may have felt I should do. But then I always have... but having said that, nobody does exactly what they want to do."

"You get an idea for sumpphin', and you start working on it, and whatever it becomes is what it is and sometimes during the process you don't remember what the original idea was."

"Actually, one of my saving graces is that I've got a bad memory!"

"Look, I never gave two hoots about what any other band did or where they got it from in the first place. I just always knew that when the time came for me to get something together I would, I did it with the Dolls and I'm doing it with my own band."

"As far as the Dolls were concerned we set some kind of precedence as far as studio technique was concerned and got slagged off for it. As it so happens I heard the two albums again quite recently and they sounded good, though a bit mainstream. The songs were good. Incidentally, I also heard 'Puss 'n' Boots' on the radio the other day and I'd forgotten just how good it was."

"It's funny, when our records first came out in America nobody would play them on the radio 'cause we were bad news... had the green slime on us. Nowadays they're frantically trying to get back into us!"

The New York Dolls may have become something of an albatross around the necks of group members, but Johansen doesn't feel his past association is something he's been compelled to live down.

"I'm not out to try and get people to re-evaluate me or anything at all like that. If people think I'm a creep, fuck 'em, that's o.k. by me. See, I just don't care!"

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THRILLS

"WHY I NEVER COMB MY HAIR" — the sordid truth about Pete Shelley!

PETE SHELLEY rings Thrills last week to tell us he's unshaven and hasn't combed his hair again.

"I couldn't care less," he tells me. "If I cared any less it just wouldn't be worth bothering."

Shelley and Buzzcocks draw unusually bad press at the moment. Amongst other things, people say they don't care about anything. "I care about music," says Pete. "I care about keeping warm when it's cold. I care about the normal things people care about."

Buzzcocks have just finished a tour of the nation.

"It was a strange tour. Rather difficult. All the things you said in your review about playing these huge halls were valid, but it's also valid to say it was a wonderful, fantastic experience for me. But the whole tour was so long it only needed a few people to brand us about an apparently couldn't-care-less attitude for it to become fact."

"On stage I always try my best. I never say, 'Oh no, not another

gig,' and just stand up there. It'd be no fun doing that. I always try to do my best."

The Brighton fiasco was one excessively publicised disturbance. Riots, hate, cans in groins and other things not associated with Buzzcocks. Anything to say, Pete?

"No. But we've had some letters to say it was nice and that

people enjoyed it. All the trouble, I never saw. I was in the dressing room. In some ways I think it was as bad as people made out. In some ways it wasn't. A few people started chucking things and it escalated from there."

You can't please everybody... What happens next is calm. Buzzcocks have had enough of

the constant touring (and the misinterpretations), at least for now.

"We're not going to do very much for six months. There's going to be a new single out in the New Year, to keep everybody happy. There'll probably be one or two live things. We'll come back when we feel like it."

That isn't another couldn't-care-less line, but a cheerful expression of exhaustion and exasperation. Caught deep in the contradictions of the new wave, it seems every way Buzzcocks turn onlookers crouch with cynicism.

"It does seem ironic that people moan about me not shaving and not combing my hair when two years ago if you didn't have a wash you were hailed as a prophet."

Times change... During the six-month break the individual members look to keep active. Drummer John Maher, for example, is thinking of doing session work, whilst Shelley hopes to release his "Cinema Music And Wallpaper Sounds" album ("it's up for grabs"), and concentrate on a number of solo things from The Tiller Boys through to some "poppy pop stuff".

Buzzcocks play out the year promoting their sixth single of '78, "Promises", a typical Buzzcocks nugget, released a little sharply after "Ever Fallen In Love".

"Ever Fallen In Love" wasn't really meant to be a 'real' single, just another marketing ploy for the album — y'know, played a little on the radio, gets the album some airplay — but it backfired on us and became a major hit. Our shrewd manipulation of the market failed! 'Promises' was always meant to be our next single, and it's been released so apparently quickly because we didn't realise 'Ever Fallen In Love' would be such a big hit.

"Or at least we didn't plan for it. We could have put the release schedule of 'Promises' back a bit but then we would have been lost in the Christmas rush."

Aah... the pressures and perils of pop stars at the top.

PAUL MORLEY

THRILLS



SHELLEY, DIGGLE & KEITH RETFORD share a joke

Pic: KEVIN CUMMINS

The Lone Groover

BENYON



DEATH AT THE BELL TRIAL

JUST OVER a year ago 24-year-old Henry Bowles died as a result of the injuries he received at a Subway Sect gig held in The Bell on London's Pentonville Road.

For the last week two bouncers who worked at the pub have been on trial at the Old Bailey for their part in what the prosecution told the jury was a "vicious" attack on Bowles.

John William Godden faces manslaughter and assault (occasioning actual bodily harm) charges. He pleads not guilty.

The second man, Frank Joseph Flood, has pleaded guilty to common assault. Charges of causing grievous bodily harm to Bowles against both men were dropped at the trial because of a lack of medical evidence.

The court heard that on October 23, 1977, Bowles was evicted from The Bell by a number of bouncers. Shortly afterwards he was found critically injured on the pavement outside and was immediately taken to hospital.

His skull was fractured, causing brain damage, and he died on November 4.

As NME closed for press the trial jury had retired to consider their verdict. Next week we'll bring you a full report on what is obviously a case of great importance to the rock business and fans.

TONY STEWART

THRILLS



HAPPILY WE ANNOUNCE EVEN MORE PROBLEMS

Now, for anyone who ever found himself or herself in the record store dilemma (which one shall I get, which one shall I get?) WEA would like to throw a spanner in the works. Or a dozen spanners, to be exact. In the form of 12 absolutely essential albums from The Doors and Van Morrison. Each one is a classic in its own right; each one a must. The choice is all yours. Nice, aren't we?



Astral Weeks
K46024



*Two Originals of Van Morrison
K86009



Doors
K42012



*Strange Days
K42016



*Moondance
K56068



Period of Transition
K56322



Morrison Hotel
K42080



Waiting For The Sun
K42041



*It's Too Late To Stop Now
K86007



Wavelength
K56326



L.A. Woman
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DOORS

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Make a sound choice. WEA - The Sound Generator.



"Which way to the strange narcotic odours department, love?"

BOX-LOADS of the new Peter Tosh LP "Bush Doctor" had to be recalled from Boots record departments last week because the chain refused to stock any copies with the scratch'n'sniff Rolling Stones logo sticker.

It wasn't the balbous lips they objected to, but the small engrained thereupon.

Y'see, in accordance with Tosh's self-styled rep as torch, or rather chalice bearer, for the cause, the sticker had been impregnated with the aroma of a certain popular combustible substance — one with leaves not at all dissimilar to those pictured in abundance on Tosh's earlier disc, "Legalise It".

A copy of the LP had been sent to Boots' directors. Upon sampling the scent they were of the opinion that it was in fact the exotic flower perfume Patchouli, and went ahead with their ordering.

Imagine their consternation when a Scottish newspaper called the company's Glasgow office and informed them of what the smell was really supposed to be.

We have to be very careful," said Boots' chief record buyer Will Price. "We are 'Boots The Chemist', and such a thing could be very awkward. Also, we saw no reason to promote this substance in our record department."

It is not certain whether this last statement refers to the competition it might offer the vicarious Swiss pharmaceuticals supplied elsewhere in the shop.

Woolworths and W. H. Smiths have not so far indicated that they will follow Boots' example.

All three, however, can rest assured that the smell, which discerning pointers hereabouts say is really more of an acid stench, will not so far cause customers to giggle uncontrollably and then jump out of windows.

FAT FREDDIE'S CAT



TOSH vamooses on his trusty unicycle.

Pic: DENIS O'REGAN

COWBOY T-SHIRT TROUBLE

THE CHELSEA Porn Squad may not have prosecuted Viv Westwood and Legs McLaren's *Seditionaires* boutique over that pile of confiscated cowboy T-shirts (*Thrills* 8.11.78), but one young man has been brought before the court for wearing one.

David Fullbrook, 20, of Wandsworth, London, was

fined £12 at a Westminster Court last week, after being arrested by a policeman in Chelsea's Kings Road on Saturday November 4.

"Several members of the public saw this T-shirt," said PC Peter Sturge, the arresting officer. "And they appeared to be disgusted."

The T-shirt, as reported previously in *Thrills*, depicts two rather well-proportioned cowboys in a state of, er, undress.

"I didn't go down there deliberately to show it off," said Fullbrook to the magistrate. "It wasn't intentional."

The magistrate commented: "I hope that this form of indecent T-shirt is something that we will not see much of." After imposing the fine and ordering the shirt to be destroyed, the magistrate told Fullbrook: "Don't do this again, because it upsets people."

SCRATCH

THRILLS

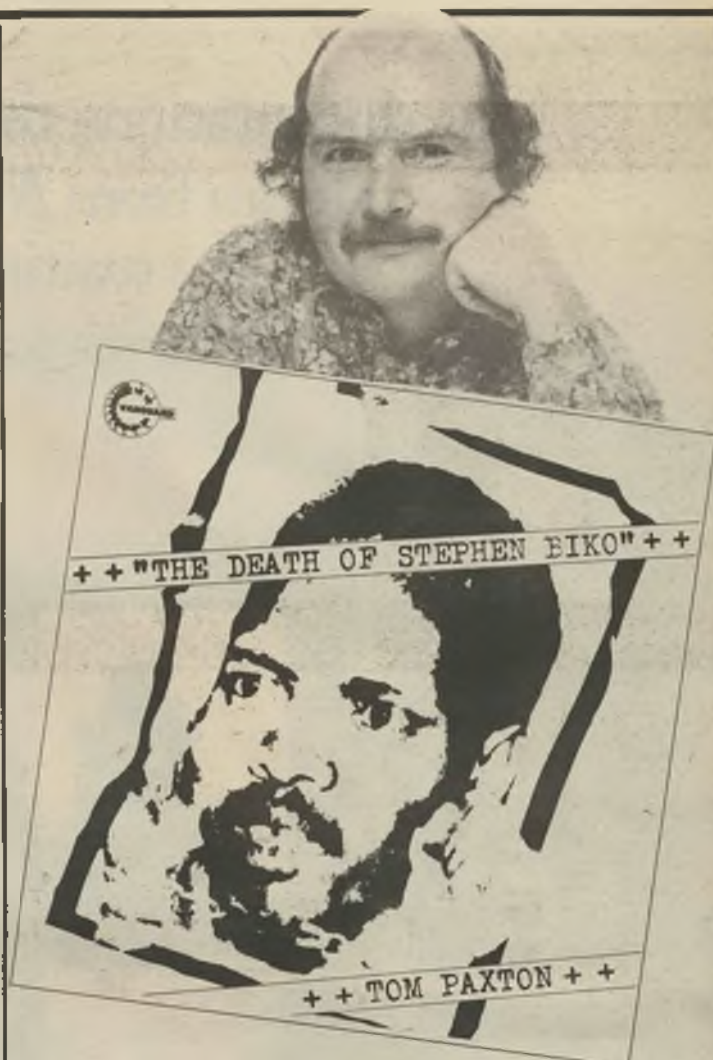


See stars with sexy 21-year-old Denis O'Regan 'cos that's his job — photographing them! Write to: 17 Stanton Road, Barnes, London SW13.

BLACKMAIL CORNER

What a hoot! Sussed you, Denis, you adorable hunk of soft-focus snapshot, you. Mr O'Regan was last seen boarding a plane at Heathrow (after snapping Peter Tosh for the item above, of course) after he got wind of our revelations about his secret life in "My Guy" magazine. Whatever next, Pennie Smith in "Penthouse"?

THRILLS



"A BIT ANGRY" ABOUT BIKO

SINCE BLACK leader Stephen Biko's death at the hands of South African security police his name has become a legend, his courage a symbol of the liberation struggle.

His importance was underlined in the book written by exiled newsman Donald Woods (*Biko* — soon to be filmed with Paul Newman, Jane Fonda and Sidney Poitier as Biko) and by the fact that the South African Ministry of Information have even gone so far as to put out a fake biography slurring his name.

Now comes a song from veteran folk singer Tom Paxton, "The Death Of Stephen Biko", lifted off his latest album "Heroes" and put out as a single by his company. Pye *Thrills* visited Paxton, a plump cheery man with windcheater and Puma Easy Rider sport sneakers to match, in his room at London's Athenaeum Hotel where he explained his motivation for the song.

"I wrote it one morning — Pearl Harbour Day as a matter of fact. I'd been following the situation for a long time, and it probably sounds terrible to say it, but it was much of a muchness for several years. The iron heel there is so consistent and the resentment to it is never-ending, that there wasn't very much in a hard news way to follow. And then this Biko thing began to heat up."

"The day that I wrote the song there was an article in the *New York Times* written by Sidney Kenridge, who was chief counsel to the Biko family, which tied up the entire story of Stephen Biko as it came out from the inquest. From that article I wrote the song in a couple of hours."

"By admitting to that I'm sure I lay myself open to all sorts of bullshit from the South African authorities about writing without doing my homework, but I stand by what the song says. There are no misstatements of fact in the song."

But why should a white folk singer feel motivated to sign about him? Surely Biko is the hero of another culture?

"I don't agree with you. I think we need strong brave men and he was one. His death hurts us all. Just think if he hadn't been killed, if he'd been allowed to speak for his compatriots, we would all have been richer for it. I don't

mean to get up on a soap box or anything, but I feel diminished by his death and I feel outraged by it."

The flipside of the Biko disc features "There Goes The Mountain", an eco-anthem reflecting Paxton's other main concern.

"The question is whether we're going to have a planet to live on the way we keep fucking it up with every kind of pollution — and yet 'environmentalist' has become a dirty word. This year's eccentric is an environmentalist — to show concern is considered bizarre. The business interests who're going to die too (laughs), have succeeded in making it a figure of fun."

Paxton's roots lie with singers like Woodie Guthrie and Pete Seeger. Having been around Woody for a while, what was his opinion on the Guthrie biopic *Bound For Glory*, which was panned by many as a soft-edged parody of the man?

"I loved it. The producer of the movie, Harold Leventhal, was at one time my manager. He took care of things for Woody and still manages Pete Seeger and Arlo Guthrie. This is not a man to idly luck around with Woody's history."

"Woody's attitude came through. The fact is that the guy was in many ways a pain in the ass. He went out for a pack of cigarettes once and didn't come back for a year. He could be a cantankerous son-of-a-bitch, but Christ, what a prolific writer."

Considering the Biko song, I wondered if Paxton thought of himself as a protest singer.

"I hate the label protest singer, mainly for artistic reasons, because any time the phrase is used it seems to me that someone is grasping at a chance to put me into a pigeonhole and write me off. I think one of my favourite songs ever is a silly thing called 'Englebert The Elephant' — hardly your socially significant song. It's all part of the same thing to me."

Paxton has never had chart success, producing instead a string of albums over the years which have earned him a steady royalty income, a steady string of concerts, a steady life.

Few could doubt his sincerity but, as he says himself, "the Biko song is a descriptive narrative that is a bit angry." That seems to highlight Paxton's failings. He never got angry enough.

DICK TRACY

THRILLS

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SQUIRE OLDFIELD THROWS A PARTY

THE NEW, Mike Oldfield — talkative, amiable, bearded, and smiling — held a party recently at his gracious, but unpretentious, Gloucestershire home.

Normally such events pass without trace, but when a man who has been a recluse for the last five years actually decides to hold a party then psychiatrists and press alike are interested.

So, what was it like? Sex and drugs and rock'n'roll? No, you rich rock aristocrat feeding and watering his vassals? A colour supplement extravaganza — very Sanderson, very Mike Oldfield? Did they shift the whole of the London ligger scene to Gloucestershire for the night? Did buses leave hourly from King's Road?

No. No. No. Wrong every time. It was like a Mike Oldfield record. "Ommadawn" in the Dosh. An air of rustic innocence and simple bohemian served up with enough steaks to set up a Berni Inn, two handsome kegs of real ale and unlimited supplies of classy white and red French wine.

There was a notable and blessed absence of the usual ligger stupidity. No food throwing, no heaving up on the

Persian carpet (no Persian carpet for that matter), no snorting and sniffing, no poncey Chelsea tweeps with their posturing, trendy clothes, and endlessly boring music biz gossip.

In fact, try and imagine Guy Fawkes night when you were five, folk clubs when you were fifteen and rhythm'n'blues at college and you've just about guessed the mood of the evening.

Early in the evening Squire Oldfield of Tubular Halls put on a bonfire and fireworks display of such grandeur that the assembled multitude "Oohed" and "Aahed" in delight as rocket after rocket was caught by near gale force winds and showered across the Cotswolds.

Then, en masse, we retreated to the warmth of large open fires where Lea Nicholson (whose sole and greatest claim to fame is that his 1976 single "Lazy Afternoon" sold by the barrowload in France and disappeared without trace everywhere else) plus a concertina band delivered an extraordinary concertina version of "Tubular Bells".

Without guitars and the resonant tones of Vivian Stannhall the music sounded eccentrically bizarre, and Oldfield and producer Tom

Newman delighted in interjecting verbal guitar noises and booming out such bon mots as "five slightly distorted concertinas".

The evening wound to an exuberant finale when Oldfield's near neighbour Steve Winwood arrived and with The Champions (a renamed version of the late and little lamented Rough Diamonds) and Oldfield on guitar launched into an enthusiastic R&B set, the highlights of which were a vigorous version of "Smack Dab In The Middle" and some soulful vocalising from Winwood.

Oldfield is, by nature, a child-like eccentric and just as his house is like a huge adventure playground — bows and arrows over the fireplace, trampoline in the recording studio, 7H long model sailing ship in the lounge room, javelins on the dining table — so it is right and proper that the ambience at the end of the night should be one of innocent good fun.

It was just a little disorientating to leave not clutching a balloon, a party hat and a clammy, tissue-wrapped piece of cake.

BRUCE ELDER
THRILLS

THIS YEAR'S MODEL



ELVIS ON THE TRACK OF TRUE ROMANCE

So this is where our El gets his inspiration, huh — from reading his prize collection of Love Story Picture Library romance comics. Whatever next — Nick Lowe sings "What's So Funny 'Bout Peace, Love And Boon & Mills Paperbacks"?

THRILLS

BOB GETS THE BRUSH-OFF

"HELLO," says the barely audible, disembodied voice on the other end of the line. "Thanks for phoning."

Courtesy of the GPO and Bob Harris' agent, Thrills is listening to a pre-recorded telephone message from the old bastion what fronts the Old Grey Wooley Tui.

"I'm going to talk to you about teeth," continues the sibilant one. "All right?" All right!

What we've got here is a radio-personality - in-a-dental-health-improving situation.

Phone Reading 50484 and you'll hear Monsieur Robert Harris tell the school children of Berkshire to — like the slogan says — "Remember the brush off."

Part of a local dental health campaign, Bob's "Brush Off" offers aural hygiene tips to all callers.

"I know it's a rather tedious subject to talk about," whispers Bob, before everyone hangs up. "But you must admit I'm well qualified to do it." This is believed to be a reference to his magnificent set of dentures.

"Roten teeth don't look nice and they make your

breath bad — and that's something I just don't like. I'm sure you don't either."

As dental surgeons and ladies on leave from the hardware section of British Home Stores join in rapturous applause, Bobby concludes:

"If you want to keep those important little white things in your mouth for life, remember the slogan."

"I know it's kind of boring, but —"

Click Burr.

CHOO HING GUMM

THRILLS



ANYTIME...



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MCA RECORDS

CLOSE TO YOUR EAR...

MANCHESTER noise nightclub The Factory, a welcome rock venue, soon takes the inevitable next step from staging to recording.

Incorporating the diversity of Rough Trade Records with the sharply eclectic marketing processes of New Hormones, Factory Records is run by co-directors actor/tramp Alan Erasmus and graphic designer Peter Saville. With the ever-enthusiastic Tony So It Goes Wilson inevitably involved, it will release an attractive double EP sampler of acts and artists who have appeared at the club over the last few months.

The EP (Fac 2) includes three tracks from abandoned comic John Dowie, produced by C. P. Lee; two pieces from Cabaret Voltaire's cult cassette, produced by themselves; two songs from Joy Division, produced by Martin Zero; and a couple of fascinating dub-psychedelia exercises from Durrutti Column, produced by Zero with Laurie Latham.

A devious sampler out to both seduce and introduce, its packaging is thoughtful and unusual, its implications exciting. It is provisionally set for mid-December release, priced an irresistible £1.50.

Future Factory Records projects remain endearingly vague: Fac 3 (Fac 1 was the original Factory venue poster, designed by Saville) looked set to be a 12-inch disco single from The Tiller Boys, but internal confusion has temporarily shelved that. Factory express interest in The Distractions, The Negatives and current musicians' favourites Manicured Noise (ask Vic Godard, the Banshees, Wire what they think of M. Noise — politely, of course).

Send Factory Records your cassette: The Factory, Hulme, Manchester. Let's all take risks this Christmas!

PAUL MORLEY

THRILLS

WE CAN BE HEROES . . .

GET A BUZZ WITH ZIGGY JUNIOR

ZIGGY HEROE and The Buzz? Could that be a pseudonym adopted by Herr David Bowie for a series of low profile gigs similar to the Stranglers' Old Codgers play earlier this year?

Fast chance. I went along to York's Revolution Club out of idle curiosity and discovered that Ziggy Heroe exists in his own right. Sort of.

So you've heard it all before — a fan develops a fetish for his idol to such an extent that they start to live out their dream-like fantasy existence on stage. Like the hordes of Elvis impersonators who try to perfect the King's every mannerism in the hope of filling the gap left by the man himself.

However, Ziggy Heroe is different for two basic reasons. For starters, Bowie is still alive and gigging, and secondly, Ziggy Stardust was a Bowie

role and never existed as a person.

As young Heroe puts it: "I have no illusions of being Bowie. I merely use his stage shows as an actor interprets a script. I'm an interpreter, not an impersonator."

"Bowie was always an actor and, let's not kid ourselves, Ziggy never existed. We just the perfect rock show and is there to be played."

The Ziggy Stardust set which Heroe performs is just the first of a four-part quartet. Heroe is now involved in the second section, a combination of Bowie's complete repertoire. The concluding parts, *The 1984 Floor Show* and *The Thin White Duke*, will follow early in the New Year.

1984 is Heroe's part-project. Bowie never played it in the UK, so Heroe is working from the "David Live" L.P. photographs and TV images. He sees this as a creative use of 'contemporary information inputs'.

"I needed stage experience, and believe this is a novel and valid approach to rock performing. I'm going to move on to performing my own material using the skills and stage sense I've learned this year."

This falls into place when you see him perform. Heroe, from Leeds, has used the same band for the past year, comprising drummer Gordon Fry, bassist Booty Francis (who also plays with punk band No Surprises) and guitarist John McLaughlin (real name — he doubles with funk band Best Friends). Heroe picks up musicians according to what Bowie guise he is presently adopting.

He certainly has Bowie's set down cold. Amazingly, he provokes a positive audience response that would bring a smile to the thin lips of Bowie himself.

Projecting into the future, though, what does it all mean? Will we witness the development of a Rock Academy of Dramatic Art where young hopefuls could attend sessions, learning to perfect Botten's dumb arrogance, Costello's geek chic, Jagger's sexuality or Townshend's guitar thrashings? Rock stars could end up like actors — only as good as their scripts.

Fortunately, Heroe is well aware of that kind of trap.

"Bowie is a one-off as far as rock is concerned. Inasmuch as he openly admits that he manipulates images, most rock stars would have the kids believe that it's all real, and try to carry their images into real life, with comic results."

I'm reserving judgement as to the validity of this approach until Heroe comes up with his own material.

For the time being, Ziggy Heroe and The Buzz are well worth an evening's viewing. It's only a rock role, but I like it.

STEVE DIXON



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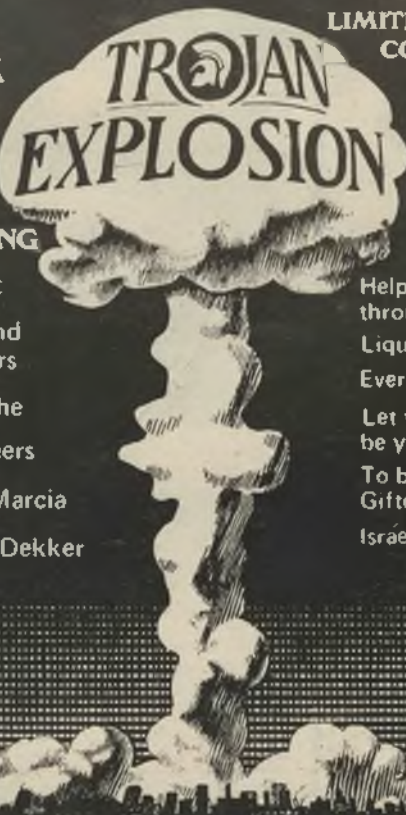
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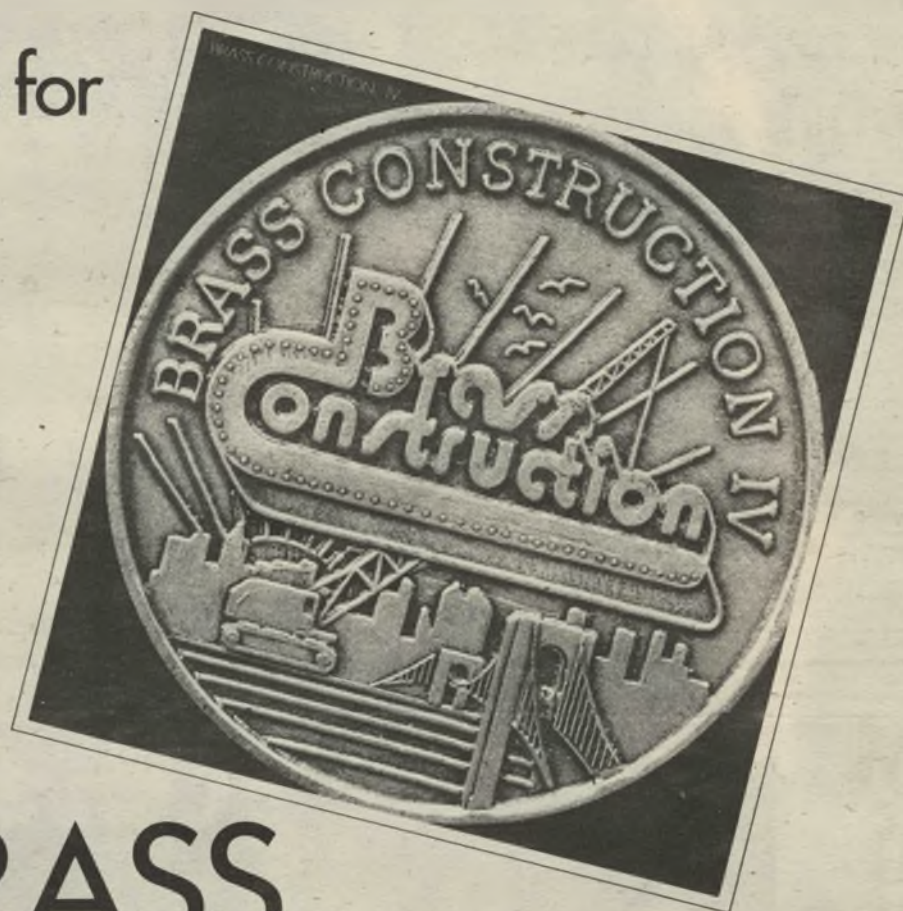


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"IF YOU WANNA BE A BYRD YOU GOTTA FLY"

THE BYRDS, or more precisely three-fifths of the original line-up and one ex-Poco drummer, recently completed a remarkably low-key tour of Australia and New Zealand. Wiping memory slates clean of the dire '72 comeback album, this promised briefly to be one of the more interesting reunions of recent times.

