

NEW NME MUSICAL EXPRESS

Scam, Scandal & Panic Dept.
ELVIS 'RACIST' ROW
KINGS ROAD RIOT
P.11

*Ditch those semi-detached
doldrums with The*

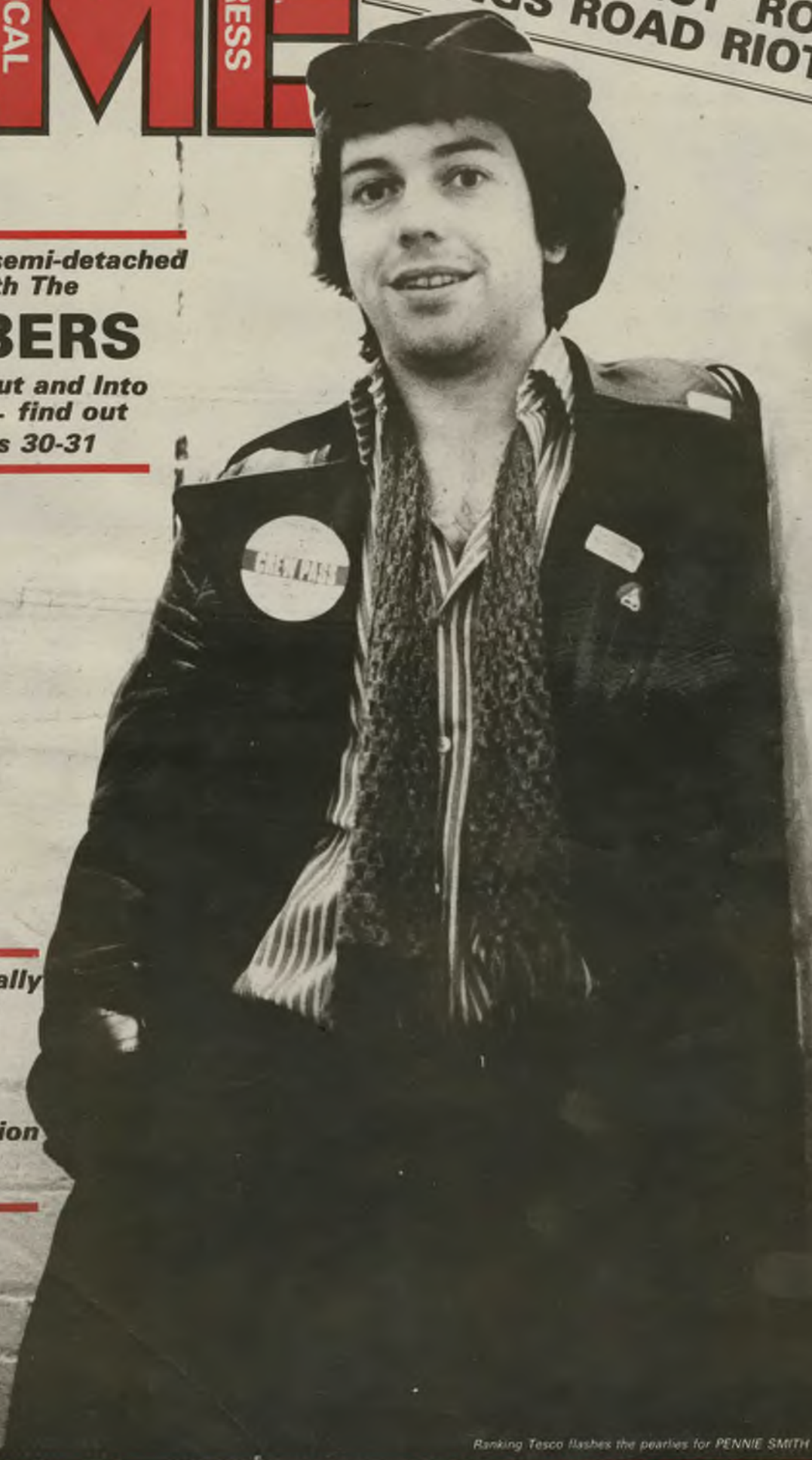
MEMBERS

*Out Of The Rut and Into
The Charts — find out
how on pages 30-31*

*Who should really
be running the
country?*

VOTE!

*in NME's Election
Fever Special
on page 16!*



GENERATION X VALLEY OF THE DOLLS

C/W SHAKIN' ALL OVER

NEW SINGLE
LIMITED EDITION ON
MULTI-COLOURED VINYL

'VALLEY OF THE DOLLS' Produced by Ian Munter

Taken from the album 'VALLEY OF THE DOLLS' CHRYSLIS 1193



LONDON PALLADIUM SATURDAY, APRIL 21st

by arrangement with Louis Benjamin
Frederick Bannister presents

TOM WAITS

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(25p booking fee)

FIVE YEARS AGO

Week ending April 9, 1974

Last This Week		
2	1	SEASONS IN THE SUN.....Terry Jacks (Bell)
3	2	REMEMBER ME THIS WAY.....Gary Glitter (Bell)
4	3	EMMA.....Hot Chocolate (Rak)
5	4	ANGEL FACE.....Glitter Band (Bell)
17	5	EVERYDAY.....Slade (Polydor)
6	6	BILLY DON'T BE A HERO.....Paper Lace (Bus Stop)
13	7	YOU ARE EVERYTHING.....Diana Ross & Marvin Gaye (Tami Motown)
5	8	THE MOST BEAUTIFUL GIRL.....Charlie Rich (CBS)
8	9	SEVEN SEAS OF RHYME.....Queen (EMI)
15	10	LONG LIVE LOVE.....Olivia Newton-John (Pye)

TEN YEARS AGO

Week ending April 9, 1963

Last This Week		
1	1	I HEARD IT THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE.....Marvin Gaye (Tami Motown)
2	2	GENTLE ON MY MIND.....Dean Martin (Reprise)
3	3	BOOM BANG-A-BANG.....Lulu (Columbia)
4	4	SORRY SUZANNE.....Hollies (Parlophone)
5	5	THE BAD OLD DAYS.....Foundations (Pye)
14	6	THE ISRAELITES.....Desmond Dekker (Pyramid)
7	7	GAMES PEOPLE PLAY.....Joe South (Capitol)
11	8	MOUSIEUR DUPONT.....Sandie Shaw (Pye)
9	9	FIRST OF MAY.....Bee Gees (Polydor)
10	10	WINDMILLS OF YOUR MIND.....Noel Harrison (Reprise)

15 YEARS AGO

Week ending April 10, 1948

Last This Week		
1	1	CAN'T BUY ME LOVE.....Beatles (Parlophone)
5	2	WORLD WITHOUT LOVE.....Pat and Gordon (Columbia)
2	3	I BELIEVE.....Bachelors (Decca)
3	4	LITTLE CHILDREN.....Bitty J. Kramer (Parlophone)
4	5	JUST ONE LOOK.....Hollies (Parlophone)
7	6	I LOVE YOU BECAUSE.....Jim Reeves (RCA)
7	7	NOT FADE AWAY.....Rolling Stones (Decca)
9	8	TELL ME WHEN.....Applejacks (Decca)
8	9	THAT GIRL BELONGS TO YESTERDAY.....Gene Pitney (United Artists)
15	10	MY BOY LULLABY.....Minnie (Fontana)

CHARTS



SINGLES

This Last Week		Week ending April 7, 1979		Highest position in chart	Weeks in chart
1	(8)	IN THE NAVY.....Village People (Mercury)	3	1	
2	(1)	I WILL SURVIVE.....Gloria Gaynor (Polydor)	9	1	
3	(4)	I WANT YOUR LOVE.....Chic (Atlantic)	6	3	
4	(6)	SOMETHING ELSE.....Sex Pistols (Virgin)	5	4	
5	(3)	OLIVER'S ARMY.....Elvis Costello (Radar)	8	1	
6	(5)	CAN YOU FEEL THE FORCE.....Real Thing (Pye)	6	5	
7	(2)	LUCKY NUMBER.....Lene Lovich (Stiff)	6	2	
8	(18)	TURN THE MUSIC UP.....Players Association (Vanguard)	4	8	
9	(14)	SULTANS OF SWING.....Dire Straits (Vertigo)	4	9	
10	(23)	COOL FOR CATS.....Squeeze (A & M)	2	10	
11	(11)	DON'T STOP ME NOW.....Queen (EMI)	6	11	
12	(21)	BRIGHT EYES.....Art Garfunkel (CBS)	2	12	
13	(9)	KEEP ON DANCIN'.....Gary's Gang (CBS)	6	8	
14	(7)	WAITING FOR AN ALIBI.....Thin Lizzy (Vertigo)	4	7	
15	(12)	MONEY IN MY POCKET.....Dennis Brown (Atlantic)	5	12	
16	(10)	TRAGEDY.....Bee Gees (RSO)	7	1	
17	(16)	CLOG DANCE.....Violinski (Jet)	4	16	
18	(24)	WOW.....Kate Bush (EMI)	2	18	
19	(27)	FOREVER IN BLUE JEANS.....Neil Diamond (CBS)	4	19	
20	(—)	HE'S THE GREATEST DANCER.....Sister Sledge (Atlantic)	1	20	
21	(—)	THE RUNNER.....Three Degrees (Ariola)	1	21	
22	(15)	HOLD THE LINE.....Toto (CBS)	6	12	
23	(17)	STRANGE TOWN.....Jam (Polydor)	3	17	
24	(26)	JUST WHAT I NEEDED.....Cars (Elektra)	4	24	
25	(20)	PAINTER MAN.....Boney M (Atlantic/Hansa)	5	6	
26	(13)	INTO THE VALLEY.....Skids (Virgin)	6	13	
27	(—)	QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.....Sham 69 (Polydor)	1	27	
28	(—)	SHAKE YOUR BODY.....Jacksons (Epic)	1	28	
29	(—)	SOME GIRLS.....Racey (RAK)	1	29	
30	(—)	THE STAIRCASE (MYSTERY).....Siouxsie & The Banshees (Polydor)	1	30	

BUBBLING UNDER
IMAGINATION — Rocky Sharpe & The Replays (Chiswick); I DON'T WANNA LOSE YOU — Kandidate (RAK); LET'S FLY AWAY — Voyage (GTO/Hansa); SHOOT, SHOOT E.P. — UFO (Chrysalis).

U.S. SINGLES

This Last Week		Week ending April 7, 1979	
1	(2)	WHAT A FOOL BELIEVES.....Doobie Brothers	
2	(1)	TRAGEDY.....Bee Gees	
3	(9)	MUSIC BOX DANCER.....Frank Mills	
4	(7)	KNOCK ON WOOD.....Amii Stewart	
5	(6)	SULTANS OF SWING.....Dire Straits	
6	(3)	DO YA THINK I'M SEXY.....Rod Stewart	
7	(4)	I WILL SURVIVE.....Gloria Gaynor	
8	(8)	EVERY TIME I THINK OF YOU.....The Babys	
9	(12)	HEART OF GLASS.....Blondie	
10	(10)	LADY.....Little River Band	
11	(5)	SHAKE YOUR GROOVE THING.....Peaches and Herb	
12	(14)	STUMBLIN' IN.....Suzi Quatro/Chris Norman	
13	(16)	I JUST FALL IN LOVE AGAIN.....Anne Murray	
14	(15)	CRAZY LOVE.....Poco	
15	(19)	I WANT YOUR LOVE.....Chic	
16	(11)	HEAVEN KNOWS.....Donna Summer with Brooklyn Dreams	
17	(—)	REUNITED.....Peaches and Herb	
18	(21)	LIVIN' IT UP (FRIDAY NIGHT).....Bell & James	
19	(23)	HE'S THE GREATEST DANCER.....Sister Sledge	
20	(20)	FOREVER IN BLUE JEANS.....Neil Diamond	
21	(28)	SHAKE YOUR BODY (DOWN TO THE GROUND).....The Jacksons	
22	(24)	PRECIOUS LOVE.....Bob Welch	
23	(—)	IN THE NAVY.....Village People	
24	(27)	LOVE BALLAD.....George Benson	
25	(25)	MAYBE I'M A FOOL.....Eddie Money	
26	(—)	GOODNIGHT TONIGHT.....Wings	
27	(30)	TAKE ME HOME.....Cher	
28	(—)	BLOW AWAY.....George Harrison	
29	(17)	I DON'T KNOW IF IT'S RIGHT.....Evelyn "Champagne" King	
30	(13)	BIG SHOT.....Billy Joel	

Courtesy "CASH BOX"

ALBUMS

This Last Week		Week ending April 7, 1979		Highest position in chart	Weeks in chart
1	(6)	BARBRA STREISAND'S GREATEST HITS VOL 2.....Barbra Streisand (CBS)	4	1	
2	(2)	MANILOW MAGIC.....Barry Manilow (Arista)	5	2	
3	(4)	PARALLEL LINES.....Blondie (Chrysalis)	25	1	
4	(3)	SPIRITS HAVING FLOWN.....Bee Gees (RSO)	9	1	
5	(1)	C'EST CHIC.....Chic (Atlantic)	9	1	
6	(5)	THE GREAT ROCK 'N' ROLL SWINDLE.....Sex Pistols (Virgin)	5	5	
7	(8)	DIRE STRAITS.....Dire Straits (Vertigo)	5	7	
8	(7)	ARMED FORCES.....Elvis Costello (Radar)	12	2	
8	(—)	THE VERY BEST OF LEO SAYER.....Leo Sayer (Chrysalis)	1	8	
10	(9)	20 GREATEST HITS.....Three Degrees (Epic)	6	9	
11	(30)	BREAKFAST IN AMERICA.....Supertramp (A & M)	2	11	
12	(16)	DESOLATION ANGELS.....Bad Company (Swansong)	3	12	
13	(11)	BAT OUT OF HELL.....Meat Loaf (Epic)	30	6	
14	(12)	MARTY ROBBINS COLLECTION.....Marty Robbins (Lotus)	8	5	
15	(18)	THE BEST OF EARTH WIND AND FIRE VOL 1.....CBS	13	5	
16	(10)	52nd STREET.....Billy Joel (CBS)	11	10	
17	(13)	THANK YOU VERY MUCH.....Cliff Richard & The Shadows (EMI)	7	5	
18	(19)	FEEL NO FRET.....Average White Band (RCA)	3	18	
19	(—)	TURN THE MUSIC UP.....Players Association (Vanguard)	4	18	
20	(28)	NEW BOOTS & PANTIES.....Ian Dury & The Blockheads (Stiff)	46	5	
21	(—)	LIONHEART.....Kate Bush (EMI)	10	12	
22	(17)	MANIFESTO.....Roxy Music (Polydor)	2	17	
23	(14)	LIVE (X CERT).....Stranglers (United Artists)	4	11	
24	(20)	TRIS TWO.....Tom Robinson Band (EMI)	3	20	
25	(15)	EQUINOXE.....Jean Michel Jarre (Polydor)	15	6	
26	(—)	OVERKILL.....Motorhead (Bronze)	1	26	
27	(26)	SCARED TO DANCE.....Skids (Virgin)	3	19	
28	(—)	LOVE TRACK.....Gloria Gaynor (Polydor)	1	28	
29	(—)	THE INCREDIBLE SHRINKING DICKIES.....The Dickies (A&M)	6	19	
30	(—)	STATELESS.....Lee Lovich (Stiff)	2	21	

BUBBLING UNDER

DEVADIP ONENESS — Carlos Santana (CBS); TOTO — Toto (CBS); EVEN SERPENTS SHINE — Only Ones (CBS); LEMON POPSICLE — Soundtrack (Warwick).

U.S. ALBUMS

This Last Week		Week ending April 7, 1979	
1	(1)	SPIRITS HAVING FLOWN.....Bee Gees	
2	(2)	MINUTE BY MINUTE.....Doobie Brothers	
3	(3)	DIRE STRAITS.....Dire Straits	
4	(4)	BLONDES HAVE MORE FUN.....Rod Stewart	
5	(5)	2 HOTI.....Peaches & Herb	
6	(6)	52nd STREET.....Billy Joel	
7	(10)	LVIN' INSIDE YOUR LOVE.....George Benson	
8	(8)	BRIEFCASE FULL OF BLUES.....Blues Brothers	
9	(14)	ENLIGHTENED ROGUES.....Alfman Brothers Band	
10	(11)	AT THE BUDOKAN.....Cheap Trick	
11	(7)	LOVE TRACKS.....Gloria Gaynor	
12	(12)	BUSTIN' OUT OF SEVEN.....Rick James	
13	(9)	CRUISIN'.....Village People	
14	(19)	GEORGE HARRISON.....George Harrison	
15	(—)	DESOLATION ANGELS.....Bad Company	
16	(18)	THREE HEARTS.....Bob Welch	
17	(13)	C'EST CHIC.....Chic	
18	(22)	DESTINY.....The Jacksons	
19	(21)	LEGEND.....Poco	
20	(26)	PARALLEL LINES.....Blondie	
21	(20)	ARMED FORCES.....Elvis Costello	
22	(16)	LIFE FOR THE TAKING.....Eddie Money	
23	(24)	THE CARS.....The Cars	
24	(15)	LIVE AND MORE.....Donna Summer	
25	(—)	WE ARE FAMILY.....Sister Sledge	
26	(27)	HEAD FIRST.....The Babys	
27	(30)	INSTANT FUNK.....Instant Funk	
28	(—)	BREAKFAST IN AMERICA.....Supertramp	
29	(17)	TOTALLY HOT.....Olivia Newton-John	
30	(23)	TOTO.....Toto	

Courtesy "CASH BOX"



PENETRATION'S DANGER SIGNS!

