

NEW MUSICAL NME EXPRESS

B. RATS Geldof Opens His Trap Again

(24 hours we never close)



Courtesy "CASH BOX"



PETER GABRIEL (left) and TOM ROBINSON exchange gear to prove they're in this thing together!

Gabriel and Robinson co-head Xmas benefit

PETER GABRIEL and TOM ROBINSON are to co-headline a special Christmas benefit show at London Hammersmith Odeon on Sunday, December 24. They call it their Charity Party, and a feature of the event is that both Gabriel and Robinson are appearing without their regular bands — but with a number of big-name guests.

Tickets for the Christmas Eve show all cost £2, and are restricted to two per applicant. They are on sale now, but are available only from either of the Harvey Goldsmith Box offices — c/o Chappells, 50 New Bond Street; and at Great Gear Market, 85 Kings Road,

Chelsea. They can be obtained only by personal application at these outlets and not from the Hammersmith box office.

All profits from the show are being divided equally between One-Parent Families (which represents Gabriel's half of the proceeds) and the Northern Ireland Gay Rights Association (which doesn't!).

Prior to this gig, Gabriel — as previously reported — headlines four orthodox concerts at Hammersmith with his own band (December 20-23) and these are now all sold out, although some standing room will be available on the nights. He is currently on tour in Europe.

AND MORE HOLIDAY SPECIALS

10cc set; Rod & Lindisfarne add

IT IS NOW officially confirmed that 10cc will headline a one-off Christmas concert at the Wembley Conference Centre in North London on Friday, December 22, as exclusively forecast by NME last week. And as we reported, it's being filmed by BBC-2 for screening as their Christmas Eve "Old Grey Whistle Test" special (10.50pm).

Tickets for the concert, which is promoted by Kennedy Street Enterprises, are all at the one price of £4. They're available at the Wembley box-office on a first-come first-served basis. Or if you want to risk the Christmas mail, you can apply by post to the Wembley Conference Centre, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 0DW, making cheques and POs payable to "Wembley Stadium Ltd" and enclosing s.a.e.

The band will be featuring their new single "Reds In My Bed", just released by Phonogram and — like their No 1 hit "Dreadlock Holiday" — taken from their LP "Bloody Tourists" which has now gone Gold in eight different countries. Another track from the album "For You And I" is included in the soundtrack of the new John Travolta movie "Moment By Moment", to be premiered in America on December 20. Since touring Britain in September, 10cc

have toured the US and Canada extensively. This week they're in Warsaw filming a Polish-TV special, which will eventually be released worldwide. New Year plans include their second tour of Australia and Japan, with British dates likely in the spring.

ROD STEWART has added yet another London concert to his tour schedule — at Olympia on Saturday, December 30. This makes a total of seven appearances in the capital — six at Olympia (three before Christmas and three after), plus his New Year's Eve party at Lyceum Ballroom.

In view of abnormally heavy ticket demand, the extra gig is already close to a sell-out as the result of applications carried forward from the previous five nights. At press-time only £6 tickets, and a handful at £3, were available — and these were being restricted to six per applicant.

LINDISFARNE — who, for the third year running, are playing a string of hometown Christmas concerts at Newcastle City Hall — have also been inundated with ticket

applications. So they've added a record fifth night on Tuesday next, December 19, in addition to the four already sold out (December 20-23).

STEVE GIBBONS BAND, already set for a seasonal hometown concert at Birmingham Odeon on December 23, are also playing two specials in London — at the Marquee Club on December 20 and 21.

THE SMIRKS have put back their Christmas show at London Kensington Nashville by 24 hours — from tomorrow (Friday) to Saturday. Everyone wearing a "Smirks Against Travolta" badge will be admitted free, otherwise entry is 50p. Support act is Gaffs.

GONG have also moved their Christmas Party, reported last week as tomorrow (Friday) at London's Electric Ballroom in Camden Town. It's now next Tuesday (19).

ELECTRIC BALLROOM in Camden Town now have a Christmas line-up comprising The Greedy Bastards (this Saturday), Eddie & The Hot Rods (Sunday), Gong (19), Generation X (20), The Doomed (originally set for 21 but now moved to 23), The Fall and Subway Sect and Fashion (28), Squeeze (29) and The London R & B Allstars (30). Attractions for December 21 and 22, as well as details of a special New Year's Eve show, have still to be announced.

At press-time, it was learned that the GLC has issued instructions about reducing the noise level at the Electric Ballroom. The management hope to comply — but feeling that, some of these gigs could be in jeopardy.

YOUR NME

If, when you scan through this week's issue, you spot the odd spelling error or inaccuracy — please don't blame us! NME has again been affected by a printing dispute which doesn't involve us — but nevertheless, we are caught in the crossfire. We've tried to maintain normal service, but please bear with us if our high standard has been impaired in any way.

Rats' second at Rainbow

THE BOOMTOWN RATS, who have been playing to capacity houses on their "Seasonal Turkey Tour", have added another London date at short notice. They topped at Hammersmith Odeon last week, and a fortnight ago slotted in an appearance at the Rainbow Theatre (tomorrow, Friday) which quickly sold out. Now they've added a second show at the Rainbow tonight (Thursday) — and in view of the last-minute nature of the booking, it's expected that some tickets will still be available on the doors. Prices are £2.50, £2 and £1.50, and the support act is again The Vipers. Promoters are Straight Music.

● Rats are best-selling new-wave act of the year. See page 5.

NEWS

MOVE OVER, NASTASE...

Centre Court gig by Queen?

QUEEN are negotiating the prospects of staging an open-air concert this summer on the Centre Court at Wimbledon! This is, of course, the home of British lawn tennis — and the venue for the world's most renowned tennis championships. The Centre Court has a 15,000 capacity, and preliminary discussions with the Lawn Tennis Association suggest they are very interested in the idea.

Although there are many courts in the Wimbledon

complex in South London, the Centre Court itself is used only two weeks every year (late June and early July) for the annual championships, and stands idle for the rest of the year. The plan is for the Queen gig to follow soon after the championships, and before the groundsmen start repairing the turf for the following year's event.

Meanwhile, Queen begin an extensive tour of Europe on January 17 in Germany. They also visit Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Yugoslavia, Spain and France before returning to Britain in early March.

NEWS WAVES

New-look Voidoids

RICHARD HELL & The Voidoids — who guest with Elvis Costello in his week-long season at London Dominion Theatre starting next Monday, and subsequently tour Britain with him — have now returned to the wing of Jake Riviera, after being unceremoniously dropped by Sire Records. This means they'll have a new single out in January on Radar Records — produced by Nick Lowe in New York last month, it couples "The Kid With the Replaceable Head" and "I'm Your Man". The re-shaped Voidoids line-up now features former guitarists Robert Quine and Ivan Julian, plus new members Jerry Antonius (bass) and drummer Frank Mauro, replacing Marc Bell who joined The Ramones earlier in the year.

Clash ticket details

THE CLASH have now confirmed booking arrangements for their two gigs immediately after Christmas at London Strand Lyceum on Thursday and Friday, December 28 and 29, reported last week. All tickets are at the one price of £2.50 and are available now from the Lyceum box-office and selected agencies. In view of the expected heavy advance demand, it's unlikely that any tickets will remain for sale on the doors. As already announced, these two shows follow the band's Sid Vicious benefit concert at London Camden Music Machine next Tuesday (19).

DAVID JOHANSEN Group — who fly back into Britain this week, after completing commitments in Europe, to headline at London Lyceum this Sunday (17) — have now set another two dates before they return to America. They are at Scarborough Penthouse (tomorrow, Friday) and Birmingham Barbarella's (Saturday).

PATRIK FITZGERALD has pulled out of the December dates in the Here & Now free tour. The reason is that, after touring extensively with The Jam in November, he now wants to concentrate on recording a single and album for Polydora release in the New Year. He'll then start touring in his own right.

IAN DURY turns philosopher and interviewer in a BBC-2

documentary called "No Trouble" to be screened on Thursday, December 21. Filmed in Northern Ireland, it's a mixture of Dury's impressions of Ulster and the opinions of local young people. It was produced during his visit to Belfast to record a "Rock Goes To College" show for New Year transmission.

CHELSEA have been forced to delay their debut U.S. visit until January, due to a minor problem with one of their road crew's visa. Instead, they support Generation X at London's Electric Ballroom on December 20, and are spending the rest of the month recording. The band have acquired a new drummer in 19-year-old Chris Bashford — he takes over from Steve J Jones, who quit last month to join Hi-Fi.

STRAIGHT 8, whose debut single "Modern Times" has just been issued on Pete Townshend's Eel Pie label, play London gigs this month at Chiswick Hounslow College (tomorrow, Friday), Camden Music Machine (18), Hammersmith Swan (21) and Fulham Golden Lion (27). They also visit Stevenage Swan on December 20.

SHAM 69's benefit concert at London Rainbow on December 27, on behalf of One-Parent Families, has again been affected by changes in the support bill. The new — and, we're assured, final — line-up comprises Sham, Merger, The Records, The Invaders and Johnny Rubbish.

MOLINARE LTD

On page 15 of last week's issue we printed an article about pirate tapes. We inadvertently illustrated the story with a cassette made by Molinare Ltd. We wish to make clear that the Molinare cassette was in fact a 30-second commercial made by Molinare Ltd for the NME and not a pirated copy. Molinare Ltd are well known in the trade for their radio and television studios. We did not intend to imply that they were connected in any way, or have ever been connected in any way, with illegal recordings — and wish to proffer to them our apologies for any embarrassment which might have been caused to them.

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Beach Boys, Eagles & Dead being set for spring tours

THE BEACH BOYS and The Grateful Dead head a formidable list of top American acts currently being lined up for spring visits to this country, according to reports this week from the States — although no official word is yet forthcoming from British sources. This is the latest run-down of projected U.S. visitors:

The Beach Boys originally promised to perform here this year, following the last-minute cancellation of their projected open-air concerts in 1977. These were called off ostensibly because they felt they hadn't had enough time to prepare for such prestige engagements. It's understood that spring dates are now being pencilled in for them, and this time they're likely to be in conventional indoor venues.

The Eagles, now featuring Joe Walsh in their line-up, also failed to show this year — mainly due to heavy U.S.



THE GRATEFUL DEAD

commitments. But they're now putting the finishing touches to their new album in Miami, and they told our correspondent that they're planning a series of major dates in the spring, to tie in with LP's release.

The Grateful Dead are now expected to come to Britain in April, to compensate for opting out of their early autumn concerts at London Rainbow, when they were due to have stopped off here

on the way home from their gigs in Egypt. The live album they recorded during those Egyptian gigs is already scheduled for April release, and the Dead want to time their visit to promote it.

Bruce Springsteen, announced in other sections of the music Press as a likely visitor in January or February, won't now be coming until the spring — and that's official. According to his management, they have set aside a period in April for British dates.

Meat Loaf, another artist to have pulled out of a proposed British tour this



Eagles' JOE WALSH

autumn (though, in his case, no tickets had been sold prior to cancellation), is currently being negotiated for a string of major concerts in late winter or early spring. Fleetwood Mac, who dropped the idea of playing autumn dates here after their suggested visit to the Soviet Union, which was to have been part of the same trip, fell through — now plan to come over in the spring, probably to play several nights at Wembley.

And it's learned that among other attractions being lined up for U.K. appearances during the second quarter of 1979 are Little Feat, Boz Scaggs, Ted Nugent and Steely Dan.

In the light of experience

The Clavinet and the Planet are two of the legends of the keyboard world. Now Hohner have used all their experience with these instruments to put them together as a single instrument with a 'split personality'.

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The combinations are almost endless, the sound is sensational. That's why in the light of THEIR experience, Jan Schellhaas of Camel and Brian Chatton of John Miles Band have chosen the Duo, and Duncan Mackay has already taken the Duo to the USA with 10cc. Give the Clavinet-Planet Duo the benefit of your experience. Contact your Hohner dealer for a demonstration of this unique new keyboard.

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New Year concerts planned by Moodies

THE MOODY BLUES finished their reunion tour of the United States on Tuesday of this week, when they played to a capacity house at the 22,000-seater Los Angeles Forum. They've been doing similar sell-out business throughout America and have obviously delighted their fans — although, as their spokesman admitted, "the critics have been taking their usual swipe at them".

It had been hoped to fit in a major British date around the Christmas period, but the plan was abandoned because they couldn't find a suitable venue that hadn't already been booked. They were offered a

date at London Olympia immediately after Rod Stewart's string of gigs there, when it would still have been set up to accommodate a rock concert, but apparently they weren't happy about the idea of playing there.

But the Moodies are now expected to undertake a full British tour in the New Year. No details are yet available, because they were waiting for the U.S. tour to end before getting down to discussions, but they're hoping to sort it out over Christmas. Meanwhile, new member Patrick Moraz will have a new solo album issued by Charisma in a few weeks' time.

BURL IVES PLAYS 30 BIG DATES IN SPRING

BURL IVES returns to Britain in March to headline his full concert tour here for 26 years! He'll be playing over 30 major dates throughout the country, running into May. Details of his itinerary are still being finalised, but it's already known that he'll be appearing at London's Royal Festival Hall on Easter Monday, April 16. In addition to his dates on the theatre circuit, he'll also be singing in one of our most famous cathedrals, giving special performances at Oxford and Cambridge Universities, and appearing on TV. To coincide with his visit, CBS Embassy will issue his album of Dylan songs "The Times They Are A-Changin'", while MCA will release the two-LP set "The Best Of Burl Ives".

Scene Stealer look good for breakthrough in 1979

FOLLOWING the suggestion two weeks ago that Wrizz might be a band to watch in 1979, five-piece Corby-based outfit Scene Stealer step into the limelight as another potential success story for next year. They've already built up a considerable reputation in Europe, where their debut album "First Offence" is selling strongly, and they recently signed a long-term U.K. deal with Rebel Records.

The LP was due for release here this month, but owing to manufacturing problems at the factory, it's now been delayed until mid-January when it will coincide with their first single "Ballerina". Meanwhile, copies of the album are being imported from the Continent to catch the Christmas market.

Currently touring Ireland, including gigs at Belfast The Pound this Friday and Saturday, the band return to play Corby Civic Hall (December 20), Rotherham College (27), Ketter-

ing George Club (29) and Tonybandy Naval Club (January 1). After playing gigs in Holland and Belgium, they open an extensive two-month British tour at Hatfield Polytechnic (January 12) and Durham New College (18).

MILES PLANS MARCH TREK

JOHN MILES has been out of the public eye for much of this year — apart from a few college gigs early on, and his recent appearance in the Great British Music Festival at Wembley. But he's now busy recording with Alan Parsons in the South of France, and the first outcome will be a new single in January. Work on his new album is almost complete, and this will be issued in March to coincide with a comprehensive British tour.

KENNY STAYS, AS WHO PLAN LIVE RETURN

IT NOW SEEMS virtually certain that ex-Faces and Small Faces drummer Kenny Jones will remain with The Who in the foreseeable future. He's been working with them on the soundtrack of their film "Quadrophenia", but this was originally said to be a temporary measure. However, a spokesman said this week that they are now considering "re-activating their group concept" in the New Year, and it was expected that Jones would continue to work with them.

The so-called "group concept" means, in effect, a return to normal band work — as opposed to their 1978 behind-the-scenes operations. The first move will be to record a new single, probably in January — and it's understood

that Pete Townshend is already talking about live performances to follow.

Said the spokesman: "When The Who return to the stage, it will almost certainly be with a new augmented line-up, adding keyboards and one other instrument. And their music is also likely to be different from what their followers have come to expect. We think that Kenny Jones will be a part of this new set-up, though in his own right, and not as a replacement for Keith Moon. After all, Kenny has a pedigree of his own."

The Who, together with Jones and keyboarders men Rabbit, are at present in their Ramport Studios putting the finishing touches to four new songs — for inclusion in "Quadrophenia". The film itself has now finished shooting and, after editing, is expected to be premiered in the summer. This will coincide with the release of



KENNY JONES

a soundtrack LP, including the four new numbers.

The other Who film project "The Kids Are Alright" is now in final editing stages, and Townshend recently returned from the States after putting the last touches to the sound. Director Jeff Stein arrives back in Britain after Christmas, hopefully with the finished film, which is now planned for March release — with a double soundtrack album to coincide. ● The late Keith Moon's four-part radio series "The Moon Tapes", originally broadcast in 1973 in "Sounds Of The Seventies", is to be repeated by Radio 1 starting on Boxing Day at 6.30 pm. The BBC say this is due largely to public demand.

ELTON BACK ON THE ROAD

NEWS BRIEFS

ALBERTO Y Lost Trios Peranolas don't rate Manchester as one of their favourite cities! They were booked for a concert at the Apollo this Saturday (16), but it was subsequently scrapped for some obscure reason — so they switched to the city's Polytechnic the same night, but that gig has now also been cancelled. But they have slotted in a new date at Stoke North Staffs Polytechnic tomorrow (Friday). THE JERKS are playing a few gigs to promote their new single "Cool", just released by Lightning Records. The Leeds-based band visit Manchester Russell Club (tonight, Thursday), Manchester The Squat (Friday), London Woolwich Trenchard (December 19), London Fulham Golden Lion (21) and Watford Red Lion (22). ROKOTTO see the year out with gigs at Leeds University (tonight, Thursday), Wolverhampton Tube Investment Club (Friday), Cardiff RAF St. Athan (19), Birkenhead Hamilton Club (20), Portsmouth Victory Club (21), Exeter Tiffany's (22), Cromer West Runton Pavilion (23), Cardiff Top Rank (24) and Swindon Brunel Rooms (29).

CHAMPION, the band featuring former Humble Pie stalwart Clem Clempson, are playing just two selected dates before Christmas — at Basildon Double Six Club (December 22) and London Covent Garden Rock Garden (23).

CIMARONS, who pulled out of the last few dates of Sham 69's "Guy Fawkes Memory" tour following hassles with bouncers during one of the gigs, have now landed their own London concert. It's a special Christmas reggae show at the New Roxy Theatre in Harlesden on Friday, December 22, and other acts on the bill are Aswad and 15-16-17.

JOE JACKSON, described as "the first true purveyor of Spiv Rock", headlines seven gigs during the Christmas period — at Retford Porterhouse (tomorrow, Friday), Gosport John Peel (Saturday), London Islington Hope & Anchor (December 20), High Wycombe Nags Head (21), Norwich Boogie House (22), London Kensington Nashville (23) and London Covent Garden Rock Garden (29). His debut album is scheduled for January release by A&M, titled "Look Sharp."

JIMMY CLIFF LONDON DATE

JIMMY CLIFF flies into London next month to play a one-off concert at the Hammersmith Odeon on January 23. Tickets are on sale now priced £3, £2.50 and £2. He's bringing along his regular backing band — including renowned guitarist Ernest Ranglin — who are also featured on his new Warner Brothers album "Give Thanks." A new single titled "Stand Up And Fight Back" will be issued on January 21, to tie in with his solitary British gig, which is part of a hectic European tour.

QUO TO STAY HERE IN '79

STATUS QUO — who've been seen on a British stage only once this year, at the Reading Festival in late August — intend to make amends in 1979. Apart from their brief return for the Reading event, the band have spent virtually the whole year out of the country. But they'll be back in January to base themselves in Britain once again. And they are planning a nationwide tour in the spring which, said a spokesman, will be very extensive "to make up for lost time".

ELTON JOHN comes out of retirement in the late winter, to no-one's real surprise, and goes back on the road to headline an extensive British and European concert tour — almost a year since he announced that he was giving up live performances and would never appear on stage again!

He'll be touring from February through until May, playing major European cities, a string of provincial dates around Britain and a series of concerts in London. Dates and venues have not yet been finalised, but promoter Harvey Goldsmith and Elton's manager John Reid expect to announce them shortly. But it's under-

stood that all gigs will be at smaller venues of about 2,000 capacity, and not at the large arenas Elton has favoured in the past.

A feature of the tour is that it will be virtually a solo venture. Elton is not forming a band to go on the road, but will instead appear solo at the piano, accompanied only by percussionist Ray Cooper.

Reason for Elton's decision to return to live gigs, having concentrated for the past few months on recording and his chairmanship of Watford F.C. is quite simply that he misses performing in public. Said a spokesman: "As an artist, it's something he feels he must do. It certainly has nothing to do with money!"

OFF THE RECORD



1978 CHART POINTS TABLES Rats: champions of new-wavers

THE BOOMTOWN RATS have the distinction of being, in terms of chart placings throughout the year, the top British new-wave record sellers of 1978 — both in singles and albums!

This is apparent from the NME Chart Points Tables, which are compiled annually and based upon the weekly Top Thirty listings, with points awarded according to chart positions — 30 points for a No.1 placing, 29 points for a No.2, and so on down to one point for a No.30.

Although there is still another week to go before the 1978 tables are completed, it is already obvious that the Rats' "Tonic For The Troops" will finish at No. 7 in the list of best-selling albums of the year, closely followed at No.8 by Ian Dury's "New Boots And Panties".

And in the singles tables, the Rats will finish at either No.5 or No.6 — at the moment they are neck-and-neck with America's Blondie, and it's impossible to say who will occupy these two positions until the final week's points are awarded. Either way, it's a remarkable double achievement by the Rats!

The top album of the year has already emerged as the "Saturday Night Fever" soundtrack set, but the title of best-selling singles act is a close-fought contest between Boney M and John Travolta & Olivia Newton-John — with Boney M as the clear favourites, now that their Christmas single is selling so strongly.

● Kansas have their live double CBS album set for release on January 19. Title is "Wild Child".

● Iggy Pop has signed his publishing company James Osterberg Music to an exclusive deal with Virgin Music. As well as future material, the deal covers songs from the albums "The Idiot", "TV Eye" and "Lust For Life". Iggy is currently working on a new album in Berlin, where he now lives.

● Still with CBS, February 9 is now the revised release date for the much-delayed album "Cafe Jacques", International, and London-based band Grand Hotel

● Valerie Carter has her second CBS album set for release on January 19. Title is "Wild Child".

● Led Zeppelin finished recording their new album in Sweden last week, though it still has to be mixed. And Bad Company have completed their new LP for release early in the New Year, their first on the Swan Song label. But there is still no official word on live appearances by either band.

● The Rolling Stones' next single, planned for January release, is expected to be "Beast Of Burden". It has already reached No. 5 in America, and is another track from their "Some Girls" album.

Free Stiff deletions

STIFF RECORDS have come up with a special offer, under which every purchaser of a recently-released Stiff album will receive a deleted Stiff LP free of charge. Buyers will have the choice of four free albums — "Music For Pleasure" by The Damned, "Wreckless Eric", "Hits Greatest Stiffs" and "Mickey Jupp's Legend". And with Stiff albums now costing £3.99, the hand-out represents quite a bonus! The offer also extends to Stiff singles — buy two and get a deleted single free. The offer continues for as long as stocks last.

Early Gram tracks set

EARLY Gram Parsons material, dating back to his first professional gigs on the college and coffee-house circuit in the mid-60's, is being made available in Britain next year by Sierra/Briar Records under an agreement reached with the executors of his estate. Initial release will be "Gram Parsons — The Folk Years, Volume 1", featuring him with the band he was fronting at the time, The Shilos. Packaged in the LP will be a booklet of rare photographs and unreleased poetry and songs, plus comprehensive notes.