Because of an agreement between head Byrd Roger McGuinn and former member David Crosby — who went on to fame and fortune with a team of lawyers — The Byrds name can no longer be used unless all five original members get back together. But references to "ex-Byrds" just managed to be in bolder type on the tour posters than the names of the musicians themselves.

The band lines up as McGuinn, Gene Clark, Chris Hillman and Poco's George Grantham. Although The Byrds' name is granting extra mileage, McGuinn insisted that "this isn't The Byrds, you know," when Thrills spoke to him at a recent

Melbourne media bash.

From all reports around the country, these lads really cut the ice onstage with all the aplomb and assurance that one came infrequently to associate with a Byrds gig — The Byrds being one of the most notoriously live hands ever to tread the boards.

However, their press conference had, to paraphrase an infamous Leo Kottke quip, about as much spark as geese fart on a muggy day. Yes, the band was going into the studio when they returned to the States to record an album, and no, they had no plans to tour the UK.

Midway through this scintillating discourse, in walked missing fourth man Chris Hillman.

"Is it true that you guys are gay?" Hillman boomed across the room to the rest of the band.

"Hey, get outta here! Don't write..." retorted a surprised McGuinn.

"Sorry, Roger. Didn't want to embarrass you," Hillman mocked.

"Ain't a word of truth in it."

McGuinn seemed pained to point out.

Thrills asked Gene Clark if he had

overcome his fear of flying — supposedly the reason for his original exit from The Byrds.

"To a degree," he answered, as all four began to babble excitedly about how they disliked flying.

"I hate it," said Hillman.

"I hate it too," said Grantham.

"I like it when the rain scares me,"

McGuinn added enigmatically.

Thrills then wondered if McGuinn was quoted accurately when, after Clark's departure from The Byrds because he was reluctant to fly, he was alleged to have said: "If you wanna be a Byrd, you have to fly."

A bemused Hillman turned to McGuinn. "Gee, did you say that?"

"I don't remember saying that," muttered McGuinn. "I may have. It sounds like something I might have said."

"Musta been on some kinda weird stuff at the time," suggested Hillman helpfully.

ROSS STAPLETON

THRILLS

DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE...

I ARRIVED half an hour late. I walked in. Applause broke out. First twinge of paranoia. "I'm not a member of Equity," I thought. "Am I officially allowed to receive applause?"

It was OK. I'd missed a speech. The applause was for the speech. I was given some pamphlets, some press releases. I was given a transcript of the speech. It had been made by Sir Hugh Willatt, Chairman of the Board of Hammersmith Riverside Arts Trust Ltd.

The second paragraph of his speech read: "You were invited because we wanted you to get the rather special feeling of this place and to meet some of the people who work in it and help us to put its finances on a safer footing."

The Luncheon Meet at the Riverside Studio's part time cinema was occasioned by Hammersmith Borough Council's donation of £65,000, and the launching of a series of benefit concerts at the Studios (by "international stars") starting with Julie Covington and The Albion Band, December 9/10, tickets £5.

What is Riverside Studios? Riverside Studios is West London's new centre for the arts, providing theatre, concerts, films, dance, exhibitions, a bookshop, food and drink.

The Luncheon Meet was basically about money. And meeting people. Lots of vaguely familiar people from the world of stage, screen, and

tube. Lots of faces, more faces than names. Thinks: "I know her!" Eleanor Bron and Alan Bates chat in front of me. I sit, slumber, wither. Somebody from *Play School* stares intently at me. She looks confused. Do I look like somebody from *Play School*? Little Teddy?

I probably look quite curiously funny, I think. I probably look as though I've wandered in off the street for the free food and wine. I probably look as though I have nothing to do with Am.

I stop blushing. I try to forget the beautiful lady from *Play School*. The room has filled with beautiful women. I hope that one of them will see how left-out I look. Perhaps fall in love with my alienation. Perhaps introduce me to Harold Pinter. Perhaps he will offer me a piece of fairy cake. Or a part in a cocktail cabinet.

"D-a-h-ling!" ... "my agent has got me an adorable part in

... "I love your hair, when ... But nobody talks to me. I don't know who to talk to. I could pretend to be somebody but I'm not a member of Equity. I'm nobody.

I trip home. I haven't met Julie Covington. She hasn't met me. I sob into my typewriter. FREEZE FRAME. CURTAIN. APPLAUSE.

IAN PENMAN

THRILLS



STEVE BELL

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CHURCH TYME'S



WHAT'S THE POINT?

Manx men NAZARETH show off their new recruit, ZAL CLEMINSON. Just another punk with a silly name and spiky moustache.

THE ILL-FATED Anglo-Manx connection was already four hours late by the time our vintage Viscount shimmied into the Isle of Man airport. "You get Zal, and the rest get Nazareth," the roadie told me, wedding journalists into his car and burning off round the island to deposit them, like pints of milk, on rock musicians' doorsteps.

Another five miles tearing past sheep-infested scenery, and I get ejected at the last outpost of the Naz tax-exile colony. It's a secluded farmhouse where the band have hooked up the Jethro Tull mobile, and are working on a new album "No Mean City".

Minutes later, I'm ensconced in an upstairs room in the company of guitarists Manny Charlton and Zal Cleminson, the band's recent addition to their ranks, and their first and only hic-up change in ten years.

Remembering Zal only too clearly as the clown-faced, gymnastic axeman with the late Sensational Alex Harvey Band, I'm not a little surprised to discover that the man behind the mask is in fact remarkably reticent. With his barely-audible Scots tones filtering through his cavalier moustache, he approaches every question with the deepest suspicion.

A mention of the band's apparent

bitterness when Alex left in November 77 gets a predictably cautious welcome.

"We didn't really feel that he'd deserted us," says Zal. "I mean we knew it was coming — he'd wanted to stop the band a year before."

Together with Chris Glen and Ted McKenna from SAHB, and one-time dancer with The Tubes Leroy Jones, Zal had formed the short-lived outfit 'Zal', and was playing British dates in March. The press were as uninspired by their evident lack of rehearsal, as they were by the uneven balance of the band's influences.

"It had a great lack of direction," agrees Zal. "It wasn't the right mixture of people — it was going back into theatre, and we didn't want it to turn out that way."

So what eventually caused them to split up?

"It was the business side of it that was taking over the music. It was just the wrong kind of promotion for that group, you know, tours all round the States — Mobile, Alabama — third on the bill. We should have played in New York and L.A. and maybe done two gigs in the right places, and really showed the people everything we could do."

Exceptionally peeved with the rock business in general, Zal took to driving a mini-cab around London for three months, until a phone call from Manny prompted a return to music.



New NAZ (L-R): Manny Charlton, Sweet Darrel Sweet, Agued Pete Agnew, Zal Cleminson, and Don McCafferty propping up the props.

"Manny got in touch with me and asked me to join Nazareth. I thought about it for about two seconds, and then said, 'Yeah — okay'."

"The idea had been in the air for about two years," explains Manny. "We didn't want another guitarist, we wanted Zal. We just decided it was time we did something else, and moved on a bit, plus I was getting real frustrated being the only guitarist on stage."

Did Zal ever think it would be hard for people to accept him outside the theatrical role he played in SAHB?

"I don't think that there's many people who care," he says bluntly.

"When somebody disappears, it's about two minutes and then it's like, 'Who was he?' There's a whole generation in Britain, with this new wave thing, who probably don't even remember Alex Harvey, or anything to do with that band."

The obvious question about their impressions of new music gets the short order treatment.

"I'm beginning to think I'm getting too old," admits Manny. "It's not doing anything for me, it's not played well enough, not produced well enough, there aren't good enough songs, and it doesn't mean anything. But there's some good stuff around —



it's just trying to find it. I like Robert Johnson, and I like Tom Petty a lot."

Their forthcoming UK tour is the first in two years, which suggests they were consciously avoiding the changes in the British music climate.

"Not really," says Manny. "We just felt we should put a lot more effort into trying to break through in the States. You can play maybe twenty dates in Britain in a year and you've covered it. You can do that in America for months, and still not have reached the audience. And how long can you keep touring Britain and losing money?"

Didn't they make the money back on album sales?

"But even the album sales in Britain can't be that big," continues Manny. "Especially for the narrow market that we're in. I mean, we sold 50,000 copies of 'Hair Of The Dog' in Britain, and we sold 60,000 in Atlanta alone — just one area of the States. That's the size of the place — just can't comprehend it."

How long do they think they'll go on as a touring band?

Manny grins. "As long as we think we're getting somewhere, and we're not just bashing our heads against a wall."

In a last attempt to elicit a reaction from the conspicuously silent Zal, I ask him if he'd ever thought it less ambitious, and so less satisfying, to join an established band, rather than start a new one from scratch?

"From a personal point of view, yes, but from a musical one it makes sense. One of these days, I'll do something on my own anyway."

Would he ever join forces with Alex Harvey again?

"I don't see it, no. Someone asked me to come back and play gigs, and I turned it down. Whatever it was that we had — it could never happen again."

MARK ELLEN

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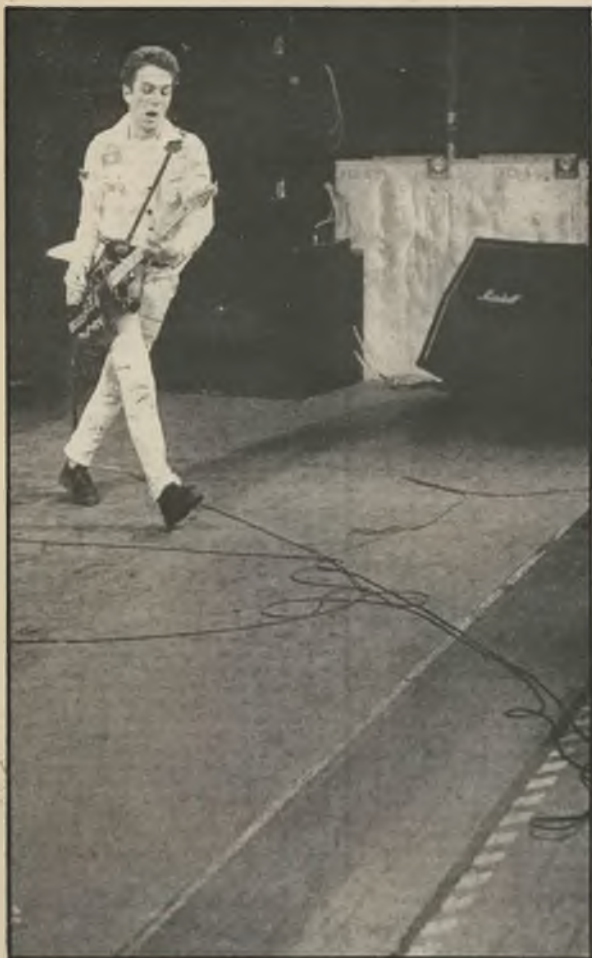
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JUST WHAT the world needs — another *NME* piece capturing The Clash On The Road Part 128, you say?

Well yes and no, the writer demurs. Nothing lengthy in the Bangsian style of extended narrative, nor is there any grim detailing of spiralling trauma like Chris Salewicz depicted in his article penned during The Clash's last tour of Britain.

The tee-shirts printed for this current fling read in simple white lettering on a black background — "The Clash — The Son It Out Tour" and although the person actually wearing the garment, a newly drafted Welsh roadie, will claim otherwise, that particular statement of intent is, it seems, being adhered to both practically and ideologically with a fair degree of success.

The gig I caught at Manchester's Apollo Theatre apparently fell into a linear focus for, as far as the opening stretch of a tour can gauge, The Clash's particular working policy is successfully being implemented.

Certainly as a musical entity, the band are in ripe old form, the current set kicking off with "Safe European Home" and seguing through a strong rendition of The Bobby Fuller Four's "I Fought The Law" and "Jail Guitar Doors". It manages to take in most of the "Rope" album with its sturdy detours like "Police And Thieves" denoting a more varied tempo allocation until the set's climax with a brace of the first album's little classics: basically "Janie Jones", "Bored With The USA" and "White Riot".

"It's that 'White Riot' that gets 'em up every time," growls one of the roadies after the set's conclusion, which tonight, like every other time, draws the front row of kids onto the stage itself on instinct — as though they were being physically impelled there by some perverse form of suction.

It's the band's expressed desire that the kids who've amassed on stage for the closing minutes of the set are allowed to remain there that appears to be causing dissension amongst The Clash road crew. And Caroline Coon, the band's new manager, will state this dilemma diplomatically to a surprised Joe Strummer at the hotel bar later: "They don't feel as though they're doing their job properly."

Mick Jones, however, balks at this latest problem and remarks jaundicedly about the roadies' apparent suppressed functions.

And so it goes. They still spit at hands up North, by the way — something I hadn't witnessed for a while and thus considered obsolete — and Strummer gets a good drenching for his troubles while Jones gamely sports a large white globule of phlegm on his current lacquered-back haircut.

"What can you do? Tell 'em to stop? Of course, it's repellent. We've always said that,"

says Jones philosophically.

But after all, it's better than that very real cut-throat violence that the band were having to face up to at virtually every gig on the last tour.

WHEN our own Chris Salewicz ran into the band on that particular trek (in Glasgow) earlier this year the report he filed was a vivid, frightening documentary of a band totally out of control of its audience and becoming prey to all manner of random violence.

It turns out that Salewicz wasn't over-estimating anything either, as both Jones and Strummer reminisce over the daily trials and tribulations of that last escapade.

Jones, for example, recalls "breaking down in tears all the time" at what was going on around him — events which included a near-fatality (a personal roadie almost "offed" by Strummer in a car accident) and a cocaine bust for the guitarist himself.

"Two years ago we did the band's first interview," recalls Jones re the latter charge. "On Janet Street-Porter's *London Weekend Programme*, it was, and me being all young and naive. I blamed bands taking too many drugs for the great mid-70s drought in rock. I recall saying it really well. And a year or so later, I found myself doing just as many drugs as them!"

"Y'know, taking drugs as a way of life, to feel good in the morning, to get through the day. And it's still something I'm getting over right now."

Now, however, instead of cocaine, or more pertinent to this band, amphetamines ("I was so into speed," states Jones, "I mean I don't even recall making the first album"). The Clash appear to be adhering strictly to a steady dosage of vitamins for maintaining energy.

Jones himself pinpoints the making of the second album as an important point of departure here. "It was really a question of me saying to myself, 'Well, do you really want to make a great album or what?' In which case, I knew that I had to be straight at least part of the time. Which I was."

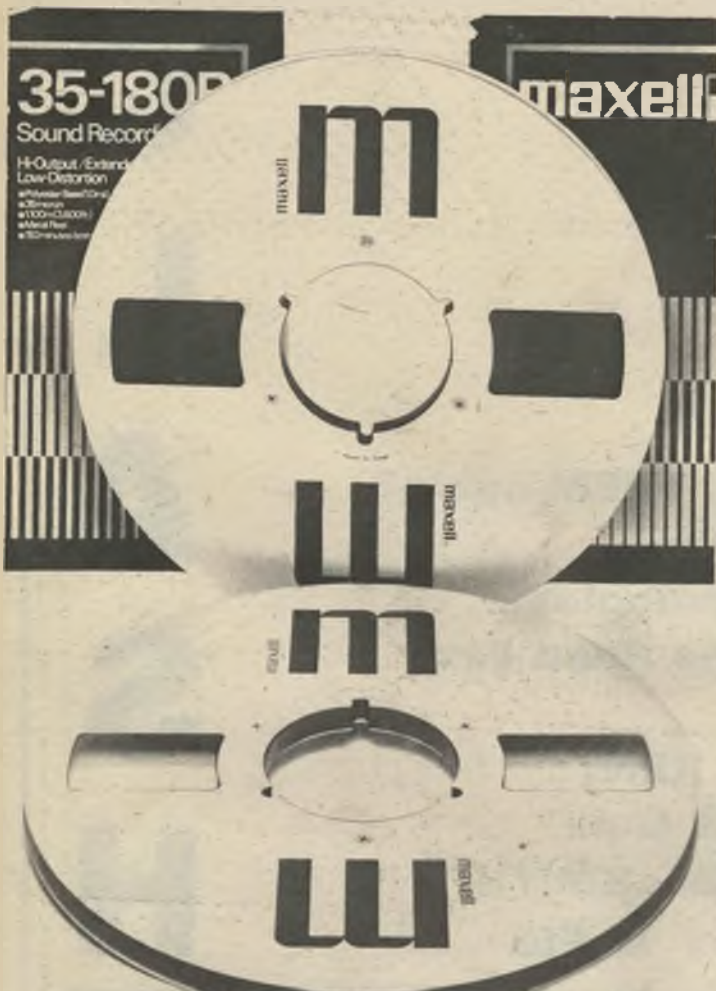
The making of "Give 'Em Enough Rope" appears, from the outside anyway, to have been a period of much turmoil. Jones himself concurs by denoting just one of the pressures on the project from the internal hierarchy of CBS.

"It was at a point right in the middle of the mixing and Sandy Pearlman was getting this incredible rush of insecurity and sheer panic because CBS were calling him up and saying that the first mixes were of absolutely no substance. And me 'an Joe were having to do this whole number on our side, telling him that this effort represented absolutely his last shot at any kind of aesthetic success."

"Meanwhile, unbeknown to us, two geezers from CBS — Muff Winwood and Jeremy Enslin

■ Continues over page





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■ From previous page

—were taking the tracks, doing their own fuckin' mixes and going back to CBS saying, 'Well look what we've done — it's much better than Pearlman's efforts.'"

Finally, in order to placate the opposition, and keep their creation from being wrecked by extensive tampering, the band conceded to a deadline which they narrowly held together. The immediate result is a satisfied Mick Jones, who laughingly claims that he wouldn't even mind seeing Pearlman on a social level again.

"His big thing is that he invented the word 'Heavy Metal'." Jones comments on Pearlman, again with tones of hilarity not entirely absent, before describing a fairly noxious aspect of the Blue Oyster Cult's one-time theorist which manifested itself through a desire to employ a somewhat ghoulish dwarf as a gofer.

"Joe and me had to really keep checkin' him over that. Like, keep on at him about this fuckin' guy being around and all."

TALK OF gofers moves perhaps a touch too coincidentally onto one of the primary Clash 'pressing issues' of the present moment, which equates itself into the little matter of former manager Bernie Rhodes becoming 'persons non grata' amongst the band members whom Rhodes himself claims he "took off the street".

The 'official' Clash line on this little chapter has the group democratically muttering "No hard feelings" as a display of good diplomacy in the face of the purportedly aggrieved Rhodes.

Indeed, the last 'official' interview I read with Messrs Strummer and Simonon — in *Melody Maker*, just before the onslaught of this latest tour — had the latter at least agreeing with Rhodes's "I-took-them-from-nothing" side of the story whilst also filling in details of the split by claiming that Rhodes's ideals had become redundant in the light of the band's progress and consequent need for better technology.

Mick Jones, however, allowed for some of the 'unofficial' essence to be sucked into print here.

The 'unofficial' side, mostly manifested through rumour-mongering, has several barbed pointers in the recounting of the latter days of the Clash-Rhodes pairing.

It was certainly a well-recounted story of the time that Malcolm McLaren, just before his interests were all consumed by the latest Sid Vicious drama, had gotten in touch with Rhodes again and was buttering up his former partner-of-sorts by slyly informing him that The Clash had 'betrayed' Rhodes.

The McLaren Sex Pistols and Rhodes Clash aspect of the situation has always, apparently, been crucial. There was this terrible feeling — manifested implicitly in the very origin of McLaren and Rhodes's quarrel — would be immediately second-best to brother Malcolm's treasure.

Mick Jones was very aware of his feeling of being second-best at one time. He admits that The Clash were made to feel that, in the shade of the Pistols' all-pervading lustre, they were very much immediate runners-up.

He also admits that at the time — up until somewhere between the creation of their two albums, Jones reckons — the seeds of dissension were forced-ferd by this awareness.

"There was this time when that feeling of being second-best was really getting to us. And, of course, Malcolm would help it along by throwing in some story like, oh Christ, there was this time when we heard that the Pistols had come over and nicked some of our gear. As a gesture of contempt, so to speak."

"So we'd immediately be up in arms... like, y'know, 'let's get 'em, let's go over to their rehearsal place and rip off their microphones', always something petty. Like there was this time — the first time — the Pistols actually slagged us off in print, in a *Melody Maker* interview. I think it was — so, right, we got off together and confronted John (Rotten) in a pub (laughs), and John was pretty shocked, probably because he saw how petty we were all becoming, fighting among ourselves, just stupid squabbling when there was a very real enemy out there probably laughing its head off." (*Ian Penman* — Ed.)

Jones recalls that when the feeling of being 'second-best' to the Pistols suddenly lifted, "it didn't even matter anymore" — which he goes on to prove by expressing a kind of dolorous awe at the Pistols' greatness, and great pity at the way they came to career-termination.

However, it's dubious whether McLaren has ever gotten over this in-built feeling of superiority. It's a moot point, for example, that he thought of The Clash as an 'easy pickings' second division to the still intact Pistols.

Thus, last Christmas, when matters came to a head, it was 'assumed' that Paul Simonon would be available for transfer to Pistols-prominence, although the bassist was doubtless never asked about it.

The Clash, however, were later to make this position clear, when 'powers-that-be' (you only need to guess who) quite recently attempted to move Steve Jones into Mick Jones' Clash position.

"Yeah, that's all true," mutters Jones now, adding slyly: "Course I wasn't going to have any of that! And, more to the point, neither were the rest of the group. But yeah, there were all sorts of little undercover swaps being arranged."

Jones, though, had an advantage in securing a kind of advance knowledge relating to these dodgy activities, partly because he's no fool and partly because of all Clash members he was the first to encounter Rhodes & McLaren — when the latter was making tentative plans for the importing into England of one Richard Hell.

"Yeah, like just before The Clash there was this thing where Richard Hell was writing to Malcolm saying, 'Honest, I'm not a junkie, I really wanna come over to London. So I was in line for that. Meanwhile, Malcolm or Bernie would be planning some new group or other and I'd be sent over to some rehearsal (laughs)... Like, there was a pool of us musicians that they'd have 'on tap', expecting us to form bands ultimately."

"At one point, me and Chrissie Hynd would be half-heartedly rehearsing away and Bernie would rush in and say, 'I've got a new idea. We'll call the band 'Big Girl's Underwear' or something like that."

Jones's involvement with The Clash project was more his own doing, however. After all, it was he who taught Simonon the rudiments of bass-playing — "for all of three days (laughs)"

Which means Paul got pissed off after those three days and would go away and then return some days later to try again."

More pointedly, Jones — and Simonon — went after the services of Joe Strummer, then of The 101ers, a self-confessed pub rock band.

More pointedly, Jones — and Simonon — y'know, amongst the McLaren bunch, of thinking 'yeah, well they're pub-rock — they're below us'. Whereas with Joe I could see he was a great performer saddled with a dull band."

THE WHOLE Bernie Rhodes subject is, according to at least one source, currently a 'sub-judice' matter, which may account for the official 'no hard feelings' front. In his place are a posse of lawyers and former Release prime-mover and freelance journalist Caroline Coon who, as Paul Simonon's girlfriend appeared a fairly obvious choice as personal manager.

For her part, after just a handful of dates, it's hard to tell whether this move has been for the best, although brief chats with the roadcrew denote that Ms. Coon is quickly learning the practical day-to-day facts necessary for a manager's vocation.

In her favour, though, is the feeling of great togetherness noticeable on this current tour. Coming off at a time when the "Rope" album has literally bulletted in at a staggering "No 2" in the official album charts, this latter show of faith has had a noticeably confidence-building effect on a band who'd had to watch virtually single after single nose-dive into the bottom reaches of the Top 30 before disappearing from sight.

"We honestly thought it was virtually finished for us in terms of commercial force", Jones now admits, pinpointing the four previous singles' lack of success as chief demonstration to this feeling.

That added to the constant barrage of letters that seemed to hit paydirt in the columns of the various music papers, almost every week berating the latest petty Clash let-down until a little under a month ago, and one begins to get only the outline of the problems that have been pelled down from what appeared like some monstrous frowning deity on the band themselves, as though their name itself warranted such treatment.

Jones points to the sequence of events that simply naming a tour, say, seems to have sparked off. The last one, for example, boasting that "On Parole" sign, appeared to virtually supernaturally guarantee at least one bust.

So this time it's down to simply "sorting it out". And this The Clash may actually achieve at least a semblance of this time around. The halls still get packed out, and visually the band may look a little the worse for wear — particularly Strummer, whose teeth seem in terrible shape after being chipped and battered by a fan manhandling of the singer's mikesstand.

Yet The Clash's philosophy, not to mention the broad design of a deep interlinking set of friendships that hold this band together against often brutal odds is succinctly hinted at by Mick Jones when he talks about the latest slag-off and its perpetrators, namely our own Messrs. Parsons and Burchill and their book *The Boy Looked At Johnny*, which attempts a brittle dissection of the band — based, The Clash maintain, mostly on half-truths and warped malice.