PENETRATION have lined up their first tour of 1979, a 22-date itinerary spread over a month-long period, and including a major London appearance at the Rainbow. Their new single 'Danger Signs' is released by Virgin on April 20, coinciding with the opening of the tour, for which confirmed dates and venues are:

Hanley Victoria Hall (April 20), Middlesbrough Rock Garden (21 and 22), Bristol Locarno (24), Cardiff Top Rank (25), Liverpool University Mountford Hall (27), Colchester Essex University (28), Hemel Hempstead Pavilion (29), Brighton Top Rank (May 2), Uxbridge Brunel University (4), Leeds Polytechnic (5), Sheffield Top Rank (6), Blackpool to be finalised (7), London Rainbow Theatre (9), Guildford Civic Hall (10), Cambridge Corn Exchange (11), Chelmsford Chancellor Hall (13), Norwich St. Andrew's Hall (14), Birmingham Top Rank (16), Coventry Locarno (17), Manchester Apollo Theatre (18) and Carlisle Market Hall (19).

In common with other acts, considered unsuitable because they fall into the new-wave category, Penetration have been banned from Mecca venues in the North-East and from Newcastle City Hall. They have tried to compensate by booking two nights at Middlesbrough Rock Garden, and are also seeking other venues.

Iggy banned because Matlock is involved

IGGY POP has been forced to switch two of the venues in his upcoming British tour schedule. He was originally due to play Dunstable Civic Hall on May 6, but the local council has now banned him from this venue — because, says promoter John Giddings of MAM, he has a former Sex Pistol (Glen Matlock) in his backing band! And Coventry Warwick University on May 10 has also been pulled out, because the Students Union has encountered resistance to booking a new-wave act. The alternative venues are now Hemel Hempstead Pavilion (May 6) and Coventry Tiffany's (10).



IGGY

WINGS MOVIE?

WINGS will star in a full-length feature film — if Paul McCartney approves the screenplay he is currently reading. It's been written by Will Russell, who was responsible for the hit musical 'John, Paul, George, Ringo And Bert', and it concerns the traumas of a band trying to escape from the pressures of stardom.

The story is based upon the Wings album 'Band On The Run', and the picture would feature all the members of the group, with McCartney in the lead role. Even if it is given the go-ahead, no decision has yet been taken on when shooting would start.

Tom Robinson for RAR's Easter gala

TOM ROBINSON BAND have been lined up as the special star attraction in Rock Against Racism's gala concert at the Alexandra Palace in North London on Easter Saturday, April 14, which climaxes the current 'Militant Entertainment' tour. And it now looks as though the event will feature several more than the six acts originally planned. The Leyton Buzzards, The Ruts, Aswad, Belt & Braces Band and Dambala are already confirmed — and they are likely to be joined by John Cooper Clarke, The Angelic Upstarts and Dynamite.

Advance tickets for this show are priced £1.70, and they are currently on sale at several leading record shops including Small Wonder (Walthamstow), Rough Trade (Notting Hill), Ace Records (Islington) and Honky Tonk (Kenilworth Town). Tickets on the doors, assuming there are some remaining, will cost £1.95.

Most of the acts have now been confirmed for the final provincial dates on the tour. They are Merger, Belt & Braces Band and The Sunsets at Llanelli Glen Ballroom (this Sunday); Merger, Belt & Braces and My Willie at Plymouth Woods Centre (April 10); and John Cooper Clarke, UK Subs, Merger and The X-Certs at Bristol University (12). Shows originally planned for Exeter Routes (9) and Newport Stowaway (11) are now cancelled.

Another Rezillos offshoot

THE ADVENT of a second Rezillos offshoot group was revealed this week. As already reported, Fay Fife and Eugene Reynolds — former vocalists with the now-defunct Scottish band — are in the process of launching a new band with which they expect to make their live debut in the late spring. Now it transpires that the other three ex-Rezillos — John Callis, Simon Templar and Angel Patterson — have formed a band of their own.

And in fact, this second splinter group will be heard before Fay and Eugene's outfit, because they have a live-track EP scheduled for release by Sire Records at the end of this month — even though they have not yet given the band a name. A spokesman for the record company commented: "They have a name by the time the EP comes out. And believe me, it really is a very different group."

On top of this, the farewell album from The Rezillos themselves is released by Sire on April 12. It's a live set, recorded at Glasgow Apollo on their final date, and titled 'Mission Accomplished... But The Beat Goes On.' It features six tracks previously unrecorded by the group, including three stage favourites — 'Land Of A Thousand Dances', 'I Need You' and 'Ballroom Blitz' — and there's the bonus of two new Callis compositions, 'Culture Shock' and 'Teenbeat'.

NEWS DESK

Stranglers in open-air gig?

IT WAS LEARNED this week that the first big open-air festival of 1979 is being planned for Scotland. The plan is for a two-day event to be staged during Spring Bank Holiday weekend on Saturday and Sunday, May 26 and 27, and it is known that many big names are being negotiated.

The Stranglers confirmed this week that they are seriously considering an offer to appear, and their spokesman said on Monday that "they will probably do it". Fairport Convention have already announced that they will be playing the festival as part of their farewell tour (see page 4), and it's believed that Scotland's own Average White Band are among other acts being lined up.

The organisers of the event are playing it very close to the chest at the moment, and will only commit themselves to a "No comment" — probably because they are still waiting for the local council to rubber-stamp festival plans. For this reason, NME has agreed not to print — at this stage — details of the exact location.

It is, however, a "natural" site with ample camping and parking facilities, well removed from any built-up area where residents might complain. The organisers have been working on the project throughout the winter, to ensure that every contingency has been catered for.

SQUEEZE AND POLICE SURFACE IN AMERICA

SQUEEZE have landed the plum role of support act on the extensive American and European tour by The Tubes, opening in New York this Sunday before coming to Britain for their previously-reported dates here. Squeeze, currently climbing the charts with their A&M single 'Cool For Cats', will be going out with new bassist John Bentley who joined the band's line-up last month.

THE POLICE are rapidly becoming one of the first British new-wave bands to make an impression on the U.S. charts, with their single 'Roxanne' and album 'Outlandos D'Amour' both in the Top 50 there. The band, currently touring America, can be seen in a repeat of their BBC-2 'Rock Goes To College' show tomorrow (Friday). And 'Roxanne' is released in Britain this week.

THREE MORE QUO CONCERTS

STATUS QUO, whose British tour schedule was announced last week, have added another concert at Glasgow Apollo on May 29 — making three at the venue. And they have slotted in a show at Port Talbot Afan Lido on June 15. Quo will also be appearing in the Dublin Festival on July 1.

Adverts and ex-drummer in legal counter-actions

THE ADVERTS are involved in a dispute with their former drummer Laurie Driver, with each party taking legal action against the other. Driver, who played on the band's debut album 'Crossing The Red Sea' and was then replaced by John Towse, claims he is owed about £2,000 in royalties — and this forms the basis of his case.

It was when he was visiting The Adverts' management to discuss his claim that he

became involved in a fracas with the band, and they are now accusing him of assault. Meanwhile, Driver has formed a new band called Succulent Youth, who hope to finalise a recording deal very shortly and to have a single out soon.

The Adverts play their first gig of 1979, and their last until their new album comes out, when they appear in an RAR concert at Leicester De Montfort Hall next Monday (9).

MEMBERS HEADLINING TOUR

28 dates confirmed



THE MEMBERS and friends

THE MEMBERS, who recently completed a round-Britain trek supporting Eddie & The Hot Rods, begin their first headlining tour in a fortnight's time. They've so far been set for 28 dates, including a big London show at the Lyceum, and there's more to come! The outing ties in with the release this week of their new Virgin single 'Offshore Banking Business', the follow-up to their debut hit 'Sound Of The Suburbs' — and their album 'At The Chelsea Nightclub' follows on April 12.

The group visit York Pop Club (April 18), Sheffield Limit Club (19), Cambridge Corn Exchange (20), Dudley J.B.'s (21), Jack-sdale Grey Topper (22), Birmingham Barbarella's (24), Newport Stowaway (25), Bath Pavilion (27), Exeter University (28), London Strand Lyceum Ballroom (29), Leeds Polytechnic (May 3), Manchester The Factory (4), Liverpool Eric's (5), Dumfries Stagecoach (6), Edinburgh Tiffany's (7), Hanley Polytechnic (9), Retford Porterhouse (11), Canterbury Kent University (12), Guildford Civic Hall (13), Bristol Locarno (14), Plymouth Tops Club (15), Brighton Top Rank (16), Portsmouth Polytechnic (17), Nottingham Sendpiper (18), Reading University (23), Gromer West Runton Pavilion (24), Wolverhampton Lafayette (25) and Middlesbrough Rock Garden (28).

GARY MOORE BACK ON THE STREETS

"GARY MOORE is one of the best rock guitarists in the world..."

Melody Maker 16/12/78

NEW SINGLE
PARISIENNE WALKWAYS
AVAILABLE NOW MCA 419

MCA RECORDS

NOW ON TOUR WITH THIN LIZ

FEELGOODS IN TEN-GIG TOUR

DR. FEELGOOD are being lined-up for a ten-date tour of major UK venues in the late spring. It will run through the last week of May and the first week of June, and full details will be announced in a week or two — although it will definitely include a major London appearance. Also on the agenda is a concert in the Isle of Man to coincide with the annual T.T. motor-cycle races there.

The band will have a live album issued in May but, prior to this, United Artists release their new single 'As Long As The Price Is Right' on April 27. The single comes in a choice of blue, brown or mauve vinyl, each with the same-coloured Dr. Feelgood label and picture sleeve. And to complete the novelty, the sleeve depicts a close-up of a woman's cleavage, with a bank note protruding from the bra — £5 for blue, £10 for brown and £20 for mauve!

FAIRPORT CONVENTION

FAIRPORT CONVENTION have confirmed the first string of dates for their farewell tour. They play Plymouth Woods Centre (April 30), Penzance Winter Gardens (May 1), Exeter Routes (2), Cardiff Sophia Gardens (3), Nottingham Playhouse (5), Blackburn King George's Hall (6), Manchester Ashton Tameside Theatre (7), Southampton University (8), Birmingham University (11), Horsham Capitol (13), Sunderland Polytechnic (19), Sheffield Crucible Theatre (20), Glasgow Strathclyde University (26), Loch Lomond Festival (27), Slough Fulcrum Centre (30), Bradford St. George's Hall (June 1), Southend Cliffs Pavilion (2) and Croydon Fairfield Hall (3).

The tour continues overseas until mid-August, though they plan further British dates in early summer. Several of the gigs in this country will be recorded for a live album. As previously reported, Fairport have decided to disband after completing all their shows at home and abroad, mainly due to Dave Swarbrick's deafness problem.

On The Road



LEE BRILLEAUX in action with the Feelgoods during their Ham-mersmith Odeon gig last October.

LEW LEWIS BAND

LEW LEWIS REFORMER are playing a string of dates this month to aid promotion of their current Stiff Record's single 'Lucky Seven'. They visit London Marrow Rd. Windsor Castle (tonight, Thursday), Sheffield Limit Club (Friday), Dudley J.B.'s (Saturday), London Marquee Club (April 8 and 30), London Kensington Nashville (10), Rayleigh Crows (11), London Islington Hope & Anchor (13), London Wimbledon Nelson's Club (18), Chester Arts Centre (19), Middlesbrough Rock Garden (20), Retford Porterhouse (21), London Camden Dingwalls (22) and Leeds Florde Green Hotel (27).

BISHOPS BACK ON THE TRAIL

THE BISHOPS have decided to go ahead with their planned May tour, despite the loss of Zenon De Fleur, who died last month after a road accident. Zen will be heard for the last time on the band's new album 'Crosscut', which was completed two days before he died, and is now released at the beginning of May.

It's preceded on April 27 by a single titled 'Mr Jones', backed with 'Human Being' and a live version of 'Route 66'. The Bishops will be joined on the tour by Blitz Krieg from the

Blast Furnace band and, with several more dates being finalised, gigs confirmed at present are:

Bishops Stortford Triad Leisure Centre (May 2), Leeds Fen Club (3), Hull College of Education (4), Durham University (5), Cleethorpes Winter Gardens (7), Sheffield Limit Club (8), Stirling University (10), Aberdeen University (11), Edinburgh Heriot Watt University (12), Fife St. Andrew's University (13), Chester Arts Centre (14), Portsmouth Polytechnic (17) and Dudley J.B.'s (26).

CHILD

CHILD begin a 16-venue British concert tour in three weeks' time, visiting Greenock Town Hall (April 25), Perth Civic Hall (26), Glasgow Apollo (27), Avismore Centre (28), Edinburgh Odeon (May 1), Newcastle Odeon (3), Bradford St. George's Hall (4), Hull Dorchester Theatre (5), Birmingham Mayfair (6), Bristol Locarno (7), Cardiff Sophia Gardens (8), Oxford New Theatre (9), Southampton Odeon (10), Canterbury Odeon (12), Ipswich Gaumont (13) and London Ilford Odeon (14). Ticket prices at all venues £2.50, £2 and £1.50. The tour ties in with the release by Arista this week of the group's first single of 1979 — it's 'Only You', a revival of The Platters' 22-year-old hit.

CHRIS REA

CHRIS REA sets out on his first headlining UK tour at the end of this month, and his schedule includes an appearance at London's The Venue. The singer-composer, whose debut album 'Whatever Happened To Benny Sentini' went Gold in the States, has his second LP 'Delics' (produced by Gus Dudgeon) issued by Magnet this weekend.

Confirmed tour dates are Edinburgh Heriot Watt University (April 27), Glasgow Strathclyde University (28), Newcastle Polytechnic (29), Saltburn The Filmore (May 1), London Victoria The Venue (3), London Hendon Middlesex Polytechnic (4), Reading University (5), London Kensington Nashville (6), Manchester University (7), Leicester University (10), Birmingham Barbarella's (11) and Sheffield University (12).

JOHN MILES

JOHN MILES, who is touring solidly throughout this month, has added another six concerts to the tail end of his itinerary in the light of heavy demand from the areas concerned. The extra gigs — again with Bandit as support act — are at Leicester De Montfort Hall (April 29), Lancaster University (30), Edinburgh Odeon (May 2), Southport New Theatre (4), Sunderland Empire (5) and Hanley Victoria Hall (6). Miles' new album and single, 'More Miles Per Hour' and 'Can't Keep A Good Man Down' respectively, are on release this week.

NEWS ROUND-UP

LINTON KWESI JOHNSON, the reggae poet, is the subject of the 45-minute documentary 'Dread Beat An' Blood' screened by BBC-1 tonight (Thursday).

LEYTON BUZZARDS appear next Monday (9) at a new club in Kingston, Surrey, called The Moose Factory. It was formerly the Cat Rock Club, but has now been taken over by City Records. Also set are Stax Marx (April 16), Little Bo Bitch (23), Deep Throats (30) and The Specials (May 7).

STREETBAND play a charity gig for the dependants of the late Mike Pato at London Fulham Golden Lion tomorrow (Friday).

THE DAMNED have switched their date at Croydon Greyhound yet again. Originally set for last Sunday, then put back to April 29, it's now been brought forward to April 22.

JOHN DENVER is showcased in a BBC-1 special tomorrow (Friday) at 7.50pm, filmed at his Wembley Arena concert earlier this week.

EDDIE & THE HOT RODS, having just completed their British tour, play an additional one-off at London West Hampstead Moonlight Club tomorrow (Friday).

BRITISH LIONS have lost their drummer-vocalist Buffin (a.k.a. producer Dale Griffin). He is currently looking for "alternative employment" and can be reached at 01-904 9583.

GEORGE BENSON performs the opening credits song on the soundtrack of the upcoming Warner Brothers film 'Boulevard Nights'. Penned by Lalo Schiffrin, the song is titled 'Street Tattoo'.

ELTON JOHN is to play five concerts in Israel in early May, as part of that country's Independence Day celebrations. Negotiations are also in hand for him to perform in Russia later this year.

WILD HORSES continue gigging at Wisbech Isle of Ely Technical College (tonight, Thursday), Scarborough Penthouse (Friday), Liverpool Oscar's (April 10), Chesterfield Coldwell Rooms (11), Wigan Casino (12) and Bedford Corn Exchange (27).

ABBA have agreed to play their first UK concert for two years, and are currently considering offers from at least two promoters. They're expected to perform about six shows here in October.

U.K. SUBS top a rock concert at Bishops Stortford Triad Leisure Centre on Easter Monday, April 16 (3.30-11pm). Also appearing are The Crooks, The Books, 64 Spoons and Scandal. Tickets are available in advance priced £1.35.

FRANKIE MILLER'S Full House have added another two dates to their current British tour — at Bradford St. George's Hall (April 17) and Manchester Ardri Cinema (26).

JEAN JACQUES BURNEL has switched one of the venues in his upcoming solo tour. He now plays Bradford St. George's Hall on April 28 instead of Muddersfield Polytechnic.

VIV STANSHALL'S work 'Sir Henry At Rawkinson End' is to be the subject of a 90-minute feature film, being shot in July and August. Currently working in recording studios with Steve Winwood, Stanshall will have Bert Jansch's new band Conundrum supporting him when he plays Drury Lane Theatre Royal on April 18.