● Boney M's current single "Mary's Boy Child / Oh My Lord" passed the million mark in British sales last Friday — exactly two weeks after the date of release. WEA claim this as an all-time record for this country.

● "Phil Spector's Christmas Album" is reissued yet again this month, and additionally this year Polydor are putting out a three-track single extracted from the LP — comprising "White Christmas" by Darlene Love, "Santa Claus Is Coming To Town" by The Crystals and "Frosty The Snowman" by The Ronettes.

● Following the release of his new "Equinox" album, Jean Michel Jarre has a single out on Polydor on December 29 featuring "Equinox Part 5" and "Equinox Part 1". The latter track has been edited to just over two minutes to accommodate Jarre's signature, which has been imprinted on the record.

● Also from CBS on January 19 is Phoebe Snow's fifth album "Against The Grain", produced by Phil Ramone. It includes her current single, Paul McCartney's "Every Night", which is receiving near-saturation airplay.

● The Rubinoos' new single "Falling In Love", which they're previewing on the current British tour, is finally set for release by Basenight on December 29. It was originally intended to issue it to tie in with the tour.

ODEON — HAMMERSMITH Monday 18th December

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IF YOU think that five hours of buffetless British Rail to Folkestone may perhaps not be the best entrée to a two-hour course of Hawklords, you're perfectly correct.

Climbing the several-hundred stone steps set in clear cliff face from seafront to centre of nightly activity didn't help, either.

Out-of-season Folkestone has the air of the necropolis: dark, cold, empty, the false promise of seaside follies and deserted crazy-golf courses exposed to the elements.

I feel like Jack Nicholson in *The King Of Marvin Gardens*, and wonder, what does Reginald Dixon do in the winter? Head for the Azores or hibernate?

It certainly seems there's pitifully little for "young folk" to do in such places at the best of times: a glance at the "forthcoming attractions" posters at the Leas Cliff Hall indicates that tourist-orientated entertainment rules even out of season, O.K.?

Peters and Lee, Tom O'Connor, and... what's this? For a magical split-second, I thought the poster read "The Dead Girls Pipers Band".

No such luck. It's the *Deal Girls Pipers Band*.

Should have known better, I suppose.

The Leas Cliff Hall's a perfect piece of seaside-show architecture: balustraded balconies, bar big enough to house maybe a pair of paralysed polecats (at a pinch).

There's a distinct lack of violence in the atmosphere, which, given the diversity of sub-cultures in evidence, is a little surprising. Or maybe not. Inner-city urban deprivation chic obviously holds little sway in seaside resorts. There are a lot of extremely attractive young ladies present.

"Shine On You Crazy Deutschmark" plays over the P.A.

I'D ALWAYS thought of Hawkwind as a peculiarly anachronistic mixture of sci-fi and drugs, slapdash and bombast — a drug-obsessed relic of an age many would prefer to forget. But, as vocalist Bob Calvert points out, "It doesn't take very much for an image to stick, especially if it's an adverse one. You've only got to have one member of the band busted, it gets the press and then everyone gets branded with that."

To say nothing, one might add, of the dictates of fashion.

However, the reason I've here follows friends' recommendations to the musical merits of "Quark, Strangeness And Charm". A cursory listen not only justified further investigation but hinted that their recent work bore more than a passing relation to certain more, ah, fashionable musics.

Just desserts, I felt, were not forthcoming.

Besides which, recent upheavals in the band, accompanied by a change of name, suggested a redefinition of outlook and intention, a rejuvenation alluded to in the liner-note to "Quark": "This is just a small message to let you know we are back on course. Last year was the worst year for us, finding us in debt and out of touch with the modern world."

"It was a case of continual battles," explains Calvert, "in order to bring about the necessary changes to keep the band alive and in touch with the modern world — whatever that is, because it's always changing. It's only a matter of subjective taste as to what section of the modern world you're in touch with, anyway."

These arguments about musical direction led to Calvert and founder/guitarist Dave Brock emerging as "the strongest, fittest survivors. A coup was put down, y'know..."

So, ex-cunt names like Powell, Turner, Rudolph, King and House, and enter, eventually, bassist Harvey Bainbridge and drummer Martin Griffin from Hawkwind spin-off band The Sonic Assassins, and keyboard-player Steve Swindells from session-work and a stint with (of all people) Pilot.

Initially, Dave and I formed The Sonic Assassins down in Devon with Martin and Harvey in order to be able to do the gigs we wanted to do at a moment's notice, instead of getting into arguments with people about whether they wanted to play a benefit, for example, or play Northern Ireland.

"It was quite a logical step to form a band called The Hawklords from The Sonic Assassins — they're both nicknames that have been used to describe the band in the past, and indeed, there are three science-fiction



ROBERT CALVERT Pic: PENNIE SMITH

LEISURE-WEAR OF THE TIMELORDS

Actually, BOB CALVERT'S mystic dressing gown is not what this feature's about: what we have here is an appraisal of the new Hawkwind, sorry, HAWKLORDS by ANDY GILL

novels about a band called The Hawklords, which are based on us."

At the time of the split Hawkwind were working on the follow-up to "Quark, Strangeness And Charm", an album provisionally entitled "PXR 5". Apparently a patchy affair, it was felt best to postpone / rethink the album, and start a new one completely from scratch, with new songs and the new band (plus Simons King and House on a few tracks).

The result was "Hawklords", an album which, despite Calvert's description of it as "a fairly conventional collection of songs," and despite the most off-putting cover ever to slide round vinyl, is not without a fair proportion of fine moments. I'll not bore you with potted descriptions of the tracks, save to say that "25 Years" is the best Roxy Music track that Roxy Music never recorded (which raises questions of chickens and eggs), and that, in general, it's as engaging a mixture of solidity and sardonic futurism as you'll encounter nowadays.

Not a great, but certainly a good debut album, and one which serves to put the band — and, hopefully, their fans — into contention with the late seventies.

Transition is the word.

THE HALL darkens, the audience cheers and moves forward, and the legend "Pan-Transcendental Industries Inc." flashes up on the backdrop, followed by "25 Years On". Noises are made in the darkness, finally resolving into "25 Years", and things get brighter.

Calvert, an obsessive dresser-up/actor, (and, if the truth be known, a more accomplished singer than he's usually given credit for), is in guerrilla chic: beret, bullet-belt diagonal "cross torso", etc.

Attired thus, the resemblance to Wolfe Smith from TV sitcom *Citizen Smith* is astonishing, lending an otherwise absent humorous edge to the images of austerity and alienation which make up the current stage-show. (It occurs to me later that the eponymous, out-of-synch toy revolutionary of that series has an ironic congruence with the accepted view of Hawkwind as anachronism — unintentional, no doubt, but nonetheless an interesting coincidence).

Two hours later, when they leave the stage, two things are apparent: one is that the Hawklords band is an extremely powerful, professional unit, totally at odds with the old Hawkwind image of banger hippies too wrecked to tie their bootlaces; the

other is that there's a definite conflict of interest between the band and the fans.

The former are concerned with change, new leaves and clean sheets. As Martin Griffin surmises: "It's a band concerned with the future more than anything."

The latter... well, it's pretty obvious when the band depart the stage that no-one's gonna leave till they've heard "Silver Machine", okay?

Which places The Hawklords in rather a difficult position. To pander, or not to pander? And while it's okay for an outsider like me to go along with the lust for progress in Steve Swindells' avowal that he "doesn't care whether a few old hippies get left behind", the peculiar fanaticism of the Hawk-ian has to be taken into consideration.

"When kids are coming backstage afterwards," points out Griffin, "and telling you not that it's a 'great gig' but that it's the greatest experience of their lives, you start to get an idea of the responsibility that rests on you."

The end result is an incredibly long — mere semi-converts like myself might say interminable — show which tries to cover every phase of Hawkwind's career, from "Urban Guerrilla" and "Sonic Attack"

through "Steppenwolf" to "Quark, Strangeness And Charm", besides presenting the newer Hawklords material.

Value for money, okay, but the failure (or unwillingness) to make a complete break with the past can only frustrate their desire to be accepted as a different band. Although, when asked about the differences between Hawkwind and The Hawklords, Calvert either isn't too sure about the distinctions himself, or attempts to appease old fans by blurring those distinctions:

"If I could be allowed to put it this way, it seems like now the band seems more the same than it used to be two years ago! Now, it's more like Hawkwind in spirit and feeling. I think there seems to be much stronger communion now between us and the people who come — and a lot of people have remarked that it is remarkable that the band is so sort of Hawkwind-ish, in spite of the fact that everybody's changed except Dave and me."

This sounds a trifle tautological, but I can see what Calvert means: live, this band is Hawkwind, to all intents and purposes. A tighter, no-nonsense Hawkwind, but still Hawkwind. Which doesn't fit with either their recent recorded stuff or their offstage demeanour.

Instead of the untethered, out-of-control, drug-added louts of Lemmy-legend, the band I met was a man composed of thoughtful, humorous, earnest but restrained human beings. A nicer bunch of blokes, etc.

What other band do you know that'd stop the tour coach to purchase, not booze, but buns? A peculiarly English phenomenon you'll agree, and quite in accord with Calvert's neat, conservative brown-suit and brogues — in itself a helluva get-up for a bona-fide sonic assassin.

In conversation Calvert combines his onstage eagerness with his offstage reserve and displays a refreshing articulacy. I ask him whether the mythopoetic aspirations of the old band will be continued in The Hawklords.

"It seems that the impetus for these literary intentions is behind us now... there's a much less self-conscious approach. We're concerned with creating sounds and lyrics that actually feel right, rather than being tailored to fit a concept..."

This seems to be the case, despite the "Hawklords" album's book-draped, factory/industry/automation concept. I put it to Calvert that whereas Hawkwind always came across like an aural Conan comic, The Hawklords are concerned more with future reality-possibilities than future fantasies that they jumped from Burroughs (Edgar Rice, not fashionable William) to Ballard.

"Right, I think, however, that the fantasy content largely comes from the artwork more than the content of the songs. 'Silver Machine', for example, isn't a sort of Conan long-haired fantasy thing, it's quite a modern song. And 'Urban Guerrilla' is another."

"The Moorcock material that's been used, in fact, is things like 'Sonic Attack' — much more realistic SF than fantasy SF."

Do they read much SF then? Are they influenced by it? (Viz., things like "Damnation Alley" from

"Quark, Strangeness And Charm".

"I don't! I don't like SF that much. Nobody in this band is particularly an SF fanatic. But then, neither is Michael Moorcock himself. I think if you're a practitioner of that kind of thing, in literature or music, there are much more interesting sources of inspiration to be found outside the field altogether, in newspapers, and magazines like *Scientific American*, which is where the "Quark, Strangeness And Charm" idea came from. Most SF is trash, actually..."

I concur, and after a brief discussion on the closeness of Ballard's apocalyptic fictions to the life itself, conversation changes tack. I refer to the musical similarities between the (recorded) Hawklords and the Roxy/Bowie/Eno caucus and ask whether the disparity in fashionability between themselves and chic outfits like Ultravox (*Chic?! — Ed.*) annoys them.

"Yes, but you see the difference really is that we grew up with Bowie and Eno. In fact I made an album with Eno three years ago called 'Lucky Left And The Longships', which was just me and him in the studio, basically, at a time when he wasn't as well-known as he is now."

Continued over page



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HAWKLORDS

From previous page

And when you're working with people in that close way there's bound to be some cross-over of influences happening. I found, from working with him, that we had a lot of ideas in common — obviously, or we wouldn't have started the thing off in the first place."

There's also the punk connection...

"Born To Go", if you listen to it now, sounds like a punk band; it could be the Buzzcocks, or someone like that. Indeed, Pete Shelley actually confessed to us that he'd spent a lot of his early youth listening to albums like the 'Space Ritual' and derived quite a lot of his musical direction from it. Which doesn't surprise me, but this is something which never gets mentioned in the press.

Okay, Sour grapes made sweet. Now, what of the future?

"What we are talking about doing is an album which is much more musically daring, less tied to recognisably traditional song formats. More experimental-bearing musical ideas, which is what we started doing on 'Quark'. Like 'Spirit Of The Age', which has an enormously long introduction before the song starts and a very slow build."

CALVERT ALSO has another solo project up his sleeve, "a painful sort of album" about a teenage schizophrenic for which he hopes to get together with label-mate (!) radical psychologist R. D. Laing. "I was diagnosed as a schizophrenic in my youth, treated as that, but then I was told afterwards that I wasn't actually a schizophrenic at all. It might end up as part of the next Hawklords album, actually."

Hmmm. Aren't the band worried about their more "experimental-bearing musical ideas" leaving their audience behind? The general impression I got was that the Hawk-audience was still largely composed of souls for whom the prospect of Armageddon holds few surprises, and whose idea of ecstasy is a tape-loop of "Silver Machine".

"I never really thought about that, actually. I mean, as long as Dave Brock is pounding away on his guitar the way he does — which he's not going to stop doing... he's not going to suddenly switch to playing plangent electric mandolin, or something like that — I don't



Pic: PENNIE SMITH

think there's much danger of our changing *that* drastically.

"It's a long process of distilling a basic urge; it started out as a huge wave of direction, which hasn't broken yet. I think it could have quite a long way to go."

"And don't forget, the people in Afghan coats are about 18 years old now, instead of being the old guys who don't go to gigs, that much now — they're at home with their stereos, which they've probably acquired from selling badges and leatherware."

"The largest percentage of rock gig-goers are young kids anyway, 'cos they're the ones who want to get out of the home situation, the European family cell, into a sort of thermo-nuclear explosion."

Calvert's under no delusions about the reason for the disparity between The Hawklords' recorded work and their live performance — only he doesn't find it as depressing a phenomenon as I do:

"It's due mainly to the energy-level of the audience, really. They demand by their very presence that we present

them with something very exciting. I think the stage-show should be exciting rather than just a reproduction of what you can do in the studio."

"In a completely dead town it's quite a responsibility to provide an exciting and colourful two hours. That's why I think rock music is so popular, because it's the only way — short of forming terrorist cells or something — that you can actually find a sort of collective excitement without causing anyone any harm."

"Like, football has become a quite dangerous sport, but in rock 'n' roll the incidents are very few — occasionally someone might get smashed over the head with a bottle but it doesn't happen very often."

"It's a release of everyday banality, isn't it?"

Sure is, but it's rather sad to see a band who originally sprang up as part of a (quasi-) cultural flowering now functioning as a release-valve for trapped souls.

That's the spirit of the age, I guess.

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HIGH SCHOOL CONFIDENTIAL

THE RAMONES have been in Hollywood for the past month making their motion picture debut, which has a working title of *Rock'n'Roll High School*.

Advance reports indicate that the plot will have all the low-rent juvenile drama ingredients we have come to associate with da brudders.

It's about the commotion that goes on in a high school when it's announced that a certain well-known rock group is coming to town, culminating with a show from the boys themselves. Romance, comedy

and social significance seem virtually guaranteed.

The movie is being produced by Roger Corman — a veteran of the B-movie shock horror genre responsible for such top drive-in attractions as *I Was A Teenage Werewolf* — and directed by Alan Arkush, who recently made a B-movie tribute called *Hollywood Boulevard*. They were looking for a group to appear in their film and The Ramones were a natural choice.

It's scheduled to be released next spring by New World Pictures. The Ramones will, of course, play themselves, and sadly but somehow predictably, Joey doesn't get the girl.

Another rock star about to make the big move to the big screen, providing it will accommodate him, is the big Meat Loaf. He will appear in a film made by the director of *Phantom Of The Paradise* and *Carrie*, Brian DePalma. If it's a supernatural thriller, as DePalma's last few movies have been, then a possible title might be *Beck Out Of Hell*.

B. SEDATED

THEIRIES



JOEY by PETER M. COOK

DYLAN ALBUM HITS NEW PROBLEMS

THOUGH the Bob Dylan live double-album *"Live At Budokan"* is currently Britain's fastest-selling import — this, despite a £16.50 price tag — CBS say that they are unlikely to provide the album with a home release.

A disgruntled CBS person was heard to say: "All this means is that the bootleg tape merchants will have a field day — all they've got to do is buy a copy of the album, record cassette copies, then flog them to their friends for three or four quid a time, thus undercutting the price of the album by over £12."

Meanwhile, Louis Raynor, of Hammersmith's Flyover Records, who have been supplying London's West End with as many copies of *"Budokan"* as he can lay mitts on, is said to be wearing a suitably inimitable smile!

PEARL HARBOR

THEIRIES



"Don't like the sound of that much, Bob."



"Just be thankful you aren't a ruddy Rasta, Bob!"

ROCK AGAINST CONFERENCES

A THOUGH we are called "Rock Against Racism" we support the struggle against other forms of harassment. There is no way we will allow women, gays or Irish people to be put down or made the butt of dumb jokes or songs from an RAR stage.

So runs one of the major proposals adopted at last weekend's RAR conference — in direct response to the criticism heaped on the organisation for allowing bands like The Fabulous Poodles to play sexist music under the RAR banner.

The conference, a two-day affair held at the Central London Poly, brought together RAR groups from all over the country to discuss future plans with the Working Committee of the London branch. Saturday's sessions, which I missed, had workshops, an anti-Nazi film, business reports and discussions on sexism. Temporary Hoarding and RAR clubs. On Sunday, we had discussions on sexism (again), Northern Ireland, alternative record labels and the projected RAR roadshow tour.

The tour, planned for early spring, will cover most of England and Scotland, and RAR are now assembling a pool of bands — the idea is that four from the pool will play a set of four gigs, then be replaced by a different four bands for the next four gigs. And so on.

People from Fast Product, Rough Trade, Scritti Politti and People United turned up to give details about making and distributing your own records. DIY fans might like to know that Scritti Politti are hoping to compile a pamphlet of basic info, while Raw Records and Television Personalities, a London band, are already working on similar projects.

The most heated exchanges, though, revolved around the issues of sexism and racism.

The first problem came when one RAR group proposed doing a gig for the "Troops Out" movement. Several people thought it would be a mistake for RAR to become "officially" associated with T.O., as this could be a potentially divisive step which would weaken RAR support, particularly in Northern Ireland. But other speakers claimed that an organisation combating racism had no

choice but to deplore the presence of an "English imperialist army" on Irish soil. The meeting left the problem unresolved — an official line would be worked out later.

RAR had invited members of Misty and Aswad along to clarify the relationship between sexism and Rastafarianism. This they failed to do, generally making a hopeless mess of the issue. First, they pretended they didn't know what sexism was; and when somebody told them, they found other ways of hedging: they weren't sexist at all, well they weren't any more sexist than whites, well if they were it was because it was God's law and you have to respect other people's religion, don't you mean?

Charles I thought God supported him over the Divine Right Of Kings, but he still got his head chopped off! Better hang on to yourselves, boys.

GRAHAM LOCK

THEIRIES

TRB TV SPECIAL



TOM ROBINSON at Finchden Manor

RECOGNISE the visage peering from the depths of all that hair in the picture on the left? You got it, *Blackmail* fans — it's yer old mate Mr T. Robinson of New Bond Street.

But despite appearances, this isn't *Blackmail* Corner. The archive suppette on display here, y'see, is just one of several highly interesting features of an up-coming Granada TV documentary about The Tom Robinson Band.

Directed by former rock photo-journalist Mick Gold (author of *Rock On The Road*, previous celluloid careers highlight a study of dada and surrealism called *Europe After The Rain*), the TRB programme is a one-hour documentary tentatively called *Too Good To Be True?*

Gold invited Thrills to witness the rough cuts last week.

Centred around TRB's gig in Oxford on September 23, it's one of the *live* TV rock shows ever, up there with the Pistols and Devoto on *So It Goes* and TRB on *The London Weekend Show*. For once, the director picks up on the fact that the singer is not the entire band, and there's plenty of footage of Danny Kustow in his most brain-damaged form, veering wildly out of tune through "Up Against The Wall" and "Power In The Darkness", while Robinson backs hoarsely through "Motorway", "Martin" and a ragged "Glad To Be Gay".

In fact, it's all pretty ragged. Which is why it's so good, huh?

In between times, Tom does his Most Articulate Man In Showbiz act — a TV natural — as Gold takes him and Kustow through their Finchden Manor experiences (Did Finchden have any long-term effect on your outlook? Tom: "It's where I first slept with a boy... and that was a whole lot of fun. I've gone right on doing it."), the band's formation, the press deluge, etc, etc.

One of the most interesting moments comes when the band are seen discussing NME's innuoes *Blackmail* Corner shot of Kustow in drag. While he and Dolphin think it's hilarious, Tom can't help pointing out that drag-as-a-joke is oppressive, as it reinforces the macho man, feminine woman stereotypes.

It's scheduled for screening early in the New Year as the second in a series of six Granada rock films (the first, on Randy Newman, goes out on January 2; the third, yet to be shot, will feature Nick Lowe and Dave Edmunds in the studio). Book a seat.

PHIL McNEILL

animal liberation: MASSACRE AND PROTEST

EARLIER this year there was widespread public protest following the news that Japanese fishermen had slaughtered over 1,000 dolphins on the grounds that they were eating the fish.

Now comes the news of an even larger dolphin slaughter in another region of Japan, in a traditional hunt which has been held annually for more than 100 years but has remained unnoticed by the outside world.

Thrills has obtained the original press release from the first outside observers of the killing, members of the Hawaii-based Earth Co-Existence Organisation (ECO). They report that some 6,000 dolphins are regularly killed during the last three months of each year around the Izu peninsula. This year was no exception.

ECO president Dexter Cate filed his first-hand report:

"It was straight out of hell. Any direction that you looked, there was blood and agony for the dolphins.

"Fishermen and families watching saw an everyday occurrence. To them, it's the same as catching any other fish." (In Japanese, the word for slaughter applies to all large mammals including humans, but not to dolphins and whales. They are simply 'caught' as fish.)

"The dolphins were kept in the fishing net awaiting their turn to be slaughtered. Many were badly injured. As they round them up, the fishermen randomly spear the dolphins to maintain panic and confusion and maybe ensure cohesion, as the rest try to help the injured ones.

"Dolphins with bellies split open thrashed about wailing in distress and their entrails flopped on the concrete. They didn't lose consciousness even as blood gushed from their throats.

"As we stood there, horrified witnesses, a fisherman deftly severed the heart from a still quivering dolphin, tossed it aside. It landed less than a yard from my feet, still beating.

The dolphins are killed purely for human consumption, but ironically, around that coast the dolphins' flesh contains an average 4 parts per million of mercury — ten times the normal level allowed for human consumption. The fishermen's annual consumption of 466 tons of dolphin meat could be killing them.

The Izu slaughter must be stopped.

◆ Closer to home, the front line troops in the Whale War have been involved in more direct action. On November 7, The Moby Dick Group poured paint stripper over seven Japanese Datsun cars on a transporter in Yeovil, causing £2,000 damage, as a protest against Japanese whaling.

A photostat statement which the Group delivered to a local newspaper office claimed: "This was part of the nationwide campaign against these vehicles both in dealers' and private hands.

"The failure of the national press and television to deliver our message has resulted in the unfair element of surprise in these attacks.

"They are to blame for not enabling people to take the necessary security and insurance measures for the protection of their property. Ample warning was given, but it fell on deaf ears."