"It's like, ultimately, who cares? Sn, two more people think rock 'n' roll's dead? So what? Should we all drop our guitars down and fall apart? It's like too many people are letting the negative aspects get to them, get them into some terminal form of depression."

"Fuck it, I get depressed just as much, but what can you do? 'Cos if you start shouting about the death of something, you're just copping out really. To me, it's like rock 'n' roll is dead? Oh alright then. See you at the next gig."



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SINGLES

SINGLE OF THE WEEK (Act One)

IAN DURY: Hit Me With Your Rhythm Stick (Stiff)

A million diaries rendered redundant in the twinkling of an eye! The Blockhead backlash does not start here. (Erasers up by ten points). So we all know of the band's chummy old pals act with the press, but no dew eyed, 'alright mate?', whacky lovable off-beat shennanigans can mask the stark truth that this record deserves no less than its full whack of the superlative stick.

It consists of geographical word wrangling over one of Chas Jankel's finest funk backings, hi hat sizzling on the beat and the Norman Watt-Roy bass bubbling like the business.

A couple of times it does seem that Dury isn't too familiar with his own lyric, but all can be forgiven because of the middle break — a bivouac awash with African jazz percussion and cranky sax runs which can tend to overshadow the rest of the single on repeated play.

The 'B' side ("There Aint Half Been Some Clever Bastards") is the offspring of "Billericay Dickie" and "England's Glory".

On Van Gogh: "He didn't paint the Mona Lisa / That was an Italian geezer . . .". Empires are turned on such statements.

SINGLE OF THE WEEK (Act Two)

Earth Wind And Fire: September (CBS)

I must have last crossed EW&F just after their "That's The Way Of The World" album, when they were developing their silly Dr Lao-Pink philosophies and flying drum kits. But there's no mystic schtick here and we find them in their finest form since the very serious "Sing A Song". The track is hurled into greatness by the instantly familiar (but not always as welcome as here) high melody harmonies which appear to repeat "Barney Owl" but I wouldn't bank on that. They maintain the crispest drum sound in captivity and can sleep easy that their chart success is as secure as a Sunday dinner. As always, it's the louder the better, so crank it up, cos you wouldn't judge any other form of music through a half-heard lilt off somebody's ailing HP II's. Musical 7-Up.

999: Action (Lebretain)
I used to think 999 were strictly a kak-handed mob of charlatans, but through singles like "Emergency" and a clutch of cuts from the "Separates" album they shape up far better than most of our '77 cousins. This 12" is an average example of their honed gusto, but it doesn't altogether warrant lashings of feverish adjectives. (Note to record labels: It is pointless marking sides 'AA' and 'A').

THE FOUR KINGS: Non Stop Dancing / R'n'R Is Here To Stay (Parole)
Magnificent sound, magnificent name (there's three of them), appalling titles/lyrics. Bordering on headbanging and working riffs so old they had to be translated from the Latin, Four Kings have a 45 which, though no more than a soundcheck for most bands, has more going for it than a bargeful of Rush monstrosities. The "R'n'R" side is pure magic and disgustingly urgent. (Fact: Early Sham 69 sounded exactly this way, but exactly.)

THE PAGANS: Street Where Nobody Lives (Drome)
Hahahah! It does the old heart proud to hear this follow

our own Four Kings. This load of toot is from Detroit (ironically?) and is the sum of the very worst tuppenny ha'penny rich boy directed "energy" you ever saw in your local Vortex. Without even the slightest so-bed-it's-good appeal it's obvious these chaps got all their punk info from the ridiculous Punk magazine. And wouldn'tcha know the reverse is called "What's This Shit Called Love?" Love, this shit's called Pagan.

THE MUTANTS: So American (FTM)

Also from Detroit but I refuse to lump them in with the above. A nest if a little unsprited single.

"Chicks, cars — they're so

American, and / Drugs, bars — I'm glad I'm an American . . .

Well, I suppose they probably are . . . but then again, have they ever sampled the delights of Sportsnight with a European tie of which you don't know the score? (The girls roll their eyes while the boys wait to "OK-UK"). A no-keyboards mid-rock record that justifies its importing.

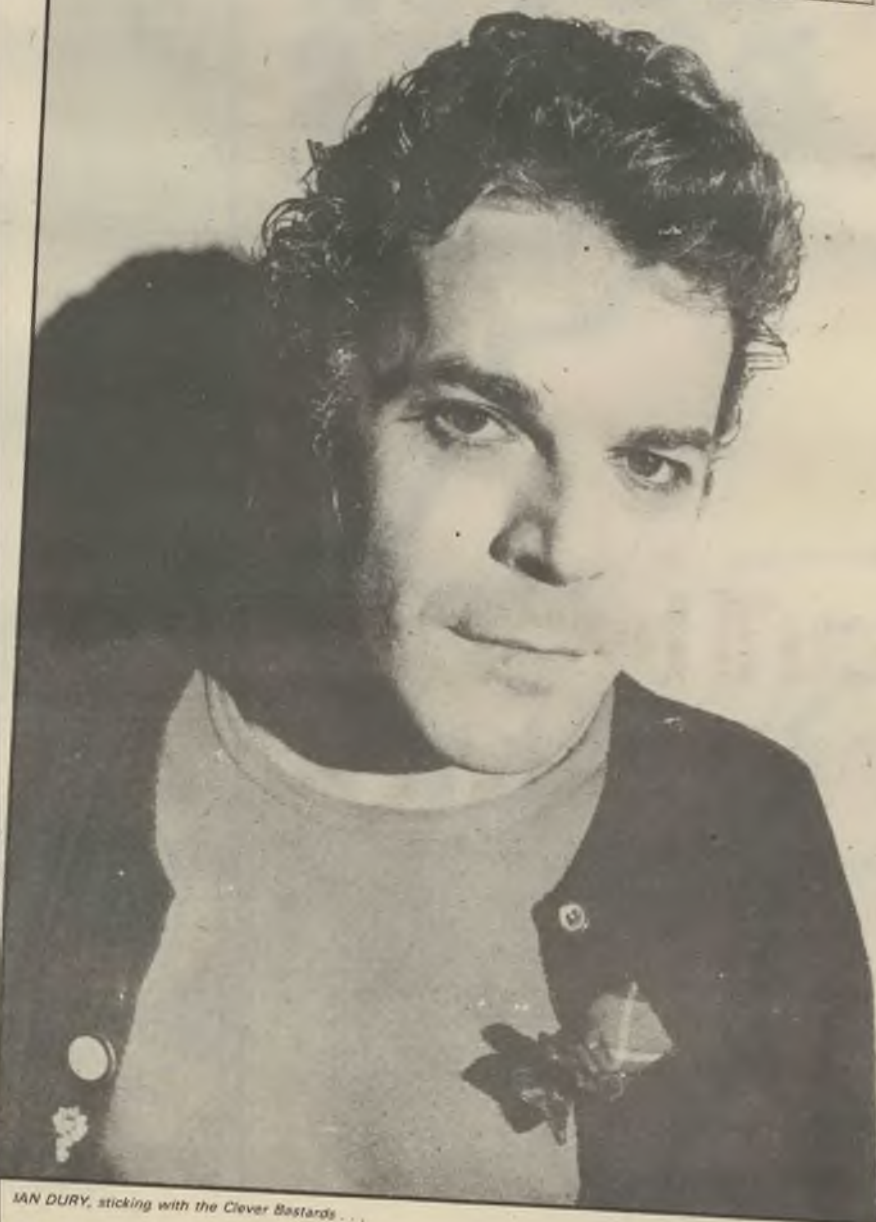
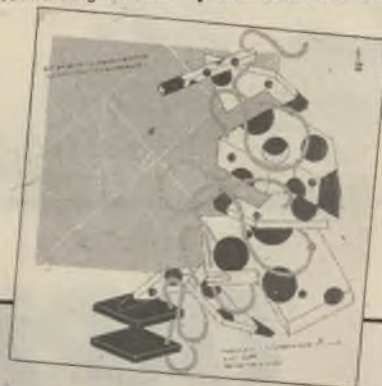
FRED BANANA COMBO: No Destination Blues (Warm)

Well, seeing as the word banana lost all its whacky charisma about the turn of the century, I think a name change is needed to prevent this mob from sinking faster than the Tirpitz. An over-anxious confusion.

MIKE OLDFIELD: Take Four (Virgin)

I must say that Oldfield is looking well these days (and so he bleedin should, a millionaire riding about in a car so big that when it's four o'clock in the engine it's still

only 3.30 in the boot). But all this winsome pixie penny whistle sub-Chieftains dribbling is only 90p value to fey retards and the type of prawn who lives to be an extra in Watership Down. Strictly for Christmas eve extension



IAN DURY, sticking with the Clever Bastards . . .

Reviewed this week by DANNY BAKER

office parties. ("Ommadawn" was good).

JAMES BROWN: Nature (Polydor)

JB still has to follow "Get Up Offa That Thang" for a dance record and I doubt if he and his crew can ever capture anything of a sparkle again. "Nature" is distinctly JB's and in '78 it's sad to report, suffers because of it.

JERRY BUTLER: Cooling Out (Philadelphia)

Another fine voice dealing with soapy songs. On the deck here it sounds pretty, but in a disco will get torn to shreds while dancers use it as the filler during which to top up at the bar. In fact, that is exactly what DJs will use this for. (We sigh).

BILLY JOEL: My Life (CBS)

A slice of de luxe non-tune from the current darling of the FM medium lit's called medium cos nothing's well done).

ROCKY SHARPE AND THE REPLAYS: Rama Lama Ding Dong (Chiswick)

NICKY BEAT AND THE BEATNIKS: I Can Hear Voices (Rigid)

SLIP HAZARD AND THE BLIZZARDS: How Can You Do It (Joe Bloggs)

Nothing here to knock Max Headroom And The Car Parks from the name pedestal. Rocky Sharpe doowops in "Why Do Foo:3 Get A Job Doing The Bristol Stomp" vein and must be aware of his slim chances of owning Mike Oldfield's time-lag automobile in a market already firmly gripped by his former backers, The Darts.

Nicky Beat delivers somewhat ineffectually and while appreciating the record being an independent affair I think they might have had the mikes in the same room as the band instead of devaluing already thin songs a little further by whacking away in a sound as flat as a witch's tit. The rotten thing about disliking independent records is they always seem to include a personal letter with the disc which, if you review it badly, makes you feel like painting your tongue black.

Slip Hazard's outing is probably the best here: almost-slick upbeat pubrock with a vocal on one track that's not a million miles from Roger Chapman — if a little chirpier.

DAVID BOWIE: Breaking Glass (RCA)

An exceptionally redundant release for rabid collectors only. From the LP which consists of five tracks from other LPs done note for note. Let's have some semblance of order round here — this is a singles page.

BOG UGLY: Disco Veteran (Toadstool)

SESAME STREET: Fever (Polydor)

Bog Ugly's record starts moodily over electric piano and disappears as soon as it gets breakneck and jumbles about with words about pogoing and discos without making clear what's going on.

The Don Martin sleeve is about the most recommendable part of the whole deal.

Meanwhile, I don't wish to sound cute, but the Sesame Street Muppet record has a lot going for it. The sleeve is reconstructed inch-perfect with the furry market kings replacing Travolta and Bee Gees. (Silly jokes ignored, sixth form). The actual single is passable disco — made sinister when it becomes OK and you realise the muppets are just on the sleeve to shift units.

Continues over page



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From previous page

ROBERT JOHNSON: I'll Be Waiting (Ensign)
Charlie Murray says this bloke is an imposter but that doesn't really follow because an imposter has grand bogus claims whereas there is nothing truly grand about this at all. It, ah, boogies along in a mindless sort of way, style, flash, empty gestures, clever guitarists going too fast. An inoffensive single all round.

THE WILD GIRAFFES: Love Me (Neck)
From Mentor, Ohio, this is one worth digging up — worth it for this 'A' side, a cracking rockpop tune that beams out like Pluto's moons. (Dalt name, although they drop the 'wild' on the label.)

STRAIGHT EIGHT: Tell Me If You Want Me To Bleed (Eel Pie)

NEO: Tran-Sister (Jet)
Straight Eight play polite rock like the type the Speakeasy was wont to trumpet out and Ian North's old bruisers Neo find 45 at last but don't know what to do with it. It can't be very satisfying or inspiring to know you are releasing singles that are neither adventurous nor in any particular field of popular craving. It certainly doesn't

Direct From Detroit...

the **MUTANTS**

SO AMERICAN

...PIECE O' SH



grip me in the jaws of graphomania, but stay with this, titbits always turn up

THE SHADOWS: Don't Cry For Me Argentina (EMI)
A conjurer's accompaniment version of the hit tune from the cash production of 'Oh No! It's Selwyn Rice-Webber!'

LUCKY PIERRE: Fans And Cameras (Unadulterated)
A titbit! Another from Ohio, another neat straight-ahead rock song with some good lyrics and a twisted charm. The lead singer tends to sound like a posh Patrick Fitzgerald and there are going to be some zealous compilations over the next decade. Search and employ.

QUAZAR: Funk'n'Roll (Arista)
Another over the top would be funk band stuffing all sorts of riffs and licks all over the shop in an attempt to come across like some sort of uncontrollable outfit of mean machines who were taped unawares while going about their daily business of being outrageously funky. For a shorter version of that message, read: Inadequate Soul Brothers Funk For Badass Dudes Called Tim.

OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN: A Little More Love (EMI)
I know it's obligatory for all 'right thinking' decent rock men to take no nonsense from this Travolta chappie (or whoever your kid sister/brother likes this year — after all, you have to make a show of your senior tastes). This probably also applies to ONJ? Any rate, this single is a starchy piece of slinkrock that will be a little hit even though it's not much at all.

LIVERPOOL FC: Hail To The Kap (Logo)
All these mediocre records make it time for a joke. (For football fans) Bill Shankley walks into the dressing room at Anfield to find Tommy Smith on top of the Liverpool skipper.



"Eeah, what're ya doing Tommy?"
"Emlyn, boss..."

DRIVER 67: Car 67 (Logo)
A fine little record for anyone who has ever been gently entertained by the banter chucked around on cab radios. (And on those iron hat nights the best sound in the world can be "One seven P.O.B." and all that nonsense). A folksy love ballad that goes downhill when it starts getting a bit serious.

ROY WOOD: Keep Your Hand On The Wheel (Warners)

These days to confess a liking for Roy Wood is usually greeted with the reply, "Tell me, do you live under a rock?" But although I'll agree that during the last couple of years all this Wizzo Band tomfoolery hasn't been too easy to overlook, I've had some good times with his singles and it's encouraging to hear this latest — which, though, by no means a classic, is still a step back to form. A mild radio joy.

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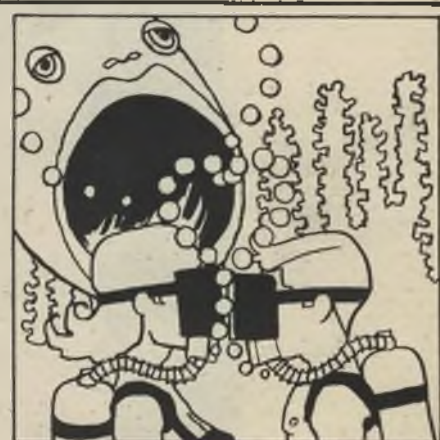
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ANYTIME...

Who is Roy Hill . . .

BY TONY PARSONS. PIX: GEORGE BODNAR.



... and why is he not being chased by, er, lascivious lovelies?

IT WAS IN the garret late last summer and I was sitting there at a loss how to translate into hot copy Joan Jett's gum-chewing, dumb resentment towards the infidels who think she cut the album for a cheap laugh, when something happened.

I touched that dial from the Dada horrorshow of the LBC phone-in to "Feelie" on "247" and scowled, expecting nothing more than the uneasy aural bedfellows of punx, Rastas and the entire Liverpool first team squad.

Instead, I got the bitter bile of frustrated ambition, the world viewed through the telescopic sights of Rockbiz London, the bloodsucked underbelly of the music industry in all its gory glory. It was perfect and I began banging it down . . .

"There's a man in New York, said I had a good chance/Now he's forgotten me, doesn't want a romance/But he won't let me go just in case the tide turns/Keeps me here on a lead, I can feel the rope burns."

"The band's playing really tight, they ought to play looser/The album's dying on its feet, we need a new producer/You just ain't colourful, wear beads and bangles/The press don't want to know, give 'em some new angles/Kiss girls, turn away/Be straight, be gay/It's only my life/tonight I think I'll end it with a knife."

"Everybody's finding me a new direction/The press man is gonna make a real good connection/There's optimism everywhere like an infection/And I'm rolling up my sleeve for a cash injection/No drugs, no drink/Write songs, don't think . . . Cut! Print it! Great, great, what's the name again? Roy Who? Hill? Roy Hill? Never heard of him. Obviously been around for years getting used as an A&R man's doormat, feels that the role of the singer/songwriter has been devalued by the events of the last two years."

probably burnt all his Dylan albums when Bob went electric on "Bringing It All Back Home", etcetera.

If he directed that Randy Newman virulence away from the hand that might feed him and aimed it at Lipstick Vogue model girls he'd be the toast of tinsel town.

Ah, but he wouldn't do that. This bloke sings like he's really got a grudge, the twisted bastard! For sure he ain't no chicken, probably got a really low visual profile — maybe even a hare-lip or something — just one more star-crossed old musician on his way to a music biz menopause of crying into his Pina Colada at Dingwall's chucking-out time that he gave you the best years of his life, oh faithless mistress rock and roll . . .

I MARKED Hill down as one of the most neglected talents of our time and filed him away for future generations to discover and mourn.

Then he turned up with his band doing a song called "Piccadilly Lights" on *Revoluer* and the situation called for a complete reappraisal.

In front of a motley crew that sounded like surrogate E Streeters there was this geezer singing and casually chopping rhythm guitar, the focal point without doubt, but this wasn't Roy Hill, there was no way that this was Roy Hill.

Perfect puberty bedroom-poster fodder for disillusioned David Essex disciples, tall, moody and hunky, his standard good-looks just the right side of Spanish waiter — he's a rebel, but he ain't Roy Hill.

But it's unmistakably another gem of Hill's caustic commentary and acidic japes, whoever this bloke out front is; Eros nightlife, the West End at pock-marked play, slit-eyed tourists with bug-eyed Nikons immortalising it all as a postcard to show the next door neighbours back in Nippon. The shooting-gallery set queuing up for their Health Service placebo, clip-joint clientele losing their bank-roll on R Whites and their teeth on the pavement, the Sloane Ranger's sidekicks heading for Billy's, the boys with bow-lipped mouths and legs to match out walking their uncles, just-a-walking their uncles . . . all of it drenched in the light of the quirky neon Arabesques.

And did Kerouac's Red Brick vision, in ancient times, walk upon England's mountains green?

"Lady on the third floor deals in education/Three minute French course/No examination/She doesn't need a phrase book/Rather have a bodyguard."

The singer is shivering all this with the poker-faced derision the song requires when suddenly camera one outs — for just two seconds!! — to the sax player . . . a short, bespectacled, maniacally grinning little man, and the kin-folk roar as one. That's Roy Hill!

See the way he knew exactly what was happening? How he needs the brown eyed mucho macho handsome one out front for the image, while — all the while! — Roy himself is at the back blowing sax cool and sweet to that Van Morrison melody fused to Springsteen's sense of the epic . . . the man's a genius!

The singer, poor geezer, is now subjected to all manner of abuse from

the kinfolk, who suggest he doesn't realise the incisive brilliance of the lyrics he sings. They are spiteful enough to suggest what his own lyrics would sound like.

"If only I were worthy to be the father of your children!"

"Your body is a flower to be plucked by the grateful!"

"Hey baybee yoo Eeengleesh wanna go to deeeeso?"

I MAGINE my chagrin when I chose Roy Hill's "I Like I Like I Like" as Single Of The Week — a brash caricature of spike-heeled, black leather, crotchless Janet Reger wear punky fetishist fashion and the sexual mores and manners thereof — only to discover upon opening a copy of the paper that instead of a picture of mild-mannered Roy Hill, some insensitive sub had put in a picture of the *Ambre Solaire* refuge vocalist trying his hardest to look smouldering and Mediterranean.

I ordered the sub responsible to be brought to my study, where we pinned the boulder to the hearth of a blazing log-fire until the heat had scorched through his britches and he confessed the reason for his behaviour.

"Because that — gasp — is Roy Hill. The bloke you thought was him is the saxophone and flute player. He's called Bimbo Acock."

Oh.

THAT'S REALLY strange!" chuckles Roy Hill when we eventually meet up in Arista's opulent gaff.

Bimbo peers myopically at the world with a hesitant smile, a bemused expression his only defence against the outside world. He is, in fact, looking like a Bimbo. Like a man who has had a history of being tormented for drawing the short straw in the lottery of life and landing the moniker Bimbo Acock.

Imagine him as a child. "You're tea's ready, Bimbo Acock!"

God, he was lucky to live past infants' school. But this mere slip of Acock happens to be the nearest thing this side of the Atlantic to Clarence Clemons. Truth.

Roy Hill subsides to a soupcon of smirks.

Glad to see you're taking it like this, Roy.

"Well, Bimbo's the only member of the band I've got now who's been with me nearly from the start," he explains in his polite Gloucestershire tones, his affable demeanour belaying the acidity of the music. "The rest I've got one by one over a period of . . . many months. I want them to be what the E Street Band are . . ."

■ Continues over

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THE CLASH

'SORT IT OUT' TOUR CONTINUES

December 2 Polytechnic, Newcastle
12 Pavilion, Bath

THE ROY HILL SAGA

From previous page

Definition?
"Sympathetic dynamite."
And what do you want to be?
"A combination of Bruce Springsteen, Ray Davies, Randy Newman and Elvis Presley... I'm not saying I can do that," he adds quickly. "But I'm gonna try."

Hill is in his mid-twenties. His undiluted contempt for the corporate showbiz empires who bring us our rebel music courtesy a kind of rock'n'roll IMF dates from his dues-paying days hustling his demo round Artist and Repertoire execs' front offices. He can name all the people who told him to go back to his day job and recite word for word the extent of their verbal abuse.

The rockbiz obsession also relates to just about everything else that has happened to him in the nearly three years that he has been signed to Arista.

For the first two years he was kept on a retainer before the first 45 rpm product got released — during which time, of course, the lads from the Fagen's Den of Sex had changed the face of popular culture by making it *de rigueur* for every high street kid in the country to throw away his flapping Oxford bags and get a sensible pair of strides that were the same shape as his legs. Roy Hill, no BA in chaos to call his him, was suffocating under the weight of record company pressure to hit upon the correct formula and clean up.

The disappointing end result of all this equivocation was his debut album release last spring. Produced by Gus Dudgeon, the album had a lush sound so appallingly sweet that it could rot your eye-teeth after just one side.

"Well, all I can say is that I was overawed by the whole occasion. There was Gus Dudgeon, all the top session men in London... I was the only person I hadn't heard of. I got shit for letting Gus Dudgeon do it his way — Arista suggested I do it with him — and I got staggered off. So now I do it all my way so that I get staggered off it on my own terms."

that album weren't turned into total write-offs. The opening cut "Join Me" was shades of "Thunder Road" meeting Cal Trask on Abra's window-ledge in *East Of Eden*, "After Tonight" the allegorical tale of musician-as-boxer getting beaten to pulp for the benefit of the vicarious ring-side thrill-seekers eating their bacon and waiting for a fall. "Piccadilly Lights" you've already met, which just leaves the "Tracks Of My Tears" — haunted "Marionettes", another song about exploitation and many other -tions inside our wonderful business.

OF COURSE, you don't have to stay in it, Roy

"I don't want to do anything else, though. I started out wanting to be rich and famous and now I just wanna be good. I think most people do it the other way round. Playing all those dates where nobody wanted us has toughened us up."

Hill's wife Chrissie is in hospital with a week-old baby boy called Jamie. It was Chrissie who kept him for years after he got thrown out of an school because he couldn't draw and set about, uh, Making It.

He whips out his guitar and knocks out three new songs: "One Time", a more personal, less nationalistic "Political Science"; "Keep Away From Me", basket-weaver, wild-eyed dreaming of settling scores, as funny as a straw-jacket, mush; and "Win Or Lose" It's Something To Talk About", a fatalistic finger to a consumer society that laps up familiar corn of *TOTTPunks* with their illusions of being both Che Guevara and a member of the local darts team, while uncharted quality like Roy Hill is telling you the way it was, it is and shall be. Better tell your Mum and Dad, finish up your grub (ha, ha)

"High hopes are rising in young hearts today as pen approaches dotted line/Flashbulbs blow, wide smiles are fixed and the executives sign/A deal is made with Deadweight Records and Tapes/Knowing groom and blushing bride/Now all that talk of instant fame can just be pushed to one side."

"In dreams of house full signs they want to play for you and me/They're gonna call themselves The Marionettes and that's just what they'll be."

"So here we are inside the home of the hits, in the land of promises and lies/Just waiting for those golden records to materialise/Before our eyes/Today they're everybody's brightest hopes, groomed for greatness, picked to thrill/Tomorrow they'll just be a reason for another restaurant bill."

"Showbiz smiles have all been packed away/The men who care have disappeared/Leaving only paper cups and empty words to be cleared."

What would you do if your son Jamie said he wanted to get into the rockbiz in sixteen years' time?

"Show him my first reviews. Then tell him to get into it."

What else can a poor boy do 'cept to sing for Deadweight Records and Tapes?

Well, I imagine there must be something. Otherwise it all seems so futile, doesn't it? (Cue "Rock Is My Life" by Bachman Turner Overdrive, roll credits and fade...)

SEEMS LIKE Arista snapped up Hill the second he set foot in their home of the hits, and immediately found themselves at a loss as to what to do with him — whether to go for coffee-table credibility like EH and Bernie, to abduct the heart strings of the tired and emotional teenes, to make with the punk, baby boy. Hill appeared at a time when new acts into sensitive folk like Ray Davies, Tom Waits, Bruce on the backless weren't exactly being hailed as vital, relevant artists.

At least we had the poxy Roky. All Hill got was dunked in hip Hemptisad syrup and a lot of stick.

"And these arc lights are picking out bruises/Little man you are a colourful sight/And you're going nowhere after tonight."

"After punk happened everyone expected just one pitch, one level of performance... didn't matter if it was Elvis Costello or Peters and Lee, they just wanted the one line. I'm not that one-dimensional. I like to bend that line. I've got junk songs, joke songs and... serious songs. I don't want a balanced set."