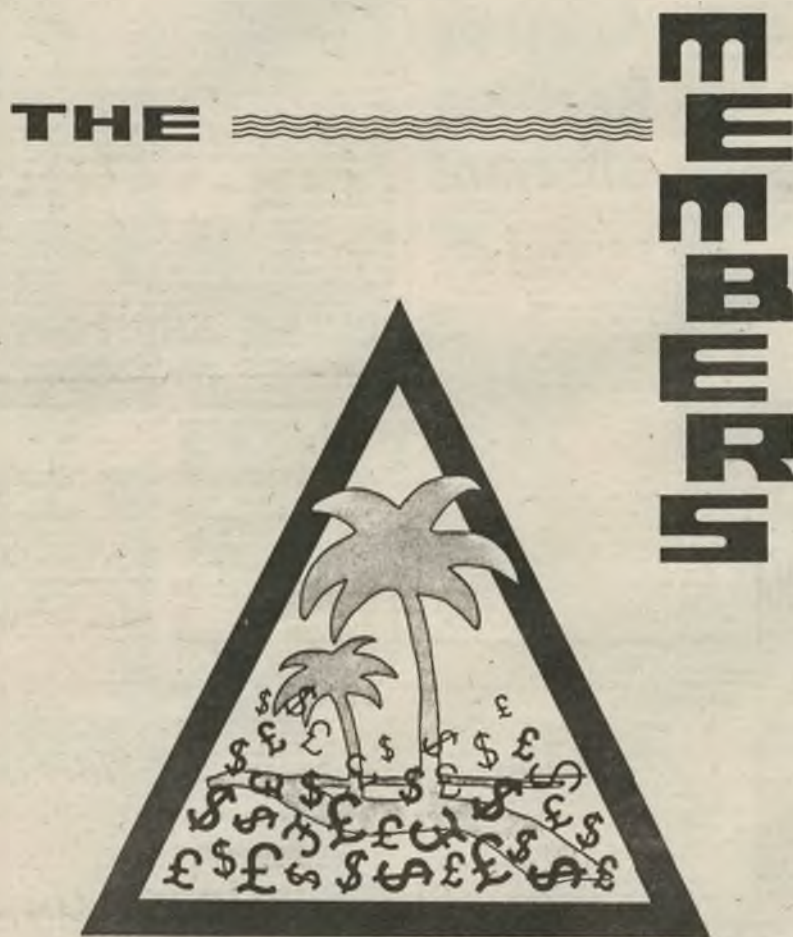
THE VIPERS, the Dublin band who are now based in London, are supporting Thin Lizzy on their UK tour which opened last weekend.

FISCHER-Z have new gigs at London Camden Dingwalls (tomorrow, Friday), Brighton Alhambra (April 18), London Covent Garden Rock Garden (19), Milton Keynes Crawford Arms (23), London Kensington Nashville (26), Birmingham Polytechnic (27) and Retford Porterhouse (28).

PETER GABRIEL has announced that he will not, after all, be performing at Wembley Conference Centre on Good Friday as part of the World Symposium on Humanity.

THE SCOTTISH MONOS play Edinburgh Depot (tomorrow, Friday), Glenrothes Rothes Arms (this Sunday), Kirkcaldy Country Club (April 13), Inverness Muir-town Motel (21) and Glasgow Art College (26).

PUNISHMENT OF LUXURY headline for two nights at London Kensington Nashville on April 20 and 21, but they have cancelled gigs at Cromer West Runton Pavilion (tomorrow, Friday) and Middlesbrough Rock Garden (Saturday).



New single

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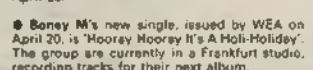
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● Crystal Gayle's new single is the title track from her latest album "When I Dream", released by United Artists on April 27. She will be featured in the BBC-1 show 'At The Meltings' on Thursday, April 12.



CLIFF RICHARD, whose current hit album with The Shadows was recorded at the London Palladium last year, returns to that venue next month for another season — this time without The Shads, but with full orchestral backing. Cliff stars at the Palladium for two weeks from May 14 (two shows on Wednesdays and Saturdays, the rest once nightly). Box-office now open.

● The Dickies' maxi-single—which, as reported last week, A&M release on April 20 to tie in with their UK tour starting a week later — is being pressed in banana yellow vinyl, and will sell at 99¢. Titles are 'Banana Spit', 'Hideous' and 'Got It At The Store'.

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VIOLENCE grows.
violence grows.

OK, we're going back. The Lyceum, February 25. The Fall, supporting Gen X, are repeatedly canned by one jerk in the front row. In exasperation they retaliate. Chaos ensues. Harry George, who missed the beginning of the incident, writes in *NME*: "Blame it on The Fall". Mark Smith demurs: "George thought we were throwing cans indiscriminately at the audience, but he could see the guy who was doing it — he'd been canning us through the set". Forward a month to the Lyceum. The Fall, second on the bill at the misnamed 'gig of the century', face a constant hail of cans and plastic glasses from a few obnoxious yobs at the front of the audience. As they start into a new song, 'A Figure Walks', a youth jumps on to the stage and tries to hit singer Mark Smith. Smith turns his back, trips over the mike stand and stumbles to the floor. As guitarist Martin Bramah and bassist Marc Riley move towards the attacker, he scrambles back off the stage and disappears into the audience. The Fall continue with their set.

Mark Smith: "It was the same guy who'd canned us at the Gen X gig. I don't wanna give him any publicity, he's just a psycho. I find it strange he came back. I think he was after more press, and that's why he flipped — 'cos this time we didn't respond. But they're not gonna fucking win, those bastards."

The Fall have been accused of behaving arrogantly towards their audiences, but this is a misunderstanding of their position — which is simply to play their music in an uncompromising fashion. Their music isn't difficult to listen to; what throws the audience is the group's refusal to use any of the customary tactics of presentation. They employ no charisma, no charm, no theatricality. They don't even pretend to have fun. And they neglect to regurgitate old crowd-pleasers.

Mark: "We could go out with a set of stuff we've recorded and go down a storm. But we don't wanna do that. Nobody's got the right to lay that on us. Every band does it, and it's the death of every band. We don't wanna die like that. We're gonna fight it. It's our war, if you like."

"I think we're still trying to find our audience. Trying to get rid of the people who just wanna attack us, and also the people who only like us 'cos they think we're part of 77. The New Wave has become very limited — I'm amazed at the lack of vision — people still want us to play songs we've forgotten about, we've got to make the audience realise 'No'."

"There are too many New Wave bands who pander to the audience. I mean, Stiff Little Fingers last night — it was so bad: 'the audience knows best' syndrome. But audiences take as much as you give them. If you behave like a little creep on stage, they'll treat you like a little creep. It was terrible. I mean, that band is important, but have they got no self-respect? When they stopped because the drummer was out of time and called him in front of those people, I thought it was disgusting. If I was that drummer I'd have just got up 'n' belted Jake Burns. But no, it was 'Ever so sorry, ladies and gentlemen, the drummer's out of time'. I thought... fucking hell!"

In cold print this may again sound arrogant, but Mark Smith is very agitated, very concerned; it's his livelihood at stake. And it's hard to disagree. To their credit, most of the groups at The Lyceum didn't go through these audience games, but Stiff Little Fingers were an exception — playing silly rock-heroic postures. They ended up looking and sounding like a third-rate version of an out-of-date Clash. And what's the point of that? Where's the fun? It's just ego: another bunch of would-beaters.

INTERVIEW Mark Smith and Martin Bramah the afternoon after the gig. I'm offered various explanations as to why the other three members of The Fall are absent: they have nothing to say; they don't like doing

interviews; past interviews with all five members haven't worked out; Mark finds it difficult to talk with so many people around. Mark and Martin are, as the only founder members left, the ones who know the most about the group.

In the event Martin says little and when he does speak it's in a hushed voice that's almost impossible to hear. The bits I do hear don't always seem to make much sense. But Mark talks a lot, sometimes rambling into incoherence. He also has a habit of ending his statements with phrases like "but maybe not" or "but I don't really know". It occurs to me, playing back the tape, that The Fall are a muddled and irritating mixture of waffle, idealism and contradictions. Mostly waffle, and mostly erased from this account. Talking to The Fall is like wading through a river at night. Nothing is clear, and there's nothing to get hold of. You'll have to take my word.

They're here doing an interview in an anonymous bedroom in an anonymous West London hotel because they've just released an album, I'm here because I like it. 'Live At The Witch Trials' received prominent and favourable reviews, speed of sales has apparently taken them by surprise. It was recorded and mixed in two consecutive days last December. One reason for the rapidity of this process was that The Fall had just returned, exhausted and half-starving, from the Scottish leg of the Hear And Now free tour. They'd actually set aside a week to record the album, but spent the first three days recovering their strength.

Another reason was that they have very definite ideas on how to make a record.

Mark: "We tried to do a track in one or two takes. If you do more, people begin to speed up just to get through it, and that's not good for our band 'cos we're not disciplined musicians, if we do a take and half of it is really good, I'd leave it like that. If we tried to get it all good, it'd just turn out average."

Rough and spontaneous are the values The Fall aim for. They have little patience with the "commercial" or the "well-produced".

Martin: "All the New Wave bands seem to think they've gotta be on the charts again. They've forgotten what it was about — all you've gotta do this 'n' that, everybody's gotta be commercially viable."

Mark: "And it seems New Wave bands get this massive inferiority complex when they do albums. When they get into the studio, they're in some sort of awe about it. So they call in a 'good' producer or someone to tell them what to do."

"It's just incredible that they do, say, 15 test numbers on an album. They look to make it sound like an album, you just call in a good producer. And what you end up with sounds like over-produced singles. All the New Wave albums have been a disappointment to me. I thought the Pixies' was horrible."

"We wanted to do our album and get out all the stuff that we can't do as singles. The production was irrelevant really. I got Bob Sergeant in to help us so we wouldn't be at the mercy of the engineers."

Some of the songs on the album, like 'Frightened' and 'No Xmas For John Quays', appear to be based on specific incidents. Is that so?

Mark: "'Frightened' is quite old actually. I wrote it when I was 16, just a thing I was going through. I used to be very afraid of things, like violence. 'Xmas' is about takers. It's anti-drugs in a lot of ways. A lot of people use drugs for getting off on 'n' they're just mind-fuckers, fucking their own brains. And they really try 'n' get your sympathy, saying 'Oh, I must have some barbs' or whatever. And there was this guy — not called John Quays — who just kept wanting things. It's about him really. He was a real bastard."

ONE of the most intriguing moments on the album is the brief title track, a rap which has Mark proclaiming "I still believe in the R&R dream, in R&R as primal scream". I ask him for elucidation.

Mark: "I regret doing that, it came over more serious than I thought it would. But it's true. I still

Stopping, Starting, and Falling All Over Again



THE FALL: latest thrown beer can ratings make them among Britain's most embattled bands.

PHOTO: GEORGE BODNAR

Mark Smith and Martin Bramah confuse themselves with new rhetoric but not GRAHAM LOCK

(At least that's his story)

believe in a kind of purity, that we come from a long line of people who've tried to do things like that — like Gene Vincent — people who were in rock 'n' roll 'n' doing it well but whose attitude was different."

Martin: "It's like you're giving a part of yourself. You're not trying to be something else, but be as real as you can."

Mark: "Trying to leave summer really. The dream of doing that. Like, you can use primitive methods to communicate — which is why I'm in it 'cos I haven't got any skills and you need a backer in most of the arts — but rock 'n' roll is the only form where you can do that. Which is why it's beautiful. Rock 'n' roll isn't even music really. It's a mistletoe of instruments to get feelings over. And the way people abuse that dream in the music business is terrible."

And the title itself? Does that mean you feel persecuted because of the dream? Mark wanders towards the boundaries of the comprehensible.

Mark: "The witch trial is very relevant to me. Like I was saying before, this is our war, this is our witch trial. I also believe that things happen in circles, that sets of people go through things in different environments, but basically the same things. Like the witch trials got rid of all the creative people, and I think that's why you get people like they are now — because their culture is taken away from them, they're all smashed down."

"It's not so much that we're persecuted. But we are part of that voice. And there are a lot of people

— like that psycho last night — who for some reason think The Fall should not be allowed to exist, which is ridiculous. I can understand anyone not liking the music — I mean, it grates on me now and again. Stiff like that does — but to say 'You can't do it' is wrong."

"I think a lot of people think of us as cheeky fuckers. There's still a big class thing in Britain. People think 'You can't go like that: you didn't go to university'. Like the Mekons are all from Cambridge

Continues over page

All pix: GEORGE BODNAR



MARK SMITH

From previous page

(funny, I thought they came from Leeds — Ed.) 'n' they're playing avant-garde pop — which is fair enough — but I think we're doing more than that. But people assume we're not allowed to, 'cos we're not middle class."

Martin: "And 'cos we've got broad Northern accents 'n' don't say profound things when we first meet 'em."

Martin, I should say, strikes me as being a little untidy together this particular afternoon. He says little, looks very pale, and stares into space. A little later, I draw my own conclusion, when he suddenly remarks "A lot of people don't get into our music as they don't seem to be into drugs like they used to. Our music takes on a different dimension then."

Ah, You take drugs?

Martin: "I take drugs but I don't need it — I don't need it to get high. I don't feel like a druggie. It's just like a holiday occasion. But it's definitely where the music comes from."

Mark desperately tries to rescue the conversation, and places the music on a more reputable aesthetic basis: "Well, it's more because of the paths which have been taken by drug music, which is good stuff. The Doors were a lot like that, and the Velvet. I'd prefer to call ours 'head music with energy'."

Martin: "It's psychedelic, but it's



MARC RILEY

hard to say that because of what psychedelia's become. I heard our album on acid 'n' it really took off then. It didn't sound deadpan or anything."

Mark: "Yeah, but we don't wanna get into that scene like the mid-'60s bands where it's only good if you're out of your bleedin' head. Like the 13th Floor Elevators."

Mark laughs loudly and rolls about on the bed. Martin lapses into silence. I'm left to ponder the significance of this exchange.

IN NME's previous Fall feature, Mark Smith told Ian Penman that "If we sign to Polydor for two grand or something weak like that, or something like Decca, then it'll all have been a waste, we might as well have done it six months ago."

Feeling myself aligned to the Penman school of methodology, I'm naturally interested in The Fall's current attitude to the music biz. I mention the above quote to Mark and ask if he still feels the same.

Mark: "That's not the point. It's a fallacy that a record company comes to you and signs you up. I think it's wrong to do that, but it hardly ever happens — the ones that do approach you are usually the shoddy ones. You have to go to the companies and sell your songs,



YVONNE PAWLETT

which we could do any time of day."

The implication being you haven't — so are you wary of big companies?

Mark: "I think there are a lot of good big labels. The American labels impress me. At least they're honest about what they do. In Britain the whole structure is Victorian. The idea of sending a band out on a tour costing half a million pounds to make three quarters of a million is just a waste of energy. The Americans tend to just hype somebody, make a million and piss off."

"I heard our album on acid and it really took off. It didn't sound deadpan ..."

This strikes me as being a rather quaint definition of honesty, but still — does your favourable impression of some big companies mean your relationship with Step Forward is likely to be terminated?

Mark: "I like Step Forward — the only disadvantage is the facilities: they find it hard to get stuff out fast enough. It's something we've got to talk about. We've got time so we're gonna think it over."

The Fall are no: 'signed up' to Step Forward. Neither party wants to be tied to the other in that



MIKE LEIGH

traditional music biz manner. What happens is that when The Fall want to release a record they come to an agreement with Step Forward that the company will issue that particular record on terms that are mutually agreeable. So the relationship is largely a matter of trust. The Fall have total control over their own press releases. The important phrase for them is "to do it on our own terms".

Nevertheless, The Fall are now thinking about big companies. They have started to use an agent. They're in the middle of their first ever tour, and have played the Lyceum twice in a month. Do they feel they're in danger of being sucked into the biz?

Mark: "I know what you mean. To get on that Lyceum circuit would be deadly. The time we played with Gen X was the first time we ever felt we were just doing it for money — 'cos we were getting all those cans and just thought 'Let's do our half hour and piss off,' which a lot of bands do all of the time."

"All we're saying is that we can be our own bosses, and we can do it on our own. But we're in a very insecure position. Presswise, we get a lot of coverage but we're still only on, like, ten notes. We've got no driver, just two guys who help out as roadies. The Fall on the road is just nine people, and we're out



MARTIN BRAMAH

on our own really. None of us ever made up to much. We're not academically outstanding or even especially practical. They are millions of kids like us, who have got something to offer if they could do the thing. We're just saying you can do it."

THE FALL came off the dole at Xmas. They're now on £10 a week each. Suggestions of a selfout would appear to be a little premature. Do they think their New Wave contemporaries have sold out?

Mark: "I wouldn't say they sold out. Things have just reverted to where they were before. I think a lot of people put their faith in something that wasn't there. The Buzzcocks always had their own mind about what they were gonna do and they've done it — not as well as I would've liked but... I mean, no way can you say they sold out 'cos they were never in to begin with. Pete Shelley was obviously into T. Rex, and Devoto obviously wanted to do Bowie and Eno. I never expected anything fantastic — that's just a heavy trip to lay on them. I did expect something from The Clash — I dunno, maybe they did it but I feel a bit disappointed."

Martin: "I think they find it too easy to be in this 'one of the boys' sort of thing, being all male. I think it's been good for us having

Continues page 40

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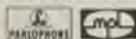
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THRILLS



LONDON'S BURNING...

ANTHRAX ORANGE and cyanide blue were the predominant scalp-tints at promoter Jock McDonald's impromptu punk-fest extravaganza last Saturday. An overnight word-of-mouth rumour about a possible Clash free concert at Kings Road's Beaufort Market narrowly failed to become a reality, courtesy of Chelsea's grizzly arm of law & order, but 2,000 people turned up anyway for an afternoon of small-cap clashes and the chance to get arrested.

For over three years, Beaufort Market has been London's central trading post for cheap(ish), imaginatively designed punk fashion and fripperies, and became widely accepted as a spiritual Mecca for the capital's Blank Generation. But a contract is a contract, and Saturday marked the expiry of lease for dozens of independent stall-holders. To herald the market's close-down, and as a partial gesture of protest, McDonald, who ran a platter-stall in the market, had secured the agreement of five bands including The Clash to do a freebie on the roof of the building.

The whisper was out and news of the event spread through the grapevine like a rat up a hot drainpipe.

What had started out as a trickle of local colour on a street corner had, by noon, escalated into a near-riot situation, as bellicose battalions of fun-hungry punks spilled from their garrets to swarm in their thousands towards the bend-in-the-road locale of the market.

Fearing a huge conspiracy of noisy anarchic enjoyment was about to go down in Chelsea's choicest skid-row, society's bouncers-in-blue made it abundantly clear that they were having none of it. Obstruction is a misdemeanor at the best of times. But when a busy dollar-earning street is overrun by thronging bondee-clad extra-terrestrials it becomes a Hanging Matter. Right, guv?

In a strategic effort to 'maintain orderly control' over the precinct, the police cancelled all leave for the day, and pinned an eleven-hour injunction on McDonald's 'ape! — effectively making the proposed concert illegal.