RECORD REVIEWERS HAVE GOT HEARTS OF STONE

"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 row Stax chorus, and it's sheer unassuming genius."

Phil McNeill, NME

"There's a world of experience wrapped up in this album. Springsteen once wrote about Southside that he was 'the only white kid on the Jersey shore that you could stand to hear sing straight r&b live sets a night'. Recommendations don't come much higher than that."

Mike Davies, MM

"I got a ragged hungry band full of stone survivors/We're out here trying to keep it alive, he sings. I'd say they were doing rather more than trying."

David Hepworth, SOUNDS



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Yeovil police are investigating.

● More recently in Glasgow, members of Greenpeace went into action when they were leaked information that a shipment of sperm whale oil was coming into Glasgow docks. They went out in inflatable boats to try to prevent the tanker from

docking, but the engine on one of the boats broke down and the crew were arrested under some obscure by-law dating back to 1889.

Their action highlights efforts by other groups like Friends of the Earth to get the dockers to black sperm oil shipments, which would effectively put an end to its use in Britain.

Members of the Glasgow dock union are in favour, it appears, and moves are now being made to try and get the issue adopted by the unions on a national basis.

DICK TRACY

THRILLS

ROD PAYS WAGE CLAIM

ROD STEWART was sued last week for unpaid royalties by his former drummer Micky Waller, and agreed to settle out of court for an undisclosed sum — an event which surprisingly escaped the attention of our Rod-hungry national press.

Waller had sued Stewart, his company Rollgreen Ltd., and company director Milton Marks for £6,000, claiming he was owed this amount in royalties.

Waller began playing drums with Cyril Davies' All Stars in '63, went on to play with Jeff Beck and Stewart in Steampacket on Beck's "Truth" album.

He then played on five of Stewart's solo albums.

But this claim was specifically to do with the "Smiler" album.

Under an agreement made in 1973, Waller was to receive one per cent of

the 11 per cent royalties Stewart got from "Smiler", which has sold 1½ million copies.

Waller's counsel said in court that the drummer instead received a lump payment because a legal dispute was holding up release of the album and he had "over-extended" himself financially.

The judge approved the out of court settlement, and added that he was extremely glad he did not have the "onerous task" of dealing with allegations of improper conduct made against Stewart.

Waller, who these days is to be found playing jazz at Putney's Half Moon, said afterwards that he was happy with the settlement. But of Rodders he added: "I'm no longer friends with him. I never want to see him again."

KEITH HUNT

THRILLS



MICKY WALLER celebrates his victory. Pic: GEORGE BODNAR.

ELO, ELO, ELO...



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WELCOME

GILLETT PLANS SEDUCTION — WITH AFTERCARE

EVER wanted to hear a radio show that operated no embargo on the music it broadcast than that of judicious taste? Where Clarence Frogman Henry could rub shoulders with X-Ray Spex?

If you live in London you're too late. Charlie Gillett's Sunday lunch time Radio London *Honky Tonk* show comes off the air at the end of this month after almost seven years — a more serious loss to a London rock fan's Sabbath routine than the closure of a certain weekly travel brochure.

The show's disarmingly frank DJ — Gillett played "God Save The Queen" at the time of the Radio One and Two bans, openly wondering what the fuss was about — says he's decided to stop being "an unpaid A&R man". After all, past years Gillett's played the first recording of, amongst others, Graham Parker, Darts, Dire Straits, Lene Lovich and D.P. Costello. Now he and his producer, Gordon Melki, intend to devote their energies to their long-suffering Oval label.

A cluster of posters among the piles of records and tapes in his Clapham home witness that Oval Records has again become a viable reality, with advance funding from A&M records, after too many years spent being in the right place too soon. Gillett, for instance, was the manager of Kilburn & The High Roads (with Ian Dury) four years ago, and his involvement with radio followed the same pattern.

"In the late '60s I sent a trial script to radio and they sent it back saying it was altogether too serious an approach. So I tried for a job with *Melody Maker* and they wrote back mentioning the word 'serious' again and suggesting I get interested in jazz."

Bemused, Gillett instead went off and wrote the definitive history of rock'n'roll, *The Sound Of The City*, which eventually landed him his radio show.

Honky Tonk's original brief was to be oddies-orientated, playing things people weren't likely to have heard before, but Gillett's involvement with the Kilburns and through them with what was quaintly termed 'pub rock' caused the show to become more of an adjunct to whatever was going down in London.

"That's one of the many things that finally made me stop: I've always been listening at home to more up-to-date music than I've been playing on the radio — it's just too schizophrenic an existence."

Honky Tonk will be replaced by a show called *Echoes* hosted by Radio One rock'n'roll DJ Stuart Coleman. "He suffers," says Charlie, "if that's the right word, from many of the same blind spots I've had. But the oddies are what that particular audience wants, and that's always been my problem."

"*Live In London* is the title I think it should have — playing whatever is live in London. Somebody digging around all that stuff and playing it."

At best, *Honky Tonk* balanced the two, and if there's a show that replaces its function, it probably won't be Charlie's: "People think radio is my main concern — despite the fact that I get paid so little it's a real joke. Gordon and I have to spend all our spare hours trying to make a living and get Oval going."

Oval started around '74 with Cajun rock'n'roll re-issues, amongst them Johnny Allen's unbeatable "Promised Land", that soon financed new recordings. But in those pre-punk, pre-Stiff-Wick days you had to aim for Radio One or not aim at all, and so



Back in biz... CHARLIE GILLETT (left) and GORDON MELKI. Pic:

Oval ended up putting out reggae records by the likes of Dennis Brown, "because the reggae scene was the only place where things could happen on a small scale."

And now? Just what the world needs, you say, another small record company. Aside from the fact that there can never be enough small record companies, the new Oval is aiming for slightly different ground.

"The way big companies choose to play it," says Charlie, "makes it difficult for them to make their decisions, because they're not involved with the artist. There's a breed of A&R men for whom signing a band is rather like seducing a girl — once they've cracked it, they lose interest."

And the group then gets shuffled around from department to

department, often in the hands of an artist Liaison Person whose main qualifications for the job is his ability to tell jokes and buy drinks. As Charlie points out, "It can be a very disconcerting experience. We're trying to protect the artists from all that."

Which ties in with a change of attitude he's had of late...

"We were always worried about whether what we'd done would be a hit single or not. But I'm starting to lose all those parities — just thinking it was something to do with a record I don't know if the record we're putting out next month by The Secret is a hit, all I know is that they themselves are."

"It's confidence in our ability to judge that. Like Ian Dury... we thought he had it too, and when he hadn't got there we began to wonder. Finally we saw that those feelings we had about him — and which we have about one or two other people like Lene Lovich and The Secret — both, surprisingly enough, Oval recording artists — were accurate. I'm realising the character of the person has actually got more to do with it than a particular record."

The only drawback for Charlie is that A&M won't give Oval their own label until they have that particular record.

Meanwhile catch the final *Honky Tonk* if you can, a demo special with the best of the tapes he has played, including D.P. Costello's "Wave A White Flag".

PAUL RAMBALI

THRILLS

CHRISTMAS TURKEYS: THE BIG CARVE-UP

EXACTLY WHOM was Mommy kissing underneath the mistletoe last night? If you think it was Santa, better getcha noddle seen to.

Odds are that it was really Clive Davis all decked out in time for the great laser parade.

Y'see, Christmas is traditionally the period when record barons whoop things up. After all, wouldn't you too be ever so slightly rapturous if you got paid again this year for the job you did last December? Too right, Bruce. Thing is, the name of the game (and one not yet marketed by Waddington's) is Christmas re-issue.

This year's supply is formed by Bing's "White Christmas", The Kinks' "Father Christmas", Greg Lake's "I Believe In Father Christmas", The Sabotus Orchestra's "The Little Drummer Boy" (I've been also dickering with the idea of re-running the Harry Simeone Chorus original last time I popped into ATV-land) and Slade's "Merry Christmas Everybody".

Please Come Home For Christmas, originally cut for Aladdin by bluesman Charles Brown during the '50s, has been re-wrapped in homogenised fashion by The Eagles, and "Mary's Boy Child", once a winner for ex-Dylan front man Harry Belafonte is being disco-propelled into the charts by the likes of Boney M.

Perhaps the whole deal really started with the Crosby item. The pipe-smoking Harry Jilly sang the dirty in the movie *Holidays Inn* back in '42, cut the disc in May of that year (Christmas songs are usually cut in the summer just to get the right atmosphere) and landed himself with a Christmas boomerang, the disc returning to the U.S. top 10 every December twice '42 and '49, also doing pretty well thereafter — often via versions cut in German, French, Spanish, Italian, Hawaiian, Polish and Dutch.

But then, '42 was big on Christmas. Dance band leader Freddy Martin sold a million copies of "White

Christmas" that year, while Fred Waring did the same with "Twas The Night Before Christmas". And Bing, finding himself with nothing in particular to do one day, ran up a version of "Silent Night" that did a nifty seven million or so.

But I digress. It's the re-issue; and second, third and fourth time around piece of gift-wrapped vinyl that we're really dealing with. Like Brenda Lee's "Rockin' Around The Christmas Tree", which charted Stateside in '60, '61 and '62 and still gets a frequent re-service via MCA. Or that Harry Simeone flashback (which, incidentally, was the first Top Rank

disc to be issued in these isles), a U.S. chart-climber for five consecutive years (1954-62).

Bobby Helms too, after surfacing with "My Special Angel", cottoned on to the great Christmas re-run and contributed "Jingle Bell Rock" — charting every December from '57 through to '62 with the exception of '59 (dunking which Christmas Frankie Avalon rightfully asked "Why?" and gained a No. 1 for so doing).

Often though, chart positions don't count for much. Xmas reissues can still accrue healthy sales by just being around. One particular case in point is the pure gospel version of "Silent

Night" recorded by the late, great Mahalia Jackson, a waxing which only made the 99th spot in *Billboard*'s Hot 100 during the Christmas of '62 but sold steadily thereafter. At one point it became the all-time best seller in Norway — and when last heard of, had passed the magic million mark.

So re-hash, re-cash has provided an easy way out for record companies through-out the years — and I guess we'll continue to see such cuts as John Lennon's "Happy Xmas" and Elvis Presley's "Blue Christmas", plus the Christmas albums from Spector, Motown and The Beach Boys, decorating local, holly-bedecked record emporiums as long as Marley's ghost (Jacob not Bob, pinhead!) continues to walk.

For it's not a white Christmas, it's a pound and dollar green one, as Stan Freberg once pointed out amid the sound of ringing cash-registers.

Revival means survival. Happy Christmas, EMI

FRED DELLAR

THRILLS

The Lone Groover



BENYON

STRANGLERS

ALBUM

HITS NEW

CONTROVERSY

IT'S HOPELESS," Hugh Cornwell's voice crackles with weariness and frustration as he squats in a corner of the *NME* review room. The tape machine jackhammers out a white label of the "new" Stranglers album "Eastern Front".

"New" because the LP has just been completed and The Stranglers want United Artists to release it as soon as it is humanly possible, and above all in time for Christmas. "New" (in quotes) because UA have informed Stranglers' manager Ian Grant that "in our expert opinion as a major record company it is not feasible, viable or even desirable to release this LP at this particular point in time if we are going to be able to maximise the ongoing commercial and marketable potential of the property concerned."

The track playing is Jean-Jacques Burnel's impassioned "Fuck My Old Boots". "Whip some skull on me, you ree-actionary old dumper", howls Burnel over wiry, vicious bass lines and Dave Greenfield's manically-spiralling organ phrases. Coming straight in via a jarring segue from Cornwell's startling interpretation of Bacharach and David's "Alfie", it is one of the most brutally effective moments in the band's recorded history.

So which tracks are actually the contentious ones? Is it "MiG"? Burnel's gutwrenching warning of Soviet military intentions in Eastern Europe? Or "Two Balls Are Better Than None (Any Day)", a piece calculated to infuriate any self-respecting male feminist? Or is it the admittedly controversial "Only Faggots Hate The Sight Of Blood"? "It certainly isn't any of these

tracks," retorts Cornwell. "UA loved those. They said they were the purest expression of our art we'd ever bloody recorded."

"No, the real reason that Jean-Jacques is going to beat the living stoofs out of those miserable liberal bastards when he gets back from his karate course is that they don't realise we've got to get this album out in the next ten days. There are two Christmas tracks on it which will be obsolete by the Spring — which is when they want to put the thing out."

How's Burnel doing on his course, we enquired parenthetically.

"Oh, alright. Except he was a bit under the weather last time I spoke to him," admits Cornwell. "He was apparently about to bite the head off a live chicken — it was part of his Pink Belt exam — when it bit him first. Just below the eye."

The Christmas tracks in question were both over on the second side of "Eastern Front", so we played them next. "No More Santa" draws arresting parallels between the assassination of Salvador Allende and the Nativity. "Let My Reindeer Be My Weapon And My Statement" is the motif of "Jingle Balls", an eerie chant accompanied only by an effects tape of exploding Japanese carrier planes — transformed, Moroder-fashion, into an attractive light disco beat.

"It's our only compromise with disco so far," admits a shamed Cornwell.

But the row, he says, originally blew up over the cover. The Stranglers had already submitted artwork depicting a giant phallus dressed as a Waffen SS trooper (with the foreskin doing double duty as a coalscuttle helmet) protruding from a snow-covered battlefield — an interestingly solipsistic sideline being the artful conglomeration of Roman bellisae, Napoleonic gun-carriages and World War II artillery: all rusted,



"Eastern Front" — the sleeve

disused, snowmelted, quiescent. Their design was rejected by UA in favour of a photograph of a dead girl with big tits. The two sides eventually compromised with the cover shown above — which should have solved the problem but instead led to further acrimony over the album's contents.

At the moment, as Cornwell has it, there is something of an impasse, with United Artists (who hold the masters) asserting their contractual right to release material as and when they choose, and The Stranglers asserting their contractual right to take a snatch squad of Finley Boys into UA's offices to "completely waste the entire building."

Cornwell claims: "It actually is in our contract, you know. There's a clause which states that we have the right to 'take punitive physical action against the executives and servants of the corporation' whenever a quorum of the group thinks fit. So, as soon as Jean-Jacques gets back..."

The threat hung in the air, all the more menacing for being unspoken. In the meantime, hoping it won't come to that, The Stranglers are taking the uncharacteristic step of enlisting the aid of the rock press, the BBC and the National Union of Conservative Students to make their case public.

"We really believe in this album."

insists Cornwell. "We honestly believe that it's the best thing that The Stranglers have ever done, and it's vital to all of us (especially Jean-Jacques) that the album is released when we originally intended it to be released. It's a really good album — far better than boring, monotonous, simplistic load of half-baked sexist crap we released last time."

M. A. CHOMAN

THROLES

CONTACT IN RED SQUARE

BONEY M became the first 'non-MOR' act to play behind the 'Iron Curtain' last week. A packed house of 3,000 Soviet punters gave an "enthusiastic greeting" to the first of ten shows by the best-selling bourgeois Western entertainment troupe, writes our man at SIGINT.

Moscow's Red Army and bureaucratic elite were spotted in the giant queue that formed outside the Rossiya Concert Hall, just around the corner from the Kremlin. The group were officially billed as simply a "vocal instrumental ensemble from the countries of the Caribbean Sea", but word spread fast and the strictly rationed tickets were fetching the equivalent of £100 on the black market. Someone went so far as to steal the American ambassador's personal ticket allocation.

Boney M's set diplomatically excluded their recent hit "Rasputin", hinting as it does at the bedroom prowess of a well-known Tzarist figure.

"I really miss not being able to sing 'Rasputin'," said Marcia Barrett, "but we were told not to. We were also told not to be too sexy."

Judging from their recent live shows, there's not much danger of that anyway. But Boney M-ania still reached such a peak that even Moscow's normally dry official newspapers joined in. Their stories centred on the rags-to-riches rise of Boney M — but played down the riches aspect and instead praised their work as a "collective".

Meanwhile rumours that the new Clash album is enjoying a brisk turnover in the Eastern Bloc have proved false, proof that even communists prefer to get down than get polemic.

THROLES

Dr. Strangelove



MONEY B. PIC: PENNIE SMITH

Wh: Peterb. JN defender
J Green ags ust Watford.

DIVISION TWO

There was a glut of g-uile in Division Two, nine being scored in the remarkable 3-3 draw between Bristol & Wovers 'd Charlton. 'aut Randall nee 'or Rove

THE OLD grey whistle test has proved successful in times of emergency for elderly people in Chingford.

Shrewsbury Crown Court was told that an error at a drug-taking session led to the deaths of two men. A third was lucky to recover after being taken to a hospital intensive care unit.

Chemists' shops
Dr's best friend, Kenneth Litherland, 27, died after he was injected with methoxyne hydrochloride which was 10 times stronger than they expected.

Blimey — he must have been pretty stoned. Spotted in the Telegraph by the Aboriginal Moran.

As for the true purpose of OGWT, our thanks to Chingford Guardian reader Septic Eyed.



THE CURE

AIN'T NO BLUES FOR THE SUMMERTIME CURE

BUZZCOCK Pete Shelley made a name for himself playing a cheap and battered Starway guitar. The drummer of The Worst used to whack beefily away behind a Chad Valley kit. Likewise, Robert Smith, teenage lynchpin of The Cure, is happy enough back in garageland with his modest axe — a Woolworth's Top Twenty guitar that set the lad back precisely £20.

Hands up those of you who still reckon you need expensive instruments to play rock 'n' roll? I

suggest you catch The Cure immediately.

An abrasive Light Metal trio hailing from Crawley, a far-flung southern outpost of London's commuter hinterland. The Cure are like a breath of fresh suburban air on the capital's smog-ridden pub and club circuit.

Compact and self-sufficient — guitarist Smith balances the group's sound live himself aided by a portable mixing desk at the side of the stage — The Cure are a triumph of impulse and spontaneity. As Smith explains, "We see so many of the people we went to school with doing absolutely nothing. A lot of them are talented enough to, but they just don't bother

themselves.

"There are so many people playing music that is absolute rubbish and getting somewhere doing it. You just think, if they're doing it, why don't you when you know you're so much better."

Smith formed the band at school with drummer Lol Tolhurst and bassist Mike Dempsey as long ago as 1976. After a short series of local gigs as a five piece, they went through a rapid succession of lead guitarists and vocalists before settling on the current three piece line-up.

After winning one of those "So You Want To Be A Rock And Roll Star" talent competitions, they spent

most of last year in limbo, unhappily signed to German disco label Ariola-Hansa — the people that brought you Child and Japan — recording demos with unsympathetic producers, but never actually getting as far as that elusive first single release.

"They wanted us to be another Child," splutters Rob. "We were even offered a song that Child eventually put out as a single!"

"They were giving us all these really old songs to cover. We couldn't believe it. This was summer 1977 and we thought we'd be able to do all these outrageous songs we'd written and all they wanted from us were versions of really banal old rock 'n' roll songs."

"Then they gave us the money to do our own demos. And of course they didn't like them. So they tried putting us in the studio with one of their soul producers, and that didn't work out either. It got to the stage where we would have become the Barron Knights of Punk..."

Their five-year Ariola-Hansa contract mutually terminated at the end of last year. The Cure, with their master tapes tucked firmly under their armpits, went back to gigging spasmodically at local venues like the Laker's Hotel in Redhill until an old friend lent them the cash to hire a studio to cut some last ditch demos.

In desperation, a dozen copies of the resultant tape were mailed out to the record companies. A week or so later, young Rob received a call from former Polydor A&R man and Jam producer Chris Parry, under whose auspices they have finally recorded a single, "Killing An Arab", due for release shortly on Small Wonder.

The title, at first glance irresponsibly racist, it transpires, comes from the song's inspiration *The Stranger*, a book by Camus about an Algerian uprising.

"The song's dedicated to all the rich Arabs who go to Crawley College discos to pick up the girls," jokes Rob drily.

"But it's not really racist, if you know what the song is about. It's not a call to kill Arabs. It just happened that the main character in the book had actually killed an Arab, but it could have been a Scandinavian or an English bloke — the fact that he killed an Arab has nothing to do with it really."

With a John Peel session, a spot on the forthcoming Polydor compilation album and more extensive London gigging on their immediate agenda, it remains to be seen whether or not The Cure can retain their refreshing joie de vivre.

ADRIAN THRILLS

LOWRY



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We all know
about the UBU,
but who the hell
is PIERRE? Sent
by Sadat Narni,
no fixed abode.

SO WE called it A Rotten Competition — we still didn't expect to receive quite so many rotten answers.

The majority of the replies could most kindly be described as eccentric, and even most of these were couched in language stern enough to make disgraced ex-presidents blanch, and thus are precluded from publication in an august family organ such as this.

In the end, we were fortunate to come across six speech bubbles worthy of earning tickets for the Public Image Ltd Christmas gigs and Haydn Davies' effort, reproduced above, is the outright winner by plain virtue of at least attempting to be a bit visual.

The other entrants who, like Haydn, of Shipton-on-Stour, Warks, will be receiving a pair of PIL tickets are:

S. David, Fremington, N. Devon — "Now this is how to get away with murder. Sid!"
Pete Branscombe, Slough, Berks — "My Public Image for Christmas... a turkey"
Robert Wellington, Exmouth, Devon — "I thought Johnny Rotten was a defective contraceptive until I discovered PIL"
Sandra, Kentish Town, London — "How can I be saying something when my bleedin' mouth ain't open. What am I, a bloody ventriloquist?"
Mick Ledingham, Truro, Cornwall — "I bet Mick Ledingham of Truro, Cornwall, would love a pair of tickets!"
Finally, an honourable mention to Anon of Somewhere who sent in "PIL's grim progress."

THRILLS

GET IT OUT ME
EAR SID!



HEARTBREAK HOTEL

(Half portions for children)

ELVIS (the dead one) is in the news again. Hot on the tale of the housewife who traded suburban for plastic surgery and a publicised freak show comes the story of yet another Presley impersonator, Nathan Anzaldúa.

On stage he belts out the words to "Teddy Bear". Wipes a sweaty palm on his white and rhinestone cat suit. Bids farewell to a rapturous audience, then it's straight home for a midnight snack of cookies and milk.

Nathan Anzaldúa is six years old. "His moves and style are so much like Elvis' you forget Nathan is a six-year-old," bubbles Ismael Lowe, the man who spotted this chubby schoolboy in a hip-swivelling situation and immediately signed him to a four-city tour. How anyone could possibly confuse the two is open to speculation, especially as the pip-squeak protegee comes up only to navel-level when a life-size picture of the real Elvis is projected on stage. But pack them in he does. Audiences in Colorado thrill to pre-adolescent renditions of "Love Me Tender" and "Are You Lonesome Tonight", sung, presumably, to the tooth fairy.

He doesn't smile ("Elvis didn't smile"), but in every other way "Nat is just like any average, ordinary child with \$20,000 pocket money."

"He gets bags of fan letters, practices every night, but at heart he's just a little boy who gets into all the normal mischief," beams his mother Miz Lucille.

Stay away from the fried banana and peanut butter sandwiches, kid, and you'll do alright.

On other Presley fronts, the song which was being marketed as a

previously unreleased original, "Tell Me Pretty Baby", has turned out to be a hoax. It was supposedly recorded by Elvis in Phoenix in 1954, several months before the country bick discovered Sun Records and international stardom. Vernon Presley took a break from passing the graveside hat to sue Cin-Kay Record Distribution of Nashville, and preventing them from shipping more than the 18,000 copies already out. The vocals actually belong to unknown singer Mike Connally, who didn't realise he was getting into all that mischief.