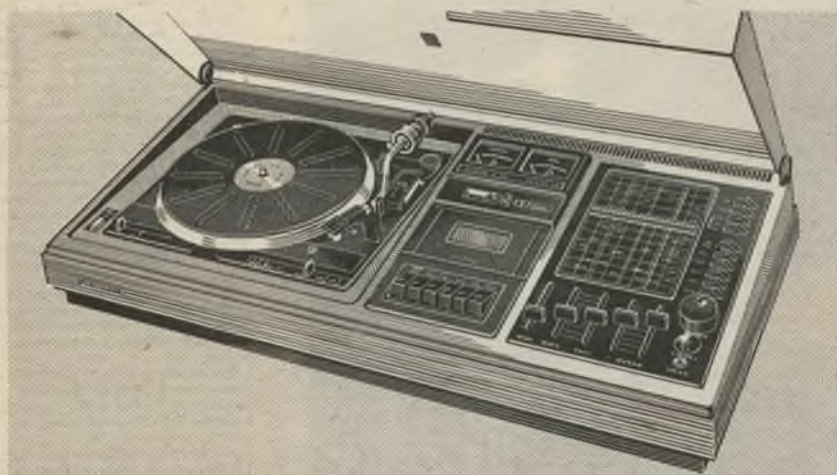
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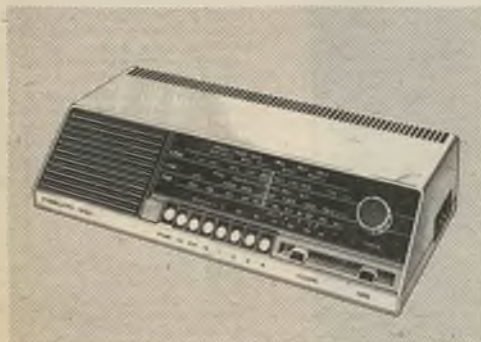
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The Desultory Revelations Of Howard Devoto Continued

From previous page

Well, yeah, I always, nearly always, never feel part of the rock'n'roll scene... well, what does everybody else feel? Does everybody feel part of a great party that's going on, or what?

But it seems as if little disturbs you. You talk about a Magazine gig as if you can't relate to it. It does very often feel like that, and I like it like that. I sort of go on with this forever mixture of surprise at finding myself where I am, and also, I don't know how to put this. I also know about it as well. As well as being surprised by it. And, yeah, I like that. Because I can never settle down to the idea of, 'OK this is what I am, OK now there's a job to be done and this is how I do it'. Does that make sense?

Does it make sense to you?
Er, yes.

You don't go out of your way to make yourself attractive?
Sometimes I feel I must stamp on the ground and make a hoo bah. I must draw attention to myself in the traditional way that people draw attention to themselves. But I can't...

Like getting drunk at record company parties?
Yeah... doing something extravagant. Sometimes I feel that I'm not satisfied with the attention that I'm getting and should do something like that. But I can't. I try to attract people's attention in rather subtle movements, y'know... I keep wanting to say, please won't you pay attention, you can go away after that, but please, pay some attention... because I'm not sure how much I want to work at attracting their attention. I can do it so much but not forever.

Is that what "Give Me Everything" is concerned with?
No, that's more a, huh, this is what I have revealed to you, here we stand, OK, here I present it for your eyes. And now that I have done this, in return for my services you will give me everything.

Oh, it's a love song. Do you think that, with "Give Me Everything" Magazine are becoming stylised? Do you feel you're a strong enough musician?
Well, it's not just me. Everyone else in the band makes a considerable contribution too.

IN THE end it's to get your viewpoint across. Magazine members cannot agree with everything that you're saying, and may be

confused by much of it. So it is to some extent a job for them. Having got involved after some months, they become part of the Magazine organisation, but not involved with what you're saying. And why you're trying to say it.

Well, Magazine music is worked out until everyone is reasonably happy with it... I don't know to explain how we work. Did you hear the John Peel session that we did? Didn't you like it?

As much as the stuff on "Real Life", as much as your appearance on "The Old Grey Whistle Test", which I liked despite the fact it wasn't powerful or forceful. It was a bit hesitant. Between songs you didn't know where to put yourself — sort of "I'm here, so I must try and act normally" — failing miserably...
Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha.

... and it does seem that Magazine have become stylised. It seems odd that you regurgitate the same stuff for a number of months.

Regurgitate what stuff?
The Magazine styles. Already you've done three of four tours. When you conceived Magazine it never looked as if you would tour so often. The thought horrified you. Doing so many tours, playing the same songs.

Yeah, yeah.
You do get impatient.
Yeah, but the good thing about touring is I discovered that it was possible to get some enjoyment out of it. And also I began to realise how long it takes to reach people. It does seem to take an awful long time. Unless you can lay on the line something instant, something easy to pick up.

Don't certain things detract from reaching people. Like "OGWT" between songs there's a focus on your hesitancy and people are distracted from what you're trying to get across. They pick up on the superficial aspects rather than the things they you're trying to get across. You haven't got total control, in fact.

Well that seems a little totalitarian to talk about something like that. It sounds at least a little fake. What sort of control are you talking about? I will hold things so that you will know exactly what to think? I couldn't do that. And I wouldn't want to do that... so much of what the songs are about is actually opposite, as complete a picture of confusion as I can put together... see, what I mean.

So all this fumbling on "OGWT" and "Top Of The Pops"... is it contrived?

The only thing you have to do in situations like that is think about how people are going to see you, through a television screen. It's different from on a stage. It's different from a still photograph. That's all.

On "TOTP" you were far more nervous than you should have been.
Should have been?

Yeah, it was the most nervous performance I've seen, and considering how amusing the whole thing must have been... was it deliberate nervousness? Were you toying with the industry so to speak?

I wasn't nervous!

You seemed it.
I don't think so.

But you must have been amused by the "TOTP" routine and appreciated the crucial three-minute access you'd got. You must have been able to do something more than stand still for three minutes in the foreground while the hand went through the motions in the background?

No, that is exactly what I wanted to do.

Aah, so it was planned?
Oh yeah! Sure. There was absolutely now way that... I mean, I can't fake enthusiasm and there was absolutely no way that I could get worked up about anything at the "TOTP" situation, so I worked on a very negative performance.

You were working against the jolly face of rock'n'roll?

Exactly. What do you see? All those people jumping about. So I just wanted to stand there and let the camera come to me.

So it wasn't nervousness — just being consciously wishy washy?
I'd like to think of it as not wishy washy.

But you didn't attach the camera... totally opposite to that first "So It Goes" appearance.
Well, it makes you think...

Why did you decide to act so on "TOTP"?
Well, everyone knows that I blew "Shot By Both Sides" chances of being number one by turning it down first week.

But didn't you blow its chances by being so negative the second week?
Oh yeah, very possibly.

Did that please you?
I would like to have been number one. I

would have been amazed if it was a significant success.

But it's a significant song.
Yeah, but that's why I again sort of sabotaged myself. When we first got offered it I blew it out. I thought no way. And then I started thinking about it. And obviously the thought of my visage being in front of one in four people in the country was quite attractive, and I began to think, ah yes, I can do this. I can do that. I can really pull something off here, but in the reality of the situation there was no way. The only way I could bring any significance to it was by taking everything away.

WHAT do you want to get through to people?

The thing about wanting to get through to people, the thing about them wanting to get the words as right as possible all comes from this thing about wanting to communicate certain things, thinking that certain things I go through are important.

I don't know if they make me important... but a lot of people aren't writing about these things — or certainly aren't writing about these things in rock. And I don't see why they shouldn't be written about in rock.

There are certain people who are intelligent songwriters, who have written things in the past that have amazed me, made me think, done all those things that are supposed to be the job of high art. Or whatever. I don't see why rock shouldn't do that. And I think it's really sad that people think it can't do that. Because it has.

Do you think rock has achieved or is coming to achieve anything on that high art level consistently?

Not really. Only in very general ways. Y'know, the way punk was able to excite people, make music exciting again. Not a lot really worthwhile comes out of it but what the hell. That's the way of everything. You can't spend your whole day in a perpetual state of bliss or personal enlightenment or whatever.

You mentioned that the album was about putting forward a picture of confusion.

Yeah, sure, it's my confusion, but I think that

everyone feels it to a lesser of greater extent. Perhaps they don't know how to deal with it. One of the songs by someone else that I've always wanted is John Cale's "Fear Is A Man's Best Friend" — just because that's a great

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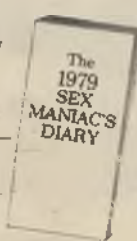
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slogan. It really makes you think. 'whaaa?' How can this be?

It doesn't seem as deep a song as "Shot By Both Sides". What prompted that? It was something somebody said to me when I had some friends in the Sociologists. One of them said to me: "Oh you, you'll get shot by both sides" — and that leapt out at me, and I had that for about a year before I finally worked it out. I often find I write too many words for something. I don't like having things packed with words. But there's an ideal where you have these words and this music and it's a perfect fit.

These things are done in a certain way. They take a certain time, with a book on my knee, or leaning on a table. I think about it. It's a very human thing to do.

What about the song "Parade" — its place at the end of the album?

It comes after "The Light Pours Out Of Me", which is someone on his own and very isolated, and seeing himself as very isolated, but "Parade" is like stepping out of the door again, and feeling, yes, er, I've never seen all this before. Sometimes it really gets on my nerve endings, sometime it's a real dance, but sometimes you can feel... I dunno... just very knowing... you know and understand what you're seeing.

You've got in the back of your mind that this is another picture, but you feel not so much at peace... but you feel just light on your toes, detached, which is a very difficult feeling from sitting there and saying I understand. But it's like saying "All this is going past me and will continue to go past me. The Parade will go on as long as I feel like this".

Then it gets my back up again and it stops. Like, you have times when you feel "how on earth could I get so worked up about something" and then you feel really, really cut off from being irritable. Or cut off from feeling anger. Moving through the world without leaving a mark on it almost.

That's how I feel about writing songs almost. I don't want to write a superfluous song. There's enough superfluous music going around. I want every word to count. That was the point using "Every Minute Counts" in "Real Life" on the adverts for the album, except it wasn't meant to be a slogan. It was meant to be in little letters.

ARE YOU content with Magazine? Yeah I feel OK so far. I'm pleased and amazed to have done an album.



Are you really?

Mmmmm.

You once said you never thought it was going to be so good.

Did I say that in so many words?

You did. You also said it was like another world.

Yeah. Now we're starting to work on some new songs. My future peace of mind depends a lot on that. I think we're considerably less committed to Virgin than anyone else. It's just a matter of pinning down what I want to do next. That never happens until you start doing it. For me anyway. My thoughts with Magazine was just to get "Shot By Both Sides" out as a single. Then we started working and more things came out, like some music would come out with a feeling — I'm going to slip in a French phrase

here — with a certain *je ne sais quoi*, y'know?

And then you want to do something more. And that's the way things happen. I can think in a vague way, yeah, I want to make another album. I was very pleased with "Real Life" It would be great to do that again. But until we actually start work on it I don't know how I'll feel. I know that we've got a lot more music that I want to see.

What would happen if I confronted you and said you were talking a load of crap. Can you be provoked?

It's got to be done in the right way. It's got to be done without resorting to blatant stupidity. It's very hard to fight blatant stupidity. I just don't want to shout in the right places. It's easy to do. Obviously there are people to grumble about — to slag off — but it's too easy. I don't want to do it.

MAGAZINE l. to r. John McGeoch, Barry Adamson, Howie, Dave Formula, John Doyle.

On stage, you seem to behave badly. Parodying the rock performer.

No it's not that. I mean, there are all sorts of ways you can behave that say I'm a rock star and this is rock 'n' roll, and I try to get away from that. But not by making it totally alien. I like to pull people in, and then pull them up, short a bit, and then bring them in again, and then bring them up short again.

Teasing them? Winning their confidence?

Yeah, in a way. Win their confidence. Yes in a way I want to say, look I think this is worth listening to. I want you to have the confidence that this is worth listening to. That it's not a waste of your time or a waste of my time. So in a way, yeah, but I don't want to push it too far.

So that it's like a parody. Because it's not a parody at all. There's lots of things that I know people like and want to see at rock performances that I don't do. I don't think.

Like what?

The big endings — rock 'n' roll endings to songs.

But you started playing "Boredom" with Magazine, which is appealing very low. It seems an easy trick and mustn't be giving you much satisfaction.

No, no. But it was really that I wanted there to be some sort of continuity — as far as I'm concerned the new songs are about the same sort of things that the songs were about with Buzzcocks. It's not just a totally different thing. I don't want to tax people to the extent that they say this is not within our understanding.

It's very difficult for me if I get an unresponsive audience. Like I've said, I can only push so far. I keep going with my faith. I go out at the beginning of a performance and I say to myself, I know this is just about as good as anything you've seen and heard and I take it from that point. You are going to like us. If after five numbers it's not like that... then from that point it all depends. Sometimes I can just enjoy it, never mind what people think, but sometimes it matters.

Most of the time it does matter. Sometimes I get really angry about it. Sometimes I just think, well, fair enough, if you feel that way. It's especially difficult for me when people don't know the songs. I am singing this line now but I am acting this way. If you don't know the song or if you can't hear the line it doesn't mean anything. I might as well be saying go kill yourself.

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WHEN I was a kid in Walthamstow," says Mick Box of Uriah Heep, "we used to do this little stunt. Disgusting, it was."

"One of us used to crap in a paper bag. Then we'd leave it on somebody's front doorstep and set fire to it. Knock on the door, and run off."

"Of course the geezer would come out, see the flames, and go: Aaaaaaargh."

By way of demonstration, Mick does a very loud scream.

"And he'd try to stamp it out. Disgusting."

At the punch-line, Mick laughs loud enough to drown out a passing police siren.

Mick Box is on tour in the States, with Heep supporting Jethro Tull. In New York, he staying at the Sheraton hotel, and each night after the gig the other patrons get the benefit of his extrovert personality.

Since everybody in the city aspires to be John Travolta these days, the hotel bar has been turned into a disco, and Mr Box, who looks like a plump, benign Frank Zappa, is to be found shaking it on the dance floor.

"He does a lovely watusi, this boy," says Lee Kenlake, Heep's drummer.

"Well," says Mr Box, "I may make a fool of myself, but I have a great time doing it."

IT'S EIGHT years now since Uriah Heep were launched on an unsuspecting world. Mick Box is 31, and if he'd waited until now to get his break, he'd no doubt be a short-haired professional Cockney flogging round on some gimmicky package tour.

As it is, he's a heavy metal guitarist, all long-hair and dramatic poses, and he's working hard on a comeback.

Time was when Heep had platinum albums in the States with the likes of "Demons And Wizards" and "Magician's Birthday", and they would headline in their own right. But things went wrong, as Mick explains.

"It got to the point where we were more concerned about how many limousines we were going to get and how much booze there would be in the dressing room than with doing a proper sound check and making sure it was a good show."

"The music took a back-seat. We got very lethargic, and every album was just like the one before it, except that the lyrics were a bit different and there were a few changes in the chords."

"It's a very easy trap to fall into, mind. When it's been going well for a few years it's easy just to sit back and enjoy it. We played safe, and it choked us. Everything was going down the tube."

And so, the night of the long knives. Our goes the former lead singer David Byron along with the old bass player; in came a couple of new boys with a new attitude.

"It was a bit of a wrench," says Mick Box, "but it was necessary. Now we're a hungry band, we've still got fight and drive, our impetus is back."

There is something a little poignant about seeing a long-established touring band busted down to support act, even if it is Madison Square Garden they're playing at.



MICK BOX. Pic: FIN COSTELLO

'umble again, and still 'eavy

'Very 'umble, very 'eavy' was URIAH HEEP's slogan at the start of their career back in 1970. Guitarist Mick Box brings us up to date with the current state of play and recalls the art of inserting crap into paper bags. BOB EDMANDS treads carefully.

Mick Box says he's got no hang-ups about being support. "During our set the stage is ours, and we give it a lot of welly, everything we've got."

But why keep at it, once you've had your platinum albums?

"To be honest, I love the business. I know that's a very brown sort of thing to say. But I can't really do anything else. I'm the number one fuckin' A-I useless. But I happen to play guitar, and I love it."

Another reason, says Mick, is that he's been in the band for all those years and doesn't want it to die.

He'd always wanted to be a guitarist. Him and his mates used to

mime with tennis rackets round at each other's houses, and charge their parents for the performances.

At school he got caned for playing "Peter Gunn" on a cello laid across a desk. It was that kind of school.

"On the last day I was on the starting blocks at the gate."

Mick had a job in an exporting business in the City of London, near Liverpool Street station. The idea was to make enough money to keep his amateur band The Stalkers on the road.

"I used to cycle into London all the way from Walthamstow," he says, "and what with doing gigs until the

early hours of the morning I used to get well knackered."

"What I used to do was sneak off down the bog, and sit there having a quiet sleep. We used to keep a sponge hidden behind the cistern, and to wake me up my mate would fill it with water and lob it over the top. I used to sleep pretty soundly, see."

From the start Uriah Heep got a good slugging from the British rock press, and that's still the case today.

For a while Mick Box used to keep all the band's bad reviews and they printed a selection on the sleeve of their live album.

What's his explanation for all the hostility?

"I think it's because Heep came out right at the end of a particular period. It was about 1970 and folk-rock was suddenly the latest fad. Everything had to be laid-back, and we were up there still giving it the old head shaking, festival touch. We just happened to come out at the wrong time."

He insists, though, the slugging didn't bother him that much.

"I mean," he says, "all the people at our concerts weren't standing on the chairs and shouting because they didn't like us. Know what I mean?"

"I remember one review where some bird said she'd commit suicide if we ever made it. As far as I know, she's still alive."

"If I ever met any of these critics, I used to ask them what it was all in aid of."

You used to get heavy?

"Nah, nothing arrogant. Just polite. Generally, they couldn't come up with nothing. They'd be totally embarrassed. Strange, really."

HEEP'S LATEST album, "Fallen Angel", has had better reviews than most of its predecessors, and their Madison Square Garden set is fast and energetic, even if it is undeniably somewhat old-fashioned.

So why don't the band try a little harder to be a bit more trendy? There are, after all, certain obvious, well-used ploys they could adopt.

"I think to be fashionable you've got to be a bit of a built-in poster," says Mick Box. "I don't think that's us. You've got to hang around with the right crowd. I would hate to do that just for the sake of the right image."

You could perhaps draft in a name producer instead of always using your manager?

"I don't think so," says Mick.

"Gerry Bron is a very good producer. Besides, we're very proud of what we do. If someone else had the say then it wouldn't be us. We'd be hiding behind them."

So how long do you think it will be before Heep are back among the headlines in the States?

"I've no idea. It's a funny business. One album could take off, and you could do another Foreigner or another Boston. If it's on the strength of sheer hard work, it'll be a few more tours yet."

The idea doesn't seem to disconcert Mr Box. He's got the consolation that Heep are still big in European countries other than Britain, and besides there's the rest of the tour to look forward to.

"When we get out to the West Coast I'm off down Disneyland," he says. "The last time I was there, I really gave it some welly. Went on all the rides, came back to the hotel with bags full of Mickey Mouse stickers. really got sucked in."

"I can well understand why they used to ban all the long-hairs. In the flower power days people used to drop their tabs, and go in there for the rides. I mean, there's a ghost house there where they've got these holograms that actually walk up to you."

"That's a trip in itself, even if you go in there straight."

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Oh! What a Lovely War...

Black And White In Colour

Directed by Jean-Jacques Annaud
Starring Jean Carmet and Catherine Rouvel
(United Artists)

Black And White In Colour is a charming war picture. The American Film Academy, usually suspicious of anything originating outside America, deemed it worthy of an Oscar for Best Foreign Film of 1977. And they're right.

It's a film of images and foibles, employing a highly developed sense of contrast in order to expose the absurdity of war, and of most human effort besides.

Two tiny military outposts, one French, one German, in 1915 are stationed along Africa's Ivory Coast. They live in neighbouring tranquility, sharing the same shops and also the flies, which are a sole intrusion into the languid if somewhat tedious existence amongst the natives.

One day a package arrives and in a six months' old newspaper the French read that war has been declared between the two European nations.

This revelation stirs the motley community, consisting of ignorant shopkeepers, aging soldiers, two stupid priests and a tart, into action. War has provided an interlude from apathy. Viva La France!

Recruited by the promise of bright shiny bowls, the natives are shaped into a home-grown militia. Only a young French geographer recognises the foolishness of such a venture, and he is cast aside in the enthusiastic preparations for activity.

The French dress up in their European finest and the natives march into battle, looking for all the world like a Notting Hill Carnival street parade, complete with costumes and drums.

There is only one thing to mar this festive outing: The

German outpost has a machine gun.

Black And White In Colour is a genial, low-key film, but one with a kick. Images are stunning in their simplicity. A family of pigs wallows happily past decaying shanties; a tribal mask lies dying in embers thrown by missionaries without mercy. And the contrast — a Renoir picnic tableau on the banks of a stream while near by, bloody battle rages.

Important concepts are raised, like the folly of impersonal patriotism. Or colonial attitudes towards native inhabitants. But for all the crudities that war brings, these ideas are handled with the delicacy of a fly's wing.

Martha Ellen Zenfell

Girl Friends

Directed by Claudia Weill
Starring Melanie Mayron and Eli Wallach
(Warner Bros.)

One Sings, The Other Doesn't
Directed by Agnes Varda
Starring Valerie Mairesse and Theresia Liotard
(Cinegata)

Two films hesitantly applauded as 'feminist' — which seems a rather hasty and dubious epithet. Beyond the simple and admittedly uncommon fact that each was directed by a woman, and that each possessed two female lead protagonists, these films broach no new attitudes or approaches worth embracing any sister for, and indeed seem ultimately trite and demeaning.

Claudia Weill's US entry wins out, if at all, only because the co-protagonist Susan (Melanie Mayron) isn't an ordinarily cinematically 'attractive' character, 'heroine' — although that perhaps implies that there is a convention which is 'attractive'... ho hum, sorry. But this possible

contradiction isn't explored, and *Girl Friends* sticks neatly to traditional stereotypes of both character and plot, and investigation thereof. Susan's 'sensitive', willowy flat-mate quits poetry and splices it with A Good Chap. They have a babe. Tulips in the window. Car in the drive. Slides on the wall. His and hers track suits.

Hints of depression and dissatisfaction are viewed through a muted, attic-life-and-jogging lens, — angst is just one more undercoat of paint. After a non-affair with a married rabbi (Wallach), Susan's heart finds its homo sap, and he's into American football and

square meals, not to mention open neck shirts worn outside the collar.

There's no reasons for anything. Abortions, successes, traumas, desires (and no good jokes) — they all flit through like butterflies. And it's quite likely they've escaped from *One Sings The Other Doesn't*.

What is *One Sings* about? 'It is about, well... life.' The plot is essentially the same; two women meet, befriend, are befriended by men, separate, grow and discover themselves in out-going meaningful situations, find one another again.

Everything is misery and ecstasy, with no barometer between — which would

make for nice idealistic metaphor, strictly, if the tortured buggers didn't keep hanging themselves, forging abortions, marrying macho foreigners, and having affairs with married pediatricians... *One Sings, The Other Doesn't* is one long Dubonet advert, and if this wasn't bland enough the director has to coo in an occasional voice-over to bridge the continuity and concept; sample 'She had to return to a life of flowing music and tousled hair...'.

Toikienesque sexual politics. Jogging optional. Not much tit's'n'burn neither.

Ian Penman

Power Play

Directed by Martyn Burke
Starring Peter O'Toole, David Hemmings and Donald Pleasance.
(Rank)

Few films about revolution deal with revolutionary ideas, and *Power Play* is no exception. In fact, ideas of any sort are scarce in the movies, with most characters a cocktail of emotions and strenuous activity. And chin-scratching moments countable on the fingers of a mitten.

The life of the mind may be difficult to film, but the clash of ideologies in *Power Play* hasn't advanced much beyond Bold Robin and the Sheriff of Nottingham. Corrupt regimes bundle the citizenry into trucks, utopians object. The Army plan a coup d'état, the Secret Police sniff about, but ultimately dreamers and rotters share an impartial firing squad as a new tyrant emerges.

A conspiratorial professor is

allowed little evidence of his vocation, while the Army leader's idealism focuses on his avuncular dealings with young girls and a weariness towards his medals. David Hemmings, looking as if he'd seen everything twice in a colonel's uniform, is so averse to bloodshed that one wonders how he drifted into that line of work.

No such doubts dog Donald Pleasance's Gletkin-like appearance at the head of the interrogators. Master of the quiet mania, the averted eye and the beetle-black suit, he could unsettle for Britain. Peter O'Toole gives a performance of glacial authority as the tank commander who wins the pot, and in the scene where he ditches his mistress, presents the deadead face outside the reptile house.

Nowhere near the class of Frankenstein's *Seven Days in May*, it's still an enterprising movie, nicely composed and paced, never boring. A lot of thought went into the lighting in the war room, and a little of *The Conversation* into the deciphering of the tapes. The 'X' certificate is probably down to the torture scene in which electrodes are attached to nipples, only dimly justified by the needs of the plot.

Brian Case

Piranha

Directed by Joe Dante
Starring Bradford Dillman
(United Artists)

A cheapskate spin-off from *Jaws*, this inept crock wears its cynicism openly with many a knowing nudge and wink in the direction of Spielberg's blockbuster.

With editing cutting from an overheating car engine to a cooking supper, one wonders if this sassy attitude is entirely justified. *Piranha* attacks on bathers as harrowing as an indistinct globeful of goldfish in dentures can make them, and without a convincing monster the movie is better 'n' chips.

I never cared about Bradford Dillman, but the presence of Kevin McCarthy and Keenan Wynn suggests some hellish studio contract worse than the human bait they impersonate. The female lead, Heather Menzies, on this outing at least, shows the thespian skills of a school-crossing warden.

Director Dante should study Romero's *The Crazies*, and despair. Roger Corman produced and should have stayed in bed. Maybe he brought the breadcrumbs.

Brian Case



Top: Piranhas ate my flesh ('Piranha'). Below: Old folks finding themselves ('One Sings The Other Doesn't'). Bottom: Old folks hunting Robin Hood ('Power Play').

Study the picture carefully. Then answer the questions below.