By the time The Clash arrived on

Police and punks fought a pitched battle in Chelsea's Kings Road on Saturday after the cops put a stop to a free Clash gig held to protest against the closure of Beaufort Market. Thrills observed the carnage.

the scene, it had become glaringly obvious that any music in the street would have to compete with the sound of breaking heads. With guitars and jack-plug in hand, the band had unanimously expressed enthusiasm for doing the gig and were eager to set up their equipment forthwith. Unfortunately, the van-driver carrying the PA and drumkit had been repeatedly instructed by the cops to sling his hook, and was by now treading water around the neighbourhood, unable to unload the equipment.

Stories in some Sunday Smuttrakers to the effect that about this time a member of The Clash was arrested proved untrue.

In the ensuing fracas between police and thwarted rock fans, over 70 arrests were made. It appeared to me that the cops were initially selecting their victims at random,

and that their handling of the situation was not exactly a model of restraint. A photographer standing next to me was dragged across the street by two constables who promptly put his Nikon in a twist. Kids got set on; kids got to ride in uncomfortable vehicles. Tamper frayed, and there were mumbled threats of storming the building which the police had solidly cordoned off. When a Panda car was allegedly damaged by a flying bottle, reinforcements were called in from other constabularies.

In as much as the impending closure of Beaufort Market was a foregone conclusion, the day's turmoil might seem, in hindsight, to be a useless gesture for which a lot of people got clobbered for nix. And in the light of the very real repressive appro that goes on in Britain's streets, from Belfast to



Above: STRUMMER mingles. Right: carrot-top dangles. Top: fans rush for cheap Public Image albums from Jock McDonald's barrow. All pix: NICK WESOLOWSKI.

Brixton, the Kings Road event would appear to be pretty small potatoes.

Still, two positive conclusions can be drawn from the day's events: (i) the punk phenomenon is alive and kicking, and (ii) any spontaneous effort to rectify the mind-numbing boredom of life in



London is likely to get trampled by a size 14 boot.

Bearing in mind that total fines are likely to run into four figures, and that some of the arrested kids will be hard-pushed for bail, McDonald has stated that a benefit concert is in the pipeline, and that The Clash have tentatively agreed to take part.

RICK JOSEPH

THRILLS

COSTELLO SAYS SORRY TO THE HAND THAT FEEDS HIM



ELVIS COSTELLO And The Attractions' American tour has been blazing its way across America amidst media controversy and public delirium reminiscent of the Stones' '72 tour and early mop-top visits. Costello himself has been verbally outrageous in public several times and is now counting the cost accordingly.

The first incident occurred in St. Louis last week where — after CBS had arranged for a prominent local radio station to sponsor his show there — Costello severely bad-mouthed the station at the introduction to 'Radio Radio', resulting in all his music immediately being removed from their playlist.

But what must be seen as Elvis one big mistake took place only a

Elvis Costello has admitted making 'racialist' remarks in a Midwest barroom brawl, and called a press conference last week in New York to apologise after his wildly successful American tour was jeopardised by numerous death threats

few days later in Columbus, Ohio, where Costello and bassist Bruce Thomas were involved in a barroom brawl with Steve Stills, Bonnie Bramlett and their band.

Initially a heated conversation broke out when members of the Stills entourage started accusing Costello of stealing his licks from Ray Charles, James Brown and other seminal black artists. Elvis' retort soon became abusive, and developed into a venomous diatribe about blacks in general.

Thomas chipped in "Fuck off steel nose" to Stills, and the whole thing degenerated into an O.K. Corral situation, with the two Englishmen coming off worse through sheer weight of numbers.

The implications of this affair became apparent the next day when every muck-raking newspaper on the East Coast ran a story branding Costello as a "racialist". From that point Costello started receiving abusive phone

Continues next page

'RACIST' COSTELLO

■ From previous page

calls and death threats at an alarming rate.

By the time the tour reached New York last Friday these anonymous promises of Costello's impending downfall numbered over 150.

With gigs at the Capitol in New Jersey and Palladium in downtown New York ahead (neither venue known for the gentility of its audience) a hurried press conference was called at the CBS offices, which drew over 50 journalists at less than an hour's notice.

Elvis was anxious to set the record straight. He apologised about making racist remarks and put it down to having been wound up by the Stills crowd, who incidentally were responsible for leaking the story to the press.

"Well, you know how it is," he said. "One day I love America, the next day I hate it."

The press conference itself ran into trouble due to the presence of some black journalists who demanded more than the slender public retraction Elvis offered. But one way or another it seems to have done the trick, since at the time of writing Mr. Costello is still alive, albeit under a blanket of security.

With two weeks of shows in New England left to play, the mood of the Attractions' tour party must be described as one of heavy but deserved paranoia.

CBS, Costello's U.S. label, have been promoting the bespectacled one as an Urban Guerilla bad boy rock star, with a fair measure of success it seems. A lottery held over a New York radio station for twelve hundred Costello tickets drew a quarter of a million replies.



Pic: CHESTER SIMPSON

The lucky winners were picked up by 'Armed Forces' jeeps provided by CBS and driven to three surprise gigs Elvis played in various small New York clubs at six o'clock, nine o'clock and midnight on April Fool's Day.

Those sort of tour schedules could make a man tired and irritable.

NORMAN BAKER

THROLES

Cue Hegarty... Cue pop prog hit... Cue applause... (Queue here?)

TYNE TEES Television wades into the growing search for At Least One Regular TV Rock Show That Somebody Can Be Proud Of when the first of their weekly 'pop magazine series' *Alright Now* is screened up north at 7pm this Friday. If the selected excerpts previewed in London last week were not deceptively flattering, TTV and producer Malcolm Gerrie can confidently expect their baby to be favourably placed soon near the head of the existing field. (Not difficult, we know, but still ...)

Hosted with irreverent disregard for all known professional modes

of presentation by ex-Dart Dan Hegarty, *Alright Now* combines elements of *Revolver's* wayward continuity and *TOTP's* studio stage sets with some syndicated film clips and many specially filmed features on the hidden essentials (roadies, technology of rock), topside ephemera (hair styles, fashions) and marginal figures (upcoming hopefuls, forgotten oldies) of the music industry in particular and teen culture in general.

As well as a reasonably sharp choice of guesting acts — Penetration and local heroes The Showbiz Kids are in the first edition, and following programmes include The Clash, Tom Robinson Band, The Police, Dire Straits and a special on The



CLASH record their slot, bring anarchy to the North-East, liberate Darlington from South Division.



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Who — *Alright Now* seems to have an untypically sympathetic camera crew (guitar solos are shown in finger-picking close-up, for instance), some novel ideas (split-screening to allow brief biogs of each group member to appear opposite the subject in action; loosely conducted 'interviews', involving the act, Den and the audience) and, perhaps most impressive, excellent sound engineers.

All studio guests perform live and yet, in the excerpts I saw, the sound was fuller, clearer and more dynamic than in any other pop/rock TV show. A bootlegger's dream.

Two contributors confirmed the quality. In the Clash edition, Joe Strummer enthused, "It's just like a gig. No miming. You can just turn up and plug in. Great." At the preview, an Only One (a new live recording of their 'Another Girl, Another Planet' is *Alright Now*'s opening theme) told me he was well pleased with the sound, as opposed to their recent appearance on the *Old Grey Nightgown*, when they were reduced to tinny weeds.

The only possibly dodgy concept in the show is its regular use of a small team of local punters, horrifically tagged The Koffee Bar Kids, whose function it is to loon about enthusiastically and occasionally comment on the acts. (Shades of "I'll give it foive.") If the series survives past the nine programmes that have already been filmed, methinks the Kids'll become increasingly painful to behold.

TTV has already sold four editions of *Alright Now* to HTV, Anglia, Border, Scottish, Grampian, Westward and Ulster TV (who'll all have scooped the originators by screening the first programme by the time you read this) and Yorkshire TV is going with the series, starting Saturday June 3. Whether or not southerners will get a chance to judge the wares remains to be seen.

CLIFF WHITE

THRILLS



BLACKMAIL THE BOZO

IT WAS too easy — far, far too easy. Absurd that we should ever have tried pulling the wool over such an obviously transparent physiognomy. Surprising therefore that some of you actually got it wrong! Haw haw — pretty dumb considering we gave you the answer on a plate. Piece of cake really — I mean, I knew who it was immediately, no doubt about it. Without hesitation I said, soon as I saw the picture, I said: "That's Loose Windscreen innit? Couldn't be anyone else."

Naturally, I was right. Shame then on the hapless individuals who guessed Steve Hillage and Todd Rundgren and Elvis Costello. Paah! Yeah, boo and sucks. Fools.

Suppose we'd better mention the hundreds of you who *did* suss the Bruce. Congrats to Jane Garcia, Lynde Bowen, Nigel Algar, Alan Fishers, Tony West, Ramon and Ducky and many others too numerous to mention. Give yourselves a hearty pat on the back and a stiff drink. It's the least we can do.

THRILLS



Pic: BOB GRUEN

The Lone Groover



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MONTHLY

Nina Hagen: Berlin's overnight superstar

AN EPILEPTIC Edith Piaf, a cross between Johnny Rotten, Maria Callas and Bette Midler, the ghost of the opera, a not-so-lean Lovich, hardboiled nightingale, Kate Bush on heat and so forth...

There is no fathoming the depths to which journalists can go trying to describe the indescribable in the inevitable clichés.

The Nina Hagen Band can loosely be described as new wave. Based in West Berlin, they have a vocalist who can sound like a demented crow or a King's College castrato. Her greatest asset is the ability toretch, scream and gurgle in turn and roll an R for longer than any human being this side of the late Billy Stewart.

German and Dutch writers from all manner of publications — from *Tir Birs* to serious socialist — have spent the last few months grappling with the problem of describing the unique talents of the latest continental superstar.

People either love Nina Hagen or they loathe her.

Some people are irritated beyond reason by her habit of using her trained operatic voice to make noises which would sound vaguely normal coming from a pregnant sperm whale or a testototal hypochondriac after a night on the tiles. Others are captivated by it.

Her political and pornographic lyrics have led Germany's top rock TV show to ban her eternally. But they have also led to her adoption as a heroine of the Women's Movement.

"We are all feminists, because men need to be emancipated too", the band chorus when remark that many female feminists regard the two F's as inseparable.

The band include a few oldies in their repertoire ('My Way', 'The Love Of A Boy Can Turn A Girl Into A Woman' — ha ha, and 'My Generation') but most of the songs are written by Nina and the band. They are hypes on sex, death, sex, politics, sex, poetry and sex, are spelt out in the kind of German guaranteed to fail 'O' level and liberally interspersed with noises which could only emanate from the hell Nina so readily admits she will end up in. She also readily admits to having had abortions, falling in love with mini-skirted rubber-trousered (female) punks and having an aversion to chauvinistic men.

Nina began her career singing thigh-slapping schlager musk before graduating to Janis Joplin and a year's classical singing training — "Essential if you're going to sing for two hours and not give up after three numbers like Eric Burdon."

She then completed her education by spending a few months in London studying the antics of her friend Ariana Forster and The Slits, who now have a number of Forster/Hagen songs in their repertoire.

If CBS's publicity blurb is to be believed, Johnny Lydon thought she had "immense class" in his Rotten days and Frank Zappa and David Bowie are among those who have fallen under her demonic spell.

The success of her first LP in Holland can only be described as staggering. The Dutch have a known aversion to German, and three months ago it was inconceivable that a German



NINA HAGEN

Pic: ANTHONY AKERMAN

THE GHOST OF THE OPERA

band singing in German could become the chief topic of conversation in rock music circles.

Their second LP is due in September, but the Anglo-Saxon world is going to have to wait for the third, some time next year — with Nina's lyrics translated by Bowie and Zappa.

It is of course totally unfair to the rest of the band — a self-proclaimed communist collective — to concentrate on the hypnotic powers of their

bisexual vocalist ("My eyes are my second most important feature"), but then who said Deborah Harry was Blondeie?

Bernhard Pötschke, Manfred Praeger and Herwin Mitteregger served their apprenticeship in Lokomoti! Kreutzberg, a TRS-style political rock band from West Berlin. Their reputation straddled the Wall after their appearance at the notorious World Youth Festival in East Berlin four years ago. Reinhold Heil added his

jazz experience on keyboards to create one of the tightest machines on the continent.

There is little left to say except rush out to your nearest import dealer and buy the record — 'Nina Hagen Band'. Then write to CBS demanding translations of the lyrics. You may of course still be left wondering about the secret of Nina Hagen's rapid rise to fame — well, far be it from me to deny you the juicy details which have made her the darling of the continental press.

Nina was born (11/3/55), bred and raised in East Berlin until deciding to leave only two years ago. The East German authorities seemed only too eager to grant a visa to this articulate and furthermore socialist dissident. Especially because the man she had spent most of her life regarding as her father, Wolf Biermann, had already been exiled to the West as the least desirable form of life: a dissident communist folk singer.

Will Nina Hagen become the Left's answer to Alexander Solzhenitsyn?

MARTIN CLEAVER

THIRTEEN

*I was pregnant, had to puke
Took pills, I don't want no kids
Why should I do female duty?
For who? For them? For you? For me?
Not for you, not for me, I have no duty!*
— from 'Unbeschreiblich Weiblich' by Nina Hagen



NINA HAGEN BAND (L-R): Herwig, Manne, Pötsch, Nina, Reinhold. Badges courtesy Dutch RAR. Pic: ANTHONY AKERMAN



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ON PAGES 38-41



**MAY
3**

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So, simply decide which face appeals to YOU most and stick your cross next to the appropriate name below. Seize the time. Do it today.



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HAD THE Shadows been fronted by Lou Reed instead of Cliff Richard, the noise they made might have sounded something like The Monochrome Set, one of the latest young London pop groups to have their single released on the Rough Trade label.

The Monochrome Set switched on for the first time almost exactly one year ago, playing their first gig at Hampstead College.

Prior to that, the four members had been biding their time in assorted Vortex-era loser bands with varying degrees of success. Guitarist Lester Square was originally in Adam And The Ants, drummer John Haney in the whacky-go-lucky Art Attacks and bassist Jeremy Harrington in both Gloria Mundi and Mean Street. Singer 'Bid' (it's short for a virtually unpronounceable Indian name) is airily enigmatic as to his musical background, saying only that he was a 'vagrant' before he tuned himself into what is now The Monochrome Set.

There is also a newly-initiated fifth member, video technician Tony Potts, but more about him later on.

First things first. Like The Pop Group's, their name is an ironic one, as Lester Square explained one gloriously sunny afternoon that I interviewed the group in his 'arty' Crouch Hill gaff.

"When we started, someone asked us how we would describe our music, and the word monochrome just came off the top of my head, because we were writing very monochromatic music at that time."

"As we have developed as a band with four different personalities, it has become very colourful, though certain monochrome aspects are still there."

"That's something that we feel is worth developing — the fact that the four of us have completely different interests and influences. We all write songs, so there are all these different facets."

"It creates more tension."

After seeing them late last year



THROUGH A GLASS BLACK AND WHITELY

at Ronnie Scott's jazz club, Rough Trade's Geoff Travis came to an immediate conclusion — The Monochrome Set were worth recording. A single 'He's Frank'/'Alphaville' soon followed, produced by Travis and Red Crayola's Mayo Thompson.

"Mayo Thompson was great at enhancing certain aspects of the song," enthuses Bid, who wrote it, "but we found that our recent Peel

session was slightly more helpful — in five songs you are able to give a much better overall impression of the group."

Having heard the session, already broadcast but certain to be repeated, I can only agree: the stuff ranges from the gritty, economic crunch of 'Espresso' and the syrupy sweet parody-pop of 'Loves Goes Down The Drain' to greyer, more esoteric ramblings like

'Noise'. It's not a game of monotony.

"It's a mixture of pure pop and pure avant garde," says Bid half-seriously, "but without compromising blandness."

"At the moment, our music is very simple, very straightforward. I'd like to try and get away from that a bit. We've already broken away from some of the traditional rock

and roll values. Now I'd like to move on."

The Set are irked — and then some — at continual comparisons with Velvet Underground. But, while I wouldn't Reed too much into it, there are undeniable similarities, particularly in Bid's bassy, deadpan vocals.

"We're not trying to cop the Velvets," asserts Bid. "That's been done loads of times before. There are a lot of bands that we are influenced by, but we're not trying to copy them."

"If I get compared with, say, Kevin Ayers then that's fine... but as soon as the words Lou Reed are mentioned, we get branded as Velvets imitators. There's as much of anyone else in there."

In common with the worthy Human League and the loathsome Devo, The Monochrome Set have recently started incorporating film visuals into their live shows — which is where fifth member Tony Potts comes in.

"We'd been planning to use film for quite a long time, to expand the whole idea of *The Gig*," says Lester.

"It's only now that we're getting to the position where we can do it. One of the reasons we are using a film maker is that it seems to be a very neglected area. Along with rock and roll, it is one of the few immediate art forms."

Tony: "As far as the films go, we want to be in a situation where we can show full-length films as part of the evening's entertainment."

"I'm interested in manipulating people's expectations of a rock gig, and a film can help to contribute to the overall atmosphere of the set."

"There should be an overall mood visually, not just a series of effects flashing on and off in time with the music, which is usually what lighting rigs are just used for."

Jeremy: "We want to try and expand on the basic idea of just being a band playing a gig. But we don't want to become inaccessible. It's so easy to write lyrics and melodies that no-one can understand."

"People say that they can't dance to our music, but I think you can. I can dance to The Monochrome Set."

You too.

ADRIAN THRILLS meets
THE MONOCHROME SET

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KEITH WATERHOUSE: "The spiritual survivors are the ones not defeated by the system."



The Angry Young Man Who Didn't Sell Out

KEITH WATERHOUSE, *Daily Mirror* Columnist Of The Year, was one of the original Angry Young Men of the '50s. Now in his 50s, he is still a caustic, committed observer of our times. Sid Vicious is as likely to feature in his column as the deadly duo of Callaghan and Thatcher. Looking for a name-check, STEVE CLARKE (words) and PENNIE SMITH (pictures) cornered him in Fleet Street.