And in Greensboro, North Carolina, people aren't getting into anything at all. Seems that two separate productions, designed as tributes to the life and times of Ee the Pee, have been cancelled due to lack of interest. The first was a "Living Legend" concert featuring Earl Owensby, an NC filmmaker and actor who plans to release a movie next year which he calls "a musical Rocky". The good citizens of Greensboro, recognising a stinko when they hear about it, purchased only 200 of the 15,000 concert tickets. A week before, Colonel Tom himself put together and promoted an event entitled "Always Elvis". It, too, was cancelled, with 2,000 tickets left unsold.

Is this a sign that the great greedy Presley rip-off is coming to a close? Or do you just have to be young and work hard at your homework in order to get away with it?

Somebody give Parker "lil Nathan's number, quick.

MARTHA ELLEN ZENFELL

THRILLS



SPOT THE BOZOS COMPETITION

WHEN THE Lone Groover was but a twinkle in Benyon's eye, these macho dudes were strutting their stuff all over the metropolis. They played a few gigs as well.

But the question is — who are these masked marauders? Obviously not The Moody Blues. They don't look much like Public Image either, though they could be an early version of The Blockheads. (No, they're not. —Ed.)

Whoever they are, they look like a bunch of tosspots to us — exactly which bunch of tosspots is entirely up to you. The first three correct entries each win a record token.

Answers to: Spot The Masked Bozos, NME, 5-7 Carnaby Street, London W.1.

THRILLS



Little El and big El — can YOU tell the difference?

SINGLES

Reviewed this week
by ROY CARR

SINGLE OF THE WEEK THE MEKONS: Where Were You? (Fast)

Just because a group produces, presses and distributes its own discs doesn't automatically afford them preferential treatment around here, though it does sometimes help.

Many do-it-yourself records that arrive for review are accompanied with notes complaining bitterly that they've been shown the door by all the majors — and all too often it's easy to appreciate why many bands are rejected in truth, they're just not up to scratch.

Any label that turned down the Mekons has no business being in the business, for here is a sublime example of the very best in store-front style, content and production. A highly adventurous and gifted band who not only go out on a limb, but possess the necessary attributes to achieve their musical aims.

As it is, their approach is so simple it defies description.

Fundamentally, the performance is based on a monotonous slashed guitar motif propelled by pristine drumming and fronted by a singer who, with immense presence and a flair for controlled drama, gets increasingly agitated about being given the run-around by the girl of his desires.

Indeed, it's the actual performance, as opposed to a nifty hook-line or an instrumental lick thrown in to increase either the intensity of momentum, that makes this record succeed where so many others fail. "Where Were You?" starts at boiling point and quickly erupts into an anguished fit similar in approach — though not in style — to Costello's most tortured tirades.

ALTERNATIVE SINGLE OF THE WEEK JERRY LEE LEWIS & FRIENDS: Save The Last Dance For Me (Charly)

It's the 'And Friends' that's the main selling point. Seems that when Shelby Singleton bought out the Sun Records catalogue, he also took delivery of a whole stash of hitherto unreleased and un-documented masters. Apparently, this is just one of many.

Though Charly don't offer a money-back guarantee, a re-print of a recent *Billboard* news item splashed on the back of the pic sleeve suggests that it is indeed The Killer trading off verses with The King (and possibly Carl Perkins) on this spirited interpretation of The Drifters' classic.

Aural evidence suggests that such allegations are true. I think that we can rule out the possibilities of an elaborate hoax or that Jerry Lee used to pal around with one-time Presley vocal-clone Ral Donner. I reckon this track is genuine and as such it's quite magnificent — a timely reminder of when recording sessions used to be fun.

FOOTBALL SINGLE OF THE YEAR ED BANGER: Kinnel Tommy (EMI)

The ability to motivate Manchester's musical madcaps to gravitate to Tosh Ryan's Didbury dips has firmly established Rabid Records as the Stiff-styled funny farm of the north. An appreciation of a worm's-eye



A MEKON

view of Kop lifestyle is essential in appreciating the mind of Ed Banger (previous of... & The Nosebleeds notoriety). For those not indoctrinated in the secret trappings of either soccer spectatorship or Mancunian dialect, the humour will prove impenetrable. If you are conversed in the above, all will be quickly revealed. Superb sound. Great performance and Kinnel Ed, with a slightly stronger hook line you would've upped yer chance of first division promotion. File comfortably between Jilted John, John Cooper-Clarke and Eddie Waring.

CULTURE: Natty Got Weary (Front Line)

True to their word Culture (with few exceptions) have remained tougher than the rest, and this track, up until now only available on import, is a fine addition to their last Front Line album and "Africa Stand Alone" set. Culture instill in me precisely the same degree of unequalled pleasure as I once derived from the mid-60s recordings of The Impressions, The Isley Brothers and The Miracles. As far as I'm concerned, I can't offer a better recommendation.

XDREAMYSTS: Right Way Home (Good Vibrations)

Though in terms of actual output Ireland doesn't threaten to saturate the international rock market, its ratio of producing acceptable — and in the case of Van Morrison, Lizzy and the Rats exceptional — talent is

relatively high. From out of the blitzed Belfast rubble stagger The Xdreamysts who, though they owe a nod and a wink and a swift halt to The Rods' "Do What You Wanna Do", suggest that they have enough going for themselves to warrant both attention and encouragement.

THE CRAMPS: Human Fly (Vengeance)

Both Alex Chilton (credited as producer) and The Cramps go a long way towards redeeming their recent ragged reputations. Surf guitar and other electric accessories buzz forbodingly while the rhythm section slowly slog out a menacing tempo over which their singer croaks with conviction. Fine in small doses, but I don't think I could take an album's worth. File between The Surfaris' "Wipe Out" and The 'O's "Wesman".

THE RESIDENTS: Santa Dog 78 (Ralph)

Andy Gill insists that The Residents can only be judged within the framework of their own aesthetics. I don't doubt his word, but as this is the first time one of their records has ever flopped onto my desk, I'm not in a position to add further comment. If you're a Resident then you'll probably know what to expect!

LAUGH AND THE WHOLE WORLD THINKS YOU'RE CRAZY DEPT. BINKY BAKER & THE PIT ORCHESTRA: Toe Kneez Black Burn (Stiff)

Like so many visionaries before him (the name Da Vinci



ROY CARR (right) accepting payola

immediately springs to mind) Antony John Baker has never been acknowledged as a prophet in his own time, never mind in his home town of Brighton.

A man who, under the guise of Randy Grope & the Green Exploding Laxative, was once revered (or was it reviled?) for introducing such Dadaism into rock as Cordón Bleu cuisine — he once cooked a perfect omelette on stage during a memorable performance — Binky once again snubs the sceptics in yet another brave attempt to push back the frontiers of his Art. By taking the name of Britain's most beloved and committed DJ, Baker transforms these two precious words into an hypnotic North Country Mantra, making it the most creative play on words since "Hello, Goodbye" and "Eat-Addio-We-Won-The-Cup". Indeed, it's the infectious and irritant factor of Binky's

performance coupled with a nation's united love and admiration for the subject of such a warm, heart-felt tribute that, after just a couple of spins, could transform it into the biggest odd-ball hit since "They're Comin' To Take Me Away Ma He".

ALBERTO Y LOST TROS PARANOIAS: Jaun Lopez (The Lonely Goatherd) (Logo)

The predicament that faces these Piranhas Of Pop Parody is that invariably they get so close to the style of the original they're lampooning that, unless you listen intently to the lyric, attempting to decipher precisely where satire stops and sincerity commences can cause all manner of problems. I firmly believe that the minor success of "Heads Down, No Nonsense, Mindless Boogie" can be attributed to the fact that said single was a bone head-banging biscuit as opposed to a perceptive piss-take of the chosen genre.

This time around, they should have had back the song and entered themselves for the next Eurovision Song Fest. No doubt about it, they'd win, pants down. Now that really would be funny!

FARON'S FLAMINGOES: Bring It On To Me/C'mon Everybody (Raw)

During the legendary Merseybeat Goldrush of '63, Faron's Flamingoes — then, one of the better Scouse

SUBWAY: Jesus Loves Me (No Fun) MECANO LTD: Face Cover Face (No Fun)

Could be as a direct result of Gruppo Sportivo's moderate success, but it appears that the Dutch new wave play strictly for laughs. instrumentally. Subway are a tight-knit liversome who waste time and talent on trivialities, while Mecano Ltd. are hilarious without ever realising it and, as such, are nominated as contributors for NME's Xmas Boro Songbook.

THE REASONS: Hard Day At The Office (Island)

Last year it seemed like just about every other group was ranting on half-a-chord about serving time on the dole queue. Times change. This year, The Reasons bemoan the fact that, despite high unemployment, they've actually managed to secure a job. With next year's popsters belly-ache about having to demean themselves so?

RICHARD ASHWORTH — M.— M.3. REVISITED: Positively Fourth Street (Overdrive)

Sacri-bloody-legs. Rancid reggae refeed of one of El Zim's caustic put-down masterpieces. You can bet that Dylan — himself engaged on re-arranging his own back pages — never saw it like this.

SUBURBAN REPTILES: Saturday Night Stay At Home (Vertigo)

Before the introduction of British Airways' Poundstretchers it used to take a good six months for any boat leaving Britain to reach Australia. Judging from this dire vinyl dispatch it takes at least twice as long for the New Musik to reach the colonies, and even then it doesn't travel well. Never mind Saturday nights... the Repts, who last time around flaunted the tackiest Nazi chic imaginable and then attempted to deny their stance, should stay put permanently or, better still, be put down. No way are they about to do a bleedin' Bee Gees or a Dame Edna on anybody. Look what happened to The Saints!

THE BOZOS: Weekend Girl (Other)

Unless they're capable of taking on the entire world with one arm tied behind their (collective) back any band fool-hardy enough to trade under the name of The Bozos is really pushing its luck. And luck — I won't even begin to discuss such trivialities as artistic integrity — is something that's extremely thin on the studio floor. Maybe if they changed their name to The Wimps they'd be nearer the truth.

THE DICKIES: Silent Night/Sound Of Silence (A&M)

THE YOBBS: Silent Night - In English/Silent Night - In German (no label — acetate)

CSM — wit that he is — just mumbled something to the effect that if punk bands are reduced to ripping off 12-year-old ideas from Paul Simon, what the hell is the world coming to? Not a lot. The aptly named Dickies insist that they're punko parodists. Well you could have fooled me. Thus far in their highly unremarkable career I have yet to discover one iota of humour in their recorded work.

As for The Yobs, common decency forbids me to air my true feelings. All that I will say is that the accompanying press handout states that only 2,000 copies have been pressed and that's 2,000 too bleedin' many.

Happy Christmas!

3 H R E E 4 O R T Y 5 I V E S

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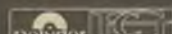


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THE HUMAN FACE OF HEAVY METAL

WHEN K.K. DOWNING plays one of his dramatic guitar solos, he stands in a bright white spotlight so the rays can caress his long blonde hair.

As the solo reaches its climax, K.K. grimaces painfully, and his golden locks dance voluptuously.

K.K. is one of the two lead guitarists with Judas Priest, and while the band muster a million ergs more energy than most heavy metal acts, K.K. at least relies on traditional visuals.

As a result, it's something of a surprise at the end of one number when someone rushes on stage from the wings and dumps a plastic bucket upon K.K.'s exquisite hair.

For a moment, it almost looks like an assassination attempt. If there'd been water in the bucket, then Mr Downing would have left us with a more flash finale than usual.

As it is, it takes him a while to come to terms with what's happening. The bucket remains on his head for what seems to be an undue amount of time. Like, who turned the lights out, man?

Finally, he wrenches off his impromptu headgear, and it bounces and bonks across the stage.

Goodbye, heavy metal macho image.

Ah well, no matter — K.K. is a trouper. He smiles at this indignity and gets on with the show.

The show goes on. K.K. takes a solo, returns to the bright white spotlight. Waves those sun-kissed locks.

Suddenly, a hand clutching a canister appears from the wings.

The hand clutching the canister presses a button on top, and K.K. Downing, his hair, and his spotlight all disappear in a cloud of smoke.

When the canister is totally emptied, the hand disappears and the smoke begins to clear. K.K. is revealed once more.

He is still vigorously soloing. He is still smiling.

The show goes on. K.K. is unstoppable.

Suddenly, K.K. is hit by a deluge of bread rolls and a plastic bag containing plastic beakers. K.K. begins to laugh and miss notes.

But he's not the only victim of the mystery saboteur in the wings.

Butch lead singer Robert Halford is hit by a flying banana. Mr. Halford is wearing his butch heavy metal bondage outfit at this stage, and it is not done to be hit by a banana when you're wearing such costume.

Far from rushing offstage to bash his oppressor, Robert's response is to unzip the banana, bite it in half, and chuck the rest into the crowd.

He then proceeds to sing the rest of the song with a mouth full of banana. He also smiles.

Judas Priest are a bunch of smilers.

PREDICTABLY, the reason for all this onstage tomfoolery is that the Judas Priest tour of the U.K. is about to end after a gruelling schedule of some 30 dates. Priest are taking in places off the usual big tour map, and the gig is at Chelmsford in Essex.

The support band, who are called Lea Hart, have already received a ritual pelting from the wings. This is their revenge, and it does seem to be a little over the top.

After all, Judas Priest are stars, and I had to phone up someone and ask them the name of the support act, because I'd forgotten it.

Not that Priest's act was unduly affected. The golden guitarist only missed a few notes, and the band went on to provide an epic rendition of "Genocide", one of the most blissful blitzkriegs in the entire heavy metal genre. Great stuff.

The episode was a revealing one, however, because it suggested that while Judas Priest take their performance seriously enough, they do not stand too heavily upon their dignity.

It's hard to imagine many new wave acts displaying the same degree of tolerance. Few people would risk

...was recently obscured by having a plastic bucket jammed over its head. But the macho men of JUDAS PRIEST just smile at such incidents. They also smile when people throw bananas. Here they even smile at BOB EDMANDS.

putting a bucket over the head of Jimmy Pursey, for example, though it might well do him a lot of good.

BACKSTAGE, before the gig, I talked to Robert Halford. He turns out to be a mild-mannered Brummie who brings a phlegmatic detachment to his view of the rock business.

Judas Priest have come in for a fair

bit of criticism of late. Some reviewers said their new album was too poppy. Did Halford think it was their best work so far?

"I wouldn't say it was the best one," he says. "We all feel that everything we've released has been worthy of release. This is just another Judas Priest album, really. But I think it has proved itself both in studio terms and in terms of the songs."

"It is our most commercial effort so far. I mean, we didn't plan it that way."

It just happens to be what Judas Priest are about at this moment in time.

For all the lukewarm reviews, Priest's new album does rock along at a brisk pace, and Halford says he doesn't favour the familiar ponderous pace that characterises heavy metal.

"The archetypal situation — nice cliché — with heavy metal bands is that they play down-tempo songs and plod along. To be honest, we've got one track on the new album, 'Evil Fantasies', that says everything about

that kind of thing. But I feel that heavy metal can cover all sorts of aspects. You don't have to stick to the same old format. There's a tremendous amount of freedom."

Halford himself has also been somewhat slagged for his adopted stage personality.

"What's it called?" he says. "My super-butch macho sado-masochistic leather freak-out gear?"

Halford's been explaining to assorted rock press worthies why he carries a bullwhip onstage. Seems it's just a matter of the providing the right stage props for the particular songs.

At one stage on the tour, he apparently took the criticism to heart, and was then accused of lacking conviction. Which just goes to show that you can't win either way.

Halford's philosophical about it.

"In a rock band, like anything else, you have your ups and downs. I mean, I won't say it's a job. If it is a job, then it must be one of the best jobs in the world."

"You have depressions and highs, and they're not just confined to offstage activities. I can be in position onstage and feel I don't want to be there."

"In fact, I thank God I do feel like that some times, that I'm a normal being with all the qualities of one. Inevitably, you sometimes think, Christ, I wish I could clock off in a minute."

"It's harder for me, of course, with two or three thousand people out there who've probably been waiting for months to see the band. So you have to fight against that kind of feeling."

"I'm sure the people out there — the audience — would understand, though."

But you don't feel like that every night, surely?

"Oh, good grief, no. It's very rare for that to happen. The band is very much on the up at the moment. We've got a very positive approach and we're very happy and contented with everything that's happening. I was just trying to answer your question honestly."

"This band has been together for four years, and I think that shows in our professionalism and tightness. We're an experienced band, and I think that's good."

Halford says Priest's best market in terms of sales is the States, followed by Japan, and then Britain.

After only two visits the band are headliners in a number of places in the States, and it seems that in Japan they can't go out in the street without being mobbed.

That doesn't happen in Britain, of course, but Robert Halford says he sometimes gets stopped in the street by fans who recognise him and he is always flattered.

UNLIKE MOST heavy metal vocalists, Halford has short hair. Given the conservatism of HM audiences, that sounds a bit dodgy. Were fans in the States, for example, ever surprised by his appearance?

"They tend to be," he says. "When you see new bands like Van Halen, they all come on looking like Robert Plant. It's expected."

"Personally, I've always disregarded that approach to it. I don't think your image should be dictated by what earlier people have done."

"I can't stand long hair, to be honest. I used to have long hair right down below my shoulders but one day I thought if I have my hair cut it won't affect the way I sing. So off it came."

"It was always a bit of a nuisance, particularly when you come off stage ringing with sweat."

It must be a shag washing long hair every night.

"Absolutely. Of course, the other guys have got long hair. That's up to them. It's fine by me."

"As far as I know, none of them are going to get it cut."

Then, without apparent malice, he adds: "In fact, I can assure you that K.K. is definitely going to keep his hair long."

You bet, Robert, you bet.



Main pic: PHILIP ZARA

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Rock is an articulate form of inarticulacy — Bob Geldof.

Commercial success is a by-product of relevance — Davo.

I'm hung up on the fact people have to like me. — Bob Geldof.

If the creator had a purpose in equipping us with a neck, he surely meant us to stick it out. — Arthur Koestler.

I don't believe in fate. I think that to a large extent you get to govern what you do. You can set certain things up that will fall in your favour. Only initially is it accidental. Like the last things that was ever on my mind was that I was going to be a singer in a rock group. That was literally the last thing on my mind. — Bob Geldof.

A SMALL COACH speeds out of South London, swerving around grassy roundabouts, stuttering through sore bottlenecks, past blank faces and shapeless bodies that merge, reaching inviting dual carriageways and eventually twisting onto a motorway.

The coach is driven by proud Trevor, whose most recent assignment was collecting Stiff personnel from their ludicrous British Rail capsule and delivering them to hotels and halls. His new role is driving this coach for The Boomtown Rats, at this time number two in the national pop charts, now slipping down but once number one.

NUMBER ONE! Think about that. The Boomtown Rats are as 'new wave' as The Clash, as 'punk' as Buzzcocks, but they are a new rock band. Three years old.

A small, smart pack of diverse diligent new rock groups have constantly nibbled around the lower, curvier parts of the top ten for some time now: Buzzcocks, Public Image, Banshees, Sham, Blondie, Jam, groups like gadgets, sharp, abrasive, noisy, hot, fast moving, vibrating,

rotating, who excite followers in numbers totally unimagined a year ago.

A year ago the Rats themselves had already enjoyed chart success, and leadperson Bob Geldof was crudely claiming that in a year's time they would be number one.

But it isn't that easy. The difference between scuttling up to number seven, eight or 17 and heaving right up to number one is massive. It's the way the business is structured. It's the way consumers react. Freaks ("Wuthering Heights", "Up Town Top Ranking") or going concerns (Money B. Travolta-John) get to number one — not grinning, leering six piece rock groups who wear pyjamas and leathers, who play looming, pedantic R&B pop and who are on a run of medium hits.

The Boomtown Rats are a hugely successful rock group. Let's say wildly successful. And Trevor's driving them to Exeter, a date in the middle of a small tour, the last of a hard working year, that levels under the banner 'The Seasonal Turkey Tour'.

THE RATS ARE CLOTS! THE RATS ARE CLOWNS!

The Rats are fun... they protest loudly, they're mildly naughty, they're hugely enjoyable unless you find them nauseating. And you might. Geldof wouldn't care if you did. Trevor shifts a gear and Geldof looks over the back of his seat at me.

"A lot of people leave fun out of everything. They refuse to acknowledge it. I remember you doing a review of a single (The Rolling Stones) where you said it was like The Boomtown Rats without the fun or the boom, and to me that says more about the Rats than anything. We thoroughly enjoy what we're doing. I can't emphasise that too much. And then that's directly contradicted with the seriousness of the songs and the care we put into

them. We work hard at the arrangements, the words, to achieve complete songs."

We swap yarns about contemporary rock journalism. A lot of Geldof's experience was gained when he himself was a rock journalist, interviewing people from little Richard to Elton John, Eric Clapton to Livvie Newton-John.

He's a rich vessel overflowing with gossip, vignettes, rumours. Some audacious cross between Thomas Wolfe, P.G. Wodehouse and Hilda Ogden. He sparkles in conversation in a way that's impossible to convey in black and white, the rhythm of his words slanted too Irish, livened by pace and tangents, rationalised by articulation and perception, and almost smothered by a continual brutal blarney that is as endearing as it is preposterous. He livens up the most mundane of coach journeys.

LIVELY UP YOURSELF!

Somehow, as Trevor pulls into the middle lane to ease past a lonely A40, Geldof leads into a spiel about meeting a star, an idol, David Bowie. Minutes of images of Geldof's nervousness, Bowie's materialism, astro turf at Earl's Court, Bianca Jagger getting her feet kissed by Iggy Pop, lines of limos crumpling Earl's Court backstage area, tumble and clash as Geldof spurs through his memory bank.

Such surreal tales of an idol's irregular isolation sound odd coming from a mouth showing signs more of a

boxer's battering than simple over-use, dominating a face that not long ago dominated your TV screens once a day for four solid days. Geldof and Noel Edmunds were like THAT.

GELDOF'S A STAR!

But Geldof's stardom is rooted in realism and observation. He enjoys his fame like you or I enjoy a cheesecake. He accepts it as part of the job. This fame is anchored perhaps impractically in a need for contact with his audience and stuck in constant perspective both by the intact illusions he has for his own idols and his absolute repulsion for any sort of pretension, visually, verbally in print and in image.

"There's no way I'm going to tell the audience what to do... if you have a certain amount of respect for your audience, and just refuse to become a demi-god then that's O.K. That's what I want."

Geldof is an entertainer, an individual.

NO BIG DEAL!

EXETER IS no big deal. It's like any town in this land. Patched, patterned, its architecture typical and unimaginative, its complexion grey, dark red, smudged.

Exeter is hilly, it hangs subdued on the edge of the moors. The Rats play the University. Geldof naturally checks out the student-civilian ratio,

satisfied only when inquiries reveal that it's 50:50.

Like any other town, this one has its starstruck numbers who dribble in during the late afternoon to observe the soundcheck, make nuisances of themselves, grab autographs, revel in half chatting to Geldof and co.