- 1 Is the horizontal person ill, or is he simply trying to listen to an argument in the downstairs flat?
- 2 Is the lady with the legs called Sniff?
- 3 Is she the first female percussionist to utilise the automatic pistol as a musical instrument?
- 4 Is the cat a permanent member of the band?
- 5 How are you going to hang the picture on the wall without leaving the record permanently on your turntable?

You can find the answers to these and many other intriguing enigmas on 'FICKLE HEART' by SNIFF 'N' THE TEARS — a rock band fronted by Paul Roberts.

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ALBUMS

SOUTHSIDE JOHNNY & THE ASBURY JUKES Hearts Of Stone (Epic)

Whatever happened to the war against all things American that raged through this journal not so long ago? Well, I'll leave the answer to the warriors involved and merely suggest that the silly feud did unwittingly highlight one thing: the essential difference between British and American music.

Simply stated, American rock music is folk music. British rock is rebel music.

Obviously these are sweeping generalisations, and exceptions abound. But on the whole the best American rock music has always been traditionalist, musically and emotionally 'mature': Albert King, Bob Dylan, The Grateful Dead, Otis Redding. Whereas great British rock is essentially young, iconoclastic, angry, 'immature': Stones, Who, Pistols, etc.

Even now, when the mesa of interesting American music comes from Anglophile punk rockers, the best American rock still springs from the depths of tradition and mature emotions.

Bob Seger and Bruce Springsteen are obviously the prime exponents of contemporary American music. And now Southside Johnny.

Third time lucky. "Hearts Of Stone" is the rationalisation of The Asbury Jukes' previous multifarious preoccupations. Here the big band line-up, the R&B grounding, the Springsteen connection, all fall into place.

No longer is Southside acting as patron and ringmaster for a host of resurrected soul stars like Lee Dorsey and Ronnie Spector, no longer is he assiduously paying his dues and respects to the past. "Hearts Of Stone" sheds that burden of 'duty', and ushers in a deliberate formulation of a Southside style. Sure, it's eclectic, but now the influences take backseat. This is the modern Southside that you should have heard about ages ago.

Reading the small print, we note that the Jukes have changed drummers. Exit the band's primo comedian — possibly a move of greater significance than one guy out of ten might indicate. This album is a serious affair, in the best possible sense.

All nine tracks present are 'originals': two by Bruce Springsteen, six by producer Miami Steve Van Zandt (Springsteen's regular guitarist — he also plays throughout this album as well as singing back-up), plus one collaboration with the three of them.

That familiar Asbury Jukes Latin brass sound is still prevalent, but moved on in the way the early English beat groups updated and reinterpreted their R&B/soul influences.

The best track here is the collaboration between Springsteen, Van Zandt and Southside, "Trapped Again". As a song it may not have the epic brilliance of "Because The Night" or "The Fever", but it pulls together all the strands of the Jukes' current endeavour in jumpin' style.

The band hit in on a lovely, relaxed groove, handling the dynamic like only a ten-piece can, no effort. Southside... his singing on this album is just marvellous, no more straining, totally in control — it's like he's broken his voice in, crossed some personal barrier. Add a tune which perfectly matches the band's new-found rock melodic feel with a raw Stax chorus, and it's sheer unassuming genius.

To top it off, Billy Rush produces a six-note run into



Ronnie Spector and Southside express onstage concern at current studio state of Grateful Dead.

SIMON FOWLER

True grit, chaps, true grit

(Souls ablaze, Southside Johnny. Jukes vindicate entire history of American rock music, etc, etc.)

his guitar break that writes him straight into the book of all-time great licks... here it comes again!

In fact, it's really only that guitar break that makes me single out "Trapped Again". After all, every other track is just as cultured, just as excellently performed, whether it be a hard rocker like "Take It Inside", a Spectorish big-beat excursion like "This Time Baby's Gone For Good", an up-city R&B groove like "I Played The Fool", or even an unashamed tear-jerker like "Light Don't Shine", wherein Johnny Lyon's vocalising rivals Bill Medley in the melodrama stakes yet neatly avoids overstatement.

"Hearts Of Stone" also scores extremely high in the terms of playability. Let me make myself clear: this album performs.

The one weakness will no

doubt be ironed out in time. Although they are distinctive, the Jukes don't have a strong collective personality. Sure, that's a sales-force term, but it still counts for a lot with this licence-paying viewer at least.

Right now the Jukes have solved a tricky problem. They've finally moved up into the big time with a style of their own. Next they have to stamp themselves upon the game.

No wonder Southside's reading *Sports World* on the back of the "Hearts Of Stone" sleeve. This man's looking for the title.

Phil McNeill

THE GRATEFUL DEAD

Shakedown Street (Arista)

Sorry to interrupt your reverie, Jerome. But then, this far along, not much could.

This is the longest, strangest trip there has ever

been. In the Dead's macrocosm events take on their own significance, unbound by the normal parameters of careers and contracts. Grateful Dead albums are like instalments of a never-ending serial. Never mind that on the last few it began to look like a soap opera. This is the new Grateful Dead album, and that's enough for some.

It was recorded under all the usual constraints — the Egyptian jaunt left them broke but probably immensely happy. The Dead family has gone from one bankruptcy to the next, and there's no reason why they should change now, so commercial pressures hardly threaten.

What does loom large, though, is the need to deal an ace from the pack, and that doesn't mean Bob Weir. The Dead reached a plateau with

the three albums culminating in '75's "Blues For Allah". Since then — barring the illicit "Make-Believe Ballroom" that really should have replaced the rag-bag of old live chestnuts that was "Steal Your Face", and barring "Estimated Prophet" on what can most kindly be called the serious mismatch of group and producer that was "Terrapin Station", they have been in the proverbial lowlands.

What do you expect from The Grateful Dead? They are as inscrutable as their name or their proxy-leaders' bearded countenance. They still play live six hour exercises in musical star-gazing. Word has it that Kesey's valley is still wired for sound too. You can't overlook the lack, Jack, of any other highway to ride

The employment of noted

derelict Lowell George in a production capacity serves to toughen-up the Dead sound, as much as such a thing is possible. On "I Need A Miracle" and "All New Minglewood Blues" it indeed proves possible, but not exactly desirable. George's sublime feel for musical drama comes to working on the Hart/Weir tune "France" in a way redolent of old cronic Van Dyke Parks, but Robert Hunter's lyrics give few opportunities for the twisted and sensual imagery we have come to associate with George's productions.

In fact, Hunter's lyrics err on the side of cliché — when something is sweet it's always sweet as wine, etc. The fertile well of folk lyricism that fuelled "Workingman's Dead" and "American Beauty" is running dry, as "Stagger Lee" illustrates.

And this is no "American Beauty", despite makers' claims. The diffusion of songwriting chores through the band prevents the singular focus of that album being revived. It's closer to "Wake Of The Flood", if anything, with the experimental Dead played definitely down — no Phil Lesh contributions, and only Micky Hart provides a measure of that sort of input.

Side one stays on the tracks after a slow start with "Good Lovin'", with Weir's vocal close to Felix Cavaliere's timbre on The Rascals' version. The disco emphasis (I kid not) of the title cut is no blasphemy, more like part two of "Eyes Of The World". And "Fire On The Mountain" almost falls into the unlimited groove of "Mister Charlie", but closes too soon.

Side two barely moves. I find myself for the first time appreciating a Donna Godchaux tune, which casts a poor light on the quality of the cuts that surround it.

Trouble is, on the aforesaid triad, especially "Mars Hotel" and "Blues For Allah". The Grateful Dead were making full use of the possibilities of their hugely rich frame-work. Most of the time here they sound as though they're falling back into it for support.

Like Hunter once wrote: please don't dominate the ramp, Jack, if you got nothing new to say.

Paul Rambali

TED NUGENT Weekend Warriors (Epic)

AS EVER, our amoral and instinctive hero "obeys nature" and ranges himself against society, wildly demanding his Utopia, aiming for an unreasonable sense of human brotherhood (WHOOH! MU... MUU!).

This volatile, sexually confused, sinister god-like publicist for ponderous power and concealed eroticism scythes his way through the unbearable realities he sees around him, using melancholy, ferocity and the influence of Wagner (UUGMI BLAM!).

The fresh-faced dynamo clings to the notion — the faith — of the artist as God, as omnipotent creator of his own world (AAAGH! WAAGH!). He remains repellently intolerant, remorselessly quarrelling with those who will not agree with him, to the potential and virtue of music as the ultimate expression (lift up your eyes and see something tricoloured in the skies!). But what he fails to see is that his kitsch fluency and vulgar artifice are fatal to even his better intentions (AIEE! WWRAGH!).

The rhapsodic reactionary, the indignant idiot, tosses off into our aspic mouths, squealing and squawking, whining and whimpering, his whole existence a masturbation fantasy.

God help us when he loses his virginity.

Paul Morley



Derek and Clive
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ROD STEWART Blondes Have More Fun (Riva)

"Don't forget," ran the note from the absent reviews editor, "to purchase your fabola and very frisky copy of the Rod Stewart album, will you, dear?"

Quite a novelty, actually having to buy a Rod Stewart album but, since Riva hadn't sent NME a review copy, out I went to procure my first RS record since "Every Picture Tells A Story".

I can't be the only one who thinks he's been well duff since then. Still, he hasn't done too badly, proving to young women all over the world that just because you like wearing mascara and cam-knickers doesn't necessarily mean you vote Liberal.

Di-di-di-di-di-di-di-di-di-di — Newflash! Rock superstar Rod Stewart last week was called 'Randy Rod' in the sinful Sun and 'Rod The Sod' in the falling Star, these startling appellations occupying front page space in both national newspapers in a week when over 900 people killed themselves in a Guyanese jungle and Mr Jeremy Thorpe's alleged misuse of public funds came in for some embarrassing scrutiny in a *Minehead* court.

Pathetic, isn't it? Just why Rodney should go to such inordinate lengths to make sure the nation's non-readers know so much about his private life will remain a mystery, because I'm not a Doctor. I'm A Hack, and even I'm sure to the fact that Stewart the songwriter isn't what he once was. For starters, he doesn't write quite proper.

"Da' Ya' Think I'm Sexy" may look like some strange Celtic corruption of an old Petula Clark title but is, in fact, about the best (original) number on "Blondes", simply because it craftily mixes a "Miss You" bass line with Gibb-like synthesized strings. And the words aren't too sickly.

The other halfway decent

song is "Attractive Female Wanted" (one of several tracks carrying the vaguely amusing composer credit of Stewart-Grainger), and undeniably seductive lurcher with Carmine Appice as ever bashing the traps stone dead — but, oh dear, those words.

Rod here plays a bachelor, tired of buying *Penthouse* and *Oui*: "I've been alone too long and all my family think I'm gay... Who would ever have thought such a thing? No time to dwell, though, because it's straight into the title track, out of the spineless and into the specious — a peen to peroxide and a pie in the face for half the planet.

Oh, Rod, you are awful — and evidently not always an autobiographical writer. "The Best Days Of My Life", for instance, opens with two surprising assertions in one line: "We ain't got money, but we sure got laughs..." Cue flutter-tongued flute for a twee, over-orchestrated vinyl blemish. I'd hate to think what Joe Jordan, or any other similarly simian members of Scotland's squad, would make of it.

What else? Some do-do-do-do's courtesy of some poncey French lick or other in "Ain't Love A Bitch?" a penny dreadful 'dramatic' narrative in "Scarred And Sacred", as real and involving as any *Waltons* episode, a snatch of poetry in "Is That The Thanks I Get?". "You kicked the shit right in my face..." — one of *Beverly Nichols*, your majesty.

The one authentic moment of rock and roll on the entire record — "Standing In The Shadows Of Love" — is all but wrecked by Rod's breathy 'improvisation': "Didn't I screw you right, now, didn't I?" And that's a mouldy old Motown number anyway, right?

At least Carmine again proves that if this lot were a bunch of buskers, he'd be the only one with any coppers in his cap — he's the only one who sounds like he's actually working. I mean, all the instruments are in tune, the



Rod cries tough

JORGEN ANGEL

And more jazz!!!

trio of guitarists (Jim Cregan, Gary Grainger, Billy Peek) are ever so tasteful, Tom Dowd's production is lovely, and the mixture of rockers and ballads is a tried, tested and tired formula.

A hit!

Troy Donahue

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Downtown Disco Party
(MCA)

Boogie Fever
(Ronco)
It's Disco Fever
(Pickwick Limited Edition)
20 Disco Dancin' Hits
(Pickwick Limited Edition)

Crimes committed in the name of Disco, episode 2001: No, I won't write yet another polite, pleading mini-manifesto to all you brick-walls who don't dig my

muse. I won't come over all sociological/working class about why you should be making merry to my favourite kind of musical merchandise. I won't go into the ins and outs of how these sinister "economy" labels are conning poor you because I can't see how they are. I'll just say here are four original-artiste compilations presumably primed for the Christmas fun-market that I hope "the kids" (un-united division) will have a wagonload of leisure to, and give my opinion as to which ones are up.

The two "Limited Edition" (250,000 copies, actually) items are cynical, cluttered and useless. "20 Disco Dancin' Hits" features a massive two disco songs, and those only dignified by memory and the Trash Aesthetic: Sylvia's vulgar "Y Viva Espana" and Barry Blue's dainty, nostalgic "Dancin' On A Saturday Night". The remainder is made up of drizzly '60s "classics" and mid-'70s mush-masses of Kinks, Status Quo and the unexpected bonus of the Brighthouse and Rastick Band rendering "The Floral Dance". An album to make your party swing, like Hanlaty.

"It's Disco Fever" comprises 20 tracks taken more or less equally from the cold vaults of GTQ and Oasis, and has two tracks worthy of mention: Billy Ocean's "Red Lights" and Heatwave's marvellous "Boogie Nights". The rest are loser, uncharted GTQ pop (Dookeys, Polly Brown, Fox). Better to have certain parts of your career end up on the cutting room floor than under the Christmas tree.

Pickwick have the necessary lust for the buck, but their business-head is in the sand: Ronco want that fast and furious buck just as much now as when they were relatively small and poor and selling household cleaning accessories just as much as records — and so they keep their eyes sharpened to the charts.

"Boogie Fever" gives you

22 (13 of them disco, 14 a big deal in the charts, all of them popular) real party tracks inside shiny, sexy packaging. The non-disco stuff, from Abba through The Motors to Foreigner, is rave but not to my taste, but side two is pure disco, good stuff. There are hits from Eruption, Belle Epoque and other flesh girls plus real quality (although they're from lesser sweethearts of the charts): "Everybody Dance" by Chic, "Hot Shot" by Jaren Young, "Rainin' Through My Sunshine" by Real Thing and Stargard's magnificent "Which Way Is Up?". Now this is the kind of thing you really think you want!

Stargard's supreme contribution to 1977 mankind also opens the *Downtown Disco Floor Filler* side of the MCA collection, but you'll suffer the rude awakening of all rude awakenings when this gem is followed by their duff but funky follow-up! In fact, all the tracks on this side (one War, two early, loud and sub-standard Rose Royce) are duff but funky (except, naturally, "WWU"), a fact that comes near to being overlooked when you consider that they're all US disco-mixes and full-length versions, as opposed to the curtailment of most compilation budget albums.

A free rain can never really compensate for a topping tune, though *Party* side two starts off crummy with Osibisa and Deodato then bang!!! into "The Clapping Song" through to the Impossible Dream's "1-2-3" (smart move), Dobie Gray's "Drift Away" and ends on the ultimate soft-soul indulgence of "Walkin' In The Rain With The One I Love".

The MCA collection is the classiest and has put the most thought into itself: "Boogie Fever" has an eye for the main chance via value, and will sell the most of all, quite rightly; the couple of Pickwick "Limited Editions" would do well to limit their edition to approximately 10 copies of each, to avoid disappointment (Pickwick's own).

Julie Burchill

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From the album
Summer Holiday ALB 100

Rootsy but slick?



Matumbi surprised and compromised

PHOTO: JOHN ANDOW

MATUMBI *Seven Seals (Harvest)*

An inconsequential and flabby album, "Seven Seals" hopefully represents no more than a clearing of the decks and drack for Matumbi, undoubtedly the country's most accomplished reggae band.

Their six-year career has been blighted by legal and business wrangles throughout, their unsatisfactory ties with the Trojan label preventing the general release of an album of original material under their own name until now.

"Seven Seals" boasts eight tracks, three of which have previously been available — "Music In The Air" and "Guide Us" made up both sides of a 12" disc mix on the band's own label last year while "Rock" was their Harvest debut single this summer. The majority of the others have been in the can in some form or another for months on end, waiting for the old contracts to expire and the various injunctions to be lifted.

Now, more than most, Matumbi really do deserve success, but this album sadly reeks of the classic case of a band watering down their music in a desperate bid for Babylon's playlist.

Rootsy but slick? In fact, Matumbi have always possessed a certain soulful slickness — peerless harmonies, gently rocking spaced-out guitar, a woolly rolling bass and occasional muted horns have been their trademarks in the two years or so that I've been going to see them — but never have they been as undynamic and insubstantial as on "Seven Seals".

"Guide Us", "Hypocrite", "Hook Deh", "Music In The Air" and "Money" are all more or less instantly disposable, their feeble lyrics clouded in Jahspeak. Based loosely around a "Don't you fall on I" chant, "Rock" is no better and ends the album on a stodgy note with a tedious instrumental passage.

And then there's the last track on side one, Matumbi's answer to the strident bravado of Fab Macca's *Crossroads* music — the theme tune for a television soap opera! Who knows, maybe "Empire Road" will start a new trend? Are we ready for Big Youth's *Coronation Street* toast — "Love Thy Neighbour Ina Dub"?

The one halfway memorable song on the whole set is the gently lilting "Bluebeat And Ska", its lyrics unwittingly ironic in the face of the rest of the goods on show: "Will somebody tell me what happened to rock steady/Won't somebody let me know where is Bluebeat and Ska?"

Sure, as a whole, "Seven Seals" is a hell of a lot harder than the homogenised covers of early soul hits like "Brother

Louie" and "Funky Stuff" that Matumbi were cutting for Trojan in the early '70s. But, considering the band's stature in 1978 — and the fact that their mainstay Dennis "Blackbeard" Bovelle has already produced one of the best dub albums of the year in "Strictly Dub Wise" with the help of vocalist Bagga Fagan, drummer Jah Bunny and percussionist Fergus Jones — you expect it to come better than this.

Wretched green vinyl too
Adrian Thrills

NICK GILDER *City Nights (Chrysalis)*

DAVID KUBINEC *Some Things Never Change (A&M)*

Nick Gilder is the strange androgynous figure who turned up a few weeks ago on TOTP to sing his American hit single "Hot Child In The City". You probably thought he'd sprung out of nowhere (well, I did); but no, he's also had a chart-topper in Canada, and "City Nights" is his second album for Chrysalis. The first, "You Know Who You Are", is directionless wimpop with Gilder coming on like an ersatz Marc Bolan.

"City Nights" is much better. Mike Chapman produced three of the tracks — including "Hot Child" — and Peter Coleman, who handles the rest of the album, preserves Chapman's distinctively punchy approach. Strong, basic drums and bass, fuzzy guitars and Gilder's high, attractive voice turn out a series of catchy teenybop rock tunes, at least half of which could serve as hit singles.

Most are more uptempo than "Hot Child", and the lyrics are pretty silly; but only the overambitious "Fly High" and "Rockaway" are failures. The rest is fine — trashy and old-fashioned, but very well done and thoroughly

enjoyable when you're in the mood for light pop sensuality.

Old-fashioned music of a different kind features on "Some Things Never Change". To judge by the album sleeve and the ad. campaign, David Kubinec is being sold as a wacky individualist — a dangerous play since the only evidence of this in his music is a predilection for yelping. Otherwise his vocal mannerisms are reminiscent of David Bowie (and "Out In The Rain" is very similar to "Space Oddity"), but his musical vision is much less interesting. In fact, it's almost non-existent.

With John Cale producing and playing keyboards, and sessioners like Chris Spedding and Ollie Halsall, the music is competent and often pleasant but Kubinec is a very derivative songwriter with little to say of his own. "The Elf Sires" is silly; the rest good, but ordinary. Cold, knowing rock.

Some people have compared him to Steve Harley and Queen. Well, he's better than them — but so is total silence.

Graham Lock

SWINGING BLUE JEANS *Best Of... (EMI)*

The Blue Jeans were one of the Mersey groups who were famous for 15 minutes each at the height of Beatlemania. They had three hit singles in 1964: "Hippy Hippy Shake", "Good Golly Miss Molly" and "You're No Good".

Lead singer Ray Ennis sounded a bit like John Lennon doing his vintage rock'n'roll routine, and the music had a fair bit of vigour despite the inevitably tinny sound. The three hit singles would have made a nice EP. But a 20-track album? Somebody's got to be kidding.

Bob Edmunds



ANYTIME...

SHAM 69



'THAT'S LIFE'
THE NEW ALBUM

Roots the easy way

ERIC CLAPTON
Backless (ASO)

"Backless" is Eric Clapton's best album since his 1974 classic "461 Ocean Boulevard".

As with "Boulevard", the accent is on understatement, be it Marcy Levy's back-up vocal on "Promises", the new single, or Clapton's dobro whining away in the background of the same song. Even the album's magnum blues, the guitarist's arrangement of "Early In The Morning", relies not so much on guitar excess as a sublime use of economy.

Clapton's recent records have left quite a lot to be desired. Despite the inclusion of Bob Dylan's "Sign Language" and a truly devastating blues in "Double Trouble", Clapton's "Reason To Cry" was directionless and inadequately produced.

Last year's "Slowhand" displayed Eric's current infatuation with country music, but lacked good material and inspiration. For "Backless" Clapton has retained the production services of Glyn Johns, but with better results. There's a refreshing live ambience to "Backless" and its deceptively lazy American sound.

"Roll It" as likely as not written in the studio, even has that earthy, spartan quality of the Stones' "Exile On Main Street". It's similar to "Ready" from "Boulevard" but, instead of featuring a duet between Eric and Yvonne Elliman (now departed from the fold and chasing her own star), the song sees Ms Levy take care of the vocal while Clapton makes with some quietly effective slide.

"Early In The Morning" is also high on atmosphere. It smacks of beer-stained bars and thick, thick smoke haze. The mix is deliciously blurred. Clapton's slide almost indistinguishable from the uncredited harp blowing. Jamie Oldaker's drumming is incendiary, the ending is pure Cream circa 1968.

Following "Early In The Morning" "Promises" works wondrously as well. The first time I heard it was disappointed by its apparent lack of muscle — slight was the word — but repeated plays reveal a disarming simplicity that's unsurprisingly not a million miles removed from J J Cate.

In the tradition of "After Midnight" and more recently "Cocaine", Cate's sensual "I'll Make Love To You Anytime" is included. In keeping with



The artist as intrepid musicologist.

the mood of the album, it's a dirtier adaptation than the version of "Cocaine" which graced "Slowhand".

Clapton has provided himself with good material by relying heavily on other people's. Dylan actually gave him six songs for the album, and two, "Walk Out On The Rain" and "If I Don't Be There By Morning", opening tracks on side one and two

respectively, have surfaced. Neither are outstanding, though the latter, a straightforward uptempo rock song in the tradition of "New Morning", features good chord changes. But for the credits (Dylan co-wrote both with Howie Springs, one of his back-up singers), it's doubtful if anyone would guess their authorship.

Clapton's own best

composition on the album, "Golden Ring", is far more distinguished. An acoustic strum, the song would be well worth considering for adaptation by Emmylou Harris.

All in all an unassuming and quietly satisfying album from the much-maligned Mr C that stays closer to his blues and R&B roots than either of his last two releases.

Steve Clarke

blend; he can harmonise nicely and is possessed of an enviable vocal range.

The trouble is that Rabin the producer compounds Rabin the vocalist's lack of personality and/or emotion by quadruple-tracking everything into oblivion, making his sound even more like everybody else than he does already.

Rabin the songwriter is a complete disaster; all the usual noises and changes and postures from macho to sensitive. The end result is moderately impressive. Does the world really need a one-man Boston or Foreigner? He'll clean up in the States, even though he had to come to London to get his Chrysalis deal.

Van Duren is, superficially at least, a more entertaining proposition. He looks like a geezer with something vaguely approximating a sense of humour, as evidenced by his album title, appearance the looks like Phil McNeill before he had his haircut and the fact that the album is dedicated to Groucho Marx, comes with a sticker on the shrink-rap announcing "Contains 13 hit singles" and so forth. Plus the album's on Jon Tiven's Big Sound Records, an enterprising indie in the classic tradition.

Lacking Rabin's lofty belief in his own omnipotence, Duren delegates lead guitar as well as drums to others, even calling in occasional extra bassists, saxophonists and percussionists. Plus he didn't produce the record, he actually only co-wrote one of the songs (Jody Stephens, ex-Big Star drummer, helped out) — what a pathetic, dependent helpless wimp. I mean, he only does vocals, acoustic guitars, piano, bass, electric rhythm guitars, organ, synthesiser, percussion, bells and clavinet.

Yep, American bioengineering is still the best in the world; a master race who can make records without the aid of humans (our only bionic musician is Welsh — damn damn damn!). The only trouble is that American mainstream rock/pop creativity is at an all-time low, which is why these records are just as crappy as the current examples of the old-fashioned sort.

Charles Shear Murray

TREVOR RABIN
Trevor Rabin (Chrysalis)
VAN DUREN
Are You Serious? (Big Sound Import)

From sea to shining sea, America (a well-known modern nation) would seem to be full of bright, rugged young men who spent their teens learning to sing in a tuneful manner, play loads of instruments, write songs and piss about in recording studios.

You thought Todd Rundgren and Rick Derringer and Al Kooper and all those guys were prodigies? More fool you, buster. In the future, every American kid will be able to do it.

Trevor Rabin'd be a useful geezer to have in a band: he plays good guitar (albeit in a disastrously conventional HM manner), fair keyboards (albeit in disastrously conventional pomp-rock style), and acceptable bass. His singing is tuneful and

Imports

I feel about Ose's "Adonia" (Egg) the way Clive James feels about *The Swarm*. And they certainly have something in common, both being about drones and flutterings in over-abundance. Ose's drones and flutterings are provided by Herve Picart, a French journalist who recently gave up his Underwood in favour of a Moog, and Richard Pinhas, described as Gaul's "foremost synthesiser expert", who has obviously given up music in order to provide monotony.

Together with drummer Francis Auger they comprise Ose (the band's name comes from the French title of a work by H. P. Lovcraft) a unit that, according to the handout, seeks to prove that "the orgasmachines of the planet Adonia correspond to a form of sensuality that equals music." Frankly, I prefer the disco version of the theme to "Star Wars" — but that's my problem!