KEITH WATERHOUSE once brushed shoulders with rock and roll. Actually it was more a crossing of swords.

The year was 1966 or thereabouts and the place Los Angeles. Under the patronage of one Andrew Loog Oldham, then svengali to The Rolling Stones, Waterhouse and his writing partner Willis Hall were in LA to discuss the possibilities of writing a screenplay for the Stones.

After soaking up the Californian sun for several days and sampling the other delights of the Beverly Hills Hotel, Waterhouse was beginning to think Jagger and company were never going to arrive. But finally they did, attired in Nazi regalia and intent on making things as difficult as possible for the two scribes.

"We didn't talk the same bloody language as far as they were concerned," says Waterhouse, drinking his white wine and soda at a fairly prodigious rate in a pub just seconds away from *The Daily Mirror's* London offices.

Apart from the Stones' truculence, the other thing that remains in Waterhouse's mind about the incident is Keith Richards — or was it Brian Jones? — obsession with how to smuggle a Luger pistol into Britain. Waterhouse laughs vigorously as he recalls that the Rolling Stone was considering disguising the gun by hiding it in a box of grass

seed. As for the film script, that was the last Waterhouse heard of it.

These days his contact with the pop world is confined to when his children give him a list of albums they'd like for Christmas presents. Reaffirming their father's inability to tell The Boomtown Rats from Captain Beefheart, they've taken to including a fictitious record in their lists so that, when Waterhouse goes to buy the records he makes a perfect fool of himself. "You know, they'll write something like 'Live From Birmingham — The Vomir'."

'The *Daily Mirror*, like all other papers, got punk completely wrong. The trouble is, it's always written by pop music writers.'

he cackles, "I've been caught two years running."

Keith Waterhouse's *Daily Mirror* columns are one of Fleet Street's few enlightened zones, a haven from the shortsighted and emotive claptrap that frequently passes for journalism in much of the rest of the British Press. His columns have appeared every Monday and Thursday for the past eight years. During that time Waterhouse has won numerous awards for his pungent journalism. When the *Mirror* refers to him as "Britain's

Number One Columnist", there's few who'd argue.

Waterhouse is an unblinkered socialist, the enemy of red tape and crazed town planners. A candid man, he offers no excuses when he agrees that his heart lies

somewhere in the Britain of the '50s when monsters like nuclear power and Spaghetti Junction were still in the planning stage. He detests bigotry, regardless of whether it comes from left or right; Waterhouse is an original Anti-Nazi League sponsor and has marched on both the ANL London demonstrations. He has attacked the hysterical reaction to the League in various corners of the media, and also castigated the aggressive mindlessness of some of the League's literature.

Waterhouse also loathes pretension. Years ago he left an early draft of his most successful novel *Billy Liar* — the book is now in something like its 15th paperback edition — in the back of a taxi, a very *Billy Liar* thing to do. He was later glad he lost the manuscript. "It was pretentious drivel," he says, scolding angry at himself in his guttural Yorkshire accent.

As Waterhouse suggests, his columns range from the trivial to the intense. Even when he writes about himself he does so with a sense of finely judged satire and something approaching diffidence, an unusual quality for so egocentric an animal as a journalist. He also has what seems to be an innate understanding of the way us Britons live. His latest

novel *Office Life* is a satire on the current British malaise that centres on the foibles of office life with unerring accuracy, despite Waterhouse's style falling a little foul of the dullness of the topic. Like Randy Newman's songs, Waterhouse's writing ridicules, with varying degrees of sympathy, the idiosyncrasies of ordinary folk.

Born 50 years ago of working class parents in Leeds, some of the inspiration for Waterhouse's novels comes from the time he spent working in dreary office jobs like rent collecting — the

'Punk talks about working class but it doesn't mean working class. It means Us, doesn't it? They just haven't got the proper word.'

protagonist of his third novel *Jubb* is a rent collector — and wasting away as an undertaker's clerk; Billy Fisher aka *Billy Liar* also had the misfortune to work in a funeral parlour.

LIKE ALL working class heroes Waterhouse was determined to better himself. "I wasn't going to work in a bloody factory or anything foolish of that kind." In any case he never considered himself working class: "Working class people don't become

writers." Not that he considered or considers himself middle class: "I don't much care for the middle class. I think it's the most selfish of all our classes."

Working first as a reporter for a Yorkshire paper, Waterhouse reached Fleet Street at what is now thought of as an obscenely early age for a journalist to work for a national newspaper: "When I joined the *Mirror* I was 21. You don't see very many young men in Fleet Street anymore. Molloy (Mike Molloy, the *Mirror's* editor) joined as an office boy when he was 15. They wouldn't let you through the door at that age now."

Waterhouse sees Fleet Street as an ageing street: "It's a dinosaur, and not only because it's using old technology when it should be using new technology. The idea of putting papers on trains and sending them to Abbeville is rather ludicrous."

He joined the *Mirror* as a feature writer, doing time as a leader writer (the paper's opinion column), a political writer and even a stint on the foreign desk. A strike sometime in the second half of the '50s prompted Waterhouse to quit the *Mirror* and start writing novels.

His first book, *There Is A Happy Land*, based on his experiences as a child brought up on a council estate amidst the depression of the '30s — "It was like living in a plateful of cold porridge. It was an awful place," he recalls — was published in 1957. *Billy Liar* came two years later. With stage

■ Continues over

WATERHOUSE

■ From previous page

versions, including a musical, following in the wake of the book. Billy soon became a national anti-hero.

Waterhouse has still to cap the success of *Billy Liar*, though on merit alone its successor *Billy Liar On The Moon* was every bit as good as the original. As yet Waterhouse has no plans to write another *Billy Liar* book, but he did tell me that the idea of a terminal adolescent like Billy bringing up a child could possibly form the basis of a third novel.

While following his star as a novelist and diversifying into film and TV scripts, not to mention the odd play and musical, Waterhouse kept his *Daily Mirror* connection. In case you weren't counting, his involvement with the paper has now lasted 28 years. At the turn of the '60s *The Daily Mirror* embarked on what was a foolhardy but brave venture, *The Mirror Magazine*, a weekly affair like a colour supplement given away with each Wednesday's newspaper. Waterhouse wrote a weekly column for it. When *The Mirror Magazine* folded his column survived and it was absorbed into the main body of the paper on a twice weekly basis.

"I found I'd been hijacked into becoming a columnist".

APONDEROUS, shabby man, dressed in the kind of threads much favoured by '60s Bohemians — suede shoes, roll-neck sweater worn under a V-neck pullover — Keith Waterhouse is not the cheerful Yorkshireman I took him for after perusing one of the mug shots that appear regularly in the *Mirror*. Despite the lack of overt humour in his conversation — not unusual for a man who earns his living by writing wry commentaries on the way we live — Waterhouse is perfectly agreeable.

When I wrote to him suggesting that he should be featured in *NME*, he wrote back puzzled at why *NME* should want to interview "a tone-deaf columnist", but agreed all the same. As befits a professional, he has never missed a single deadline in his eight-year stint as twice-a-week *Mirror* columnist, but at times the going gets tough.

"The longer the time I have the longer I spread it out," he explains, referring to how long it takes him to write a column. "I manufacture it sentence by sentence until I've got it right. I might draft the intro about a dozen times. Some sentences might get done two or three times."

"There's always something to write about. The odd thing about the column is putting your own thumb-print on an event. For example, yesterday I was quite desperate to think of today's

column. Now the newspapers are full of news about industrial disputes.

"The position is always, well, I've just done that, or the leading article has just said everything I wanted to say, or perhaps my view on something is so conventional that it's not worth stating. It's not enough just to have the news event. You've got to have something to say in your peculiar way."

As it happened on this occasion, he finished up not writing about a news event at all, choosing to recollect his recent collecting days, hanging his memories on a story about a woman who looked up some council officials in her flat.

He is unimpeachably loyal to the *Mirror*, a paper that has been frequently decried for going down-market in an attempt not to lose out to the soaraway *Sun* with its emphasis on trivia, tits and Tonyism.

"The thing about the *Mirror*" he says, "is it knows what tabloid journalism is all about. It's serious when there's something to be serious about. It has the leader every day. It has the briefing page on page two. It has *Close Up*. It's got me twice a week."

"A paper has got to have a heart and soul as well as the right content. *The Sun* has never understood that. *The Sun* has no proper policy, it simply asks 'What are your readers thinking? We'll simply follow that'. It's a load of rubbish. As for *The Star*, that's absolutely pathetic. It's like the scrapings of a dustbin bungled together and put in page form. Total drivel from beginning to end."

Waterhouse has two major criticisms of the Press overall — that they're too obsessed by main line politics and political personalities, rather than actual issues, and that they're far too cringing towards authority.

A recent story in *The Daily Telegraph* on the police use of arms made him see red: "It was a total justification and defence of the police using arms. It was a news story. And it was only there to persuade the public that our police were wonderful and that this is the best of possible countries. You do find a lot of that stuff sliding about in the newspapers. They're very status quo, aren't they?"

He agrees that the Press's treatment of punk was atrocious: "*The Daily Mirror*, like all the other papers, got it completely wrong. The trouble is it's always written by pop music writers. As a subject it should have been taken right away from them and given to someone who would look at the social aspects of the whole thing."

But didn't the papers tend to do that?



WATERHOUSE: "I think the country will be healthier, although poorer."

"They regarded it as simply the latest thing in music."

Surely they were more into sensationalising it?

"Oh certainly, but I don't think anyone went into what it was there for. What it was doing there."

What does he think punk was doing?

"It sounds pretentious, but I think it was a kind of political statement. In the same way that graffiti means something — graffiti means pretty well what it says, actually — punk rock was making very basic statements."

"And I don't mean the words of

the songs, I simply mean the thing itself. And talking about the state of affairs we're in and about the kind of homes people live in, and the kind of job they either have or don't have."

An aspect of punk that worried me, I suggest, was that it reinforced class barriers. "It seems to, but whether it actually does I don't know. It talks about working class, but it doesn't mean working class. It means Us, doesn't it? They just haven't got the proper word. They choose to call it working class but just because they choose to call it working class doesn't mean it is."

ONE OF Waterhouse's most memorable columns, *Life in the Junk Age*, was in fact sparked off by the Sid Vicious episode at the Chelsea Hotel. "That," he says, "brought together a lot of fragments of thinking about the '70s that I'd often meant to say and the moment had never been right. Those moments choose themselves."

Seething with passion, Waterhouse said more about the consumer-obsessed, streamlined nightmare that is true '70s than any other commentator. Rather than pouring out a stream of self-righteous indignation at Vicious's latest suicide attempt, Waterhouse admitted that there were no easy answers to our problems, a symptom of which was media creation in Sid's downfall.

"The column did end on a hopeless note, I'm afraid," he says. "I do feel quite pessimistic in some ways and in another way I feel quite optimistic, plus I think there are going to be survivors. Do you remember a couple of pieces called *The Polycracy* which tried to define a newish social class?"

"It's really the polyeconomic generation which goes right across the spectrum of England and is creating a new class. I think these will be the survivors of the junk age. And I think the country will be healthier, although poorer."

Waterhouse has become heated, his eyes thick with anger — proof that despite his affluence (he earns £20,000 a year from the *Mirror* alone) and enormous success, he's still an angry man.

"The spiritual survivors," he continues, "are the ones not defeated by the system. Where I live in Islington, which is what they call a mixed community — in other words most of the roofs are falling in — there's some pretty hopeless people about."

"The housing's not tower blocks. They're fairly low rise in fact, but they're the usual desolate places. The place is crawling with social workers and traffic wardens and people waiting to die. But in various pockets, basements, you find the polycracy living. And they have adapted to this place and they live very cheaply. When councils have done their worst and tried to destroy a neighbourhood by taking out all the life, these people put the life back in."

"It's interesting to see in Manchester where they've got a famous block of flats named after prominent architects which they can't let — like the Pigeonies in Liverpool. And they've started letting students and young people, singles or doubles, take them. So for the first time these despised tower blocks are being properly lived in because the right kind of people are living in them rather than families. Families should never have been put in them in the first place."

The *Junk Age* piece concluded by pointing out how bereft the

■ Continues page 44

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SPARKS (from left) Ronald and Russell Mael. Pic: MIKE LAYE



CHARM-O-METER HITS RECORD LOW

Injudicious abuse (swearing even) causes new disco candidates SPARKS to fail personality test. BOB EDMANDS remonstrates.

WE HAVE a lot more personality than anyone else Giorgio Moroder has worked with before," says Russell Mael of Sparks.

Russell is attempting to explain the significance of the newly-released Sparks album which Moroder produced, but his explanation seems a little inadequate.

Moroder is best known for his work with Donna Summer. Are you really suggesting, Russell, that Sparks have more personality than Ms Summer?

"Yes," says Russell, very firmly. "I think so."

Equally convinced is Russell's brother, Ron.

"Donna Summer, uh, is a, uh, personality," says Ron, "but she doesn't, um, have personality."

Since Ron Mael's personality seems to consist of disguising himself as Charlie Chaplin and stumbling over sentences, you may rightly conclude he's got a lot of nerve.

Ditto for Brother Russell, who's content to pose around as a guileless teenybop idol. Former teenybop idol that is.

"We didn't want to have our picture on the album," Russell preens.

"Oh, why's that?" "Because there's too much personality and it tends to overshadow the music and so we managed a compromise." And that is?

"Our picture's not on the outside of the album, but on the dust jacket inside." So be warned. Do not glance at the dust jacket of Sparks' new album, or you will immediately realise the music is inferior to their picture. Ah well.

Some five years ago, the Brothers Mael were extremely fashionable in the U.K. They had a top 10 single with a song called "This Town Ain't Big Enough For Both Of Us".

Sceptics may have suspected that this success resulted from their novelty value.

Ron looked like Charlie

Chaplin in those days too. In fact, he was probably born with that kind of moustache. Also, he used to sit at the keyboards with a fixed stare and then move his eyes sideways like a reptile.

A reptilian Charlie Chaplin seemed a pretty strong selling point. But Brother Russell had his plusses, too.

He wasn't just a pretty face. He used to gabble Brother Ron's lyrics in a high, keening falsetto.

It was a weird act, weird enough to sell a few records, but not too many.

Still, the rock press liked them. Ron's words were sort of witty, and his arrangements were sort of clever. But even the critics eventually got bored.

"Assholes," says Ron.

"Cunts," says Russell.

"Oh sorry," says Ron, very wittily. "Assholes is last year's word. You're right. Cunts."

The Brothers Mael are using terms for parts of the anatomy of which many people are very fond to express their view of the British rock press.

Wishing to appear urbane I take no offence, but why this spontaneous denunciation, chaps?

"Well, uh, I don't, um, care what they write," says Ron, stumbling again after his brief moment of passion. "It upsets me whether other people, er, take stock of the, um, rock press."

"I mean, uh, I don't subscribe to all the, um, rock papers. I subscribe to other, er, things."

Such as?

"Well, er... (extremely long pause) news, uh, magazines, things with a, um, broader, er, aspect."

Evidently the Maels consider British opinion to be somewhat volatile.

"Every week it, um, changes as to what's, uh, in fashion and what's, er, out of fashion."

Week in and, uh, week out. It's exciting, but also, um, amusing."

Isn't it annoying, too, if you think your music is consistent?

"That's the one thing we've got going for us," says Russell. "Our music is consistent. We will be around longer than Joe Blow who wrote a review of us five years ago."

For the moment, though, the Maels are stuck with the Brits. As Russell admits, they have no more than a cult following in their home country. (They come from, uh, Los Angeles, by the, um, way.)

So is this collaboration with Giorgio Moroder an attempt to prop up your credibility?

"That may be your, um, opinion," says Ron. "But that's, er..."

"If you want to do something in that line," says Russell, "you go to the best and Giorgio's the best."

"Giorgio got tired of working completely with black girls," says Ron. "He, um, wanted to move into the white boys area."

"So it worked out perfectly because we needed the technological, er, help to put across what we wanted to do and he had that kind of expertise."

SPARKS SAY they first contacted Moroder a year ago (when Moroder was still unfashionable). A German journalist who's "Giorgio's best friend in L.A." brought them together.

"And he turned out to be an incredible person," says Russell, "and we became incredible friends."

Incredible.

"And it's not just a one-off. We're working on another album with him in May."

So far, however, the first collaboration has had mixed

reviews, and the single from the album 'Number One Song In Heaven' has had little earthly acclaim.

To help things along, the Maels are sitting in the press office at Virgin Records giving audience to assorted assholes and cunts from the rock press.

Now about this album of yours. True, it's got Giorgio's trademark, synthesisers and a big, flashy beat, but isn't there a danger that you Maels have submerged your identity under it all?

"I guess you could say we, uh, helped to submerge each other," says Ron. "Giorgio has expanded what he, er, has always been. We're different than what we've, um, always been."

"It could have been a very, uh, negative thing. Entirely, um, self-cancelling. But in fact, it's very, er, positive."

Won't people see you as just another act in the Moroder catalogue?

"We should be so, uh, lucky," says Ron.

THE SPARKS say they'll be taking their new sound on the road later in the year. The partnership with Moroder stemmed from their wish to work totally with synthesiser (and, of course, a drummer) so there won't be a guitarist in the line-up.

"In the past," says Russell, "we'd been cheating because the whole Sparks thing was based around Ron's keyboards, and we'd impose his style on a guitar player. So there'd always be that discrepancy."

"It was always watered down to be just another, er, rock band," adds Ron. "All those '80s trappings and a guitarist leaping about are so, um, old-fashioned."

As a result the new Sparks touring act will feature two other synthesiser players in addition to Ron. But definitely no guitarist.

"The guitar," says Russell "just has to be about the most passe thing that's still around."

Present company excepted of course, chaps.

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SONGLES

THE LEAD REVIEW. BUT LET'S HAVE NO HATS IN THE AIR JUST YET.