"Phew, he is normal," exclaims a cynical young fan who had an offer of a biscuit brusquely but politely turned down by the busy Geldof. Who ever claimed he wasn't?

The Exeter hall is a typical academic assembly hall. At soundcheck time, Geldof becomes obsessively involved. He paces backwards and forwards, looking large and ominous in scarf, leather jacket and heavy boots, between mixing desk and stage, organising lights, noise arrangements bravely and meticulously, silently objecting to the outsiders who are scattered around the hall.

After the soundcheck, a nap at the motel, then back to the university. Trevor bravely shows the coach down a narrow, twisting poorly lit lane as Geldof, myself and an unintentionally humorous, garishly clad visiting CBS executive run through the problems and dangerous dogmatism of American radio.

So the hours before the days, the years, climax, the hour when the Rats come alive on stage, roll out. In the large, bright dressing room (Exeter

■ Continues over page

Will success suck the soul out of Ireland's punkiest show band? PAUL MORLEY gets trapped on tour with THE BOOMTOWN RATS to find out.

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ALBUMS



DAVE SIVOUR

So he said to me "Aren't you John Cooper-Clarke?", and I said "How long is a piece of string?"...

Stuck inside of Tokyo with the Sony Mobile blues again

BOB DYLAN
Bob Dylan at Budokan
(CBS/Sony Import)

And lo, as the Yuletide season beckoned, the sound of voices united in one tone of joyous thankfulness across the land. Cue the rustle of wrapping paper as it is merrily torn and then a sighing chorale of "Darling, our first Japanese import album!"

Sixteen quid and fifty pence worth of prestige-encrusted vinyl buys you "At Budokan", flown over direct from the land of the rising sun for those of us with well-padded wallets and a near-obsessional yen (Very good, Kent—Ed) to check out the latest waxings from the Big Jim.

The format and the presentation make the price tag scarcely a snip. You'll find approximately a hundred minutes of music spread over these four sides, but there are no unrecorded or unreleased songs present, even though virtually all the 22 numbers are granted radically new arrangements and it's all packaged in an attractive low-key gatefold sleeve. The set should be released by UK CBS in February.

Meanwhile, it seems sad — to this mind at least — that Dylan's most active year in the '70s should also have coincided with easily the most savage drubbing the man's

had to suffer from the critics since the very outset of his career. Granted, Dylan's *Renaldo & Clara* film was an irredeemable self-indulgence, but the fact that the uniform trashing it received in the States appeared to provide a bonus-bias with which to belittle the excellent "Street-Legal", this veered upon the criminally perverse.

Fortunately here in Britain we were provided with no such precedent (*Renaldo* appeared some time after "Legal" and the Earls Court concerts) and thus could more easily view the musical achievements of both Earls Court and Blackbushe. The concert represented here was in fact taped just prior to Dylan and his new band's return to LA and subsequent recording of "Legal" and, as such, presents the listener with a few obvious shortcomings in regard to its prematurity.

More to the point, "Budokan" tends to fall in with the other two live Dylan efforts of recent times, the hesitant "Before The Flood" and particularly the downright scrappy "Hard Rain"; it's so evidently an unbalanced collection of rearranged songs that its hit-and-miss rating tends to dampen the potency of the whole undertaking.

As some slight benefit, the worthwhile portions do tend

to run for the length of whole sides. Side one and four bear the brunt of the forgettable retreads whilst sides two and three generally push home the goods.

Side one, for example, consists of pleasantly inconsequential revamps of "Mr Tambourine Man", flat and lifeless with some silly flute-tooting over an unbecoming pacing, "Shelter From The Storm", a sluggish neo-gospel workout, "Love Minus Zero", the best of the belch but still veering closely to muzak, "Belladonna Of A Thin Man", the Gothic sound of the original getting into Vaudeville here, and, finally, "Don't Think Twice", merely semi-competent white reggae.

Similarly side four piles pabulum upon pabulum in the form of a downright clumsy stomp-up of "All I Really Want To Do", a version of "Knockin' On Heaven's Door" that makes the song sound like nothing so much as "Winoweb", a "Forever Young" that sounds sluggish and uninspired (although Steve Douglas' sax deserves some acclaim), and a tepid encore of "The Times They Are A-Changin'". The only worthwhile song on the entire side is a fierce "It's Alright Ma — I'm Only Bleeding" which rocks out with an almost heavy-metal sense of

dynamics — a trifle suspect at times, especially Bitly Cross' guitar hero histrionics in the foreground, but still feisty enough to connect.

But now we've cleared the path to the better bait. Side two's superiority is heralded from the outset with a riveting "Maggie's Farm" which draws this often excellent band into fine focus with a blizzing Stax-Vol riff which swings high and hard. This is the goods — Dylan and company complementing every nuance of the song in question, shifting certain emphases but always adding and recharging instead of merely purloining and changing for its own sake. "One More Cup Of Coffee" follows well, even though it's hardly classic Dylan.

"Like A Rolling Stone" falls into line too, neatly using an arrangement closely akin to the original 1965 single with similar pacing, textures of smokey organ and ringing guitar, with only Douglas' bleating sax and the three girl chorus adding sprightly punctuation. A worthwhile near-duplication.

A subdued and yearning "I Shall Be Released" keeps everything on an even keel and only a paltry note-for-note rendition of "Street-Legal's" "Is Your Love In Vain" besmirches a superb side

which ends finely with a masterly and punchy "Going Going Gone", this complete with totally new lyrics (not particularly good ones, mind you).

Side three starts out badly with a shmalzy "Blowin' In The Wind", with ugly echoes of Neil Diamondish opulence and self-centredness but shapes up with a stately "Just Like A Woman". "Oh Sister" cops Steve Winwood's "Gimme Some Lovin'" riff, but somehow transcends that debt by a sultry, mysterious exchange between Dylan and the girl singers.

"Simple Twist Of Fate" takes the place of "Tangled Up In Blue", Earls Court's musical highpoint for me, but fails to convince, becoming straddled in an Edith Piaf-like cocoon of sugar-kiss. The latter's shortcomings are only emphasized by a stunning "I Want You" with just flute and synthesiser providing a serene sparseness to the song (in this instance, bereft of its original last verse).

By my reckoning, "Budokan" provides the discerning infatuee with at least a solid 50 minutes of valid rejuvenation. But this is not definitive Dylan, nor would I consider it anywhere near as essential as, say, "Street-Legal", especially at its current asking price. The

1966 Royal Albert Hall bootleg still has no contenders.

Nick Kent

THELMA HOUSTON

Ready To Roll (Motown)
Thelma Houston has been underrated for several years. Her fine 1973 album for Motown was undeservedly ignored, and it wasn't until last year's hit "Don't Leave Me This Way" that she began to receive a little of the attention she warranted.

"Ready To Roll" is a good, solid album, a mixture of uptempo disco and strident ballads, but it doesn't have the necessary sparkle to build on the single's success. The arrangements are attractive, but predictable: the songs fairly mundane. There's a strange mix, too — bass and drums upfront, as you'd expect, but the rest very dense — a thick wedge of sound that tends sometimes to just clump along.

Still, Ms Houston has a strong, versatile voice — growing through the punchy "Midnight Mona", a paean to an independent disco lady, and handling with equal assurance the plaintive emotionalism of "Am I Expecting Too Much". Well, maybe I am, but "Ready To Roll" seems altogether too safe an album. There's little to fault, but little to shout about either.

Graham Lock



Some hope!

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Information CITY

EDITED BY FRED DELLAR

New light on Moondog

WITH reference to your mention of Moondog (Louis Hardin) in your NME import column (11.11.78) I would like to the facts published therein. While it's true that CBS did release an album by the old man back in '69, they also released a second LP in the U.S. only, this being called, not surprisingly, "Moondog 2" (Columbia KC 30897).

This album, like the first, was produced by Guercio, but, unlike the first totally instrumental album, featured all Book One of the so-called "Moondog Madrigals" — these being a series of 25 rounds or canons (like those old "Frere Jacques" and "Three Blind Mice" nursery rhymes) arranged for four, five, six and seven part

harmonies, sung by Hardin and his daughter June, the last piece on the album being a harp instrumental.

Only four or five back-up musicians were used on this album as opposed to the cast of 1000s on the first one. The four-part rounds date back to the early '50s, all the others being completed in 1968 and possibly the best-known piece on the album is "All Is Loneliness" (the very first one he wrote, apparently, back in '51), which was covered by Big Brother and The Holding Company. — PETE ELLIS, Barnston, Dunmow, Essex.

● Cort I was beginning to think that only me and Tom Welts (born 1948, died 1955) had ever heard of the old fella. Incidentally, I recently checked through Leonard Feather's *Encyclopedia Of Jazz* and discovered that at one time Moondog not only completed a perpetual calendar covering the period 44 BC to 3200 AD but also



MOONDOG pictured on his "Moondog" LP sleeve (CBS).

found time to fit in an album with Julie Andrews for the Angel label. Now this is the sort of stuff which real legends are made!

CAN YOU tell me if Sham 69 ever recorded on the Step Forward label? — JIM, A United Kid From Sheffield.
● Tis true, O little Hillsboro

here. Puryay and Co out a three track single, "I Don't Wanna"/"Ulster"/"Red London" on Step Forward SF4. And being a truly magnanimous personage, I will now give a plug to Zigzag (no. 89), which contains a 28-page catalogue listing all available goodies on the small labels, plus details of where to obtain same. Needs, Frame, Tobler etc. — you know where to send the cash, right?

I have a puzzle for you regarding the band It's A Beautiful Day. I have three recordings of theirs, namely "Merrying Maiden", "Choice Quality Stuff" and "It's A Beautiful Day", and I have read about an album called "At Carnegie Hall", though I can't find any mention of it in any discography — likewise two other albums, "1001 Nights" and "Today". Could you tell me anything about these discs and maybe where to get them? — JOHN PECK, Burnt Oak, Edgware, Middx.
● What can I tell you? (Says he, sucking a lollipop). All six albums you mentioned were released in this country. "At Carnegie Hall" appearing on CBS 64928, "1001 Nights" on CBS 65812, and "Today" on CBS 65483. However, sales were hardly up to K-Tel standards and by the end of '75 all had disappeared from the catalogue and have since become hard to come by. Since the band split, violinist David LaFlamme, who was Day's mainman, has cut a couple of solo albums and can currently be heard on Papa John Creach's new album "Inphasion" (DUM DJF 20545), a disc that contains the umpteenth version of LaFlamme's "Silver Bird".

WHEN DID Jerry Lee Lewis start recording and what did he do prior to his signing for Sam Phillips' Sun label? Also, is there a current album available with all (or most) of his hit records on it? — JOHN ALEXANDER, Perivale, Middx.
● The Killer, who was born in Ferriday, Louisiana, in 1935, always seems to have been tied into the music biz somewhere along the line. Brought up in a family well steeped in gospel music — his parents sang and played at the Assembly of God church — Jerry Lee stomped the 88s at an early age and played his first public gig in 1949 at the local Ford car agency, introducing a new model.

Much influenced by country pianist Moon Muliken (who had two million sellers on the King label), Lewis cut a demo in Shreveport, Louisiana, during 1954. His first Sun single, "Crazy Arms"/"End Of The Road" (Sun 259), being released in 1956. His next release, "A Whole Lotta Shakin' Goin' On"/"It'll Be Me" (Sun 267), then zonked its way up the pop charts, reaching third spot on the *Billboard* totem pole, after which even folk in deepest Accrington (sorry, Jon!) got to hear of him. Recently both Charly and Phonogram have

released albums to tie-in with the Killer's British tour, Charly issuing "20 Original Rock'n'Roll Hits" (CRM 2001), a compilation formed from the best of Lewis' Sun material, while Phonogram have back-to-back two live albums, "The Greatest Live Show On Earth"/"More Of The Greatest Live Show" (Mercury 6641 888), this double also featuring such perennials as "Whole Lotta Shakin'", "What'd I Say", "Roll Over Beethoven" etc.

GOING through a few music papers (including yours) I noticed a few people selling copies of "God Save The Queen" by The Sex Pistols, apparently on the A&M label. Could you please explain this, as I was under the impression that the Pistols were only on the label for a week after being sacked by EMI and that no A&M version of "God Save The Queen" was ever released? — PATRICK DALBY, Gipton Estate, Leeds.

● A&M promoted broken-tooth rock from March 10, 1977 — when CBS began pressing copies of "God Save The Queen" for the label — until March 16, on which date Malcolm McMoneybags received a pay-off cheque of £75,000 from Messrs Alpert and Moss. During this period some 25,000 A&M copies of the single were pressed and readied for distribution but these were supposedly destroyed under strict supervision. However, some could have survived — even recorded copies of King Edward VIII's abdication speech (which were really destroyed under supervision) managed to survive, so I guess there are a few copies of the A&M artifact in existence. I would advise any would-be buyers to be careful though — it's even more likely that pirate copies of the disc are being shuffled around.

CAN YOU tell me anything about the "Cruisin'" record series? A mate of mine has one of these on tape and it sounds great — but where do I get the discs? — L. ROWE, Walsdstone, Harrow, Middx.

● The "Cruisin'" series comprises 13 albums, each of them documenting a year in the history of rock 'n' roll radio. The first release in the series "Cruisin' 1956" (Increase NCM 2001), which contained such items as Chuck Berry's "Roll Over Beethoven", The Teen Queen's "Eddie My Love", Frankie Lyman's "Why Do Fools Fall In Love?", The Crows' "Gee", The Mello Kings' "Tonite, Tonite" and others introduced by WKMH, Detroit. DJ Robin Seymour also includes commercials for the *Detroit Times*, Faygo Root Beer, Merchants Green Stomp, Budweiser (sung by The Crew Cuts), plus the WKMH jingle and other things that made Seymour's "Bobbin' With Robin" show an award winner way back in '56.

This and six other albums, covering the years 1957-62, where all released in June, 1970, after which came LPs containing record shows from 1955 and 1963 (both released January, 1972), a final quartet covering 1964-67 appearing in September, 1973. Though it seemed a possibility that Phonogram would issue the series in Britain at one point, negotiations fell through and the discs remained a best-selling import line until recently when they were deleted from the U.S. catalogue. Consequently, the "Cruisin'" albums are now becoming hard to find, though some import shops still have a few left in stock.

DAVE LEWIS

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Diane Keaton, Kristin Griffith and Marybeth Hurt in *Interiors* — ever felt like you were in a Bergman movie, girls? There was a bit in *Love And Death* that looked just like this, too.

Decorative Interiors

Interiors

Directed by Woody Allen
Starring Geraldine Page
and Diane Keaton
(United Artists)

There has never been any doubt that a pretty desperate neurosis underlies the comedy of Woody Allen. The question raised by his new film is whether — as with Strindberg — that brand of fuel is capable of generating tragedy too, or merely pessimism.

Interiors is harrowing all right, and I don't know that I should want to see it again. This is the world of raw relationships which produced his early one-liner, "I didn't recognise my first wife with her wrists closed", but without the annealing effect of laughter. For all his mocking of the genus New York Culture Vulture, Woody has always been of that ilk, and his script resembles those of Savanarola Brown, Bearbom's fictitious playwright who never missed a second night, and consequently wrote like a salad of all of them.

Interiors comes on like *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, *Three Sisters*, *The Lady From The Sea* and in terms of obsessive closed circuitry could give Ingmar Bergman a run for his throne. It's a very important and accomplished movie, but my personal feelings about Woody Allen's new direction are best summed up by Billy Wilder's comments on Marilyn Monroe: "There are certain wonderful rascals in this world, like Monroe, and one day they lie down on an analyst's couch and out comes a clenched, dreary thing."

The story dissects a family, tracing the guilts, jealousies and psychological damage emanating from a neurotic mother. Home might be a model of glacial taste, but mother's touch elsewhere alternates between the domineering and the cravenly insecure. Father decides to separate, and the three daughters are left to cope with their mother's breakdowns and suicide attempts, as well as their own fretful relationships.

Geraldine Page, as the mother, gives one of her greatest screen performances and made me shudder with pity at her disastrous character. She has a nose for humiliation and pain that would not disgrace an early Christian martyr, so that all family festivities — a birthday

party, a wedding, a reunion — are doomed to the thorn bush.

Diane Keaton, precariously married to a failed and bitter novelist, is so locked in with her own preoccupations with poetry and the cold sweet of hyper-awareness that she can offer only off-hand praise in place of genuine support. The younger sister, Marybeth Hurt, favours confrontations but lacks staying power: everything she touches just peters out. Kristin Griffith pours an effusive showbiz catsup over all irritants, but mainly plain stays away.

Events come to a head when father, E. G. Marshall, decides to remarry. Pearl, his partly extroverted bride (Maureen Stapleton) is clearly intended as a breath of fresh air in this hothouse, but mother's blighted inheritance runs deep in her daughters, and mother herself looms up to commit suicide on the wedding night.

This section smacks of melodrama, with mother wading into the sea and daughter being resuscitated by her replacement. Keaton's husband (Richard Jordan) tries to rape Kristin Griffith in the garage where she is snorting a sustaining line of coke, and utters the dafiest line to the effect that it would be a change to screw someone he doesn't feel inferior to. All too schematic.

Direction is confident elsewhere, choosing a bald, uncluttered style which centres squarely on windows and allows the rising squabbles to build their own tempo. It's a movie to admire, but whether it will start a stampede to the orphanage is in the lap...

Brian Cose

The Serpent's Egg

Directed by Ingmar Bergman
Starring Liv Ullman and David Carradine
(Enterprise)

Heave-ho. Once more into the abyss, once more into the wonderful world of Ingmar Bergman wherein, as a characteristically wan and overwrought Liv Ullman is moved to remark, "people have lost the future" and "the only real thing is fear".

As foolish as flesh to have expected otherwise, to have even dared hope that Bergman's self-imposed exile from his native Sweden and his partnership, for this feature at least, with extravagant producer Dino King Kong De Laurentiis might have somehow softened the cold, hard knell of the director's fatalism. No, you never wave in Bergman's cinema, you drown.

The Serpent's Egg is set in Berlin in 1933. It attempts to convey the mood of Weimar Republic Germany at the time of one Adolf Hitler's abortive Munich putsch (an escapade which was to earn Hitler a year behind bars, whence he emerged cradling *Mein Kampf*).

Inevitably, Bergman's Berlin has next to nothing in common with the archetypally 'decadent' between-the-wars den of license portrayed by films as worthy as *Cabaret* and *The Damned* or as worthless as *Salon Kitty* and *Just A Gigolo*.

Instead, it's a penumbral wasteland washed by endless rains. Inflation is rampant, food is scarce and the



Liv Ullman, who is in a Bergman movie. David Carradine's nose also stars in *The Serpent's Egg*.



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● continued from previous page

populace catatonically cowed by the air of hopelessness and helplessness that clings to the city like a viscous shroud. Unhappy days are here again.

And all this, Bergman insists, is the dark, dank shell that nurtured the obscene serpent of anti-Semitism and Nazism. He might even be right — though history is always more complex than hindsight or, as here, romantic realism allows.

Meanwhile, as face-fixated as ever, Bergman propels his protagonists through the desolation with utter disinterest. They live, they die, they mostly die. The director even coaxes commitment — and occasional Kung Fu — above and beyond the call of casting from the usually comatose Carradine (an acrobat), whilst the hypertense emoting of Ullman (another acrobat) has rarely seemed so appropriate. Elsewhere, Gen Froebe (a detective) and Heinz Bannert (a scientist) add substantial support.

The film's plot proper — a series of unsolved slayings and sundry disappearances — seems almost incidental. Which is perhaps how Bergman planned it; he rarely

credits characters with any ability to determine direction.

And background continues to become foreground until Bannert's closing convulsions of psyche and psychosis — his own gruesome 'experiments' — cauterise Bergman's vision into a hell-harrowing. And hell, as Jean-Paul Sartre suggested, is other people.

Heave-ho. Hopelessly, helplessly, *The Serpent's Egg* is a slick of strychnine, but swallow it you should. This was real life.

Angus MacKinnon

Waiting For The Wiz

An all-black musical gets the business.

With the strains of "Ease On Down The Road" already hitting the airwaves, the opening shots of what will be a massive promotional barrage for the all-black musical *The Wiz* have been fired.

Filmed on location in New York, this remake of *The Wizard Of Oz* features Diana Ross as Dorothy, Michael Jackson as the Scarecrow and Richard Pryor as the Wizard.

Before we all get suckered into the hoopla, a few facts about the movie should put matters in some sort of perspective. *The Wiz* is considered by many industry insiders as being perhaps the biggest musical gamble in screen history. Valiums have been the order of the day at Universal studios as the first few weeks' take have been announced Stateside. It has not been easily forgotten that it was the big budget musicals of the '60s — *Doctor Doolittle*, *Star 80* and *Hello Dolly* — that almost sank the mighty 20th Century Fox.

Packaged for Universal by Motown, *The Wiz* cost some \$35 million which, when added to the \$4,500,000 promo budget, puts the recoupment figure at about \$80 million. To achieve this, the picture has to become the biggest crossover film in cinema history, drawing a huge white audience to an essentially black attraction.

Traditionally, the black cinema has had limited success, the highest grossing film being *Lady Sings The Blues* (also, incidentally, starring Diana Ross). But that grossed a mere \$10 million.

Ironically, the original *Wizard Of Oz* had more than

its fair share of problems. There was disagreement at MGM over who should play Dorothy, many producers believing it should have been Shirley Temple, not Judy Garland. The script went through the hands of ten screen-writers (including Herman Mankiewicz) and four directors were used. George Cukor and King Vidor being uncredited. The budget of \$2,777,000 was big by 1939 standards and 20 years passed before it recouped its investment. Universal must be praying that history does not repeat itself.

Needless to say, every effort is being made to guard against this. Already, lavish, well-publicised parties have been held in major American cities to give the movie a boost. Celebrities in attendance included Kurt Vonnegut, Cher, Candice Bergen, Henry Winkler, David Hockney and Andy Warhol.

Of course, large amounts will be recouped by the double album soundtrack but the fact remains that Universal are gambling for high stakes and they need you to go and see *The Wiz*. Bear that in mind when the publicity steamroller operation moves into action.

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Saturday February 241st

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Thursday February 246th

Friday February 247th

Saturday February 248th

TELEPHONE  01-387-0428**MUSIC MACHINE**
Playing times 10.30 pm and midnight

DANDEN HIGH ST OFF ABBINGTON CHURCH TUBE NW1

Wednesday December 13th £1.50

BLACK SLATE + Brimstone

Thursday December 14th £2.00

THE ADVERTS + The Innocents

Friday December 15th £2.00

NO DICE + The Business

Saturday December 16th £2.00

GONZALEZ + John Potter's Clay

Monday December 18th

STRAIGHT 8

+ Daylight Robbery

Free admission for one with this ad
before 10.30 — Normal admission
£1.00

Tuesday December 19th

Sid Vicious Defence Fund

Featuring

THE CLASH
THE SLITS

+ Phil Rambow

Advance tickets now on sale, £2.50 from Box Office

Wednesday December 20th

£1.50

FABULOUS POODLES

+ Wendy Tunes

Thursday December 21st

Christmas Party
with**THE JAM**+ special guests Jab Jab
+ Gang of Four
+ The Nips

Advance tickets now on sale, £2.50 from Box Office

Friday December 22nd

THE PIRATES

Admission £2.00 — Pay at door

Sunday December 24th

Special Christmas
Eve Party Night
with**SORE
THROAT**

Open 8 pm to 1 am

Sunday December 31st

New Year's Eve Party
with**SUPERCHARGE**

Open 8 pm to 3 am

LICENSED BARS - LIVE MUSIC - DANCING
8PM - 2 AM MONDAY TO SATURDAY**ART FAILURE**
IN BRITAIN

POLYTECHNIC of CENTRAL LONDON S.U.