Unfortunately I had to sit through one Ose track twice, a cut titled "29 Heures 08 Minutes" (which fortunately only lasts just under seven minutes), this item also appearing on "The Most Progressive European Experience", an Egg sampler that's for promotional purposes. Now I wouldn't mention this disc — which is unavailable to your everyday

punter — but for the fact that it includes some choice cuts from albums that are either just released or about to be released.

Among the even choicer cuts is Tim Blake's "Generator", a synthesiser soiree that is the very antithesis of "Adonia", being a dotty but endearing pure pop affair that you can dance to, chant along with or merely add to your growing collection of Gong offshoots. The message is then — the new Blake album, whatever it is called, ("Tim Blake's New Jerusalem" — Ed) could be worth tuning into.

The mighty Moog also plays a part on "Free Smiles" (Arista-Novus), a live at Montreux set from Mike Mainieri and Warren Bernhardt, Mainieri, who plays vibes, also handles a synth-vibe, which triggers a Moog synthesiser, while sidekick Bernhardt, a keyboardman, also has a synth plugged in. But their music is hardly of the sterile, gee-whiz, weird category much in vogue with the current crop of skelet-grabbing astral-taxi riders. For Messrs Mainieri and Bernhardt, who obviously remember the MJQ with some affection, possess considerable warmth and humour and sound as if they have some affinity with planet Earth.

Fred Dellar

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Paranoia the easy way

PHIL MANZANERA

K-Scope (Polydor)
Phil Manzanera's plain man's music is a dreary, potentially immensely sellable collection that proves conclusively that gentle Phil was the plainest of all the plain characters in Roxy Music, and that he really is in love with the bland, modulated and sedate.

Or does it? "K-Scope" is a very cosy, sequential product that seems more indulgent than paranoid. And yet it exploits custom and causes with a narrow greed that I can't help wondering (hoping) is an attempt at displaying a subdued, symbolic uneasiness with contemporary satisfactions, cultural blindness and general slackness.

Can plain Phil really be so enraptured with the sapped, safe and smooth, as hinted at in previous long players, or is all not as it seems? Is playful Phil being sly and naughty? If so, this is a clumsy, careless deception. It has been voiced before that cheerful Phil maybe aims to produce a work that both satirises and works as (intelligent) easy listening — a hope that furry Phil is not as soft and susceptible as he appears. "K-Scope" all but strangles such thoughts.

Manzanera's records have always been clean and restrained, so maybe sensitive Phil fancies himself as the sensible, sophisticated yet somehow avant-garde rock commentator, a sort of risky Phil Collins. But his fellible fascination with the undistinguished, unexciting and blank is so synthetic and insubstantial; even any subversive messages get saturated by the destructive, demeaning gloss and grace of the passive presentation. Manzanera has lately favoured.

And "K-Scope" has little of the furtive edginess that made patches of some of his previous works if not exactly exotic, then contagious. It is a horribly civilised collection straining to be decorative and shows no signs of anxiety.

The opening two cuts, the b-side and a-side of the current single, "K-Scope" and "Remote Control", are smart and instrumentally accurate, but over-acted and too obvious — a casual complexity with an oily tone. They're certainly not as vibrant and as vivid as similar exercises on "Diamond Head".

The following three are dehydrated dance interpretations, again firmly and reliably structured yet overridingly dutiful and derivative. The six minute "Cuban Crisis" is witty, theoretically acceptable rock-reggae. The five minute nihilistic disco rattle "Hot Spot" is the record's prime example of a bad conceptual balance between message, medium and motive. "Numbers" either intentionally or coincidentally quotes Rose Royce's "Love Don't Live Here Anymore" and develops into a well behaved Average White Band graft.

Side two is less overtly voyeuristic, more intricate and spasmodically engaging. There's nothing speculative, breathtaking or definitive, but after the ordinary "Slow Motion TV" and the vulnerable "Gone Flying", the dainty instrumental "N-Shit" is sweet, if inconsequential. Similarly, after the mood balled "Walking Through Heavens Door", the dignified "You Are Here" (originally the album's title) is a careful, mournful way to finish a cluttered and isolated set.

Manzanera plays all the instruments on "You Are

Here", whilst elsewhere the record is a typically, necessarily democratic work. It fails to achieve the blasted, mobile blend of "Diamond Head", where Manzanera was an active, inquisitive catalyst for those around him.

Of the ten tracks, only the three instrumentals are composed unaided. The contributing musicians include Paul Thompson (drums), John Wetton (vocals), Francis Monkman (piano), David Skinner (keyboards), Simon Ainley (rhythm guitar), Neal Finn, Kevin Godley and Lol Creme (backing vocals) and fluctuate around a central unit of Simon Phillips (drums), Bill McCormick (bass, drums and vocals), Mel Collins (sax), Tim Finn (lead vocals) and Eddie Rayner (keyboards).

Competently classy, cosmetic and objective — am I falling into the trap, missing the point? I fear not. The more I play this album, the more sincere and straightforward it becomes. My first reactions were to look for something that isn't there, hoping that pleasant Phil has an ulterior motive. They rapidly evaporate. This is nothing more than a versatile, varied but mundane set, another uninspiring, predictable episode in the Roxy Music plain chap saga.

Paul Morley

EDDIE HENDERSON

Mahal (Capitol)

A staid and weakened but perhaps logical continuation of Herbie Hancock's two broadminded and shrewd early '70s electronic and large-scale instrumental albums, "Crossings" and "Sextant".

Eddie Henderson (nobody's fool, trumpet and flugelhorn) and Hancock (The Master Spirit, Fender Rhodes,

none of the essential ambition, curiosity or true speculation (even theatre) of the actual 'new wave'.

Everywhere you look, they fail.

Although they can play their instruments. Apparent virtuosos George Csapo (lead voice, violin, keyboards, synthesiser), Nick Michaels (guitars and vocals), Everton Williams (bass and vocals), and Pat Dowling (drums and vocals) graft hard but indistinctly. And they just don't know what to do with their ability, lacking even the inspired, innocent inventiveness of mentors Purple and company.

Not one of this record's ten dusty songs has the attractive verve, excitability or accidental delight of a "Black Night" or a "Paranoid", the naive tension and structure of an "Alright Now", the neo-metaphysical slashing of Thin Lizzy, the minor thrill of a "Neat Neat Neat" even. The album is a witless and shapeless jumble of unemphatic, drab Who outtake rock songs.

These songs' pitifully pretentious philosophical statements (titles like "Summer Wine", "I Gotta Go", "The Fiddler", "Clown In The Crowd", "Odd Man Out", "You're A Dreamer" — take it from there...) sketch shaky and shaming lines about confusion, alienation and concern. They make Jimmy Pursey seem like Herman Hesse. The last track on side two, "Nothing New" (a typically messy song), says much about "Crash Landing's" grey contents.

The lyrics are printed on the sleeve. The album is less spirited (even) than their last. Hippocampus designed the sleeve. What more can I say? Bye Bye?

Paul Morley



IAN DICKSON

clarinet, ARP 2600, ARP string ensemble, mini-moog, etc., etc.) lead a capable and clever 12-piece that includes Benny Maupin (tenor sax and saxello), Julian Priester (trombones), Hubert Laws (flute) and Paul Jackson (bass).

These are seven polite, proper instrumentals with titles such as "Butterfly",

"Emotions", "Prance On" and "Ecstasy"; they're full, active and superlatively performed, yet inevitably predictable and unadventurous. Themes, textures and details are easily anticipated. Solos, phrasing and phrasing are dull clichés.

Everything echoes the arrangements and patterns of those two earlier albums, but is, of course, farked up with

heaps of sugar. The new jazz? This has no unity and no expression. It's functional and stylised.

Paul Morley

ELVIS PRESLEY

Elvis' 40 Greatest (RCA)

We-e-e-e-e-e-e-e-e-e, it's a... Basic entire history of Elvis for blockheads, and it's on pink vinyl too (hurry hurry hurry). One side is devoted to the early '50s, one to the late '50s, one to the '60s and one to the '70s. The '50s stuff is all great with the exception of "Love Me Tender" (I have this recurrent nightmare about drowning in treacle, doctor) and "Old Shep" (cringe city, though I must admit that Ol' El could probably have put me under the table with the rest of the sob sisters if he'd cut a couple of decent cat songs), and the other album contains maybe half a dozen good songs, including the absolutely treble-ace version of "Fever" that kicks off the third side.

My advice, popkids, would be to leave this turkey in Woolworths (where it belongs) and latch onto both volumes of "The '56 Sessions" and the first post-Army album "Elvis Is Back" — that is if classic no-gristle Grade A Elvis is what you're after. If you like his more recent stuff, consult your dealer.

Charles Shear Murray



Stuck in the middle with who?

BETHNAL

Crash Landing (Vertigo)

Bethnal's irritating and unchallenged 'wise', 'moral', 'experienced' and 'shrewd' veneer has given them an automatic respect and reputation that their regressive and heavy-handed music, glazed and self-conscious lyrics and crude, often sexist stage antics have no right to merit.

A kid glove press acceptance, a convenient, topical multi-racial integration (which surely should just be taken as natural and not something to boast about), a frequently broadcast strong will, an acclaimed open-mindedness to the apparent old and new rock waves, and a relationship with idol and wizened observer Peter Townshend (pompously previewed as a musical adviser though not credited as such), which merely emphasises the narrow-mindedness and smugness of both parties, has solidly combined to supply the East London quartet with an auspicious image. If not

actual success. The above front has given Bethnal good protection for their actual failure.

Musically, their sound has never been examined, just accepted as powerfully eclectic. The misleading but romantically feasible theory was that Bethnal possessed the (mythical) penetrative skill and imagination of the 'good old' turn of the decade progressive rock (sigh) bands, their obsessive, laudable desire for technical superiority and the energy, direction and social commitment of the mid-'70s punk rock people.

This meant (so it went) that they were musical (whatever that means, but friends always used to tell me that Led Zep were more 'musical' than Buzzcocks) and relevant. Perfect? All the wunnerful advantages of both genres and all the crass, gross disadvantages discarded. The ideal modern rock group?

Truth is, Bethnal incorporate all the heavily disguised inadequacies, the indulgence, self-satisfaction and self-deception of early '70s progressive rock, and



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NATIONWIDE GIG GUIDE



THE BOOMTOWN RATS played the first leg of their autumn tour back in October, then devoted November to recording sessions and overseas trips. But now they're back on the road with the second leg, aptly named their "Seasonal Turkey Tour", and coinciding with their biggest chart success to date. They open at Bracknell (Saturday), Guildford (Sunday), Exeter (Monday) and Cardiff (Tuesday).

Thursday

Aberystwyth College of Librarianship: **Here & Now**
 Basildon Upstairs at Turkeys: **Grinder**
 Belfast The Pound: **The Doomed**
 Belfast Ulster Hall: **Darts**
 Birmingham Hippodrome: **Jasper Carrott (until Saturday)**
 Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Orphan**
 Birmingham The Bell: **The Clerks**
 Brighton Richmond Hotel: **Nicky & The Dots**
 Bristol Crookers: **Wheelz**
 Bristol Grenary: **Bullets**
 Bristol Polytechnic: **Johnny Moped/Witiz**
 Bristol University: **Gazza**
 Carnock Troubadour: **The Amazing Dark Horse**
 Cardiff Sophia Gardens: **David Essex/The Real Thing**
 Chatham Central Hall: **Mike Harding**
 Cheltenham Town Hall: **Generation X**
 Coventry Warwick University: **Blast Furnace/John Potter's Clay**
 Coventry Wyken Pippin: **Reno**
 Derby Assembly Rooms: **Showaddy**
 Doncaster First Aid Centre: **Belt & Braces Band**
 Dundee Bogar Hall: **Boys Of The Lough**
 Edinburgh The Place: **Lift Of The Road**
 Flint The Raven: **Juggernaut**
 Galashiels Tallman: **Charley Browne**
 Glasgow Apollo Centre: **Gene Pitney/Co-Ze**
 Glasgow Pavilion Theatre: **John Martyn**
 Halesowen Tiffany's: **Blazer Blazer**
 Harlow Victoria Hall: **The Sods**
 Ilford The Greenbrook: **Jerry The Ferret**
 Keele University: **Stadium Dogs**
 Lancaster University: **Magazine**
 Langley Mill The Club: **Scene Stealer**
 Leeds Fan Club at Brannigan's: **The Boy-Friends**
 Leeds Florde Green Hotel: **CG&S**
 Leeds Polytechnic: **Wilko Johnson's Solid Senders**
 Leeds Royal Park Hotel: **Just Frank**

Leeds Viva Wine Bar: **Alwoodley Jets**
 London Barnes Bull's Head: **Chris Barber Band**
 London Camden Brecknock: **Scarecrow**
 London Camden Dingwells: **The Retainers**
 London Camden Electric Ballroom: **Sham 89/Cimerons**
 London Camden Music Machine: **Zaine Griff**
 London Canning Town Bridge House: **The Innates**
 London Chelsea Breaking Point: **Rogue Kering**
 London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **The Hollywood Killers/Nicky & The Dots**
 London Fulham Golden Lion: **Fame**
 London Fulham Greyhound: **The Foundations (for three days)**
 London Hammersmith Odeon: **Boney M**
 London Hammersmith The Swan: **Straight 8**
 London Hammersmith The Rutland: **Fred Rickshaw's Hot Goolies**
 London Islington Hope & Anchor: **The Sinceros**
 London Kennington Goldsmiths School of Art: **This Heat**
 London Kennington The Cricketers: **Manyana**
 London Kensington De Villiers Bar: **Gold Dust Twins**
 London Kensington The Nashville: **Gonzalez / Liz Christian Band**
 London Marquee Club: **No Dice**
 London Regent's Park Bedford College: **Johnny Cope**
 London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **Barry Richardson Band**
 London Twickenham Winning Post: **Noel Murphy**
 London Wembley Arena: **Lindisfarne / John Miles / Frankie Miller's Full House / Chris Ree / Bandit / Mike Elliott**
 London W14 The Kensington: **The Young Bucks**
 Macleefield Krumbs: **The Accelerators**
 Manchester Apollo Theatre: **Olivia Newton-John**
 Manchester Band on the Wall: **Swift**

Manchester Kelly's: **Knives / Withal Damage**
 Manchester Mayflower: **Squeeze**
 Manchester Polytechnic: **The Cruisers**
 Manchester Russell Club: **Private Sector**
 Mansfield Westfield Folk House: **Art Failure**
 Melton Mowbray Painted Lady: **The Cresters (for three days)**
 Middlesbrough Teesside Polytechnic: **Mi-Tension**
 Newcastle City Hall: **The Rezillos/The Undertones**
 Nottingham Club Malibu: **Forwards**
 Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **Test Tube Babies**
 Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Lap Region**
 Perth Blairgowrie Gig: **Acker Bilk Band**
 Peterborough Wirtana Stadium: **The Clash / The Sits**
 Portsmouth Guildhall: **Mary O'Hara**
 Portsmouth Polytechnic: **Pere Ubu**
 Poynton Folk Centre: **Jeremy Taylor**
 Reading Bones Club: **Screwdriver**
 Rotherham Dickens Inn: **The Sneakers**
 Rugby College: **Incredible Kidz Band**
 Seaford Third World: **The Flies**
 Sheffield City Hall: **Devo / Doll By Doll**
 Sheffield Limit Club: **White Horses**
 Sheffield Polytechnic: **Xero**
 Sheffield University: **Mud**
 Shrewsbury Music Hall: **Spud**
 Southport Scarisbrick Hotel: **Orchestral Manoeuvres In The Dark**
 Strathepple Spa Pavilion: **The Tools**
 Swansea Circus Club: **29th & Dearborn**
 Wantage The Swan: **Scratch**
 Withernsea Grand Pavilion: **Tavaras**
 York Barge Club: **Defunked**
 York Revolution Club: **Ethel The Frog**

Friday

Aberdeen College of Education: **The Tools**
 Aberdeen Music Hall: **Boys Of The Lough**
 Andria Pyle Club: **Underhand Jones**
 Aldham Red Lion: **Agenda**
 Aylesbury Kings Head: **The Liggers**
 Bangor University: **Here & Now**
 Bath Academy of Art: **90° Inclusive**
 Bath Brilling Arts Centre: **Robin Williams-son / Mary Black**
 Bath University: **Alberto Y Lost Trios Paranoias / The Police**
 Bailey Crumpets: **Marsella**
 Belfast The Pound: **The Doomed**
 Birmingham Aston University: **Generation X**
 Birmingham Barbarella's: **Supercharge**
 Birmingham Barrel Organ: **Wide Boys**
 Birmingham Elizabethan Days: **Bad Earth**
 Birmingham Odeon: **Devo / Doll By Doll**
 Birmingham Railway Hotel: **Spitfire**
 Birmingham The Sheldon: **Ocean Boulevard**
 Birmingham University: **Generation X**
 Blackpool Northbrook Castle: **The Accelerators**
 Bradford Royal Standard Hotel: **Just Frank**
 Brighton Buccanerg: **Fan Club**
 Brighton Sussex University: **Pere Ubu**
 Bristol Colston Hall: **Lindisfarne**
 Bristol Crookers: **Wheelz**
 Bristol University: **The Albion Band**
 Burton 75 Club: **Blazer Blazer**
 Bury St. Edmunds The Griffin: **Gussar**
 Cambridge The Alma: **Spring Offensive**
 Cardiff University: **Batholomew**
 Chatterham North Glos. College: **Mechanical Horsetrough & Cocky**
 Chester Labour Club: **Why Control / Coventry Young Men / Co. Starz**
 Coventry Theatre: **Showaddywaddy**
 Coventry Leisure Centre: **Mike Harding**
 Doncaster First Aid Centre: **Belt & Braces Band**
 Dudley J.B.'s Club: **Fischer-Z**
 Eastbourne Lottbridge Arms: **The Little Jimmies**
 Edinburgh Clouds: **The Lurkers**
 Edinburgh Odeon: **John Martyn**
 Edinburgh University: **Mi-Tension**
 Exeter University: **Witiz**
 Gourock The Ashton: **Chou Pehrot**
 Harrow College of Higher Education: **Racing Cars / Helicopters**
 Hadden Bridge Carlton Club: **Reducers / Drive By Night**
 Harford College of Education: **Zaine Griff**
 Ilford The Cranbrook: **Jerry The Ferret**
 Ipswich Gaumont Theatre: **Fairport Convention**
 Kingswinford Woodman Inn: **Johnny Cope**
 Kirkcaldy Dutch Mill: **Simple Minds**
 Lampeter St. David's College: **Muscles**
 Leeds Florde Green Hotel: **The Vye**



PETER TOSH has finally made it to Britain, after all the delays and uncertainties due to the controversial injuries he sustained back home in Jamaica. He's only playing a few gigs here, as part of a European tour, but the lucky ones can see him at Manchester (Sunday), Cardiff (Monday), Bradford (Tuesday) and London Rainbow (Wednesday) — with a second Rainbow show to follow next Thursday.

Leeds Riley Smith Hall: **Red Eye**
 Leeds Viva Wine Bar: **Ethel The Frog**
 Lincoln Bishop Grosseteste College: **Paradox**
 Liverpool Bradford Hotel: **Swift**
 Liverpool Christ College: **Scene Stealer**
 Liverpool Eric's: **Sore Throat**
 Liverpool Polytechnic: **After The Fire**
 London Acton Kings Head: **Paz**
 London Camden Electric Ballroom: **Sham 89 / Cimerons**
 London Camden Music Machine: **Cafe Jacques / Fame**
 London Camden Southampton Arms: **Jellyroll Blues Band**
 London Canning Town Bridge House: **Jackie Lynton's Happy Days**
 London Covent Garden Rock Garden: **Grand Hotel**
 London Elephant & Castle Southbank Polytechnic: **The Young Bucks**
 London Fulham Golden Lion: **Ricky Cool & The Icebergs**
 London Hammersmith Odeon: **Boney M**
 London Hammersmith The Swan: **The Piranhas**
 London Harrow Rd. Windsor Castle: **Steve Linton Band**
 London Islington Hope & Anchor: **The Dogs**
 London Kensington Queen Elizabeth College: **Cade Belle / Squeeze / Panties**
 London Marquee Club: **Spud**
 London Notting Hill Old Swan: **The Crack**
 London Paddington College: **Moonstone / Poser**
 London Putney Star & Garter: **Greig & Nigel's Folk and Blues Night**
 London Putney White Lion: **Snoots**
 London School of Economics: **Viv Stan-shall**
 London Stoke Newington Pegasus: **The Monos**
 London Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: **Revelation**
 London Willesden White Hart: **Crazy Cavan 'n' The Rhythm Rockers**
 London W10 Acklam Hall: **Pressure Shocks / Live Wire**
 London W.C.1 Institute of Education: **This Heat / Metabolist**
 Manchester Apollo Theatre: **Olivia Newton-John**
 Manchester Mayflower: **Dave Lewis Band**
 Middlesbrough Rock Garden: **White Horses**
 Middlesbrough Town Hall: **Tavaras**
 Milton Keynes College: **Bullets**
 Newcastle University: **Magazine / The Bishops**
 Nottingham Club Malibu: **Thriller**
 Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: **Last Call**
 Nottingham Imperial Hotel: **Slip Hazard & The Blizzards**
 Nottingham University: **Japan / Gaffe**
 Oxford Corn Dolly: **Dog Watch**
 Oxford Oranges & Lemons: **Scratch**
 Oxford Polytechnic: **Gillian**
 Oxford Westminster College: **Split Rivit**
 Perth Blairgowrie Gig: **Acker Bilk Band**
 Plymouth Hoe Theatre: **"Salute to Satohime" with Humphrey Lyttelton / Alex Welsh / George Chisholm**
 Raleigh Cross Club: **The Olympic Runners**
 Ryde I.O.W. Prince Consort: **Last Straw**
 Salford University: **Frankie Miller's Full House**
 Seahouses Yilling Club: **Chris Barber Band**
 Sheffield Limit Club: **The Straits**
 Sheffield Polytechnic: **The Fabulous Poodles / CG&S**
 Sheffield University: **Mud**
 Southampton Gaumont Theatre: **Eric Clapton Band / Muddy Waters**
 Southend Cliffs Pavilion: **Cliff Richard**
 Sunderland Polytechnic: **Punishment Of Luxury / The Wall**
 Tamworth Arts Centre: **Incredible Kidz Band**
 Walford Herts College: **The Detroit Emeralds**
 Wokingham Rock Club: **Hazzard**
 Wolverhampton Lafayette: **Penetration**
 Wolverhampton Rose & Crown: **Devo**
 York Revolution Club: **The Sneakers**
 York University: **Wilko Johnson's Solid Senders**
 York Winning Post: **2TV**

CONTINUES OVER



ALBERTO Y Lost Trios Paranoias are always well worth seeing, because their stage show is more than a gig — it's an event. And on their latest round of dates — starting out at Bath (Friday), Sheffield (Sunday) and Oldham (Monday) — there's the added bonus of seeing that up-and-coming outfit The Police as special guest artists. If you're ready and willing to get into festive mood, this is the show for you.

CHRISTMAS DEADLINES

DUE TO the upcoming 'seasonal holidays, please note the following early deadlines for Gig Guide entries covering the Christmas and New Year period:

Details of gigs taking place up to and including January 3 must be received at this office by not later than Thursday December 14, to ensure publication.

Gigs taking place during the week of January 4-9 must be received here by Thursday December 21, at the latest.

So don't delay, in case you forget. Help us and help yourself by popping them in the post right away to: Gig Guide, New Musical Express, 5-7 Carnaby Street, London W1V 1PG.



BONEY M couldn't have come to Britain at a better time. They're currently the most consistent singles sellers in this country, and look like having THE big Christmas hit of the year with their latest release "Mary's Boy Child". They're at London Hammersmith (Thursday and Friday), Birmingham (Saturday), Liverpool (Sunday), Manchester (Monday) and Brighton (Tuesday). All sold out, though.