BILL SUMMERS & SUMMERS HEAT: Straight To The Bank (Prestige) These days, with the currency conglomerates turning their sweaty gaze firmly on what they believe is a clean-cut non-sweating Youth Club youth, it probably won't be long before they twig what is one of the current disco turns of phrase, viz a viz, 'The Bank'. Then we shall be strayed with hideous bejauned dance troops "going real crazy daddy" to defenceless dance tunes such as this, whilst sincerely assuring us that all the swingers in the know have discovered that building societies are right up there with Anarchy and 7-Up as an 'in crowd' essential. Well, by thunder, we can still beat William and Glynns to this one. Even though this circle of bounce infection was released when Hyde Park was still in a flower pot it appears we never reviewed it, and it's still fine enough to save you scouring the new releases for something half as good. This twelve inch articulates the obligatory nonsense lyric with a neat derring-do drum push and horn section that sounds like they couldn't care if they don't get home till Tuesday week. A casual opening leads through a flying, loose build-up until we're into the hooks and proper. Though never whipping up magic enough to compete with its half sister, Shalams! 'In The Bank', when played hard and loud enough it creates a passion all its own. You can and should own it.

MIKE OLDFIELD: Guilty (Virgin) There was giggling when they handed me this, a Mike Oldfield disco single. All that piety and introverted humility shorn away, nowadays Oldfield at least has the decency to look as if he takes his liberties and money with bottle. What was the point in looking like Jed Clampett when you had the accers to make the recent pools scooper look like Nick Kent? Anyrate, he goes disco without taking the hornpipe from his lips and thus a praiseworthy attempt is castrated. This bash has the semblance of something cutting but he twines all over it and even sits crossed legged on the sleeve. Maybe he thinks people dance to anything these days. Huh!

THE FLOATERS: Float On (Long Version) (ABC) Bejesus this dab of diabetes was strain enough first time around and a long version gets re-released yet! Hi I'm Dan and I was born on the cusp! Disco can turn out exquisite fast-pace game at a rate of knots, yet you're lucky if one in ten smoochers prevents you from nodding off on your girlfriend's shoulder. The Floaters had this one freak hit and their turgid follow-ups sank like so many dumplings. A damn silly word dumpling is too!

BOBBY CALDWELL: What You Do For Love (TK) Make that one in twenty, and here's the one. A real darling and as close as we may get in our hunt for the Single Of The Week. Without profundity this nevertheless anchors well clear of the saccharine sea; a beautifully constructed and worked song that pays off in warmth what it lacks in tune. Caldwell's voice double tracks without blinding out and the lilting brass carries the weight without fussing. One of the best low light-lervy you songs since Latimore's 'Straighten It Out'.

GLAXO BABIES—This Is Your Life (Heartbeat) The drummer's crisp and the guitarers all fit until it gets



They arrive each week. They're round. They're black. They have holes in them. People adopt strange new postures when they hear them.

spoiled by the type of stering humanoid vocals that many 'new music' bands feel throw some sort of ironic or modern inflection on their lyrics. It's probably a bluff because they're too inhibited to actually sing. A lot of new wave vocalists get away with murder, just standing there acting bored or zombieified, when they'd shrivel up and die if they were ever called upon to do some work. Lungs the size of thirpenny bits most of 'em! But I diverse. Apart from the vocals and a stale arty press hand out ('The name originates from some experiments they were conducting with baby food names at art school') this is a rather decent record. I'm particularly taken by that stringy guitar sound, and though only the title track of this Bristol outfit's four tracker really grabs, they'll probably sort themselves out for more notable pieces in time. I apologise for the tone toward the end of that review, this is what comes of inhaling next to a schoolteacher.

ERUPTION: One Way Ticket (Hansa / Atlantic) I think their version of 'I Can't Stand The Rain' was their fifteen minutes of stardom as this hopeless bash serves only those hankering for something until

Boney M get out a new one. The sleeve shows that once more, our hopes that Chicory Tip chic had vanished have been dashed.

THE TUNES: Truth, Justice And The Mancunian Way (Rhesus) Dominated by the pointed notes of Anne Webley's shrill toned organ, another 12" four track indie that while being worthwhile in a mindless sort of way, is rinsed clean of any fire and passion that could conceivably have lurked in the framework of the songs. The Tunes achieve a clean picked riff, always very clipped and light, and then allow Webley's keyboards to run parallel, skipping around and above, with Colin Thorpe's vocals forever trying to paint a little feeling on what inevitably amounts to a thin grey

backdrop. Sure it's not a bad record, and it has a cushy little sound overall, but there's no scope for argument in there, neither is there anything which in those dark days we laughingly called 'change'. The Tunes strike me as what The Fall would sound like if they were contented and sane. Independents stopped being different a long time ago.

LEIF GARRETT: Feel The Need (Scott Brothers) Well the campaign men have done their stuff and Leif is in *Mates* mag with the best of them. I must confess his former disc 'I Was Made For Dancing' was received by these ears on many occasions with an open stirrup, despite his nonexistent frame jiggling about obscenely on *TOTP* and the name which begs puns

about Autumn. Flinching when I realised this was the old Emeralds dragon, I have yet to overcome that daff reaction that certain songs are 'sacred' merely because they are inexplicably tagged to a mythical golden age or conjure up some absurd closed club, purist connection. A very good version of the track, a particularly solid backline, and a hit.

PLASTIC BERTRAND—Tout Petit La Planete (Sire) Happily, these days the tedious EEC gimmick is filed alongside Animal track Soled Shoes in the great Has Been warehouse. This portion of duffo is particularly grizzly.

SYLVESTER: I (Who Have Nothing) (Fantasy) Though 'Mighty Real' was definitely one of the top three singles last year, I always felt Sylvie could get rank as easily as get inspired. Dripping drama and desperately trying to be 'heavy' record, the old Bessey/Jones warstick hangs eternally on the pumping bass pedal of an intro yet never delivers a single tingling flurry. 'Mighty Real' was blitzkrieg zeal, a thundering triumph, but the bathos of 'I' comes as a sinister disappointment. BUT! If you see this twelve inch BUY IT!



DANNY BAKER quite likes some of them

Because not only does the B side contain the full 'Mighty Real' disco mix but also a dynamic electronic moody instrumental that, permed by Sylvester alone, quashes all those 'talentless, hysterical transvestite' rumours.

THE GANGSTERS: Record Company (Storbeat) I'm a sucker for records like this. Ancient but manic rock'n'roll, untempered raw and pointless, all Brown Sugar and 'Naive' by The Killjoys. The panting, ranting singer keeps losing touch with the mike, rejecting CBS and EMI, still braying of the 'betrayal' of 1977, and how the music press is run entirely by business men. I'm not being patronising. I genuinely think this record is good. (Reasons for this can be found in I. Penman's *The Empirical Romanticist At Large—Threat To Our Pop Kids, Vols 1-55* and soon to be a major new revue in the West End!)

THE SCARS: Horrorshow (Fast) Boomy drum and menacing bass sound are the only redeemers in this caterwauling chunk of the new new super heavy godfather wave metal. Stupifying in its attempts to be alienating and harsh, it winds up just another single for the sake of it. A very conventional '45 for the, excuse my chuckles, Alternative Market.

WAVIS O'SHAVE: Dennis Smokes Tabs EP (Company) Well the big guns are certainly out this week! do you know I've got singles by Public Image, Costello, Blondie and Mickie Dolenz still in the pile but it doesn't look like they'll fit just yet! Now here's my point: if you're gonna take the time and effort to slap out your own record, why act like Joe Blow and hope that by wrinkling your brow and doing your best you'll get results? Not Wavis O'Shave! The outfit might only have an acoustic guitar and a bass but you know what they're about. The chaps improvise all other instruments orally, including a rather unconvincing drumkit, and with titles like 'Mauve Shores Are Awful', 'You Think You're A Lady Because You Don't Eat Fishcakes' and the title track, they thankfully manage to steer clear of being merely 'whacky' — and Lord that's a damning adjective — and dish up as entertaining a handful as you can find this side of Smumpos, Montana. Apart from their tendency to wear an idea thin, there's nothing can stop Wavis O'Shave now — barring another rise in the postal charges. (Company Records, Fort Barnes, rookery Lane, Lincoln LN6 7HQ).

HERBIE HANCOCK: Tell Everybody (CBS) A Mark, a Yen, a Buck or a Pound, that clinking clanking sound. 'Bet You Love' could be a ferociously good record at times but this sounds like the formers' middle eight all over again. Cranky cold funk that when you are as talented as Hancock supposedly is, must be routine and cynical to produce.

BOB SEGER: Till It Shines (Capitol) Seger always comes across like a good old nut and this acoustic driven opus is a quillion times more acceptable than current blather from the likes of Fleetwood Mac, Smoke, Bob Dylan, etc. A polished, if derivative, piece that will be a radio hit (even should the nation decide to give it love, I freely admit to the sum one quillion being absolute poppycock).

THIRD WORLD: One Cold Vibe (Island) Firmly established now in dub and pub alike. Third World certainly possess a finer knowledge than other

Continues over

SINGLES Contd.



From previous page crossover band / records of how to keep a grip on the disco elements — singable, oft repeated chorus and snappy melody phrasing — whilst retaining a backdrop of reggae that at no point becomes taken. Still pulling from the 'Journey to Addis' album, this one strikes home healthily enough, never sounding like the third to be selected, which, face it, are usually the dodgy ones.

BILL NELSON'S RED NOISE: *Revolt Into Style* (Harvest). Press baron Bill Nelson leaves me knitting with his own brand of treated heavy rock. It appears tasteless, colourless and odourless, yet thousands swallow it bag and baggage, and surely they can't all be

apprentice bell-hops sold on the image?

RATS & DELICIOUS: *No time* (Logo). One wears a bodice and suspenders, the other don't. That's the colour sleeve so I take it that's how the women want to be sold. The music is by one Phil Dee who appears solely influenced by Rezillos out-takes. A crushingly bad record.

THE SHAPES: *EP* (Sofa Records). Some kids from Learnington Spa who are enjoying themselves, and here again sits the wretched reviewer forced to pass judgment on a small group's money, time and work. Well The Shapes play unadventurous 1977 one riff pop and here are four tracks all very similar, all very familiar, and probably only of

use to local folk who have discovered it all so late. Like the man said, 'Where's The Fire?'.

CARBARETTA: *Scat* (Ignition). Written, produced, recorded and performed by the artist who is not a band but a girl. The actual A side is 'You Must Be Kidding' but that's a bit light, fey and flat so we concentrate on the unaccompanied electronic keyboard work that makes up 'Scat' on the reverse. I doubt if you should spend a pound note for it though, but don't let the name get lost.

CROWN HEIGHTS AFFAIR: *Dance Lady Dance* (Mercury). **BOHANNON:** *Cut Loose* (Mercury). **CERRONE:** *Look For Love* (CBS).



IMPERIALS: *Goin' Outta My Head* (Tammi). Four hopeless steps at the charts. Crown Heights Affair still pack all the punch of a brown ale left overnight with the cap off and will insist in slicing our ears with their clueless trumpet arrangements. Bohannon is caught on his tape loop recording over and over the only thing he knows, hoping if he flogs that boring rhythm long enough people will start talking of a 'Bohannon sound'. Cerrone goes back in time too, making a limp part of a dance tune that is a homage to all the naff Love Unlimited Orchestra fillers rolled into one. Meanwhile, The Imperials get themselves in a lather with a stupid flippant flyweight arrangement of one

of the world's most boring songs.

MICKY DOLENZ: *Love Light* (Chrysalis). Former monkey — aren't we all? — Dolenz beams back in a white suit and one of those insubstantial hanky / tie affairs that suaves love to drape around their neck. The record is acoustic lalala reminiscent of The Bellamy Bros 'Let Your Love Grow'. Mickey's back! Fane swoon! (Brian & Sally James). Makes lousy record and keeps a firm eye on those repeat fees. The flip of this ton of feathers slog is called 'Alicia'. This ties up things nicely. Alicia = Bridges = *Upstairs Downstairs* Cook = Bellamy Household, whom, I suppose, had the brothers who recorded (com. page 34).

GINO SOCCIO: *Dancer* (Warner Bros). You may not

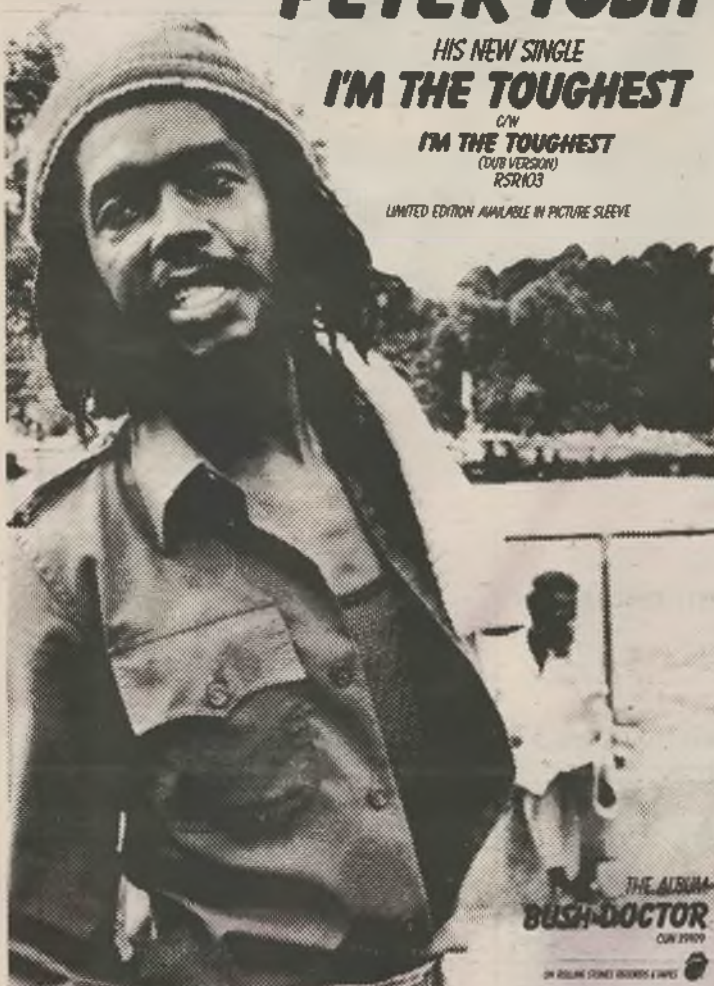
know this but Gino is a very hot disco property right now. He deals with electronics like Moroder and can boast some deal of success with his 'Outline' album from which this is lifted. Beginning with handclaps I'm always sure will lead into 'Carwash', it builds nicely over a fierce yet tightly tempered series of similar disco patterns. Breathily girl vocals add on and if played loud enough it does cause the old heart some overtime. Gino Soccio is going to get a grip on things pretty soon, you watch. One of my mates said he's gonna be the first '80s gunvor — but then when again I lent him a copy of *The Critique of Metaphysical Reality* he told me it reminded him of 'Airport'. You see what we're dealing with? . . .

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SQUEEZE dodging the crap. Pix: MIKE LAYE.



Putting The Squeeze on TOTP

ASK CHRIS DIFFORD, one of the singers with Squeeze, who it was that wrote the lyrics to the band's new hit single 'Cool For Cats', and he'll give an embarrassed laugh and say: "Me."

Ask Chris if he's the singer on the record, and Mr. Difford is equally diffident. "Freid so", is what he'll say.

Why keep apologising, Chris? Is there something about the record that makes you feel apologetic?

"No", says Chris, "I'm not apologising. Sorry."

'Cool For Cats' is Squeeze's biggest success so far. They had a hit single last year with 'Take Me I'm Yours', but the new one's already outsold it.

Essentially, 'Cool For Cats' is a jokey, lightweight little song, and maybe that's why Chris seems a bit bashful. The words are about matters sexual, in keeping with what the *NME Book Of Modern Music* called the band's "obsession with the seamy side of sex."

The mystery is how they got away with it on the radio.

"I think we did well to get away with it, to

be honest," says Chris.

There's a line in the song about giving the dog a bone, and it has only one possible meaning in the context.

"I don't think they realised what it meant on *Top Of The Pops*," Chris comments.

"They realised that 'bleeding' was a swear-word, and so we had to change that."

What to?

"Blimming. But they grabbed us two minutes before we went on and told us, and so there wasn't much we could do."

Squeeze's other lead singer, Glenn Tilbrook, says he thinks the compromise was worth it.

"Besides", he explains, "if people go out and buy the record, they get the real thing anyway."

"Yeah", adds Mr. Difford, "The real swear-word."

At this thought, the members of the band laugh cheerfully, as well they might. In this year of 1979, a censorship row over the word "bleeding" is inevitably comic.

Squeeze are gathered back-stage waiting to go on at the Nashville pub in West London. They're playing a run of three nights there, and this is the second.

So many punters have turned up that it's

It means ditching vulgar words like 'bleeding', just for starters.

'Blimming' is what nice people say. SQUEEZE explain to BOB EDMANDS.

practically impossible to move out front. What surprises the band is the number of good old-fashioned punks in the audience.

"I wouldn't have thought we'd have appealed to them," says Tilbrook. And during the Squeeze set you can hear why.

Difford thinks Squeeze got onto the A and M label when they did because the record company were looking for a token new wave act. But as Tilbrook points out, they rode the new wave but weren't really part of it.

"A lot of people find it difficult to categorise us," he says, "and that puts them off."

"It would have lowered the tone. Didn't want a lot of riff-raff in there."

Wasn't it a bit embarrassing saying no like that?

"Yes," says Mr. Holland, "but he came to see us one lunchtime there, anyway, and it was alright."

THE STRANGE thing about Squeeze is why, with two hit singles to their credit, they're still playing pubs and clubs.

Glenn Tilbrook says it's not a lack of self-confidence on their part. They simply take bookings that will help them reach the biggest number of people.

The Nashville is clearly too small, nonetheless, for a band with their pulling power, although Tilbrook admits they wouldn't have attracted so many people but for the single.

The title of 'Cool For Cats' is taken, by the way, from an early television rock'n'roll show. Not that Chris Difford is old enough to remember it.