Christmas Party
with**COUSIN JOE**
(from New Orleans)

+ Chas and Dave

8 pm, Thursday, 14th December at
115 New Cavendish St., W.1**"ADVERTISE"**

Ring Brian B on 01-261 6153 for details.

WILKO JOHNSON'S

CITY HALL, ST. ALBANS

Saturday December 16th at 8 pm

**WILKO JOHNSON'S
SOLID SENDERS**
+ STEPPIN' OUTMarylane Disco-Bar—Food (Rural Ale)
Advance tickets from Box Office, 37 Chequer Street, St Albans, tel
64511, or available on door. Cheques and Postal Orders made payable to
St Albans District Council (Not Words Promotions)**SNIFF AND THE TEARS**Thursday 14th December — Nashville
Monday 18th December — Dingwalls

Album — Fiddle Heart by Sniff and the Tears CWR 3992 Also available on tape

Blast Furnace and...
John Potters CLAY

FRIDAY DECEMBER 22nd at 8pm
SOUTHEND COLLEGE of TECHNOLOGY
Camarvon Road Southend
SEASTS D STUDENTS, £1.50 SW 2244

ENQUIRES 01-727 0754, 01-229 0666

FAMEat the **ELECTRIC BALLROOM**
Saturday December 16th
with The Greedies**SPLIT RIVITT**Friday 15 December
CRAWFORDS, MILTON KEYNESSaturday 16 December
BRIDGE HOUSE, CANNING TOWNThursday 28 December
THE NAGS HEAD, HIGH WYCOMBESaturday 30 December
THE JOHN BULL, CHISWICKAnd don't forget Split Rivitt's residency at the Rock Garden every
Tuesday in January!
Further info, call Debbie, 729 2666

PEGASUS
100 GREEN LANE,
LONDON N10
01-226 0000

Thursday Dec 14th
BARRY RICHARDSON BAND
Friday Dec 15th

Free
50p

Saturday Dec 16th
MONOS
+ SECRET SEVEN
70p

Sunday Dec 17th
BIG CHIEF
Featuring Dick Hebdall Smith
50p

Monday Dec 18th
SOUL YARD
Free

Tuesday Dec 19th
CROOKS
Free

Wednesday Dec 20th
TENNIS SHOES
Free

DAVID BLOSSE BAND

**DOG
WATCH**

FRI 15 DEC: EAST HAM, Ruskin Arms
SUN 17 DEC: EAST HAM, Ruskin Arms
WED 20 DEC: CHADWELL HEATH, Greyhound
FRI 22 DEC: EAST HAM, Ruskin Arms
SUN 24 DEC: EAST HAM, Ruskin Arms (+ Roadpoint)

Send Enq
01-499 1623/1-688 0875

"As we wake up and see the sun"

Benefit concert for National Council for One-Parent Families
Wednesday 27 December 7.30 pm
at the Rainbow

SHAM 69

+ The Records
+ Merger
+ The Invaders
+ Jonny Rubbish
and special mystery guests

TICKETS £2.50 FROM RAINBOW BOX OFFICE & USUAL AGENTS

Frank Tokyo
Presents

Music For Your Brain and Pelvis

METABOLIST

at Action Space
Chenies Street, W.C.1
+ Theatre

Starts 8 pm, Fri. 15th & Sat. 16th
Dec

THE V.I.P.'s
every Saturday —
Wheatsheaf pub, Kings Rd
except Sat 16th —
The Railway, West Hampstead
(with Little Bo Bitch)
Sun 17th —
Windsor Castle, Harrow Rd
Sat 23rd —
Sheffield Limit Club
(Christmas Party)
To hear the V.I.P.'s ring: (011) 673 5431

Thursday December 14th
GIRLS SCHOOL

Friday December 15th
DISCO

Saturday December 16th
FREDDIE FINGERS

Monday December 18th
STRIFE
+ The Next Band

Tuesday December 19th
PANTIES

Wednesday December 20th
JAB JAB

Thursday December 21st
STREET BAND
Students Free Monday.
Discount Tuesday and
Wednesday
Open 9 pm-2 am

100 CLUB
100 OXFORD STREET,
LONDON WEST ONE

present a special
CHRISTMAS PARTY
on Thursday 21st December
with Jamaican superstar

TAPPER ZUKIE

featuring his all-Jamaican band
plus special guests **CYGNUS**

Tickets on sale on door on night only!
7.30 to 1.00 am Late bars & food
All enquiries: 01-348 2823

STURROCK MUSIC PRESENTS

**EDDIE & THE
HOT RODS**
THE MEMBERS
THE INNOCENTS

ELECTRIC BALLROOM
181 CANNON HIGH ST W1

SUNDAY 17th DECEMBER at 7.30

TICKETS 12.50 (incl. V.I.P. ADVANCE) ELECTRIC BALLROOM BOX OFFICE, TEL. 495 9006
LONDON TEL. 01-348 2823, 01-348 2824, 01-348 2825, 01-348 2826, 01-348 2827, 01-348 2828, 01-348 2829, 01-348 2830, 01-348 2831, 01-348 2832, 01-348 2833, 01-348 2834, 01-348 2835, 01-348 2836, 01-348 2837, 01-348 2838, 01-348 2839, 01-348 2840, 01-348 2841, 01-348 2842, 01-348 2843, 01-348 2844, 01-348 2845, 01-348 2846, 01-348 2847, 01-348 2848, 01-348 2849, 01-348 2850, 01-348 2851, 01-348 2852, 01-348 2853, 01-348 2854, 01-348 2855, 01-348 2856, 01-348 2857, 01-348 2858, 01-348 2859, 01-348 2860, 01-348 2861, 01-348 2862, 01-348 2863, 01-348 2864, 01-348 2865, 01-348 2866, 01-348 2867, 01-348 2868, 01-348 2869, 01-348 2870, 01-348 2871, 01-348 2872, 01-348 2873, 01-348 2874, 01-348 2875, 01-348 2876, 01-348 2877, 01-348 2878, 01-348 2879, 01-348 2880, 01-348 2881, 01-348 2882, 01-348 2883, 01-348 2884, 01-348 2885, 01-348 2886, 01-348 2887, 01-348 2888, 01-348 2889, 01-348 2890, 01-348 2891, 01-348 2892, 01-348 2893, 01-348 2894, 01-348 2895, 01-348 2896, 01-348 2897, 01-348 2898, 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NATIONWIDE GIG GUIDE

For the week
December
14 to 20

Details of
special
Christmas
gigs over
the page

Beckett: Tour De Force
London Piccadilly Theatre: Dame Edna
Everage (for a 12-week season)
London Rainbow Theatre: The Boom-
town Rats
London Southgate Royal Ballroom:
Cadillac / Riot Rockers
London Stoke Newington Pegasus:
Berry Richardson Band
London Walthamstow North-East
Polytechnic: The Monos / The Crooks
London Waterloo Young Vic Theatre:
Fran Landesman
London W10 Actham Hall: The
Members / Raww / London Zoo
Luton The Cotters: Scratch
Macclesfield Krumpholtz: Juggernaut
Manchester Kelly's: Reducers
Manchester Owens Park Ballroom: Ray
Morgan Quartet
Manchester Russell Club: Ultravox /
The Jerks
Newcastle The Canteen: Sabrejets /
American Echoes / Rockoff
Newport Kings Road Hotel: Crazy Caven
'N' The Rhythm Rockers
Norwich Tudor Hall: Gonzalez
Nottingham Boat Club: The Smirks
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: Test
Tube Babies
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: Lap Ragion
Nottingham The Black Boy: Chris
Barber Band
Oxford College of Further Education:
Eddie & The Hot Rods
Plymouth Breastwater Inn: The Bricks
Plymouth Polytechnic: Undisfame
Ponmouth Cumberland Tavern: Last
Straw
Ponmouth Polytechnic: Swift
Poynton Folk Centre: Peter Bond
Reading Target Club: Stas Marx
Scarborough Penthouse: Robin
Williamson's Merry Band
Sheffield Limit Club: Giffschool
Swansea Nuts Club: Wild Horses
Taunton College of Art: The Bishops
Wakefield Newton House Club: Jet
Harris/Vintage
Wantage The Swan: Double Exposure
York The Revolution: Neon Hearts

Friday

Bath Pavilion: Undisfame
Belfast The Pound: Scene Stealer
Birmingham Barbarella's: Frankie Miller's
Full House
Birmingham Barrel Organ: Wide Boys
Birmingham Elizabethan Days: Red Earth
Birmingham Railway Hotel: Spitfire
Birmingham Odeon: Parliament /
Funkadelic
Blackpool Winter Gardens: The Rubettes
Stricknell Arts Centre: Cousin Joe from
New Orleans
Bradford College: Muscles
Bristol All Saints Church: The X-Certs
Burnham Night Owl: Robert & The
Remouids
Bury St Edmunds Theatre Royal: Chris
Barber Band
Coventry Double Diamond: Shirley
Bases
Cambridge Corn Exchange: Penetration
Cambridge The Alms: Scratch
Canford Troubadour: Bullets
Chatham Town Hall: Caroline Roadshow
Coventry College of Further Education:
Fashion
Creddon Queen Elizabeth School: The
Fans
Crewe Alsager College: Hot Water
Cromer West Runton Pavilion: Topper
Zuke
Dudley J.B.'s Club: Streetband
Dunelm Technical College: Supercharge /
Simple Minds
Eastbourne Star Inn: Steve Boyce Band
Edinburgh Cloude: The Doomed
Edinburgh Napier College: The Scottish
Monos
Guildford Star Club: Crazy Caven 'N' The
Rhythm Rockers
Hemel Hempstead: The Ignorants / The
Vokes
High Wycombe Nags Head: Sore Throat
Hornchurch The Bull: Jerry The Ferret
Huddersfield Polytechnic: Here & Now



TODD RUNDGREN is back in town — and a very welcome visitor he is, too. He returns to Britain specially to headline a week-long season at London's newest rock centre, The Venue in Victoria. And that's where you'll find him every night from this Friday through until December 21. As usual, he's accompanied by his formidable backing band, Utopia.

Ipswich Royal William: The Kidde Band
Kidderminster Wolverley Memorial Hall:
Jot Stream / Dead Ringer & The Clones
/ Willmott Experience
Lancaster Catholic Club: Anniversary
Langdon Hills Youth Club: Steve Hooker
& The Vampire Lovers / The Spurts
Leeds Vibe Wine Bar: Foma
Liverpool Empire Theatre: Jasper Carrott
London Acton Kings Head: Paz
London Camden Brecknock: Bravado
London Camden Music Machine: No Dice
London Camden Southampton Arms:
Jeffrey Blue Band
London Canning Town Bridge House:
Grand Hotel
London Charing Cross Hospital Medical
School: Pambles
London Chiswick Hounslow College:
Straight 8
London City University: The Secret /
Shrink / Nicky Shy
London Europa Hotel: Gonzalez
London Fulham Golden Lion: Little Acre
London Hammersmith Odeon: Al Stewart
London Marquee Club: After The Fire
London Putney Star & Garter: Greig &
Nigel's Folk and Blues Night
London Putney White Lion: The Vibe
London Rainbow Theatre: Boomtown
Rats / The Vipers
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: The
Monos / Secret 7
London Tottenham Court Road Dominion
Theatre: Dean Friedman
London University Hall Hospital: Fabu-
lous Poodles

London Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's: Hold-
ing Strong
London Victoria The Venue: Todd
Rundgren's Utopia (until December 21)
London Waterloo Young Vic Theatre:
Fran Landesman
London Willesden Bobbysox Club:
Matchbox
London Wimbledon Theatre: Max Boyce
London W11 Sidney Webb College:
Substitute
London W10 Actham Hall: China Street /
Pearly Spencer / Berlin
London W.C.1: (Cherries: St.) Action
Space: Metabolist
Maidstone Technical College: Gilhan
Manchester Apollo Theatre: Rory
Gallagher / Brian Tichkovsky
Manchester The Square: The Jerks
Manchester The Venue: Brent Ford & The
Nylons
Milton Keynes Crauford Club: Spix Rivitt
Newcastle Polytechnic: The Rubinoos
Newcastle University: Spud
Newton Abbot Saele Hayne College: The
Young Bucks
Norwich Googie House: Strife
Nottingham Clarendon College: Tiger
Aulby
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: Last
Call
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: Slip Hazard &
The Bizzards
Preston Guildhall: Showaddywaddy
Ride I.Q.W. Prince Consort: Last Straw
Salisbury City Hall: J.A.L.N. Band
Scarborough Penthouse: Cafe Jacques
Stevenage The Swan: Heron Scarem
Stoke North Staffs Polytechnic: Alberto y
Lost Trios Paranoias / The Police
Swindon College: Stadium Dogs
Warrington Pedgates College: Muscles /
Paradox
West Bromwich Coach & Horses: Video
Windsor Theatre Royal: National Youth
Jazz Orchestra
Wolverhampton Rose & Crown: Stan
Arnold
Workington Rendezvous Club: Jet Harris
/ Vintage
York The Revolution: Strangeways
York Winning Post: Red Eye

CONTINUES ON
NEXT PAGE



IAN DURY & The Blockheads are playing seven nights in London — but at five different venues, in order to spread goodwill to as many areas as possible. He kicks off at the Lewisham Odeon on Sunday and Monday, followed by Hammersmith Odeon on Tuesday and Streatham Odeon on Wednesday. You'll find details of the other three in next week's Gig Guide.

Thursday

Basildon Double Six: Spud
Belfast The Pound: The Undertones
Belfast White Hall: Ralph McTell
Birmingham Barbarella's: Willie John-
son's Solid Senders
Birmingham College of Food: Ricky
Cool & The Icebergs / Wide Boys
Birmingham Mercat Cross: Ocean
Boulevard
Birmingham Odeon: Al Stewart
Birmingham Railway Hotel: Orphan
Birmingham The Bell: The Clerks
Birmingham Westhill College: Muscles
Bolton The Gallery: John Cooper Clarke
/ Ed Ronger
Bournemouth Tiffany's: Matchbox
Brighton Buccaneer: The D.P.'s
Brighton Hungry Years: The Tinsels
Brighton Polytechnic: Caroline
Roadshow
Bristol Granary: Streetband
Bristol Technical College: Frankie
Miller's Full House
Bristol Trinity Hall: Spica / Numbers /
Blue Wave Band / Art Objects
Canford Troubadour: The Amazing
Dark Horse
Canterbury College of Art: 50' Inclusive
Corby Sports Club: Gaffs
Coventry Wyken Pippin: Reno
Creddon Old Market House: The
Brainiac Five
Culdrose Sea Hawk Club: J.A.L.N. Band
Dundee College of Art: The Doomed
File St. Andrew's University: These
Four
Glasgow Amphora: Underhand Jones
Glasgow Apollo Centre: Rory Gallagher /
Bram Tichkovsky
Glasgow Art School: Simple Minds
Gloucester Leisure Centre: Jasper
Carrott
Halesowen Tiffany's: Quartz
Hornchurch The Bull: Reddits
Jersey New Auditorium: Stephane
Grapelli / George Shearing
Kendal The Bowman: Anniversary
Leeds Fan Club at Brannigan's: The
Boys / Butterflies
Leeds Polytechnic: Here & Now / The
Table
Leeds Scott Hall Hotel: Snoots
Leeds University: The Rubinoos
Lincoln A.J.'s Club: After The Fire
Liverpool The Cleveland: The

Accelerators
London Archway Caxton Hall: Revela-
tion
London Camden Brecknock: The Gentry
London Camden Dingwells: Matumbi
London Camden Music Machine: The
Adverts / The Innocents
London Canning Town Bridge House:
Bobby's Allstars
London Central Polytechnic: Cousin Joe
From New Orleans / Chas & Dave
London College of Fashion: The Young
Bucks
London Covent Garden Rock Garden:
The Vipers
London Fulham Golden Lion: Samsom
London Fulham Greyhound: Trogs (for
four days)
London Hammersmith Odeon: Parla-
ment / Funkadelic
London Hammersmith The Rutland:
Fred Rickshaw's Hot Goggles
London Hammersmith The Swan: The
Frankies
London Islington Hope & Anchor:
Essential Logic
London Kennington The Cricketers:
Merrys
London Kensington De Villiers Bar:
Gold Dust Twins
London Kensington The Nashville: Sniff
'N' The Tears
London Marquee Club: Bert Jansch
London New Barnet Duke of Lancaster:
Jerry The Ferret
London Notting Hill Old Swan: The
Crack
London Old Kent Rd. Thomas A'

SEND YOUR NEW YEAR GIGS NOW

AS WE warned you in our last issue, it's now too late to submit details of gigs covering the Christmas and New Year holiday period. In next week's NME, there'll be a special two-week Gig Guide with full information about what's on from December 21 to January 3 inclusive — and that has already gone to press. So no more entries for that period, please, because we can't use them.

But now, looking ahead...

We are now taking entries for the first full week of the New Year — that's from January 4 to 9 inclusive. And because of protracted holiday arrangements, the closing date for entries during this period is **next Wednesday, December 20** — that's a day earlier than we announced last week, owing to unforeseen difficulties at the printers. So there's no time to waste — get your gigs for early January in the post right away, or it will be too late.

Saturday

THIS WEEK'S CHRISTMAS SPECIALS



LINDISFARNE are, for the third successive year, playing a string of hometown Xmas shows at Newcastle City Hall. And this time they're doing no less than five on the trot, all of them: completely sold out, beginning on Tuesday. Our pic is of stalwart Alan Hull.



ELVIS COSTELLO & The Attractions begin their week-long series of London concerts on Monday at the Dominion Theatre in Tottenham Court Road. They run through to Christmas Eve, and after a two-day lay-off Costello is off again on a nationwide tour.



EDDIE & The Hot Rods are playing a special seasonal gig at London's Electric Ballroom on Sunday, supported by The Members. It's your last chance to see them before they begin a full country-wide tour in the late winter or early spring. Barrie Masters is pictured.



PETER GABRIEL makes his first concert appearance since his open-air shindig in Battersea Park during the summer, when he opens a string of four successive — and inevitably successful — nights at Hammersmith Odeon on Wednesday. Expect strictly the strictly unexpected.



THE CLASH headline at London's Music Machine on Tuesday, in a benefit show to help pay Sid Vicious' legal costs. A couple more Clash concerts follow at the London Lyceum night after Christmas. You'll also find them in the provinces this week. Pictured: Mick Jones.



THIN LIZZY weren't intending to do any more concerts this year, but they've now decided to slot in a one-off Christmas show for their devoted followers. It's at the Hammersmith Odeon on Sunday, supported by The Undertones. Pictured above is Phil Lynott. Who else?



GENERATION X have touring extensively recently, and they're now winding up their current gig series with a Christmas Party beano at London's Electric Ballroom, together with various surprise guests. It's all happening on Wednesday. Billy Idol is pictured.



ALEX HARVEY is back in business again with his brand new band. And although we'll have to wait until the New Year before he goes out on tour, he's doing a one-off holiday special in his native Scotland. Catch him at Glasgow Apollo on Saturday — if it's not sold out!

Other seasonal specials for your delight this week: GONG, with Daevid Allen and Gilli Smyth, stage their Christmas party at the Electric Ballroom on Tuesday . . . THE BOOMTOWN RATS complete their "Seasonal Turkey" tour at the Rainbow on Friday . . . DAVID JOHANSEN returns from European commitments to headline at the Lyceum on Sunday, before flying home to the States . . . and DARTS present a holiday special at Hammersmith Odeon on Monday, their first major show since their recent personnel changes. All these gigs are in London, of course.