NATIONWIDE GIG GUIDE

Saturday

Aberdeen Capitol Theatre: John Martyn
Aberllyn Six Belle Cray
Basilton Double Six: John Potter's Clay
Birmingham Barberella's: Dave Lewis
Birmingham Barrel Organ: Reno
Birmingham Bogards: Quarts
Birmingham (King's Heath) Hare & Hounds: Dave Peabody
Birmingham Mayfair Suite: Penetration
Birmingham Odeon: Boney M
Birmingham Railway Hotel: School Sports
Birmingham Town Hall: Robin Williamson's Merry Band
Birmingham University: George Melly & The Feetwarmers
Blackwell Bridge & Crouse: Hazzard
Blackwell Sports Centre: The Boomtown Rats
Bradford Royal Standard Hotel: Just Frank
Bradford University: Mud
Broughton Centre: Eric Clapton Band / Muddy Waters
Bristol Crown Cellar Bar: The Wild Beasts
Bristol Granary: Cafe Jacques
Canterbury Odeon: Sham 69/Cimerons
Canthakon St. Helier Arms: Vernon & The G.I.'s
Caversham The Garage: The Beavers/Smeg & The Pretty Bos-Lambs
Chelmsford Institute of Higher Education: Partles
Cheltenham Town Hall: Crazy Cavan 'n' The Rhythm Rockers
Chester Deaside Leisure Centre: Tavaros
Chiddingfold Six Bells: Possum
Cromer West Runton Pavilion: Brown Sugar
Cumbernauld Golden Eagle Hotel: Flat Out
Derby Kings Hall: Magazine
Derby Mickleover College: Bullets
Doncaster Bircotes Leisure Centre: Frankie Miller's Full House
Dudley J.B.'s Club: Strife
Edinburgh Clouds: Skrewdriver
Falmouth Ship Club: Matchbox
Fife St. Andrew's University: The Lunkers
Folkestone Leas Cliff Hall: Samson
Glasgow Strathclyde University: Mi-Tension
Glasgow The Magpie: Underhand Jones
Halifax Good Mood Club: Blazer Blazer
Hanley Rose & Crown: Any Trouble
Hornchurch The Bull: Jerry The Ferret
Huddersfield Coach House: Ashwoodley Jets
Inverness Minton Motel: The Tools
Ipswich Royal William: Witchynde
Ipswich Tracey's: Murus
Keele University: Swift
Kirkcaldy Delnabo Country Club: Acher Bilk Band
Leeds Floride Green Hotel: No Dice / The Kiddie Band
Leeds Trinity College: After The Fire
Leeds Viva Wine Bar: Knife Edge
Leicester University: Fairport Convention
Lincoln A.J.'s Club: Ester
Liverpool C.F. Mott College: Scene Stealer
London Battersea Arts Centre: G.F.R./Massagan
London Camden Dingwells: Teresa D'Abreu Band
London Camden Electric Ballroom: Wayne Cousins & The Electric Chairs / Gang Of Four/Colourapes
London Chelsea The Wheatheaf: The V.I.P.'s
London Fulham Golden Lion: Simon Townsend Band
London Hammersmith Odeon: Devo/Doll By Doll
London Harrow Rd Windsor Castle: Zaine Giff/The Vye
London Kensington The Nashville: Ivor Biggun/Johnny G/John Denver/Duff
London Kingsbury Bandwagon: Toad The Wet Sprocket
London Manor Park Three Rebbits: Harlem Scam
London Marquee Club: Speed-O-Meters
London New Barnet Duke of Lancaster: Earthbound
London North-East Polytechnic: Chas & Dave
London Rainbow Theatre: Mike Harding
London Roehampton Friar's Institute: The Young Bucks
London School of Economics: Viv Sten-shall
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: Big Chief With Dick Hackstad-Smith
London Stratham: Philippa Fawcett
College: The Secret/Shrink/Nicky Shy
London University College: Dog Watch/64 Spoons/Nicky & The Dots
London Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: Revelation
London Wembley Arena: David Essex/The Rich Kids/The Real Thing /The Movies/Nick van Eede
London West Hampstead Railway Hotel: Split Riffs
London Woolwich Thames Polytechnic: Supcharge
Manchester Apollo Theatre: Showaddywaddy
Manchester Belle Vue: Rod Stewart
Manchester Belle Vue: Here & Now / 7th Angel / Danny & The Dressmakers
Manchester University: Wilko Johnson's Solid Senders
Middlesbrough Pool Garden: CG65
Newcastle Rockers Theatre: Chris Barber Band
Newcastle Polytechnic: The Clash/The Silts
Northampton County Ground: Japan
Norwich East Angles University: Pere Ubu
Norwich Bodge House: Boney M & The Jets
Nottingham Boat Club: White Horses
Nottingham Club Malibu: Gaffa/Harry Stephens/The Press/Low C
Nottingham Hearty Good Follow: Outward Bound
Nottingham University: Bethnal
Plymouth Hoe Theatre: Barney Kessel Trio
Poole Chequers Inn: Fringe Benefit
Portsmouth Polytechnic: China Street
Rochdale Technical College: Reducers/The Tunes
Sheffield Polytechnic: Belt & Braces Band
Shoal Langley College: Spud

Rod's Christmas cracker



ROD STEWART begins his eagerly-awaited British tour this weekend, happy in the knowledge that he's got another smash hit on his hands, plus a new album that's about to emulate the success of his current single. He's playing 16 major concerts around Britain during December, and the first four of these are at Manchester Belle Vue, starting on Saturday. But if you don't have a ticket, there's little chance of getting one now.

Southeast Little Pavilion: Cliff Richard
St. Albans City Hall: Gillan / Teza
Stevenage The Swan: Spring Offensive
Stockton The Dovecot: Mike Westbrook Band
Stowmarket Royal Oak: Griffin
Sunderland Polytechnic: Punishment Of Luxury
Swansea Brangwyn Hall: Lindisfarne
Tottenham Navel Club: The Dogs
Walsell Dirty Duck: Winesap
Warford Red Lion: Redkite
West Bromwich Coach & Horses: Ocean Boulevard
Wishaw Crown Hotel (lunchtime): The Peats
Wolverhampton Polytechnic: Mechanical Horsestrough & Cocky
York Revolution Club: Action Replay

Sunday

Accrington Lakeland Lounge: Whitefire
Birmingham Barberella's: Wild Horses
Birmingham Railway Hotel: CDS 5
Bishops Stortford Old Matings: Antares (lunchtime)/Swing Street (evening)
Blackburn King George's Hall: Frankie Miller's Full House
Bradford Princess Club: Ashwoodley Jets
Bradford Royal Standard Hotel: CDS 5
Bradford Town Gate Sports Club: Vintage
Brighton Alhambra: The Piranhas
Bristol Locarno Generation X
Burnley Thompson Centre: Boys Of The Lough
Canterbury Odeon: Sham 69/Cimerons
Cardiff Top Rank: Lindisfarne
Charnock Richard Park Hall: The Dooleys (for a week)
Chelmsford Chancellor Hall: Pere Ubu/The Human League
Cleethorpes Bunnies Place: The Real Thing
Colchester Embassy Suite: The Detroit Emeralds
Coventry Lanchester Polytechnic: Johnny Copein
Croydon Fairfield Hall: The Three Degrees
Croydon Greyhound: Penetration
Dumfries Stagecoach: The Lunkers
Dundas Royal Centre Hotel: Skrewdriver
Guildford Civic Hall: The Boomtown Rats
Hastings White Rock Pavilion: Mike Harding
Leeds Viva Wine Bar: Deadliner
Liverpool Empire Theatre: Boney M
Liverpool Piccadilly Club: Here And Now/The Tables/Patrick Fitzgerald
London Battersea Nags Head: Jugular Vain
London Canning Town Bridge House: Remus Under Boulevard
London Chiswick John Bull Swift
London Drury Lane Theatre Royal: Ralph McTell/John Williams
London East Ham Ruskin Arms: Dog Watch
London Enfield Hippo Poles: Glass Siren
London Finchley Torrington: Dave Lewis Band
London Hammersmith Odeon: Devo/Doll By Doll
London Harrow Rd Windsor Castle: Zaine Giff/The Vye
London Kensington The Nashville: Ivor Biggun/Johnny G/John Denver/Duff
London Kingsbury Bandwagon: Toad The Wet Sprocket
London Manor Park Three Rebbits: Harlem Scam
London Marquee Club: Speed-O-Meters
London New Barnet Duke of Lancaster: Earthbound
London North-East Polytechnic: Chas & Dave
London Rainbow Theatre: Mike Harding
London Roehampton Friar's Institute: The Young Bucks
London School of Economics: Viv Sten-shall
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: Big Chief With Dick Hackstad-Smith
London Stratham: Philippa Fawcett
College: The Secret/Shrink/Nicky Shy
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London Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: Revelation
London Wembley Arena: David Essex/The Rich Kids/The Real Thing /The Movies/Nick van Eede
London West Hampstead Railway Hotel: Split Riffs
London Woolwich Thames Polytechnic: Supcharge
Manchester Apollo Theatre: Showaddywaddy
Manchester Belle Vue: Rod Stewart
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Newcastle Polytechnic: The Clash/The Silts
Northampton County Ground: Japan
Norwich East Angles University: Pere Ubu
Norwich Bodge House: Boney M & The Jets
Nottingham Boat Club: White Horses
Nottingham Club Malibu: Gaffa/Harry Stephens/The Press/Low C
Nottingham Hearty Good Follow: Outward Bound
Nottingham University: Bethnal
Plymouth Hoe Theatre: Barney Kessel Trio
Poole Chequers Inn: Fringe Benefit
Portsmouth Polytechnic: China Street
Rochdale Technical College: Reducers/The Tunes
Sheffield Polytechnic: Belt & Braces Band
Shoal Langley College: Spud

London Woolwich Tramshed: Five Hand
Reel/Chris Dewhurst
Manchester Apollo Theatre: Peter Tosh
Manchester Belle Vue: Rod Stewart
Manchester Belle Vue: White Horses
Manchester The Venue: No Dice
Newbigin Sports and Community Centre: Acher Bilk Band
Nottingham Boat Club: Art Failure
Nottingham Hearty Good Follow: The Press
Peterborough King Theatre: Chris Barber Band
Portsmouth Cumberland Tavern: Stee Marx
Poynnton Folk Centre: The Drans
Reading Target Club: Juggernaut
Redcar Cosham Bowl: Wilko Johnson's Solid Senders
Redhill Lakens Hotel: The Little Jimmies
Sheffield Little Club: New Jets
Sheffield Polytechnic: Mechanical Horsestrough/Cocky/The Albion Band
Sheffield Top Rank: Alberto Y Lost Trios Paranoias/The Police
Skegness Arcadia Ballroom: Mud
Slough Fulcrum Theatre: The Platters
Southampton Gaumont Theatre: Child
Southend Cliff Pavilion: George Melly and John Clifton's Feetwarmers
Stoke Jollies: Tavaros
Sunderland Empire Theatre: Showaddywaddy
Wakefield Bretton Hall College: Mike Westbrook Band
Wakefield Newton House Club: Snoots
Walsell Dirty Duck (lunchtime): The Amazing Dark Horse

Monday

Amphill Folk Club: Barry Goodman
Birmingham Barberella's: Special Clinic
Birmingham Barrel Organ: The Crack
Birmingham Crown & Cushion: Incredible Kiddie Band
Birmingham Hopwood Waterside Club: Quarts
Birmingham Mercat Cross: Orphan
Birmingham Railway Hotel: Prima Donna
Bolton Institute of Technology: Here & Now / The Fell / Patrick Fitzgerald
Brentwood Hermit Club: Blazer Blazer
Brighton Alhambra: The Molesters
Brude Hippodrome: Child
Bude Widemouth Bay Hotel: Chris Barber Band
Cardiff Sophia Gardens: Peter Tosh
Chaser Smamy: Blitzer/Bop
Chesham Winter Gardens: No Dice
Coventry Warwick University: The Razil-las / The Undertones
Derby Polytechnic: Fashion
Durham University: John Martyn
Exeter University: The Boomtown Rats
Hanley Odeon: Lonnie Donegan (for three days)
Henley Victoria Hall: Jasper Carrott
Hill University: Belt & Braces Band
Hull Cauliflower Hotel: Original East Side Stompers
Leeds Royal Park Hotel: The City Limits
Leeds Viva Wine Bar: John Hedley Haggard Band
Leicester De Montfort Hall: Tavaros
Leicester Granby Halls: The Real Thing
Liverpool The Sportsman: Juggernaut
London Camden Brecknock: Tennis Shoes
London Canning Town Bridge House: Spud
London Fulham Greyhound: Bob Kerr's Whoopie Band
London Hammersmith Odeon: Mi-Tension
London Kensington The Nashville: Bowles Bros. Band

Tuesday

Birmingham Barberella's: No Dice
Birmingham Barrel Organ: Fashion
Birmingham Fighting Cocks: Brujo
Birmingham Odeon: The Platters
Birmingham Railway Hotel: Speed Limit
Bishops Stortford Trid Leisure Centre: Gyp
Bradford St George's Hall: Peter Tosh
Brentwood Youth House: Fred Wedlock
Brighton The Centre: Boney M
Bristol Odeon Hall: Mi-Tension
Cardiff Sophia Gardens: The Boomtown Rats
Croydon Fairfield Hall: The Yetties
Doncaster College: Wide Boys
Dunstable California: Generation X
East Grinstead Clouds: The Piranhas
Frame Martin Theatre: Chris Barber Band
Gateshead Labour Club: Belt & Braces Band
Glasgow Doune Castle: Underhand Jones
Hanley Victoria Hall: Jasper Carrott
Keele University: The Razil-las/The Undertones
Leeds Haddon Hall: Red Eye
Leeds Polytechnic: Magazine
Leeds Viva Wine Bar: Aquas Vita
Leicester De Montfort Hall: Max Boyce
Liverpool Empire Theatre: Lindisfarne
London Barking North-East Polytechnic: Mud
London Camden Dingwells: Charlie Dora's Back Pocket
London Camden Electric Ballroom: Wild Horses/The Physicals
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: Steve Linton Band
London Fulham Greyhound: Richard Digance
London Hammersmith Odeon: Eric Clapton Band/Muddy Waters

London Hammersmith Riverside Studios: Michael Nyman Band
London Harrow Rd Windsor Castle: Blazer Blazer
London Kensington The Nashville: Chas & Dave
London N.11 Orange Tree: Wizz Jones
London Putney Half Moon: Liam Og Flynn
London S.E.1 College of Printing: Pere Ubu
London Sheen The Darby Arms: Freddy's Feetwarmers
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: Tennis Shoes
London West Hampstead Railway Hotel: The Vye/Embryo
London W.14 The Kensington: Beaver
Manchester Apollo Theatre: Child
Manchester Band on the Wall: Fast Cars / Departure / I-Beats
Manchester Belle Vue: Rod Stewart
Norwich St Andrew's Hall: Penetration
Nottingham Hearty Good Follow: Art Failure
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: Gaffa
Nottingham University: Here & Now / Blank Space / Patrick Fitzgerald
Plymouth Fiesta Suite: The Detroit Emeralds
Plymouth Moor: Frankie Miller's Full House
Portsmouth Guildhall: Mike Harding
Sheffield Little Club: The Meltons
Sheffield Tolly College: Streetband
Southend Cliffs Pavilion: The Real Thing
Walsell Dirty Duck: The Amazing Dark Horse
York University: John Martyn

Wednesday

Aberystwyth University: Wilko Johnson's Solid Senders
Birmingham Barberella's: Magazine
Birmingham Barrel Organ: Brujo
Birmingham (Hall Green) The Sherwood Cartoons
Birmingham Railway Hotel: Rainmaker
Birmingham Town Hall: Little Acre / School Sports
Birmingham (Yardley) Bulls Head: Rosie Blackpool Opera House: Lindisfarne
Bradford University: These Four
Bristol University: Mike Harding
Cambridge Civic Theatre: Chris Barber Band
Cardiff University: Frankie Miller's Full House
Cheltenham Plough Inn: Roadsters
Deal Astor Theatre: The Molesters
Eastbourne Congress Theatre: Tavaros
East Grinstead Clouds: The Piranhas
Hartfield Polytechnic: Mechanical Horsestrough & Cocky
Leicester University: Japan
Leeds P.C. Club: Skrewdriver
Leeds Viva Wine Bar: Argus
Leicester University: The Crushers
Liverpool Empire Theatre: Devo/Doll By Doll
Liverpool The Mosaic: Juggernaut
Liverpool University: The Clash/The Silts
London Acton White Hart: The Ruts/The Vye
London Battersea Arts Centre: Nick Cudworth/Charlie Prince
London Camden Brecknock: The Young Bucks
London Camden Dublin Castle: O.K.
London Chadwell Heath Greyhound: Dog Watch
London Fulham Golden Lion: Scene Stealer
London Fulham Greyhound: Girls School
London Hammersmith Odeon: Eric Clapton Band/Muddy Waters
London Islington Hope & Anchor: Left Hand
London Madison Club: Streetband
London Paddington Western Counties: Zilch
London Peckham Montpelier Blue Moon
London Putney Star & Garter: Dana Sinner & Greg's Folk and Blues Showcases
London Rainbow Theatre: Peter Tosh
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: David Rubine's Excess
London Tooting The Castle Vaguely Attractive
London Twickenham St. Mary's College: Spud
London Victoria The Venue: Ninckley's Heroes
London Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: Earthbound
London Walthamstow Town Hall: Revelation
London West Hampstead Railway Hotel: Lightning Rods
London Wimbeldon F.C. Nelson's Club: The Secret/Nicky Shy
Malvern Winter Gardens: The Razil-las/The Undertones
Manchester Apollo Theatre: Cliff Richard
Manchester Belle Vue: Rod Stewart
Manchester Mayflower: Crazy Cavan 'n' The Rhythm Rockers/Matchbox
Manchester University: John Martyn
Middlesbrough Rock Garden: Here & Now/The Tables/Patrick Fitzgerald
Newcastle City Hall: Child
Newport Stowaway Club: Generation X
Nottingham Hearty Good Follow: Gwalhir
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: Some Chicken
Pontypridd Wales Polytechnic: Swift
Reading University: Mud
Salford University: Whitefire
Sheffield City Hall: Max Boyce
Sheffield Little Club: Capital Letters
Sheffield Polytechnic: Hazzard
Soflusk Golden Lion: Orphan
Southampton University: Gillan/Samson
South Woodford Railway Hall: Original East Side Stompers
Stairpad Black Swan Crooked Oak
Stevage The Swan: Quaver
Strking University: 90° Inclusive
Taunton Odeon: The Platters
Torquay Carlton Club: The Detroit Emeralds
Unbridge Brunel University: Pere Ubu
Walsell Isle of Ely College: The Real Thing
Wolverhampton Polytechnic: Band Of Joy/Ricky Cool & The Icebergs
York Arts Centre: Mike Westbrook Band
York Robertus Club: Marselle
York Revolution Club: The Boys

ON THE TOWN

**OOOP!
YAAA!
UNNGH**

(That's right, this is a James Brown review.)

James Brown

Odeon, Hammersmith

It is nearly two years since the James Brown Revue last caroomed through Britain; a period of time in which the man has pulled off no great musical coups, just slipped a couple of points further down the star ratings towards what one could normally say would be certain relegation to the has-been league. Except that only a fool would make so final a judgement about James Brown.

Since as far back as 1964 he has been written off more times than the national debt and each time he has confounded the sceptics. I wouldn't be at all surprised if he's about to do so once more.

Clean-shaven again, and perceptibly slimmer than last time around, Brown looked and performed like he was about five years younger than when he was here in January '77 — even to the extent of increasing his athletics, although of course the splits and spins and knee-drops and so forth are now only an intermittent token reference to the wild non-stop routines with which he once boggled.

Musically, Brown and his band are still quite extraordinary, especially so because they defy current technological trends. Just as in the studio they still usually record "five" (no layers of separate tracks; simply wedge in all together and pick the best out of four or five takes), so on stage they performed without using the house PA, without monitors and without a mixing desk. They simply linked and projected through their own modest array of Marshall amps. And yet, at least on the second show at Hammersmith (the opening set was a bit rough), the sound was better than at any other gig I've seen this year.

Opening as usual with their own brief set, the 10-piece JB's International (3 horns, 2 bass, 2 drums, congas, guitar and organ), several of whom were raw recruits last time, proved to have matured into as tight and exciting a band as any of Brown's previous ensembles, punching out "Hot Pants Road" and a hard-driving, totally illogical but supremely successful, funkified medley of "Thus Spake Whitsname" and "Somewhere Over The Rainbow" before accompanying Martha High & The Lasers, three singers whose versions of some recent soul hits were every bit as good as the originals.

And then to startime... Short, sharp and sassy in black and silver, JB swung straight into a barrage of funk that was to be the predominant force for the next hour or so. He still hasn't cottoned on to the fact that the majority of European fans would prefer a little less sanctified wailing, but at least



X-RAY SPEX. Pic: ROB HALL

Our Lady of St. Consuma's

he proved that he can still get righteously down with "Try Me", a tormented "Georgia On My Mind" and a blistering version of "It's A Man's World" that segued into "Lost Someone" and a succession of tributes to the departed: Otis, Elvis, Janis, Jimi and Wes Montgomery.

The last gave veteran guitarist Jimmy Nolen a chance to break away from his chicken-scratch role; in fact he was further allowed a lengthy blues spot in honour of B.B. King, an unheard-of event in previous Brown shows. Similarly, nearly all the band members were introduced and allowed solos at some point — Hollie Farris

(trumpet), Joe Poff (sax), St. Clair Pinckney (sax) and Johnny Griggs (congs) being especially capable.

For the rest it was shout and shimmy and strut and storm through the old "Cold Sweat", "Get On The Good Foot" etc., the recent "Get Up Offa That Thing", "Body Heat" and the newish "The Spunk" and "Jam" in a solid, meticulously-synchronized performance that had everyone on their feet from the off and still panning hard and hearty as the last strains departed for suburbia.

Papa's bag is still in good shape.

Cliff White



BROWN: has never met Nicholas Parsons. Pic: PENNIE SMITH

X-Ray Spex

Bristol.

If the world turned dayglo, chances are it would look like Tiffany's.

Figure then that this shrine to extreme tackiness and grot is custom-built for Poly Styrene, whose love / hate fascination for the synthetic world, while inspiring most of her lyrics, has also contributed to the disillusionment and illness that's kept her out of the picture for far too long.

Of all the most acclaimed bands to emerge from the thin end of The Wave, X-Ray Spex are one of the least derivative. They're just a high-speed heavy rock band, lucky enough to be fronted by the only New Wave upstart actually to have crossed the borders into mass media acceptance.

It's fairly obvious why she makes it when other contenders don't. She isn't aggressive, she isn't provocative, you couldn't even call her bizarre. If anything, she's just exaggeratedly normal, and hits the spot with an unlikely balance of perverse charm, vulnerability, and a kind of chubby, adolescent vigour; qualities which, together with an exceptional song-writing talent, have produced a debut album that's a firecracker — but a live act that's decidedly

second-rate.

On stage, decked out in an oversized regimental jacket and cockeyed peaked cap, she looked like a refugee from some fancy-dress-and-jellies-type primary school hop. She also looked far from happy with the crushed mob up front, showing blatant signs of distress between sporadic (and very forced) flashes of that legendary tooth brace.

The band, staring blankly at their silent monitors, launched into lumpy retreads of "Art-I-Ficial", "Obsessed With You" and "Warrior In Woolworths", while Poly footsied about awkwardly, and waited down the mike in dismal tones.

"She doesn't exactly sing", observed a voice on my left. Someone reassured him that "she's not supposed to."

You can stuff that, as she does and she is, although, off the record she doesn't always manage it too well, reason being that the band have about ten times her confidence, strength and control. On numbers like "I Can't Do Anything" the power, expression, and plain accuracy of Rudi Thomson's riveting sex lines drowned out the vocals every time.

Twice they got it dead right. "Dayglo" — her haywire, piercing vocals clearly outlined against a sparse, toned-down backdrop, and "Bondage", when she'd finally adjusted to the pace, the place and the people, moving from screech to ecstasy.

But only twice. Mostly, the arrangements are too well defined, and she contributes zero to the music, just dangling from invisible wires to fill an empty space on stage. A strange paradox — as without her the band would be nowhere.

The more precise the image — the more impact, the less mileage.

I suspect there's no through road past hermetic visions from a lone star siren of the neurotic Sacred Heart.

Where to now, I wonder?

Mark Ellen

The Red Crayola Cabaret Voltaire

prag VEC

Scrutti Politti

Acklam Hall. An apt curtain on recent patchy and prickly Alternative Variety nights (church vaults to caves!), the Acklam Hall community centre played host to four unsteady, unusual groups.

For the trio Cabaret Voltaire it was the last in a line of London gigs (my third as spectator, but first as your guide).

Thankfully, they've dropped the tapes of West German speech and the names of Red Army Faction terrorist martyrs — obviously now aiming less (or more obliquely) for the particularly pat and impressionistic ideological image — or "statement" according to them. At the moment they only hint at potential. They are a reassuringly colourless, frigid English dub-pop group, bitty droll, diffidently "different": brussel sprouts to XTC's sweet corn — drone to zifling — surface value either way, a lot of tint and little context (this is Pop?). The "Mussolini Headkick"? Camp concentration, or what?

Scrutti Politti played out their first gig in a maze of nervousness without a proper set.

Not properly consulted (they claim) over their billing

and not properly prepared themselves, they asked the audience to regard their appearance as an "open rehearsal". They won sympathetic respect and three offers of support slots on projected national tours.

Highly strung but low-key is an appropriate description of both Scrutti Politti and Red Crayola.

The Crayola duo slipped on discreetly after an interval about as long as Politti's 15 minute set.

The present Red Crayola make shocking, obedient, dynamic use of what seems like a limited range of possibilities.

Drummer Jesse Chamberlain puts a hard heart weight, a rash pivot into his work from a rock direction, but he also pulls certain beats, times, and tones away from the kit: a jazzy decisiveness, the deft restraint of someone like Jack De Johnette, the impulsive dexterity of John Stevens — a frowning, imprisoned pulse.

With this Mayo Thompson gulps, shutters and shatters parallel lines with his rigid obtuse guitar. Music like jazz, it's a positive discourse, up and down and across. Watch Red Crayola influence people (I've already seen it).

From dialogue to... chat? VEC must be careful, they're in danger of throwing too many words either way or just at people. Like The Fall, they're headed towards a jumbled, morally complacent unorthodoxy which doesn't do them justice.

They continue to 'improve', but are unsure of what they're improving toward. Singer Sue Grogan and guitarist John Studholme present a tangible, visible relationship, but beyond that? A lapsed friction? Bass and drums at present are loose and indistinct; which is as unconsciously neurotic as technical perfection, and just as off-putting.

Like The Fall's Mark Smith, Grogan is an intrinsic mockery of onstage pretty pictures and pendering.

But all I hear is talk... They'll be stuck (the words and the group) on a crumbly short circuit if something doesn't rouse them.

It was a night of spirit rather than substance; activity rather than accomplishment: a night for gestures and join-the-dots.

Ian Penman

Merger

Sheffield

Why is it, I wondered while watching Merger, only the white folk are dancing? *Men cool or what?*

The only reason can be one of... eh... relative discernment.

And that's quite heartening, 'cos I didn't reckon much to Merger either.

True, they're preferable to Reggae Regular (though that's not saying much) and they did start quite strongly with "African Lady" and "Ghetto Child". But from then on they became overwhelmingly ordinary, eased only by sporadic flashes of brilliance from percussionist Far, a man with a sense of rhythm as bountiful as his hair is long.

The rhythm section of Don Guma (bass) and Tony Ossei (drums) presented a typically solid and safe foundation. But things only sparked when the latter's rimshot and hi-hat staples were chopped. Michael Ossei's electric piano work was adequate if not exceptional, and he's put to better use providing synth-string tints and textures for their more romantically-inclined material.

Andy Gill

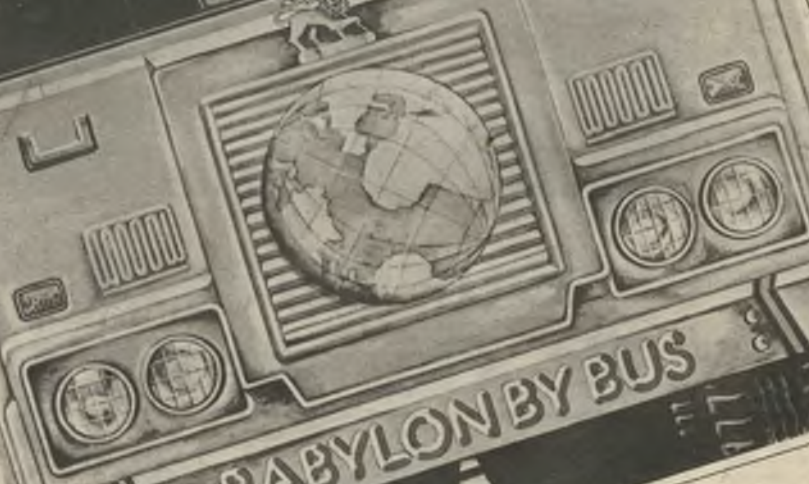
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The Cars

Lycium

The Cars took the stage to a backing tape of revving engines, the principal mode of presentation for this Boston-based five piece. The house was packed, mainly with media-linked personnel. Where were the thousands of punters who put the single "Best Friend's Girl" in the charts? Amidst mutterings that WEA have pulled a gigantic marketing scam on their latest hot proteges the absence of atmosphere and rooting hordes of converts indicated that a touch of suspicion was in order.