"The engineer we used on the album remembered it," Chris says. "We were reminiscing one night behind the mixing desk and he brought it up. It seemed like a good title."

If you don't remember that particular TV rock show, which ones do you remember, Chris?

"The hit and miss one *Juke Box Jury*. And I remember Simon Dee because he had a white Jag and I've always wanted one."

A new hit single brings Mr. Difford and his chums closer to white Jags all round, and it's come at a time when many rock reviewers were tending to write them off as a spent force.

Tilbrook says quite freely that the first Squeeze album was a disappointment, even at the time it was issued.

The producer was John Cale, who they'd worked with successfully on their 'Packet Of Three' EP on the Deafbeat Fun City label.

'Patchy' is Tilbrook's description of the album, but he enthuses (predictably enough) over the second one which they produced themselves.

This month, Squeeze get the chance to sell a few more LPs when they start a three-month "world tour" supporting The Tubes, another act who coincidentally have difficulty translating stage success into hit albums.

"I think our new album is one of the best I've heard," says Glenn. "It's intelligent, both musically and lyrically, and the playing is great."

But why don't you sell a lot of albums to match the songs?

"Well, I think there are few bands to equal us. It's just that the general public don't happen to realise it at the moment."



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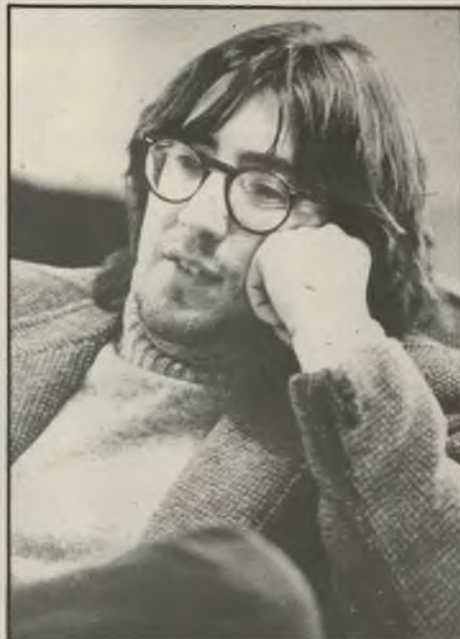
John Landis: "Gee — he thinks I can't see him reaching for his Marlboro's..."

SILVER SCREEN

meets the man who makes money-making comedies



My God! He sucks them!



...And he has the gall to ask me about my influences."

Not an auspicious start. He'd asked the waiter for a Dr Pepper, and got a blank look. "No wonder you're going Communist over here," he muses, aloud. I'd asked him if it was OK if I smoked. "Actually, since you asked me, I do mind," he says. "If you'd just lit up, I would've been polite. But you asked me and I hate it when people smoke — it stays in the curtains and everything. Is that all right? Will you still be favourable? Oh God, I can see it now — This righteous asshole I was sitting with."

This righteous asshole I'm sitting with happens to be Hollywood's latest — and youngest — whizz kid. Just turned 28, John Landis has made the eighth biggest grossing film of all time. It's called *National*

Lampoon's Animal House (reviewed in *Silver Screen* 3/3/79) and it's his third movie. It's taken more money than any other comedy film ever. His voice goes through about 18 octaves as he explains why this fact terrifies him.

"You look at Bogdanovitch or Friedkin, Nichols or Scorsese, a whole slew of directors who have an enormous success — then the next picture's *Catch 22* or *New York New York*. So it's like I'm looking over my shoulder," he says, his stubbled chin and owl glasses giving him the air of an intelligent Jonathan King.

"The first movie (*Schlock*) I made when I was 21, the second (*Kentucky Fried Movie*) when I was 26. So it's not exactly an overnight success. I did a lot of shitty jobs in between."

John Landis' Animated Farces

Folio: MONTY SMITH Faces: TOM SHEEHAN

Landis' immediate future seems secure enough. He's just finished acting, with *Animal House* star John

Belushi, in Spielberg's '79-1 ("Steve Spielberg is a young guy who I think really has quite a future," he says,

mockingly, of his friend — adding, "I didn't like being directed at all") and in June he returns to his hometown, Chicago, to film *The Blues Brothers*, again with Belushi.

It will be a narrative musical comedy — "The R&B movie of all time," says Landis, "when the cast is announced people are gonna shit" — featuring the full Blues Bros line-up (Steve Cropper, 'Duck' Dunn et al) and special guests like Ray Charles, Aretha Franklin and Cab Calloway. And with Belushi, of course, will be Dan Aykroyd, who's co-written the script with Landis.

Then next winter he'll be here making *An American Werewolf in London* — which is very funny but not a comedy at all. It's extremely frightening. It's gonna scare the shit outta people. I'm going to make them laugh then grab that laugh by the throat."

He wrote the script when he was 19 and has been trying to get it filmed ever since. All it took was the phenomenal success of *Animal House*. Right now Landis could proffer the idea of filming his Bell Telephone bill, and someone would take him up on it. Yet *Animal House* might have been a very different film. In the original script — by Doug Kenney, Chris Miller and

Harold Ramis — the pungent flavour of *National Lampoon* magazine was more pervasive.

"I can't take any credit for the script, but I made them rewrite it. Doug, Chris and Harold were all in college fraternities in 1962 (Landis was 12), which was a seminal year in the US, truly the last year of the '50s."

"The humour was a lot crueler in the original script, so I made them tone it down. The Toga Party, for instance, was originally a Pig Party — that's a horrendous thing where boys bring the ugliest girls they can find, without telling the girls that's why they're asking them. The prize was awarded to the guy with the ugliest date — very mean."

"There were very funny things in it, but it was harsh and unpleasant. See, *National Lampoon* always has things in it that are funny, but there's always something in it that offends me. It genuinely hates women — the writers are terrified of girls, terrified of them — and it's extremely racist, very anti-semitic. "I have a very moral view of comedy. I'm your classic liberal person. *Lampoon* isn't immoral, it's amoral — which is worse. I have to make movies about people you like, people you care about."

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Invasion Of The Body Snatchers

Directed by Philip Kaufman
Starring Donald Sutherland, Brooke Adams and Leonard Nimoy
(United Artists)

"I think *Animal House* is quite sweet, really. It's played naturalistically for the most part — because you need to know and love those characters — except occasionally everything goes woohoo! and it's *Three Stooges* time. The John Belushi character is like Harpo Marx actually, but he does things that humans just can't do."

He's a composite of all the gross-out figures you've ever known?

"Yes, he is. But I think of him more as a primal force than a gross-out figure. I don't think he's that gross, in fact. Belushi is one of the most extraordinarily gifted performers I've ever met. He's not only a good comic, he's a fine actor and a great singer."

"I envisaged Bluto as a cross between Harpo Marx and *Sesame St's* Cookie Monster, basically charming and very sweet. And John was able to do all those insane things, like downing a bottle of Jack Daniels in one, and still manage to retain his charm. I mean, it's very difficult for a performer — I'm serious about this — to spit out those potatoes at people and still have the audience totally on his side."

As Landis is so obviously enthusiastic about everything he turns his hand to, I wondered what were his seminal influences.

"I had an interview with Derek Malcolm (*Grauniad* and *Cosmopolitan*) the other day," he replies, grinning. "He's



Landis (left): "See — quit smoking and grow a beard!"
Belushi (for it is he): "Burp"

kind of a pompous little guy and he asked me that. I rattled off Howard Hawks, Leo McCarey, George Stevens — and then I realised, oooh, I didn't mention Hitchcock. Kubrick or Kurosawa, oops, I left out Capra. There are too many great film-makers."

"I do have favourite directors, but it's difficult... I see everything and I've seen everything ever made."

I was told at film college that that was the best way to learn.

"Sure. Not many people realise that it's just as difficult to make a bad movie as it is a good one. You can learn just as much from a bad movie. Absolutely. And read comic books — they're very often extremely good story boards."

The lady in Landis' life is Deborah Nadoolman, costume designer on *Kentucky Fried Movie* and *Animal House*. I remind him that — small world that it is — Peter Bogdanovich told for his designer, Polly Platt.

"Umm," he reflects. "I've never thought of that. Just think — I could get to make *At Long Last Love*."

I'm off for a lap, I say, and he gives me an old-fashioned look.

Monty Smith

"People are strange when you're a stranger. Faces are ugly when you're alone," sang Jim Morrison. And how many times have you been shuffling down a busy street only to stop, seized by blind, unreasoning panic, and wonder just who or, more disturbingly, just what are all the people and faces around you? You've never felt the sudden brush of such dark, enfolding wings? I don't believe you."

Invasion Of The Body Snatchers is the film of the film of the book. Philip Kaufman's remake swaps the cramped Middle American community of Jack Finney's book and Don Siegel's 1956 film for an equally oppressive contemporary San Francisco.

The shift of location from small town to big city is peculiarly appropriate as it echoes the drastic changes in social climate that have overtaken the USA (and the rest of the West) in the last 20 years. To wit — in the mid '50s, most 'right-thinking' Americans were uptight about the 'outside' threat to the clean ideal of the nuclear family posed by anything from Communists to UFOs; in the late '70s, however, most Americans of most persuasions seem more uptight about the 'inside', about themselves and other people. And nowhere is that newfound unease better expressed than in the inner-city.

The gist of *Body Snatchers* is ingenious. Like George Romero's *The Crazies*, it improvises on the distinctly paranoid premise that nobody is necessarily what they appear to be. For all we know or are told in these last days of top-heavy bureaucracy and 'open' (i.e. closed) government, we could be surrounded by aliens or mutants in human form and be none the wiser for it.

Body Snatchers goes several stages further though and maliciously crosses our emotional wires. We naturally root for Matthew Bennell (Donald Sutherland as a harassed and overworked health inspector) and Elizabeth Driscoll (Brooke Adams as his hassled and confused research assistant), nudging them on as they uncover the 'conspiracy' and fight off the 'invasion' as best they can.

But then we're informed that the results of the alien takeover could be paradoxically beneficial; we're promised a future perfect of vegetable passivity: no more love, hate, emotions or wars. So do we surrender our precious humanity and individuality or continue to make do with imperfect and irrational but oddly lovable old *homo sapiens*?

A twister to be sure. Meanwhile Matthew's blind faith in civic authority (the police, the city council, and so on) is touching, but misguided; he's obviously heading for a fall. The bullshit popular psychology bandied about by Dr David Kibner (*Star Trek's* Leonard 'Mr Spock' Nimoy, but an able enough actor to cut the connection) and the everyman's para-scientific doggerel placed in the mind and mouth of Nancy Bellicec (Veronica Cartwright) are both plainly inadequate: sops not solutions. Jeff Goldblum's engaging, amusing but depressing tantrums as neurotic would-be poet Jack Bellicec are much more the real index of probabilities. The alien method — the



Donald Sutherland gets more than his curls in a tangle in *Body Snatchers*.

process by which they duplicate humans — is depicted in all its grotesque detail at the film's mid-point, but these revelations are

hardly final. Kaufman's direction remains tense and concise, although it tends to rely on rather too many tricks of the trade. His insistence on

unconventional and extreme camera angles certainly piles on the pressure, but it becomes wearing and intrusive at times, as do both

Douglas Stewart's impressive but overly abrupt editing and Denny Zeitlin's unsettling but often exaggerated score.

All cinema manipulates in one way or another, but the secret's to keep an audience unaware of the machinery of manipulation — and *Body Snatchers* occasionally tries too hard for its own good in this respect.

Which isn't to say it's tame. Anything but. The mood of mounting anxiety is carefully orchestrated. The obvious ironies (who's gone 'veg' and who hasn't?) are well exploited by W D Richter's script. The cameo appearances of both Kevin McCarthy — the hero of the original film — and Don Siegel — its director — and both integral, not just sly nods aimed at film buffs.

Minor quibbles aside, *Invasion Of The Body Snatchers* is deliciously scary. Obsessive paranoids will probably conclude it's all a devious parable about how West Coast soft-rock is blunting the emotional sensibilities of the entire Western world.

But whatever, people are strange. Aren't they?

Angus MacKinnon



DIANA ROSS in
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and RICHARD PRYOR (as 'THE WIZ')

Production Design & Costumes by TONY WALTON · Songs by CHARLIE SMALLS · Music Adapted & Supervised by QUINCY JONES · Ken Harper · DeDe Allen
Director of Photography: OSWALD MORRIS BSC · Special Visual Effects by ALBERT WHITLOCK · Supervised by JOEL SCHUMACHER · Rob Cohen
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THE NUMBER!

"We stand for the social underdog," Nidhi Tagor once remarked. "like the sporty kid in the class. We're not into direct political songs. What I like us to do is take a kid's situation and reflect it in the lyrics, and if people listen, maybe they'll realise they're being fucked about."

**Visit rainswept Portsmouth!
And meet PAUL MORLEY!**

The Members know what it's like to be a blemished bungler. You really wouldn't believe it now, but the five mature and mainly members of The Members were once totally inadequate and inferior, but they got over that and offer hope to all those who feel confined and unsure. Isn't that wonderful! These boys are now so special they have to pretend to be ordinary, and if they can get that far, then you see most

They aren't just for the music's raw emotional power but for the specific dance beat. J.C. has no delusions about the sound The Members have achieved on this single.

"As a part-time reggae freak, I know that we're not interpreting the music as well as a

As Tates sits in conversation throughout the night, he unintentionally reveals the pressures and pervasiveness of impending fame, the responsibilities being forced upon him as each day he ebbs in and closer to being a star. There's the undesired pleasure of playing in a successful pop group, mixed with the suppressed knowledge of the trauma of adapting, of feeling "normal" life isn't every and some crazy, unreal existence clutch his throat.

As the fast tears through Portsmouth,

After drinks and frivolous chats in the hotel, the Fulla berries everybody back for the performance. Mike and Nicky walk into the Liparno chatting about the weather, and there by the entrance are a couple of blood-smiley subway cops. "Ayy brother?" Nicky asks worriedly. "No," chuckles one of the innkeepers.

The versatility and vigor of their music is one reason why they're the new king of players. At the Chateau Nightclub, which is little more than a gaudiest bus confection, presented in much the same order as their act — from "Electricity," the looting instrument that opens their set with modulated chords, to "Chase the Wind," a wonder that ends it — sharply played, sharply produced (by Steve Lillywhite, Adrian's brother, who did "The Scarsman"), sharply listened (the cover is in fact twice off the record), who is this Malcolm Garrett and why does he keep coming back? The answer is simple: It is exaggerated, morose, direct, astute. "When you come and see The Members, when you hear them, you're reminded of the Runny Things in your life. It's not fantasy or anything like that. It's exaggerated. It's like a

Does he see pressure pushing down on him on a Pusey level? The Members are attempting to promote young kids — kids whose attitudes seem so narrow minded — with humor and absurdity, and because they're right there at the "battle front" they're recognizing the full force of the effects. The fragile balance between the realism of communication and the personal fantasy of performing is dangerously disturbed and the game becomes something more.

J.C. is broadly speaking the vision of the band: Tesco in the character. J.C. is a very special, natural composer, who is responsible for the band's songs ("Solitary Confinement," "Sound Of The Suburbs," "Banking Business"); only Tesco could put them over so elegantly and appropriately.

J.C. is also the practical therapist in the group. He attempts to define the purpose of The Members, to make them aware of their own and the group's strengths and weaknesses: "The Members are not politicians, he insists.

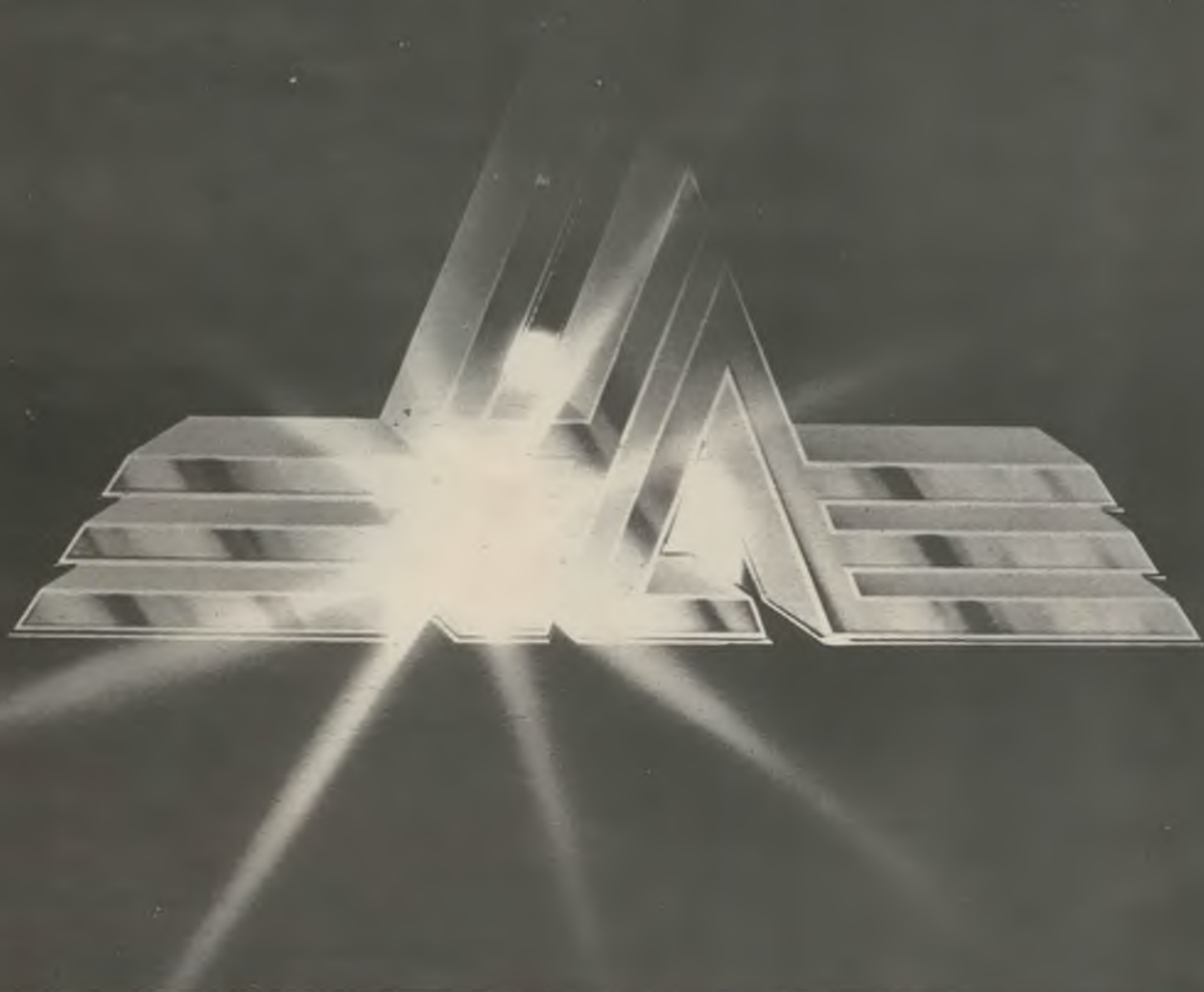
"Any attitude about a Members show, alright, we talk about politics and oppression — to most of our members is important and we don't ignore that, but my prime function is to entertain. I think that's a valuable function, as long as you don't change on telling Irish jokes."