Tuesday

Basilidon Sweeney's Disco: The Trogs
 Bard Brillig Arts Centre: Wild Horses
 Birmingham Barabellis's: The Doomed
 Birmingham Barrel Organ: Fashion
 Birmingham Bournbrook Hotel: Here &
 Now/For
 Birmingham Fighting Cocks: Brujo
 Birmingham Mercat Cross: Cartoons
 Birmingham Railway Model: Speed Limit
 Bishops Stortford Triad Leisure Centre:
 Scratch
 Blackpool Mecca Ballroom: Autograph
 Brentwood Youth House: Albert & The
 Grobbles
 Bristol University Union: Glaxo Babies/
 Joe Public/Messiah/Driving Cars/Art
 Objects
 Cardiff Top Rank: Tapper Zukie
 Chatham Pentagon Centre: Baby Grand
 Leeds Fan Club at Branning's: The
 Bishops
 Leicester De Montfort Hall: Showed-
 Up/Dead
 Leicester The Jesters: Chris Barber Band
 London Acton White Hart: Sounder
 London Camden Gingswals: Wayne
 County & The Electric Chairs
 London Acton Electric Ballroom: Gong
 London Camden Music Machine: The
 Clash/The Silts/The Innocents
 London Fulham Golden Lion: The Jags
 London Hammerhead Odeon: Ian Dury &
 The Blockheads
 London Hampstead Town Hall: Little
 Wires/Blue Steel
 London Harrow Road Windsor Castle:
 Spring Offensive/Steve Linton Band
 London Kensington The Nashville: The
 Undertones/The Squares
 London N.11 Orange Tree: Frances
 Gihray & Mick Burke
 London Sheen Derby Arms: Freddy's
 Feetwarmers
 London Stoke Newington Pegasus
 Town Show
 London Tottenham Ct. Rd. Dominion
 Theatre Elvis Costello & The Attrac-
 tions
 London West Hampstead Railway Hotel:
 The Members/Local Operator
 London Woolwich Tramshed: Samson
 London W.14 The Kensington: Beaver
 Mountain Ash The Penic. Sue Marx
 Newcastle City Hall: Lindisfarne
 Nottingham: The Gents
 Oldham The Lounge: 5FW/Dirty Dog
 Plymouth Woods Centre: Alberto Y Lost
 Trios Paranoid/The Police
 Purley Tiffany's: Slouise & The
 Bershows
 Sheffield City Hall: Jasper Carrott
 Sheffield Limit Club: Parties
 Slough Langley College Spud
 Statham North Staffs Polytechnic
 Fischer-2
 Walsall Dirty Duck: The Amazing Dark
 Horse
 Wrexham Yale College: Hot Water

Wednesday

Aberkham Academy: The Scottish Monks
 Birmingham Barrel Organ: Grupa
 Birmingham Railway Hotel: Reinmaker
 Birmingham (Yardley) Bulls Head: Roses
 Cheltenham Plough Inn: Roadsters
 Chesterfield: Grovener Rooms, The
 Thompson Twins
 Colchester Essex University: Mera &
 Now/Zero Gong
 Corby Civic Hall: Soane Stealer
 Croydon Heath Haden Hill Centre: Quartz
 Hildesheim: Tower Hill: Side/Village
 Ipswich Royal William: Gypsy
 Leeds Brannigan's: Streetband
 Leeds Victoria Hotel: Ethel The Frog
 Leeds Vireo Wms Bar: Red Eye
 London Camden Brickwork: Grand Hotel
 London Camden Dublin Castle: O.K.
 London Camden Electric Ballroom:
 Generation X
 London Camden Music Machine: The
 Fabulous Poles
 London Canning Town Bridge House: The
 Valves
 London Canning Groundhouse: Mud (For
 four days)
 London Hammersmith: Odeon: Peter
 Gabriel
 London Harrow Rd. Windsor Castle: The
 Monos
 London King'sbury Bandwagon: Semson
 London Leicham Montpelier: Blue Moon
 London Putney Sair & Garter: Diane
 Sirmmonds & Greig's Folk and Blues
 Showcases
 London Rainbow Theatre: Andy & The
 Angels U.K.
 London Shepherd's Bush Trafalgar: Glom
 & The Sharps
 London Stoke Newington Pegasus: David
 Blossie Band
 London Westminster Odeon: Ian Dury &
 The Blockheads
 London Tooting The Castle: Vaguely
 Attractive
 London Tottenham-Ct. Rd. Dominion
 Theatre: Elvis Costello & The Attrac-
 tions
 London West Hampstead Railway Hotel:
 The Addix/The Cure
 Newcastle City Hall: Lindisfarne
 Newcastle: Showcase Club: The Jolt
 Northolt White Hart: Crazy Caven 'N' The
 Rhythm Rockers
 Norwich Boogie House: The Smirks
 Nottingham Hearty Good Follow: Gwalior
 Nottingham Imperial Hotel: Witkhynde
 Odeon: The C. G. King
 Plymouth Metro: Supercharge
 Salisbury College of Further Education:
 The Blaphoe
 Swindon: The Arts, The Camer

Sunday

Bakewell Mensal Head: Witchfynde
 Birkenhead Hamilton Club: Gerry & The
 Pacemakers (for a week)
 Birmingham Barabarella's: Jameson Reid
 Birmingham National Exhibition Centre:
 Rod Stewart
 Birmingham Railway Hotel: Video
 Birmingham Repertory Theatre: Chris
 Barber Band
 Bishops Stortford Old Maltings: Swing
 Street

Monday

Ramus Down Boulevard London Clapham Two Brewers: Live Wire London Covent Garden Rock Garden: Whiz London Finchley Torrington: Alkatraz London Ilham Golden-Lib: These Four London Hammerstein Odeon: Thin Lizzy/The Undertones London Harrow Rd, Windsor Castle: The W.P.s London Hingston Hope & Anchor: Spud London Lewisham Odeon: Ian Dury & The Blockheads London Marquee Club: The Fall/Maniacured Noise London Oxford St. 100 Club: Cousin Joe From New Orleans London Peckham Montpelier (lunchtime):	Aylesbury Grammar School: Blast Furnace/The Uggers Birmingham Barrow: Crack Birmingham Marcat: Orphan Birmingham Odeon: Showaddywaddy Birmingham Railway Hotel: Prime Donna Blackpool Technical College: Supercharge Brentwood Youth House: Keith Pearson Brighton Seafront Showbar: Dave Barry & The Cruisers (for a week) Bristol Crokers: Corkscrew (for three days) Cannock Drake's Drum: Paradox Chester Smarkey: Stax Marx Edinburgh Trianon: Tappan Zukia Exeter Round: Alberto V Lost Trios Paranoias & The Police
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COMPILED BY
DEREK JOHNSON

ON THE TOWN

The Peter Tosh backlash doesn't start here. . .

Peter Tosh

Bradford

Some of the filthiest conditions Yorkshire had experienced in four centuries failed to deter Peter Tosh's diehard northern rooters from showing up to see the Rasta evangelist doing Jah's work on a definitive pee souper in Bradford.

Swirling in Ethiopian colours, St. George's Hall was an appropriate refuge for a man whose aggressive vision and alignment with the mass dream has made him a new black leader.

One may have thought Tosh would show signs of being cramped and compromised by the Glimmer Twins. But no, the militant conscience of the Wailers is alive and well: his song remains the same.

The opener, a 10 minute version of "400 Years" proved the point, alerting us to the high regard Tosh has for the song, while his players lent solid support. Two

keyboardists (using five keyboards), drummer Sly Dunbar, pulsating bassist Robbie Shakespeare, guitarists Micky Mao Chung, Al Anderson and Donald Kinsey, plus a male I-Threes contrived to pump out a rhythm as good as the Barrett Brothers at their best.

Perhaps Tosh lacks the ebullient charisma of Marley, but in a way he's more intensely magical. Thoroughly mesmerised, the audience let the music wash over them while Tosh moved around as if in a trance, or stood immobile, letting the dreadlocks swing.

Sometimes his delicate elfin grace made him appear aloof, but it was unintentional. You could probably put it down to

his bush philosophy.

His "Equal Rights" Rasta credos and manifestos were interspersed with his most famous songs: the idyllic Bunny Waileresque "Pick Myself Up", "Bush Doctor" and "You Gotta Walk". Even "I'm The Toughest" (lightweight and facile on record) was given a new vitality: its ostensible banality transcended by Tosh's pervasive mystique, and towards the end by his karate kicks.

Tosh's approach was so casual that one could have overlooked his brilliant, understated rhythm guitar playing. On the other hand, Mao Chung left nothing to the imagination.

Soaring wildly above the superbly blended rhythm of Dunbar and Shakespeare, his playing was reminiscent of Billy Cross for Dylan. And while some of the nursery rhyme riffs reflected the Pluto Shervington in Tosh, Dunbar's primitive drum solos suggested a throwback to shantytown ritualism.

The gal was strange but effective: melodic chord changes emerged from nowhere to redeem the occasional shortcomings.

Tosh made a spoken appeal for "black people to see The Light and love each other irrespective of organisations", before ending with "Get Up Stand Up", which brought the house to its feet, and another hymn, "Legalize It" for an encore. Tosh finally jogged slowly around the stage before handing his spiff to a grateful black devotee. It was magic, and everyone knew it. "Equal Rights" may forever be the seminal Tosh Album, but the men's time in history can only be just beginning.

Emma Ruth

David Bowie

Sydney

Over 40,000 tickets were greedily snapped up for David Bowie's two concerts at the Showground, proving he was the most eagerly awaited artist to visit Australia in years.

At precisely 9.30pm the puzzled audience watched as Bowie placed himself behind his mini-Moog while Carlos Alomar conducted the band through the doomy opening piece "Warszawa". But it was with the thundering intro of "Heroes" we were shown what the rest of the evening would bring, as Bowie abandoned his keyboards for a microphone.

Wearing a garish baggy green leather jump-suit, at one moment, he crouched over, and the next bounded over the stage with a hand mike. The focal point and lynch-pin, he immediately and confidently established a commanding stage presence.

Continual touring has allowed the band to develop their awesome fire-power to maximum effect. Spotlights fell primarily on Adrian Belew, Roger Powell and Simon House; but Carlos Alomar, Sean Mayes, Dennis Davis and George Murray proved they weren't alouches either.

They showed astonishing versatility, effectively crushing the audience with the sledgehammer riff of "Jean Genie", and then three numbers later tackled a delicate piece like "Fame" with nimble grace.

The first set comprised songs primarily from "Low" and "Heroes", with the crowd leaping up the faster and harder songs like "What In The World" and "Beauty And The Beast". But the textual mood pieces "Warszawa" and "Sense Of Doubt" drew only polite applause. Perhaps such morose, doomy works are more appropriate to a European background, but meaningless to a nonchalant Sydney audience.

For the second set Bowie



PETER TOSH. PIC: DENIS O'REGAN.

returned in a silver snakeskin jacket, loose white shirt and white tent pants.

After introducing the band he went straight into a half hour of "Ziggy Stardust": an affectionate nod to his best-known character, and not a skeleton being dragged from the closet for one more dance. Judging the rapturous applause greeting each song, it was the most successful segment of the show.

They moved through "Art Decade" and "Whiskey Bar" before booming into an

overwhelming version of "Station To Station". And Powell's titanic steam engine and Belew's madcap train whistle even drew complaints from residents living over two miles away.

Bowie encored with "TVC 15" and "Stay" and then took the stage alone. Grinning from ear to ear he thanked the audience for being so appreciative, and then charmingly asked, "Would you like another? . . . Shhh, I'll see what I can do."

They returned with "Rebel"

"Rebel", then it was all over with only a promise to return next year.

But nobody asked for more. Nobody was capable of expressing anything but mute amazement: the gig was simply stunning from start to finish.

Bowie is undoubtedly the total master of his environment and physically and intellectually the most exciting performer in the world today.

Stephen Dowse

Gobble gobble squawk—a tonic for the turkeys

Boomtown Rats

Hammersmith Odeon

Into London trots the "Seasonal Turkey Tour"—or, as the Odeon billboards would have it, "A Tonic for the Turkeys".

So we played our parts: we came, we squawked, we gobbled. Most of us would have done anything Modest Bob demanded. All mouth and trousers he may be, but there are few without a place in their hearts for Geldof on a good night.

This year has seen the rise and rise of Bob and his Rats, and the emergence of a following that's more

broadly-based than any other. Whether by luck or charm, skilful manipulation or simply by talent, they've found acceptance in every camp.

So tonight there were no problems. Even if doubts persist about the strength or depth of the material, there's no denying that live their formula works.

Also working are The Vipers from Dublin. This venomous ensemble acquit themselves deftly, snake some action and they've matured in the past half year from spiky, uncertain identipunk into a four-square R'n'B machine.

Their applause is more than polite, but by now the promotional balloons are thickening over the auditorium and they say "The

Boomtown Rats": and it's what the kids are hollering too.

An exceptionally young crowd by rock standards, it's female to a way-above-average degree. Posters, scarves and badges are all for sale and it shows. Marvellous how the marketing men can turn us into sandwich-boards for their product; and we pay them.

So the fun of the fair fills the air, and the complete showman Geldof makes an ideal attraction.

With long long monologues that would be a credit to Max Bygraves, the set is predictable, and a dream of dread called "Late Last Night" is the only innovation. But it's the celebratory nature of just the tried and true that everyone undoubtedly wants.

The Rats just blast out all the hits and more, so complete is their assurance and so total the response.

"Joey's On The Street Again" sees the welcome entrance of "Orish" John Earl (moustache and saxophone). An awesome sight in his

"genuine 1959 Irish showband jacket", it's Earl who contributes that heroic thick and filthy sax sound to the current hit "Rat Trap": a trite and corny song but when imbued with Geldof's trash-theatrics, nothing short of brilliant.

Alternately populist and arrogant, Geldof's attitude to his audience is ambivalent. "When you're lookin' at a danceband you're supposed to DANCE!" he roars, wiping out the last pocket of resistance. Yet in his triumph he can fleetingly look cynical and dispirited that he gets his way so easily.

The Rats can now consolidate their role as mass-entertainers for the under-18s with Geldof as big brother; they would be just the job for kiddies' parties. But it'd be an easy option.

Instead they could follow the riskier and more demanding fine, hard line of rock 'n' roll proper. The Rats plus maturity would be something; if they don't sell themselves short.

Paul Du Noyer



BOB GELDOF. PIC: PENNIE SMITH

Just EC, sinking under Muddy Waters

Eric Clapton Muddy Waters

Hammersmith Odeon

It's no mere coincidence that when EC was born in 1945, Muddy Waters had moved to Chicago, bought his first electric guitar, met up with Sonny Boy Williamson, and started recording his original Delta blues.

No coincidence because Clapton was primarily responsible for steering electric blues into a mass-media, multi-million production capable of selling out base-ball stadia in less time than it took him to tune-up.

And the vast amount of 'battle-of-the-giants' reviews the two have collected are justified by Clapton's choice to ignore his recent schmaltz/country influences, and play a predominantly blues-based set.

Judging the pair of them on their own terms, Muddy on safe ground, receiving an almost obligatory standing ovation.

This left Clapton to prove that his last 15 years had raised trad-blues to a definitive level of technique and sophistication.

Muddy Waters' support set was outright brilliant. Whatever their equipment, his six-piece band sounded like they were jamming in a ransacked tenement block. Every note was crystal clear, but cut with gloriously seedy, raw edge.

The numbers just cluttered

along, threaded out with complex blues runs, highlighted by James Cotton hauling the honkiest bass notes from his harp against the fine backseat keyboards of the magnificent 'Pinetop' Perkins.

Muddy let them warm up then shambled on in his lounge-bar suit, propped himself on a stool and launched into an affectionate run of all his classics.

He started out low-key, gave Perkins most of the vocal on 'Kansas City' played some crazed slide guitar, and by 'Mannish Boy' had dropped the axe and was leaping about on the stage cat-walks.

He wound up a sadly short set with the encore 'Got My Mojo Working', proving that he can't be beat.

When Clapton played Blackbushe he shared the frontline vocal with Marcy Levy and the guitar instrumental with George Terry. Now without them, he could hardly hold it together, and turned in a set that was invariably fistless and ultimately dismal as hell. The blame fell squarely on his mixing crew and his stoutly unimaginative band.

Much of his act (particularly 'Layla') suffered without a second guitar, and Dick Sims was forced to substitute his warbling ice-cream organ, leaving Clapton to build his admittedly excellent solos on Jamie Oldaker's lumpy drumming and Carl Radle's regimented bass.

They took no risks, had no real interchange and just put up a perfunctory backdrop



CLAPTON 'n' WATERS. Pic: GEORGE BODNAR

with acres of wasted space.

The slow blues pace permeated everything, giving us a sluggish listing 'Crossroads', a decidedly vacant 'Badger', and the mediocre downhome boogie, 'Tulsa Time'.

The only sign of life was in JJ Cale's 'Cocaine'; but it wasn't enough to salvage what was otherwise a depressing spectacle.

An old Clapton quote nagged in my mind: "Given a choice between accomplishing something and just lying around, I'd rather lie around. No contest."

No doubt... No change? No comment.

Mark Ellen

Van Morrison

Los Angeles
Van Morrison has never been at ease with audiences.

After performing for over a decade with Them and through his evocative solo career, the situation hasn't changed dramatically. The songs remain powerful and he sings expressively; yet underneath it all the shyness remains.

You know Morrison would prefer to be in his dressing room rather than under the lights.

Like Presley concerts, Morrison requires the crowd to watch passively as he goes

through the motions until one or two brilliant moments make it all worthwhile.

His return to L.A. after a four year absence was marked by this special intimate performance at the 500 seat Roxy nightclub. And 'Wavelength', his most satisfying LP for some time, added to the anticipatory excitement.

Last year's 'A Period Of Transition' album proved to be just that: a transitory work where Van came up with the right ingredients, but was unable to figure out complementary musical settings. But 'Wavelength' is a strong set of dazzling tunes capable of consistently

holding the listener's attention

Oh stage, Morrison has surrounded himself with an admirable band featuring the same musicians as on the current album.

Camel's Peter Bardens (keyboards/synthesizer) and ex-Jeff Beck Group/Hummingbird front-men Bobby Tench (guitar and background vocals) direct the outfit well, complementing Van's erratic vocal phrasing with sympathetic precision.

Although Morrison opened with 'Brown Eyed Girl', he played random album songs rather than the sure-fire favourites 'Into The Mystic', 'Wild Night' and 'Moondance', which he featured at the start of this tour. Instead he built a steady set of slices from most of his LPs. Most encouraging was that all the songs from 'Wavelength' were effectively moving.

The most memorable oldies were 'Tupelo Honey', 'Stone Me', 'Moonshine Whiskey' and the stirring 'Caravan' with Van occasionally playing acoustic guitar.

At times he was relaxed, snapping his fingers and smiling. But for most of the show he remained serious, concentrating on a careful performance.

He was most convincing on 'Wavelength', 'Checkin' It Out', 'Hungry For Your Love' and the riveting 'Kingdom Hall' (from the last album), revealing that he too appreciates the excellence of the new material.

And the show climaxed with an encore of 'Cyprus Avenue', with his obligatory dropkicks and impassioned vocals.

Morrison isn't a particularly exciting performer, but his intoxicating hybrid of blues and rock music is staggering; it ensures he'll always give a good show.

Justin Pierce

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The Rezillos Machine turns it in

The Rezillos The Undertones Ralph and the Ponytails

Lyceum

Heard the one about the Irish band, the Scots band and the Welsh band who played London's Lyceum?

From Edinburgh there were these five Rezillos. Lusty, trashy and gaudy, it was their last time on English soil and it will matter little that their farewell was a slightly muted affair, dogged from the start by sound problems. The gig was a gesture, a thank-you. And significantly vocalist Eugene didn't harangue the audience as he did at the Music Machine last summer. Nobody got their head kicked in tonight.

They were joined by their former bassist, William Mysterious, on saxophone as they ran through most of the "Can't Stand" album, plus a welter of newer, unrecorded songs destined to crop up on live vinyl.

Their devastating debut single aside, The Rezillos were always best as a live act: one who never truly captured their tacky stage fury on record.

Earlier their party thunder was all but stolen by Derry's finest, The Undertones.

They went down better than they were prepared to acknowledge and vocalist Fergal Sharkey's good natured jibes at the pogoers

were a shade misplaced.

Ludicrously, The Undertones were the only band not to enquire.

Although the band didn't scale the heights reached only a few weeks back on their London debut at the Marquee they're already special.

Delivering the clearest, purest rock 'n' roll I have witnessed for many a gig, they make their obvious mentors (Heartbreakers, Jones and Cool) look like jaded has-beens.

They even got away with bringing unseasonal cheer ("Here Comes The Summer" "our Christmas single", joked the squinting Sharkey), covering The Clutterband ("Just For You"), while "Teenage Kicks" with its cheekily acknowledged heist from "He's A Rebel", must rank as the year's saddest single.

Their vocal strength sets them apart from so many superficially identical outfits, particularly chain-smoking Sharkey's quavering whine which is guaranteed to send a shiver down most spines.

Keeping The Rezillos tradition of assembling a challenging, off-beat support bill, the evening began with a spirited, shambling trash from Welsh combo Ralph and The Ponytails, a weekly seven-piece garageband.

They parody numerous stock figures and forms — Meg Richardson, James Bond, Radio One, macho

REZILLOS. Pic: PAUL SLATTERY



manhood, reggae — and even dedicated a song to the NME dynamic parajournalist duo Tony and Julie ("A Bomb In Tony Parsons' House"). But their all too self-conscious anti-professionalism became a bit tiresome after a half dozen numbers.

Adrian Thrills

The Streetband

Nashville

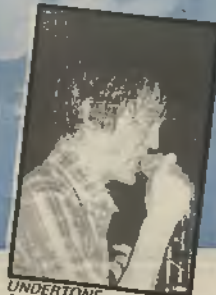
With the accidental Top 20 "Toots" under their belts, The Streetband could be wrongly pigeon-holed as one-off peddlers of throwaway art.

But any preconceptions of a night of Pete 'n' Dud style frivolity were promptly shattered by a superlative performance of twang, ragtime, and structured chaos.

Their act embodied a wide range of talents, a defiant sense of comedy, a

spontaneous empathy with the punters and a compelling brand of rock music.

Fronted by the debonair barrow-boy persons of Paul Young sporting a Joe Brown haircut and Hilton spiv suit, The Streetband maintained a constant high on the excitement. Gravel vocals



UNDERTONE
Fergal Sharkey

and some neat harmonies were merged expertly with bass (Mick Paeart), drums (Chalkie), and guitars (Roger Kelly and John Gifford).

Their repertoire comprises originals plus a couple cover versions. A low-key rendition of Shakin' All Over replete with wilful Mickey Mouse instrumentals and android strutting about, emphasises that they could be 79's prime agents of rock burlesque — which "Toots" merely suggested.

I can't help liking The Streetband. Maybe it's because they remind me of The Goodies, or perhaps I'm prejudiced in favour of a charismatic live group who can wield a plenum with the best of 'em, and pepper the whole event with fun, subversion and self-parody.

Pick Joseph

Robin Williamson's Merry Band

Royalty Theatre

The curious and largely underrated excursion that took The Incredible String Band through their experimental first five years, and later on to a less successful acoustic/electric fusion, now finds the band's co-founder, Robin Williamson, completing a musical full circle.

Four years living in LA, and the formation of his all-acoustic Merry Band (a misleading two name), have given him the freedom to re-instate his original influences and return to writing contemporary Celtic songs.

More importantly, he's rid himself of what was the String Band's greatest limitations: their ever-changing "ideology". If you weren't with it from the start, it was hard to latch on to mid-way. At London's Royalty

Williamson was on magnificent form as ceremonial host. He rambled confidently between songs, dividing the two sets between Celtic-based folk and theatrical farce, and readings of his poems and prose.

Most of the songs — "The Poacher", "The Hardwood Logs", "The Spurious Boyhood Of Henry Morgan" — re-worked age-old themes with insignificant lyrics. But all were precisely arranged, perfectly balancing their combination of harp, fiddle, flute and mandolin.

He also included "Zoo Blues", a deliberately appalling amalgam of animal puns exploiting his self-confessed "weak" humour. And the best of his newer material was "These Are The Mythic Times", with its looser feel, and his characteristic free-flowing vocal.

But the most striking additions were his readings.

Now adopting a more objective, historical view of Celtic folklore and mythology, the first poem "The Five Denials Of Merlin's Grave", set to a harp, fiddle and flute backing, was a re-appraisal of "non-barbaric Man"; and the imagery, flavour and music suggested every period from Saxon to 19th Century.

The second was a very different prose extract from his retrospective "Mirror Man Sequences". In this he brilliantly portrayed the artist as an erstwhile sheep-rustler.

Although he could have played endless encores from his past, he instead chose to end with a classic version of "The Circle Is Unbroken".

He convinced me that of all those loosely assembled under the "folk flag" (except The Chieftains), Williamson has imagination and diversity, and a total independence that will always ensure he's in a league of his own.

Mark Ellen

NME

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Sylvester the pussycat

Sylvester

Hammermith Odeon

The homosexual transvestite Sylvester made an outrageous British debut that all the young lunkers (new perms and pegs) will remember long after their soul shoes have gathered dust in the attic.

I had originally approached this concert with apprehension. Admittedly Sylvester sometimes makes great records, but Disco artists are notoriously unable to translate their recorded performance into live excitement. In fact, before this all the recent soul concerts I'd seen, including Joe "Cabaret" Tex's autumn debacle, had been desperately disappointing.

This time such fears were totally unfounded.

Sylvester may be the last of the Glam Rockers, the Wayne County of Disco even, but his show ranks with The Best.

Resplendent in silky black threads with glitter trimmings, he's flanked for the whole performance by the Two Tons Of Fun: two big, black mamas, who contribute as much as the man himself with their searing, trenchant vocals.

Visually this frontline triumvirate is as imposing in its own way as that of The Clash.

Apart from the inevitable dry ice, the concert is — mostly free of showbiz gloss. Even the simple tinsel backdrop is modest considering Sylvester's reputation as a lavish set designer.

But, as he said in one of his "intimate" raps with the groovers at the front, "These

singers don't need this glitter, y'all. It's just down to the music with us y'all."

Ooo weel! And so it goes with over an hour of pacy racey disco heat, driven relentlessly by the omnipresent drums 'n' bass sizzle and throb, and embellished by the tremulous warbling of the synthesizer and the succinctly understated keyboards.