C'mon Cars, entertain me. In the event the band turned in clean, exact definitions of their debut recording while presenting a front completely devoid of emotion or personality. Elements like rapport, surprise and honest excitement are as vital to the mood of a concert as Pavlovian applause.

Maybe it's deliberate that leader Ric Ocasek eschews communication with the fans (y'know the ones who paid to get in) but ultimately The Cars come over as a very awkward outfit. Their imagination, given full saturation on the album, stops short in a live setting. The sum of the parts revolves around an admittedly-quirky sound barrage, but leaves no room for manipulation of ingredients.

"Good Times Roll" was promising. Throughout the evening drummer David Robinson provided a heavy, fluid simplicity, though at times I sensed his emasculation by the overall effect, mostly a highly-evolved playing-by-numbers. To obtain their mix of painfully self-conscious modernity Ocasek's repertoire borrows liberally from hidden sources but loses originality in the restatements.

Bassist Benjamin Orr splits lead vocal duties with Ocasek. At times he lends a menacing prettiness to the obscurely weighted arrangements. The hooks range through "Can't Explain" revisited riffs and subway glamour on "Bye Bye Love" a rock star pose whichever way you turned it up.

Strangely though The Cars lack a substantial solo voice and they ain't so hot on the rhythms. Ocasek skulked behind his shades and seemed to be protecting his rhythm guitar in the same way. It was humourless, matter-of-fact, the thin line between Velvet Underground and Talking Heads but lacking the free spirit of both.

Even the single, which sounds fine on the radio, came over like bitter candy floss, nothing humane to latch a perception to, no grey area between flesh and vinyl to warrant a night in a club. The transition through "Moving in Stereo" and "All Mixed Up" was successful music and Orr's performance on their best song "Just What I Needed" was momentarily sexy pop but these enduring fragments were soon dissipated by pure head banging. So the new numbers "Take What You Want" and the encores "Candy-O" and "Hotel Queenie" emerged as second rate heavy metal, technical, precocious, as stultified as E.L.P. in their way except that I wasn't laughing. Guitarist Elliott Easton put in some work rate but didn't make it pay. Ocasek eventually metamorphosed into a cardboard dummy.

Minimalist? Well, Orr later told us that "We've played three shows in Europe so far and this has been the best."

Then again enough people have nice positive things to say about The Cars to make me wonder if it isn't a case of simple incompatibility. Them and me, we didn't get on. I made the effort, they played three encores.

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Cars' Ocasek. He metamorphosed

Hopelessly Devoto . . .

Magazine

The Venue

"Feed The Enemy" concluded (plane-crash on the frontier, ghouls and border-guards gather). Howard Devoto intones a solemn warning: "Don't let this heavy brown descend all over you," he says. "It's been killing a lot of people recently."

Come again? (On reflection I think it was a reference to goings-on in Guyana). No, communication is not this fellow's strongpoint. The gnomic utterance, the cryptic quip, these are his stock in trade. A Pith Artist, in fact; brainbox credibility won through a judicious mix of pregnant pauses and off-the-head haircut.

But let's not dwell on all that, for the only flaw in Magazine's otherwise enviable career has been the vast and intense attention expended upon the frontman's taste for riddling pseudery/New Age intellectuality (delete as inexplicable), when the group's true worth so clearly lies in their awesome abilities as a musical unit. I like them a lot, Devoto included, but a little de-mystifying rarely comes amiss.

Their sound is cold and strong, and seems to bristle with ominous potential — reminding you of "magazine's" other definition: a store of explosives.

Often dominant is the nervy treble of Dave Formula's keyboards, though equally useful is guitarist John McGeech (fletching in a fringe six sizes too big for his face) and Barry Adamson's no-nonsense bass runs supply a creditably firm support. Somewhere up behind an expensive range of drums Jon Spencer is

acquitting himself with honours.

I think the point's worth emphasising: only in the context of a superb group like Magazine can Howard afford to indulge himself without dragging songs down into a morass of pretension. Fortunately, as your mind starts wandering from his grandiose and opaque lyricism, there's plenty to keep it occupied.

"Burst" is monumental; epic and repetitive. "My Tulpa" likewise, slow and subliminally militaristic. Immodestly titled, "The Light Pours Out Of Me" is constructed around, of all things, Gary Glitter's "Rock And Roll".

Of course the fact remains that Howard Devoto is, for most people, the essence of Magazine. His dry and bitter vocals curl and climb about the music, without an authority to match his stage-presence but effective enough. Charisma's the thing, the classically-sculptured features animated by the ghost of a mocking smile. Funnily enough, he still reminds me of a giant wasp.

"Boredom" is a rapturously-received blast from Howard's Buzzcockian past whilst "Back To Nature" is one of the set's innovations. "Dance-on-the-tables-time" he announces in less-than-rousing tones, any old irony, and it's into the ponderous 3/4 of "Great Beautician In The Sky", lurching forward with all the brutal jollity of a teutonic drinking-song. As expected, it's the glorious, glamorous "Shot By Both Sides" that closes.

This year has produced an embarrassment of riches, and Magazine shine amongst the best and brightest. Sing it, Olivia — Hopelessly Devoto to you.

Paul Du Noyer

Max Bell



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LOOK BACK TO '72

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Only he can make me smile (again and again)

The David Johansen Band

The Venue

A big date this, tight fans, and one which no self-respecting ex-glam rocker like myself could miss out on.

But first, two pointed questions: could David Johansen and his new-found cronies follow through the cherished memories that his previous unit, The New York Dolls, had left behind and which four long years have turned into the stuff of 'true rock legend'? More pointed, could this Johansen band improve on that last bout with fame and fortune and, with integrity intact, succeed where the Dolls failed?

Some facts need stating here concerning the New York Dolls because their importance in regard to affairs in this subsequent half of the decade will doubtless have blinded many who weren't around as to their 'true worth'.

The Dolls may well have been "ahead of their time" and all that other corn that gets schpielied out in retrospective these days but the fact remains that for all their undeniable style and "vim", the Dolls were a stilted corporate — often a bedazzlingly fine club band who never quite cut it when they transferred their attentions to "halls".

Indeed, the larger the hall, the worse the band sounded and that, as much as any other consideration, was primarily responsible for crippling their activities back in the glory days of '73 and '74.

Now all this malarkey about the Dolls wouldn't be worth even that obligatory trot-out, were it not for the fact that David Johansen, the Dolls' leader and easily their most professional member in terms of onstage requirements, has learned from his previous short-comings.

Johansen's show at The Venue was as invigorating a gig as any I've seen in this year of Dylan and Co., not merely packing the full punch of the Dolls at their lascivious best but also improving on previous displays by dint of a new-found urgency and professionalism that the whole band — a faceless bunch on vinyl but nothing of the sort when traucing the boards with their mentor — positively oozed.

The "new-look" Johansen made himself most evident from the first moment he stalked out in the darkness to check out his audience as the band dutifully tuned up. Gone were the glam-rags, the primping high-heels and silly halter tops, the bouffant of hair surrounding the Jaggeresque facial contours. In their place, Johansen simply dressed down for the occasion and liberated in the process a face and physique that once bore such a resemblance to the lead Stone but now looked nothing more nor less than totally the property of its owner.

More to the point, this stripping away of former embellishments has given Johansen the chance to dip into comedy: those big lips and the Frankenstein forehead — in fact, his whole face looked like it was made out of "Play-Do" — were twisted constantly for full visual impact. As a result, Johansen looked at once ridiculous — somewhere betwixt a punch-drunk boxer and a white boy Louis Armstrong-clone — and perfect. Indeed, I've not seen a more visually "varied" and forceful figure on a rock stage since Iggy Pop's "rubber legs" days. Equally important here was the presence of that other Dolls-original, Sylvain Sylvain, who played Andy to Johansen's Amos throughout the show when he wasn't acting as musical conductor or all-important link-man

Bethnal

Leeds

Bethnal's crash-landing at Leeds, witnessed by a mere couple of hundred ghoulish punters, signified the introduction of make-your-mind-up-time for those among us still spoilt for choice in the post punk/new wave sieve. And not surprisingly, the new fans were as pleased as those of the heavy metal persuasion to stumble upon a band which possesses the best basic elements of both genres. Ultimately, it was unnecessary for either faction to know whether Bethnal jumped on the bandwagon, or were pushed.

The band's essential merit rests with their instrumental expertise, and in the fact that, even if their music is none too original, then at least the faces are young, and the angle fresh. "Crash Landing", a rousing way to start a concert if ever there was one, was all it really took to identify Bethnal's zonal status: an impressive re-working of die-hard heavy metal influences. The number was readily endorsed through the headbanging prowess of the itinerant longhairs who seemed to symbolise the blowing of the band's

characterisation gaff.

"Soldier Boy", for instance, is as Purple as you can get without stooping to cover versions — this specific number having all the ingredients of "Fireball", just as the ripped-off riffs of "Lady Love", "Summer Wine" and "I Gotta Go" cannot help but remind you of other songs from heavy rock's aesthetic heyday, circa '70. Caspo's frenzied and often very lengthy violin excursions take you through David Laflamme, Jerry Goodman, Dave Arbus and Bartok, but they always work: even the committed punk resisted the urge to nudge his neighbour.

But, irrelevant multi-racial analyses aside, Bethnal's New Deal is as fine to watch as it is to hear. Bassist and co-composer Everton Williams, resplendent in survival kit and sawn-off dreadlocks, moves it around some, throwing in the quasi-Foxton leaps, vying positions with Caspo and often stealing the visuals from the ostensible chief. And the cute Nick Michaels, playing some sterling — if self-conscious — lead, had time to look around and seemingly acknowledge isolated converts, continually switching from Gibson to Fender and back, while Caspo

between the band itself and Johansen.

As for the band — well, they were good — very good at times, well up to that all-important point where they easily transcended the awful sound of the Venue while their visual uniformity, all square-jawed Ito-American mugs with names like Frankie Le Rocka or Johnny Reio to go with the one-dimensional image, replete with yer archetypal Keith Richards clone in one Thomas Trans (a truly uncanny resemblance at that) made for a strong back-line. As musicians they deliver too — with a great drummer, strong bass-player and two, sometimes three guitars, which blend well together.

Pacing, too, was of primary concern to Johansen and his cronies, with "Cool Melro" opening proceedings and taking on a personality infinitely more dynamic than its vinyl archetype. A giddy drive into "Lookin' For A Kiss" provided instant Dolls nostalgia but with a purposeful kick going for it that the original interpretation never quite gauged. The band work at a solid third gear — mostly through a selection from the first D.J. album, allowing for the odd tempo shift a la "Donna" — until surprise, surprise, a flat-out surprisingly full-sounding rendition of The Four Tops' "Reach Out — I'll Be There" moves the stick-shift into proverbial four-wheel drive.

Johansen dives into the crowded pit to bark out the extended chorus and, at an apt half-way house for the set's timing, finally wins over the audience.

Then he takes them through a fizzing "Reckless Crazy" (quoted as "a new song", the number, as yet unrecorded, in fact dates from the N.Y. Dolls' McLaren era), into Johansen's antidote for "intellectual starvation" disguised as his best-ever composition to date — "Frenchette" (pre-empted by a verse from Sandie Shaw's "Girl Don't Come") again building on an epic climax, and washes it all down at the terminus point with a furiously-paced "Girls".

A graphically re-arranged "Personality Crisis" makes for the second N.Y. Dolls number in the set and one long, feisty encore.

Conclusions are only too easy to arrive at after the gig is over, the primary one being that finally, new wave or no new wave, Johansen will nonetheless break into the big league this time around.

Mick Kent

stuck with the Strat.

Bands like Bethnal are pushovers for cynics, but these guys do not deserve to be sleeged unless/until the pretensions of their "message" take over from the integrity of their music. Until that time, let's be fair, and recognise that Bethnal's current metier — breaking the bigotry barriers — could prove to be a lot more important than seems possible right now

Emma Ruth



Everton Williams

Johansen samples Yorkie bar, tastes success this time around. Beer: Boy Howdy!



Denis O'Regan

Tea break's over, Dill — back on your head

Dillinger Clint Eastwood

Rainbow

Spend one night in a Rainbow and see a once-mighty Jamaican deejay toaster reduced to nothing more than a pandering puppet.

Lester "Dillinger" Bullocks' second visit to English shores this year manifested itself in a shabby dressed evening of tried and trusted showbiz mitzpah.

Dillinger today is The Talkover Artist As Superdude myth — at first just a sign of healthy and colourful competition between rival reggae sound systems — gone totally over the top.

An eternal trail of "Let's hear it one more time for..." raps from the toaster's effusive stooge gave the evening the flavour of a school prize-giving ceremony, while the stream of Roots Rock Rastafarian clichés that flowed forth from the mightymouth himself were just too numbing by half.

Trumping around the stage like Nellie The Elephant in a red, green and gold three-piece suit and tither, as

his stooge dished out the publicity postcards, the star of '76 cuts a pathetic figure, still riding on the waning crest of a two-year-old hit.

That hit, "Cokane In My Brain", complete with its heist of the People's Choice "Do It Anyway You Wanna" riff, was duly saved for the first of two encores.

Earlier on, old favourites from "CB 200" to "Natty 8Sc" had shown that the man could still entertain for the odd, fleeting moment, although he evidently has very little new to offer, as he testified with "Oul The Light" (... "and gimme what you gimme last night"). Yes, the all-too-predictable face of Rasta sexism. Natty mek like a Judge Dread.

Never minding the Bullocks, however, there were a few crumbs of comfort to be had from the show.

The playing of Freedom Fighters — a five-man back up band introduced by the stooge as "mighty Dillinger's personal idren", no less — was uniformly excellent, the work of one Fatman on keyboards particularly blissful, although they could do better than the twee "Smile For Reggae Music" for their own short star spot.

But for me, the show was stolen by animated teenage toaster Clint Eastwood, sadly allotted the time to rail his R's and shake his ass for only four numbers in a brief warm-up slot.

The enthusiastic and spontaneous reception that met Eastwood's surprise appearance on stage — in marked contrast to the embarrassing staged applause for Dillinger — was proof indeed of the lad's ascending rank among the JA deejays.

Young Clint also joined Dillinger onstage for the second of his encores, but what could have been a revealing battle of the banter never developed as the old campaigner kept the hallowed limelight to himself, with Eastwood relegated to ineffectual backing vocals.

A deejay jamboree? This event fell short of the sentiments promised in its opening song.

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DEAR brothers and sisters, *NME* (Nov 11) produced a feature that completely distorted the aims of the new RASAR (Rock Against Sectarianism And Repression) organisation in Belfast.

Perhaps *NME* would like to see this group develop along the lines of their own interpretation of what goes on in Northern Ireland. They produced a badge above the article, saying "Rock Against Terrorism". The article by Gavin Martin didn't mention "Terrorism". *NME* obviously gives us the name they want us to use. The title was *Rock Fights For Peace* — but whose terrorism and whose peace is *NME* talking about? Is it the terror of getting your brains kicked out in an RUC cell, or the terror of being locked away without a trial, or being forced to live in your own disharmonies in Long Kesh, or the terror of having guns trained on your every move by Brits and Cops as you walk the streets of Belfast?

Or is it the terror of people defending their rights to live?

Is it the moronic peace of the now-departed Peace People, who got their Nobel Prizes for services rendered to the British Government and left us to live in the deepening shit of repression?

Or is it the peace of a just society where people can live and work together without having guns pointed at their heads by thugs in uniform?

As for the article by Gavin Martin, he pointed out a lot of other nasty things that go on in this little police state. He uses the word sectarianism, which we have in the title of RASAR. Unfortunately it's a word used by a lot of fur-coated politicians and Peace People — the people who produce sectarianism and have the kids of Northern Ireland tearing each other apart.

No. We're not rocking for Peace or Rocking Against Terrorism, not the way the English press would like to see us rock. We're rocking for survival, rocking to mobilise ourselves, rocking against State and Church repression, rocking against the sectarianism that makes us afraid of each other. On this understanding, we hope that Rock Against Racism and other friends in Britain will give us their help.

HENRY, RASAR, Box 101, 7 Wincleva St., Belfast 1.

Gavin Martin's article *Irish Rock Fights For Peace* in *NME* (Nov 11) implied that RASAR has encountered direct opposition from Terri Hooley and the Good Vibrations label.

Terri Hooley does not control the Harp Bar's weekend 'punk workshop' — it is run by a committee. The attitude of Good Vibrations is that RASAR are free to organise whatever they like while Good Vibrations is entitled to maintain its independence. Terri Hooley and Good Vibrations might sympathise with the concerns of RASAR but know only too well the dangers of political labels in a Northern Ireland context.

Terri Hooley has worked steadily in Belfast over the past fifteen years on various schemes to provide alternatives to the hatred and divisiveness in this part of the world. Who are these people who suddenly appear from the shadows to jump on the bandwagon of someone else's effort and success, to use it as a platform for their banner-waving and sloganeering? Northern Ireland has had quite a bit of banner-waving and sloganeering which it could well have done without.

Beware the dangers.

Picture the scene, gentle reader. 'Tis the A&R office of a major phonographic record concern. At the desk sits an A&R man in a digital watch and matching calculator (showing exchange rates). Lounging nervously against the secretary stands a Potential Star (our hero), in hip FU's drainpipes and Top Shop tie

DENIS O'REILLY

BAG LASH!

RE STYLES brings the whip down

The pop idols of today caught with their metaphorical trousers down in a fickle crossfire of recriminations and complaints. It's time to clean up your act.

RASAR! Politicising can so easily be manipulated or misinterpreted in Northern Ireland's tightrope situation. A banner-waving campaign recklessly handled could backfire and cause needless problems, division and retrogression.

The members of RASAR may have flats to go to in the cosy university area of town, but the kids who go to the Harp Bar and the members of the bands who play there are living in and travelling in and out of much riskier areas of town — while RASAR remain the nameless generals putting the bands and Terri Hooley in the front line.

JOHN CARSON (associate of Good Vibrations).

Apologies to RASAR for the fabricated badge, though it was actually intended to refer to terrorism of all — factions. Even so, the underlying aggro of RASAR's stance, as expressed in Henry's letter, disturbs this liberal peacemaker at least. As for Gavin — who is doing a good job for *NME* in a complex situation — and Good Vibes, hopefully his follow-up item (Nov 16) cleared the air — Phil McNeill, Thrills Editor.

Picture the scene, gentle reader. 'Tis the A&R office of a major phonographic record concern. At the desk sits an A&R man in a digital watch and matching calculator (showing exchange rates). Lounging nervously against the secretary stands a Potential Star (our hero), in hip FU's drainpipes and Top Shop tie

A&R Man: Well, kid, we love your music, and we think you could be big. Very big. But, well... *GLANCES AROUND PARANOICALLY, LEANS FORWARD* — there are three pictures, like, from long ago, that, say, show you in levitation or... or long hair? I mean, are you now, or have you ever been a hippie?

Our Hero (confused): Well, I might, y'know, I might have had me hair long in '76. I might even have listened to Alice Cooper...

A&R Man (clutches heart, gasps): Egad! One of my blue pills, quick! Look, kid, I mean, I don't give a toss, but... it's Them. (Lowering voice) Used to say 'man', did you?

Our Hero: Jez! I didn't expect a kind of Rock Press Inquisition!

(Clap of thunder off. Door flies open stage left and in bursts Julie Burchill dressed in a red cape and demonically lingering her long black moustache. On a lead she drags Tony Parsons, who slavers on the floor, his face grotesquely distorted into a mask of pure etcetera.)

JB: NNNNNNObody expects the Rock Press Inquisition! Our main weapons are complete unaccountability, subjective fascism, perversity for its own sake and an almost fanatical devotion to our own infallibility. You, fatso, are charged with heresy on, ooh, lots of counts. For a start, bub, your father votes Tony!

TP: Woof!

JB: Secondly, you've never

had your fizzog in a quality Sunday.

TP: Yap!

JB: Most despicable of all, you probably intend to take me to lunch.

Our Hero: I promise to take a doggy bag...

TP: Yip, yip!

JB: Down, Tone. Okay, that's enough whimpering from you, bimbo. (To *A&R Man*). Hit him with the comfy contract, so I can really get him in my sights!

Our Hero: No, no, I'm an artiste. I got something to say.

TP: Rough!

Our Hero: What if I offered to undergo circumcision?

JB: That didn't help. Take him away! What do these people want? Money AND approval? (To audience.) If we shadows have offended, think but this and all is mended! If we stars didn't act like this, you mortals couldn't take the piss. (Ekeunt.)

BILL THE BARD:

Meanwhile we immortals just have to laugh — The Silver Surf.

Dear Julie, I was very frightened by your review of the Banshees — not by Siouxsie, who I admit does present rather a nasty image, but by you.

I've always felt at one with your feelings about racism/sexism and being a woman. I agree with what you are against but the way you write it sounds like random spurts of hatred, you sound so full of hatred in a style something akin to just the

people you're against. I agree with your disgust at that lyric, but most people will disregard that completely because of the silly rubbish you write. "Instrumentals are pretentious as shit". Your sole justification is that Chuck Berry never fell the need for them. That won't convince anybody unless you expand on this devastating statement, which no doubt you do in your book, so why not keep such tirades to that and "Screw you, Siouxsie" to verbal abuse? After all, you were writing a review of a record and most readers want to hear more about the actual record.

What scares me is that in your Bowie review you mention yourself, "I", six times. This time it was 26 — more I think than you mentioned Siouxsie. Let alone the record which was being reviewed. How come for X-Ray Spex CSM only mentions "I" three times? Quibbling details, sure, but what's Siouxsie's supposed "Chislehurst-cimber accent" then?

I'm worried because the tone of your voice makes me remember this stupid book I once read *W.H.A.M. (We Hate All Men)*, where the women kill all men but at the end of the book one woman grows a penis. You sound as though you're growing a man's bloated ego. You talk about fascists but you sound like a megalomaniac.

This is serious, so I expect it won't be published, but I only write it because you seem to be playing into the hands of those who deride what you believe in. *FLISS, Sussex.*

Speed will turn you into your parents — Frank Zappa.

Why don't Tony Parsons and Julie Burchill set up an agency to 'vet' potential stars? For one, would welcome the introduction of a standard moral code to be observed by all persons in possession of a recording contract.

EM WHITEHOUSE, Widness Why should rock stars have to be any different from the rest of us? — P.R.

I recently went to a Rock Against Racism gig in South London. Being from outside London, I hadn't had much contact with the organisation, but it had always had my full support. However this was changed by this gig.

The reason my friends and I went to this gig was to see the main band Eddie and the Hot Rods. We arrived in the hall just in time to see the end of the support band's act.

While the roadies were changing the stage, a film projector started up at the back of the hall, so we moved back to see what was being shown.

The film projector was showing various shots from the Grunwick pickets, National Front marches, the Notting Hill riots and the large ANL marches. These were obviously true accounts of what happened at these events, taken by a home-movie camera.

What was disturbing was the slides being shown simultaneously alongside the film. There was no verbal commentary with the film but the slides acted as one, albeit a distorted one. The slides showed shots of Martin Webster, Adolf Hitler, the Royal Family and other scenes, all with statements attached to them.

The obvious message that this film/slide sequence gave was that the National Front must be destroyed and that they should be stopped from speaking by whatever means possible. This is obviously wrong as all people have the right to speak freely, whatever their

views, although they should not speak unopposed.

If the views expressed by the film are those of the RAR movement I want no part of it.

MARK ADAMS, Southsea. Nice to see Hot Rod fans getting some sophisticated political rhetoric mixed in with their shot of rhythm'n'blues. Isn't it? — A Rock Against Robinson charter member.

Dear Ian Penman, In your review of Gregory Isaacs you exhibit an extraordinary misunderstanding of the recording and production process. Front Line Artists deliver to us finished records — in very few cases do we have any direct influence over how or where they are recorded. In the particular case of "Cool Ruler" I wonder how you Ian Penman would have reacted if Gregory Isaacs had sold the master to Deb or Third World instead of Virgin.

ECM Records exhibit consistency of production and sound because every single record is produced by Manfred Eicher — you may consider his sound bland; you may consider Cool Ruler limp (I emphatically don't); but to imply that because a record appears on the Front Line logo it is magically transformed is absurd. *SIMON DRAPER, Virgin Records.*

I review reggae, Front Line or not, as it comes — and do not consciously operate an embargo on any artist or label. (Re: my over-the-top favourable reviews of Front Line Zuke and Culture records). I did not mean to suggest that FL artists are masterminded or mixed a la Manfred Eicher or Joe Gibbs, just to impart the feeling that along the line seems to de-pressurize the music. — Ian Penman.

Is Ian Penman the missing link between Manfred Eicher and The Smurfs? *AN EXISTENTIALIST who refuses to boogie down.*

I would like to complain about the review of The Smurfs' new single "Dippety Day". Yet again, it seems the *NME* staff praise a new idol of the rock scene with their first release, but with their second record the *NME* slag them off.

Yes, The Smurfs are added to the already long list of artists like Sham, Blandie and Davo, whose realistic poise in the structure of the rock world has been brought to a halt by the cruel, cruel staff of the *NME*.

"DETECTIVE-PARSON MA'AM"

And it's a luxury that's worth every penny, except two. — P.R.

Overheard whilst watching The Bishops at the Electric Ballroom.

1st Skin: "Just been down the Campden, it was crap so we came here. Any action?"

2nd Skin: "Naah! They're all watching the band."

Yours, for only £3.99.

LEMONT CHOP WALTON (Sir), Tottenham, London.

It's like I always say, Lemon Chop, gigs are your best entertainment value. — P.R.

David Hedges: You can read my *NME* as long as you don't rip it to pieces. *Alison.*

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