After a respite for the night's only ballad and another "intimate" rap (in turn corny, embarrassing,

perfunctory and sincere), it was up, up and away again for Sylv's archaic melodrama "I Who Have Nothing".

Followed by two songs most familiar to my swivelling hip joints — the singles "Dance" and the superb "Mighty Real" — two dozen kids transform the Odeon into the dance floor of Ilford's Lady. And you thought that only happened at Lurkers-gigs?

Sylvester may come from a sheltered American West Coast "upper middle class black bourgeois background" so things are different for him, but the "message" is the same: forget what they say and be what you want to be.

And at the same time you can shake your booty!

Adrian Thrills



Misow ... Pic: ROB HAL



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from page 25

and aware of what's required more than any similar entertainers from the Stones to T. Rex.

Traditional! Mere mortals! "The ambitions of the band are always very mundane. Very obvious. My ambitions come down to just having choice in my life. At the moment I'm not really permitted to have any. I want to get rid of certain restraints. I want to get rid of these restraints more for myself than for the world."

The only way to conclude any piece on the Rats is to accommodate the band's most immediate ambition. Which is, in some perverted echo of an old fading tradition. America. What else could it be after a number one? (don't answer — you'll spoil the tone of this fade...)

The band view it as 'interesting.' Geldof, inevitably, elaborates, as Trevor controls the coach through the last few miles to London. "I've no particular fondness for the place as the home of rock 'n' roll. To be honest I could do without the fucking place. But it's a challenge. I don't know how we'll do. I've no intention of playing the toilets of Telas for three years. I've no intention of getting lost in the midwest. There must be better ways of doing it. No way will I do the Bottom Line... those record company catenacs. Fuck that. There's no way I'll pull a Slade or a Sweet and disappear over there and forget about here."

(Here it comes...)
 "... I'd like to play with

some turkeys like Aerosmith, who are still pulling large crowds but in my opinion are on the way down... they haven't got one wit of musical bellow between them.

"And not only will Steve Tyler (of Aerosmith) get pissed off because he's got another Jagger look-alike up his sleeve but also 'cos I'm a lot better on stage than he could ever be. I'd love to play with any of them... those characterless turkeys, those faceless American bands... Foreigner, Boston..."

"There's no competition in America, just the system to overcome. I really don't doubt that we'll crack America, putting on my usual risk of being made to look a complete prat in a years time. If I'm wrong, I'm wrong. But like a year ago I said we'd be number one! Maybe we'll stiff. I honestly don't know."

IF ANYONE is going to "crack" America, and all that entails (shake up, lethargy, complacency, following leaders, scared media, politics, radio) which is really quite heavy, it's going to be the Rats. Their music is firmly R&B rooted, they are not especially colloquially inaccessible, they can sell themselves better than any marketing campaign, they are tremendous performers, and ultimately they don't care if they win through or not. And are certainly not going to sweat over it. And why should they? Finally, essentially, crucially, the Boomtown Rats are not afraid of trivialities. THAT is their genius.

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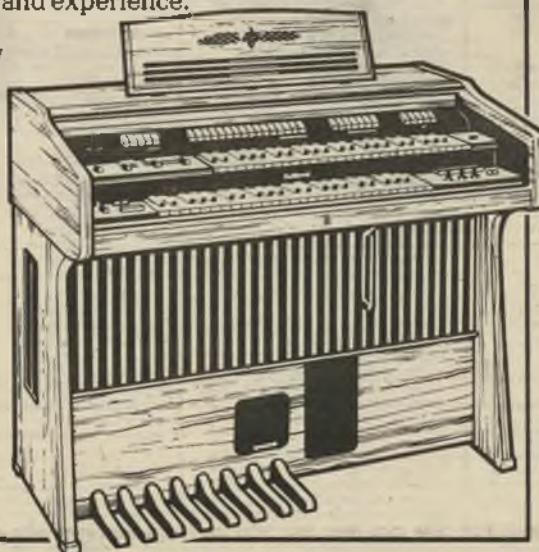
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No.9



DISGUISE IN LOVE

Cut out and keep this wacky picture, kids. If you've got this and the others from the series, you could get lucky. See next week's full page ads.

I would just like to say a few words regarding Stephen "Cat" Coore's (of the Third World) morose statement about cocaine in your November 18th issue.

"Coke like they take it in the States really wires you up. Yet on the other hand you have these people in places like Peru who have been chewing the leaves and having it as part of their own thing."

If by "wired up" he means that it causes mental excitement, delirium, ataxia, which can lead to acts of aggression and later causes headaches and depression, he is quite correct. But if he thinks it's any different for the Peruvian peasants he referred to, he is wrong.

He says that they chew the leaves of the coca plant as part of their own "thing". Bullshit. The reason most of the peasants chew the leaves is because, being so badly impoverished, they use coca to deaden their empty stomachs.

Unfortunately, the habit doesn't end with chewing coca for relief of hunger and fatigue. The habit can soon become severe addiction, bringing on a state of apathy and complete indifference to one's surroundings.

The addict's health soon becomes impaired, leading to complete reliance on the toxic properties of the herb. The complexion becomes sallow, and a constant sense of itching and irritation of the skin leads to constant discomfort. Addiction becomes worse and leads to derangement of the nervous system, headaches, loss of appetite, total inability to sleep which aggravates mental depression. Years of suffering may drag on before the addict dies an extremely painful death.

Addiction to coca or cocaine is highly dangerous. "Cat" obviously doesn't know what he was talking about, but he has a lot of influence with young people and his attitude to them is so irresponsible as to be almost unbelievable.

It might be nice if people like him used their brains instead of saying every chic thing that comes into their heads. If they want to fuck themselves up, let them. But why influence the weakest members of so-called society to do the same thing.

ERICA ARTHURS, Gloucester.

Yeah, disgusting drug, innit? Beats us why all these fat dope-smoking hippies are always whining about speed. We gave our boys over 250 million standard-dose amphetamine tablets during World War II and it didn't do them any harm — ALLIED EDS.

I was most upset to see a "Rock Against Pixies" member write to NME.

Please stop printing these letters because they give us law-abiding pixies a bad name.

Thank you, RICK THE MAGIC PIXIE, Under A Toadstool, Japan. P.S. How about a "Rock Against Pixies" backlash?

Better yet, how about some fraternal support for our comrades fighting the good fight in "Elves Against Goblins"? — CHIEF SPOKESPERSON OF "SPIRITS AGAINST WIMPS".

I'm listening to Peel... he's playing the new Public Image LP. I can't believe what I am hearing.

Lydon, you are a traitor. You've fooled us all for too long now. I suppose we must have got the message when "Greatest Hits" — sorry — "Bollocks" came out. "First edition" is the epitome of what Punk fought against. Lydon, you bastard, kids get beaten up, harassed, KILLED for Punk and its principles. What do you give us now??

"Theme"? It sounds like Black Sabbath on Mandrax played at 16 rpm. What a cop-out, Johnny Rotten. The whole scene is a wash-out. I suppose Sid will be the next to sell out.

Then again, if "Cowboy Song" is where Punk is at now... then thank Christ it's dying on its feet. Don't spend all your royalties in one shop, Johnny. KINGO, Horwich, Bolton. Don't listen to the puke, John — ALL AT SEDITIONARIES, KING'S ROAD.

Dear Siouxsie and The Banshees:

I would like to take this opportunity to offer my deepest apologies for that apology of an

Trampling the running Huns underfoot, they advance ever closer to the burning suburbs of crumbling Berlin. Snort your crushed-down KP rations NOW, for the zone you are about to enter has been declared. . .

ALLIED BAG

Edited by Joey, Frankie and Winnie



Howcum there's no letters about me? — J. MORRISON.



Howcum there's no letters about us? — J. BURCHILL, T. PARSONS

awful audience at your rearranged gig at Liverpool University.

Jesus, they were worse than you.

SOMEONE WHO ACTUALLY GOT HIS ROCKS OFF AT YOUR CONCERT (A MEMBER OF L.U. TOO).

When I get to the bottom I go back to the top of the slide! — PAUL MCCARTNEY.

Dear Bag, am I the first person to say that The Clash album stinks?

P.S. I recently read news in another music paper that bands like Led Zeppelin, Rainbow and AC/DC actually exist. This is not at all evident from reading NME.

HOPPER, Lancs P.P.S. Give 'em enough rope and they might just be good and hang themselves.

We live in hope — BERNARD RHODES' DOPPELGÄNGER

I'm trying to make a name for myself in the world of abusive letter writing and wonder whether either of the two efforts below are suitably vitriolic.

(A) Dear Bag, look, I'm not trying to say that Paul Morley, Ian Penman and Howard Devoto are pretty fucking boring but every time — yawn — I try... yawnwwwnnn... yessegh... to write a complain... yawn... 22222222... Or...

(B) Dear Bag, I thought that kind of fatuous drivel that Messers Devoto, etcetera gave us last week

was exactly what most of the "New Wave" was supposed to be a reaction against.

Yours wonderfully, GERALD LENGTH (AND BAR, T.C.P.), Pretender to the throne of Russia.

No, no, no, Gerald! Thousands of such letters are burned in a giant waste-paper basket each and every day. You've got to capture their imagination, stand apart from the herd. BE ORIGINAL!

Something like this — Dear Bag, you filthy pinkie commie faggot fascist homo Zionists slagged off the greatest band in the world last week. Of course, I am talking about (name illegible) so me and the rest of the Neanderthal Stag Night Lads are going to saw off your faces, napalm your oh-so-trendy so-cool offices in sleek chic Carnaby Street, get our brothers to get you at play-time and that's just for starters. I bet you don't print this letter. Yours, etc.

Get the idea, Gerald? And why don't you write it with cut-out letters? Nobody does that. On toilet paper. Nobody does that either. Not over. ALLIED EDS SICK OF READING THE SAME OLD TIRED CRAP IN GASBAG.

So, Paul you think it's O.K. to belt out Jammusic for 45 minutes then leave the stage? Oh yeah, all the old fire and verve were there; old and new numbers. But 45 minutes, man, it's just not on!

So how did the crowd react to this? They went ape-shit — but backwards, sideways, every which way for more and pissed a few pants in the process. You stung 'em so clean Mr Weller, they didn't even know they were being decapitated. So this is the Modern World?

Sure you played two encores — but that didn't bring it up to the hour mark. It all seemed so, calculated, so careful, so "Gee thank for having us back!"

And Paul, how come the pathetic Dickies were on the bill — It reflects on you! Was it to make your show that much better? You didn't need that ploy. There are a load more worthy bands who could have done a bunk up, which your tour could have given them.

And the audience... they didn't even say a dicky bird. They didn't know whether to spit, twist, wiggle their arses or crap themselves! Some even clapped!

This boy looked at Paul and found him wanting.

TOM, St Pauls, Bristol

I went to the Electric Ballroom on Friday, December 1, but unfortunately my evening was spoilt thanks to some morons who kept kicking and punching my friend and me thought out the Sham 69 set.

I believe Jimmy Pursey could see what was happening (on yer right by the amps, Jim), but he took no notice. Then he spouted a load of

bullshit about how if there was any violence tonight then Sham would quit. Beautifully said but actions speak louder than words. I am too scared to go to the Rainbow alone (d'ya hear that, Jim?).

The only thing that Friday night proved is that the song is true. What have we got? FUCK ALL! TRACEY GRIFFIN (someone who's not too scared — YET to write complaining letters to music papers), Sutton, Surrey.

OPEN LETTER TO JIMMY PURSEY,

Two weeks ago I travelled all the way from Halifax across to Bradford to see Sham 69. They didn't turn up. No explanation. None necessary, eh, Pursey?

So we went again last week. Where were you, Pursey? Filming for Top Of The Pops? No explanation was given; as I got my money back they said they hadn't got any explanation from the band.

When I left I saw a dog pissing up against a Sham 69 poster and it all seemed clear then. Pursey, you've disappointed a lot of Punks here.

I shoulda stuck to The Clash anyway.

ANDY, Halifax. Since summer 1978 the number of letters to The Bag complaining about writers slagging off fave bands has been increasingly rivalled by letters from kids complaining about the way bands have allegedly treated them.

Without exception, the correspondence has pertained to the behaviour of "New Wave" bands — not that the new(ish) acts are any more likely to abuse their fans than the Old Guard. However, we don't know all the rights and wrongs of this particular case, so it ain't fair to comment. Maybe Mister Pursey himself could give us his side of the story?

I hate Radio One with its middle-aged DJ's who do impressions of John Wayne, it's Tony Blackburns, Peter Powells, Irritating D.L.T.'s, inoffensive Simon Bateses, smug, typically English John Peels.

I'm sick of hanging around colleges/universities with a can of lager in my hand, waiting on some smug, half-educated student to sign me into his/her little club, just so I can have the privilege of watching some boring, inoffensive, capitalist produced band. All students should have their union cards stuck up their arse and stamped on their foreheads so they could be banned from all public gigs.

I'm sick of listening to The Clash, Sham 69, Public Image, Sex Pistols, Buzzcocks, Penetration, X-Ray Spex etc. etc with their £500 Gibson Les Pauls, and their £10,000 Marshall P.A.'s, telling me how boring it is to have no money, no girlfriend, being on the dole etc, etc. I hate bands, newspapers, universities, TV programmes, politicians, unions etc, whose only motive it is to encourage the proletariat not to think for themselves.

I detest Snouds. I hate Monotony Maker and I loathe the Parsons Family Express with its smart-ess excuses for journalists. I hate stupid millionaires like The Rolling Stones, Queen, Led Zeppelin, Boston, John Travolta, Johnny Rotten etc who have nothing of any interest to say about anyone or anything except themselves.

I hate America, with its racist, anti-communist politicians, it's plastic contrived people and it's president whose main claim to fame is that he owns a peanut farm. I hate the English monarchy who receive more money in one year than the entire working-class population will earn in its whole working career.

I detest the capitalist CBI, Labour, Conservative and Liberal Parties whose political life is spent filling their own pockets. I hate people who write to music papers because their favourite band never did an encore. I hate favourite bands who write into music papers explaining to people why they never did an encore.

I love Scotland, Russia, Karl Marx, Hugh MacDiarmid, Communists, Lenin, Leon Chestov, David McLean, Wales, Ireland, Cornwall, Friedrich Engels, Kant, Homer, Gaelic, Robert Burns, China, Women (models to shop-assistants). I want a revolution.

(To be continued) REVOLUTIONARY, Edinburgh, Scotland.

Mesself, I don't like revolutions — CZAR NICHOLAS II, 1863 - 1918.

T-ZERZ

HAS A SMASHING TIME



PHOTO: ADRIAN BOOT

Turbulence, change, decay, writhes, violence, disasters, gunpowder, treason and plot... the view from the *T-Zerz* desk this pre-Christmas week is one of unrelieved MISERY, ladies and gentlemen. Where, we ask ourselves, is the bloody messiah now that we really need him? Bruce? BRUCE?

Sid Vicious has, as you may have heard, been celebrating the onset of the festive season in his own unique manner: he allegedly shoved a broken beer bottle into the face of Patti Smith's brother/roadie Todd (a much nicer brother that Patti deserves, as it happens) in a dumb altercation in a New York disco and got handed a "Go directly to jail/forfeit your \$50,000 bail" card. Todd Smith, meanwhile, will be spending Christmas with five stitches over his left eye...

Incidentally (1), Sid faces a maximum of seven years jail for the assault charge. What a lad, eh? Incidentally (2) before this latest "incident", Sid had apparently been enjoying a rich and varied sex life thanks to the following witty and apposite pulling line: "Ere, I 'av'n't ad anyone since Nancy — wanna portion?"

Incidentally (3), *NME's* New York bureau chief and photographer, Joe Stevens, was delighted to find himself stuck with a massive phone bill after putting Malcolm "Legs" McLaren up on his premises for the duration of the *affaire Sid*, especially since the Talc One now seems reluctant to make any financial (or other) contribution to said bill...

More blood, carnage and disaster: *Southside Johnny* fell off stage and severed an artery (messy, that — medical Ed) while he and *The Asbury Jukes* were playing a radio station party in Sacramento last week. While *Buddy Miles* (older readers will remember that he used to play drums with — among others — Jimi Hendrix, Wilson Pickett and the Electric Flag back in the '60s as well as leading his own band and teaming with Carlos Santana) is currently doing

two years stir in Hollywood after being found guilty of two theft charges while on probation for a drug charge (PCP Angel dust to you — in case you're interested). Exciting lives these people lead, huh?

Is this taking the piss or what? The new exciting, dynamic Mike Oldfield not to be confused with the old boring tedious wimpy approved-by-Derek-Jewell-and-Karl-Dallas type Mike Oldfield) has separated from his wife after a whole month of what we are regretfully forced to assume must have been less than blissful nuptials. Oldfield and his bride Diana met on a — chortle — self-improvement course with the esteemed therapy cut Exegis, who are also Diana's full-time employers. Enigmatic Mike would only murmur, "we both got what we wanted, out of the marriage." The mind is almost afraid to boggle...

No such reluctance is, however, present at the announcement of a Nancy Spungen Memorial Concert set for Tuesday the 19th of this month, the same date as *The Clash's* Sid Vicious benefit gig against which this concert is a protest. The band in question are *Cash Pussies*, formed by Alex Fergusson (last heard of with *ATV*) and sundry members of *Security Risk*. Masterminding the gig are Fred and Judy Vermorel (authors of the popular, controversial, popular, exciting, controversial and popular *Sex Pistols* paperback biography). Fred is co-writing the lyrics of some of the songs with Alex and Judy is ringing *T-Zers* up with statements along the lines of "The Clash are a bunch of clapped-out social workers" and worries about where the money from the gig will actually end up. Those not wishing to contribute to Sid's legal fees can find the Pussies and the Vermorels (telling them apart) at Valentino Rooms in the Bedford Corner Hotel in Bailey Street, London (a well-known city near the *NME* offices)...

Insults and injuries: tall, saturnine Paul Morley wins this week's *Emma Ruth* Award for slagging off bands who didn't actually perform, following his destruct job on *The Movies* in last week's coverage of The Great British Music Festival at Wembley. On behalf of The Movies, Michael Willis of Star Artists Management fired off the following missive to our beleaguered *MNE* Ballsup Desk: "I was amazed by the way he simply slagged off each act in turn from Nick Van Eede to David Essex. If this is the way Paul Morley reviews quite frankly he should be out of a job and working behind a bar at a rock venue as opposed to watching and constructively reviewing acts. I manage The Movies and I was absolutely dismayed to read his review of The Movies in the same article. They did not perform at the Great British Music Festival which makes a complete mockery of the *NME* review. Did Paul Morley even go to the gig? If he did I presume he was in the bar." Paul ("Lips that touch liquor shall never touch mine") Morley offered no coherent excuse for his action, but swore drunk that he wasn't blind. (*Make that "swore blind he wasn't drunk", will you — Ed*)...

A little learning is a dangerous thing: Ringo Starr (older readers will remember him from *The Beatles*, a load of duff movies and an extensive history of heavy-duty lugging) has been ordered by a Hollywood court to spend two nights a week at a night school in traffic, learning about the American Highway Code, traffic signals and (on account of he drove through three red ones when they pulled him) the workings and significance of American traffic lights. Keep both eyes on the road, Starkey...

Offing the pig: since it's fairly well-known that Rastafarians consider pork unfit to eat, it came as a surprise to some people when *Front Line* decided to advertise their new sampler album with a press ad whose

Ian Orry and Chas. Frankel demonstrate the Blockhead technique for dealing with undesirable discs in preparation for nutting Danny Baker, whose feature on Ian & da boize is in next week's fab ish of the world's most festive rock weekly.

main pictorial device was a pig divided up butcher-style. Red faces were seen glowing all over London before someone pulled the plug out in time to stop the ad appearing in *Music Week* and the rock weeklies...

R-e-s-p-e-c-t-a-b-l-e: while Alice Cooper gets elected to the ultra-conservative Rotary International for his contribution to the Hollywood Sign project, a 14-year-old Baltimore kid is in hospital requiring extensive skin grafts after trying to copy Kiss Keep Gene Simmons' fire-breathing stunt, while Japan (the country, not the band) gets ready to relax its ban on *The Rolling Stones* (the band, not the country) after several years of worry about the band's lifestyle; nothing like a good court case to clear the air, eh Keef? What d'you reckon, Sid? Oh well...

A Parliamentadelicamentinthehouseofparliamenthang: George Clinton and all his multifarious pals had a reception laid on for them at no less a venue than the Mother (ship connection) of Parliaments itself, yarractical Houses Of Parliament. It seems that someone in a record company press office had a father who knew an MP who agreed to sponsor the event provided that it wasn't for (shock horror) wait a second we think we did see a nipple in the *Daily Express's* punk rock band. Little did he expect that his charges would be a whole monstrous regiment of plack people dressed up funny and prone to the occasional less than sedate utterance. George Clinton himself arrived looking absolutely stunning, sweethearts, albeit somewhat frazzled after a five-hour show in Manchester the previous night, and introduced the assembled congregation to his pet dachshund Logic before demanding his prune juice (everybody whose really rip to the trip knows George is

heavy into prune juice, but it seems the Hoff don't qualify). We here at *T-Zerz* suggest that prune juice should always be on the menu at the Mother of Parliaments etc etc...

And a straight-up honest-to-murgatroyd happy event: Steve Clarke's lovely wife Kim gave birth to an infant son last week. As yet unnamed (though we're betting on "Eric") the sprig is doing splendidly, as are the parents. This is what we call "real journalism"...

Back to the sleaze: Tom Waits is performing the title song for a low-budget movie to be called *Skid Row* (we say it's type casting and we say the hell with it) by his near-namesake Ralph Waite (of *Waltons* infamy, we still say it's type casting)...

Social living: a party / wake was held for Charlie Gillet's *Honky Tonk* radio show at the 100 Club at the weekend, with *The Young Bucks* playing and Chas & Dave, Lene Lovich, Danny Adler et al. lugging. Laid-back Charlie lui-meme was dragged up on stage for a speech, and hastily introduced Stuart Colman who'll be taking over the old *Honky Tonk* timeslot in the New Year with a new show...

Listeners to import copies of the new Dylan double live album will not be surprised to hear that Bashful Bob conspired a hypnotist to calm his nerves on his world tour earlier this year...

Camden Town's Electric Ballroom was visited by representatives of the GLC on Friday night complaining about excessive volume and demanding additional soundproofing or else. The exact outcome of this latest GLC strike against rock and roll in the capital is still in doubt, but the GLC made their point: they certainly don't like rock music. At this stage in the game, neither do we. Horrid stuff. Ban it all. See you for the tinselled turkey next week...

BETTER BADGES

TOP TEN

This week	Last week
1. PP	5
2. Clash Police	9
3. Smirka against Travolta	6
4. Buzzcocks	8
5. The Jam	1
6. Love	1
7. Bites	2
8. 999	—
9. X-Ray Specs	—
10. X-Ray Specs	—

New Releases

30p Drunk Punk
25p Tapper '78, African Herkman. What you see is what you get, Get X6. Rock against Xmas, Merry Wines
30p 11 word more says Sham 69 Cabaret
Valentine, Prag-Vee, Lightning Rodders, Punk
Felines Love, The Drowned, Split 04, Gorm
Fren, Kishwork, Tony Parsons, Julie
Burchill

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TEN BEST

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