"The one thing that does upset me is this: six months into the business, I have totally lost touch with people on the street. No way have I haven't." I admit it. I live in hotels, I speak to crew, porters, liggers, groupies and that's it. On nights off I'll go to the pub and have a drink, but really I've fucked lost touch. But I

style—I returned humbly unswayed of the price—the ridicule, the accusations, the complex criticisms—the group have to pay for their escape. At the moment they're missing a point, and they're destined to be enormous. The cracks already show.

"We've just got to keep on making records that are enjoyable, on a physical level, that make a good statement, on maybe a slightly political level. We're not going to be trying to impress, we're just going to be trying to entertain, we're just going to be trying to make the best out of ourselves. We've written a great song called 'We'll Have A Society Southern Christianism' as long as we realize where our true vocation is. As long as we realize that we're not politicians, we're not leaders.

"They're not going to change the world. But sometimes to compromise is a lot harder than not. Wish them luck."



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ALBUMS

J. J. BURNEL Euroman Cometh (United Artists)

It was the 19th Century Italian poet Leopardi who put it best: "Great truths are discovered only by a faculty of reason in a condition of near-enthusiasm" — or something like that.

He was talking about metaphysics, mind, and though I wouldn't dream of making such grand claims for rock ('great truths' in rock music? Ha!), with a little semantic stretching here and there, this concept of 'rational ecstasy' can be made to apply to rock music, neatly sheltering 'neath the one umbrella tents as diverse as Barry, Dylan, Zappa, Steely Dan, Ubu and The Ramones, and providing a succinct explanation of why the poet-Rotten Pistols are so lame.

Jean-Jacques Burnel's first solo album, unfortunately, is not the product of rational ecstasy.

Burnel, as he never tires of telling us, is undoubtedly possessed of a faculty of reason, but 'Euroman Cometh' sees this faculty not in a state of near-enthusiasm so much as a state of mere titillation. Both the theoretical bases underlying the concept, and the musical realisation thereof, lack rigour: J.J. (as he's called on the album), in testing his theories, has attempted to prove them rather than search for facts which falsify them, and has decked his argument in the surface trappings of the 'New' European music.

The result is a well-meaning album which promises a lot but frustratingly fails — bar a few isolated cases — to deliver.

The cover, a shot of J.J. legs akimbo, dwarfed by the pipes, rods and rails of the Pompidou Centre, strikes the right 'industrial' tone, but it's the inner sleeve that really gets down to business: four maps depicting the extent of the European empires of chronologically.

Charlemagne, Cromwell, Napoleon and Hitler, and another couple showing Soviet Europe and the EEC.

The inference seems to be that once-mighty Europe (the tradition Burnel sees himself as descended from) is now small and weak, and that Soviet influence is a wave of encroachment slowly spreading over Europe, halted only by the valiant EEC.

This is, of course, a truism. But what I find interesting about the maps is that although Charlemagne, Cromwell, Napoleon and Hitler were undoubtedly geniuses (of a certain Machiavellian type), they were also dictators who forcibly united Europe by oppression; their European were not the spontaneous, voluntary comminglings of cultures necessary for a strong union — which is perhaps why the empires all perished.

Seen in this light, the Soviet and EEC maps take on an ironic light — the one unashamedly totalitarian, the other a more subtle shift in that direction, borne of 'economic necessity' (the new dictator); power-political unions rather than people-political. The Kraftwerkian view takes this into account: their 'Man-Machine' is a cautionary poke in the ribs, not a



Burnel: Euroman almost cometh. Pic: Robert Ellis



George: Yankee's been and gone. Pic: Mike Putland

Euroman: no match for a hard-working Yank

J. J. Burnel comes up against good ol' Lowell — and loses.

welcoming fanfare.

This is where, I think, Burnel's reasoning goes awry: the leap from economic union to cultural union inherent in the concept of Euroman (if man is to be seen as an individual rather than an economic unit) is logically invalid.

Personally, I'd welcome a bit more cultural give and take for the effect it might have on the moribund state of British philosophy, literature and visual arts, but I can't honestly see it happening for the simple reason that Europe is composed of Old World nations deeply entrenched in their own traditions, and with their own dominant social and psychological characteristics. Without resorting to the crass, insulting stereotypical reduction of that banal *Mind Your Language* sitcom, it's possible to talk of such characteristics: a culture is merely a particular realisation of the general human potential, after all, and in that case, *vive la difference, eh?*

Musically, it has to be admitted that 'Euroman Cometh' makes a refreshing change (for the better) from The Stranglers' recent output, especially that awful live album; also, that it demonstrates the openness with which Burnel receives new musical ideas.

It opens with 'Euroman', a sombre statement of policy based round a shuffling drum-machine and sur prisingly reticent bass, with interjections from a distant distorted guitar. Burnel's vocals are in a (thankfully) clipped, deliberate, unemotional French, and proclaim his descent from the great dictators.

An inauspicious opening, redeemed somewhat by 'Jellyfish', the next track, which bounces along merrily and resembles something off

The Residents' 'Buster & Glen'. Again, as on most of 'Euroman Cometh', Burnel uses an untreated drum-machine instead of drums, which gives the album a rather flat, static feel: sort of Edmund Ros meets Brian Eno. In general, a drum-machine's best treated with a few effects, its naked sound being intrinsically bland and lacking attack, as an album's worth painfully demonstrates.

This notwithstanding, 'Jellyfish' (or several other tracks, for that matter) would make a far better single than the pedestrian 'Freddie Laker (Concorde & Eurobus)', on which Burnel's vocals are distorted to the point of incomprehensibility, which is quite a neat way of avoiding their being criticised, I suppose.

'Euromess' features less harshly distorted vocals, and seems to be a call for solidarity based round a repeated chorus of "Don't rely on lies". It's quite engaging, in a meandering sort of way, but nothing special.

'Deutschland Nicht Uber Alles', which closes the side, uses a constant drum-figure with occasional treated snare shots (which is quite effective), but suffers from indeterminate melody and backing. My German's almost non-existent, but the phrase "American colony" comes through loud and clear, suggesting, along with the title, a tilt at German acceptance of subjugation. An easy target, I reckon.

The second side manages to do slightly better than two out of five. 'Do The European' is J.J.'s stab at disco, descending flanged bass-line and shuffling drums underpinning his avowal that "I could have been born in Tokyo or Delhi/I could have been born in New York or

Sydney/I could have been a post-war East Berliner/But I was born of European issue." Again, there's no melody worth speaking of, just rising and falling.

Best thing on the album — by a long stretch — is the instrumental 'Triumph (Of The Good City)', a tribute to the Meriden Workers' Co-op which allies a ticking-over motorbike (not one of those Japan buzz-boxes, either, but the throaty chuckle of a British Bonneville) to the ubiquitous drum-machine and pulls it off, mainly because care's been taken to make percussive use of the sound, rather than just having it slop around all over the place.

Eerie synth screeches dominate the track, but Burnel uses a semi-dub technique which prevents any instrument obtruding overmuch, slipping them in for a few bars and then out. It's easily the most fully-realised piece here, one of which Burnel makes constructive use of the elements of 'new music' instead of just giving the impression they're being used.

The other good track, a short R'n'B workout called 'Pretty Face', is a bit out of place on 'Euroman Cometh'. For one thing, it's the only non-original on the album (although its anti-subversive-female lyric could just as easily be Burnel's), and the frantic scrubbed rhythm guitar and harp (Brian James and Low Lewis) intrude on the album's ambience like Arthur Mullard at the Aristotelian Society. Which may be the intention. Out of place but enjoyable.

So there we are. The other three tracks, 'Tou! Comprendre', 'Europead (Your Own Speed)' and 'Crabs', either bored or annoyed me — especially the

totally awful latter — but the album in general's better than I'd imagined it would be. Indeed, if the care, attention and thought that went into 'Triumph' were in greater evidence elsewhere, 'Euroman Cometh' could have been (at least) a good album. It just lacks rigour, that's all.

Andy Gill

LOWELL GEORGE Thanks I'll Eat It Here (Warner Brothers)

The real name of this album is 'Thank You I'll Eat It Here' which was the original name of Little Feat's 'Sailin' Shoes' and applied, obliquely, to the Neon Park cover painting of a disconcertingly feminine piece of cake swinging of a garden swing. A rather pointed visual pun on the notion of having one's cake and eating it, with the overtones perhaps a little too risqué for the sensibilities of the time.

Present sensibilities might find this solo album by the erstwhile leader of Little Feat just as unusual, but then it's part of George's appeal that he's always been out of step with his contemporaries. When earlier in the decade the hard rock boogie and other horrible mistakes held sway, Little Feat could be counted on for inspiration and innovation — a dirty, physical rhythm and blues band streamlined musically and psyched-up lyrically for the '70s.

The past three years, during which this album was made, have witnessed a growing estrangement between George and his cohorts. He wrote only five of the 17 songs on their last two studio

albums. They travelled apart and argued openly during the last British tour. Speculation mounted and rumours snowballed. It was held that George was saving his best for this — and it might also be noted that alienation (from one's surroundings) has long been a pet song topic of his.

So it's surprising to find that the bulk of the material comes from other pens, lending credence to the frequent claims by the rest of the band that George had "hit a dry spell".

This dearth of George by-lines is the first and biggest disappointment. My palms sweated in anticipation of the parched metaphysical landscapes, poignant turn of phrase and surreal sense of humour that his songs have in the past contained. Lowell George, after all, was the man who wrote a song about the existential dilemma of a truck driver.

But though George could never be accused of being heavy going, this is a whole lot more lightweight.

The first side passes through versions of Allen Toussaint's 'What Do You Want The Girl To Do', Ann Peebles' 'I Can't Stand The Rain' and a re-work of 'Two Trains', barely pinning the attention down. Subsequent spins, however, reveal the understated excellence of Toussaint's plea on behalf of abused emotions, which George doesn't fluff, and I can't help but fall into the groove created on 'Two Trains', with its beat backsliding all over the place. 'Can't Stand The Rain' and an original called 'Honest Man', both in the style of 'Spanish Moon', just don't happen, although the listener might enjoy hearing the Stax-type horns jam up a treat.

Side two is far more captivating, opening with the album's prime cut, the mariachi-flavoured 'Cheek To Cheek Chiquita', co-written by George and Van Dyke Parks — and it shows. Sublime modal changes subvert what could otherwise be a cloying picture of endless hacendados, turning it into a perfectly charming miniature. A whole album of this was once mooted — would that it had materialised. Rickie Lee Jones' 'Easy Money' continues George's peculiar interest in the denizens of red light districts. "One stepped forward, one stepped back, the other one loosened her shoulder strap". A tart little moral tale that exudes just the right sleaze quotient, low down horns and all.

'20 Million Things To Do' is a slight piece of homespun pathos, presaging the deeper melancholy of 'Find A River', the album's other prime cut and a moody ballad of love lost that, if you have tears, could make you drown in them.

The record closes with 'Himmler's Ring', a thoroughly whimsical coda that betrays the influence of Van Dyke Parks although no definite credit can be detected.

There you have it. It could only have been a Lowell George album — the vivid lyrical imagery and eclectic musical bases betray the hand that fed it. But it could have been a better Lowell George album.

Thanks anyway Lowell, I'll take it away

Paul Asmaki

TESCO: no longer gives Green Shield.

Sound of the Suburbs: scorn or sadism?

THE MEMBERS

At The Chelsea Nightclub (Virgin)

The Members — an everyday story of Camberley folk starring cuddly ugly Nicky Tesco, dealer in trite stereo-types and women's magazine clichés, harmless and humorous as a rock'n'roll Mrs Dale ought to be.

Open the diary, they're all there: 'Sally', the local kid made good who gets disfigured in a car crash — the awful fate awaiting all would-be jet set models; 'Soho-A-Go-Go', where you meet soulless women who will destroy your soul — another awful fate for would-be thrill-seekers; 'Solitary Confinement', the lonely bedsit awaiting all those who fall for the lure of London's tinsel; 'Frustrated, Bagshot', the jerk who jerks off in the darkness alone — the awful fate awaiting hung-up porn-mag consumers; 'Phone-In Show', where Samaritan cases discover the awful fate awaiting innocents who put themselves in the hands of contemptuous radio demagogues; 'Chelsea Nightclub', where the posers meet their lonely fate...

'The Sound Of The Suburbs' indeed — a fistful of cautionary tales like your mother used to tell, only Nicky tells 'em better.

The album opens with a little Members dub called 'Electricity' by rhythm guitarist Jean-Marie Carroll, which shows off their blending of reggae and rock to far greater effect than the new single 'Offshore Banking Business' (not included here, incidentally — which is sensible, because it would be a complete sore thumb. I can understand Julie Burchill labelling it "white kids proving they don't dislike blacks" — Tesco shouldn't ever drop his Surf London accent, either for awkward sincerity or pseudo-West Indian, both of which rub shoulders on the single).

'Electricity', though, is really good — atmospheric blips

over an attractive bass riff alternating with some excellent rock guitar from Nigel Bennett, expertly produced by drummer Adrian Lillywhite's brother Steve. The Members display a fluent, sinuous side previously unrecorded.

That segues (as us bar-proppers say) into 'Sally', a terse rocker spiced with a neat reggae chorus: 'Everybody's got a daydream... and Sally's modelling dream winds up in the wholehouse — possibly a comment upon people who sell their bodies (a parallel the song does draw), but couched in yer traditional paperback romance gruesome warning style. Written, incidentally, by the band's ex-guitarist Gary Baker.

Next up is Nicky Tesco and bassist Chris Payne's tour of Dean Street's message parlours, 'Soho-A-Go-Go' — another fierce hard rock song replete with police messages over the lead break, Tesco warning the vice kings to 'clean up your state of mental health'. As always, the construction is perfect, finely judged climaxes a-go-go (so to speak), with Tesco chucking in great Joey Ramonisms en route.

'Don't Push', more Cossack than Rasta, is a longtime stage highlight. Again, it's surprisingly powerful, Bennett yanking it along with abrasive guitar.

'Solitary Confinement' should be the side's crowning glory — it's a brilliant song — but instead of keeping to the point, which is quite ornate enough as it is, they drag it out into a dreadful jam at the end and rather piss it away. Still, who else could carry off that exquisite moment when the tragic chant "On your own / By yourself / On your own / By yourself" twists evilly into "Buy yourself this record"?

'Frustrated, Bagshot' opens the second side on a real low As if the dreaded watery slide guitar wasn't bad enough, the song paints a vicious picture of sexual frustration, machismo mockery of the 'afflicted' — a theme repeated more sympathetically in the



one completely 'straight' reggae song 'Stand Up And Spit', which is strangely reminiscent of XTC's 'My Weapon'.

'The Sound Of The Suburbs', as any hule kno, is a masterpiece, from the rabid illustration of Johnny annoying the neighbours with his punk rock electric guitar, to the woman next door who hasn't left her house since her husband died. Its confidence and sheer compositional flair rub off on the whole album.

'Phone-In Show' brings back the doubts: another skilfully drawn song, but although they put down the vicarious nature of phone-ins — "Cheap entertainment / Phone-in show / Five minutes of gib advice / When you've got nowhere left to go" — they seem to portray the guy who phones in with his hang-up with venomous glee. Hopefully I'm being unfair to them, and their concern to put life's losers in the harshest possible light is out of sympathy rather than sadism.

'Love In A Lift' is a good lop-sided reggae rock throwaway, and the wrap-up comes live from Hammermith Odeon with the 'My Generation' mutation 'Chelsea Nightclub', featuring Tesco looking for the toilet in the midst of the chaos.

Before I heard this album I'd tagged The Members as a good night out, a band with more enthusiasm than technique despite some of the best lyrics currently on view and a couple of classic singles. Don't let the good buncha lads front fool you — they know what they're doing. The most surprising thing about 'At The Chelsea Nightclub' is how painstakingly it's been assembled. Each track literally overflows with little tricks and subtleties.

Whether they're trapped in

sweet suburbia remains to be seen — certainly the awkward gestures of 'Offshore Banking Business' are not the way out.

And as for the occasional ideological slips, just put it down to the sad fact that rock'n'roll stars, unlike rock journalists of course, are not omniscient.

Phil McNell

THE BEACH BOYS

LA (Light Album) (Caribou)

Practically every self-respecting reviewer approaches each new Beach Boys album with a sense of optimism — to the extent of going to unprecedented lengths to find something that will not only vindicate the group but compensate for those times when they've failed to deliver.

Except for a brief respite in the shape of 'Surf's Up' (1971) and 'Molland' (1973), events have shown that The Beach Boys have spent practically all of the '70s engaged in the kind of con-game that makes McLaren's little escapade look like peanuts.

Undoubtedly the longest holding-operation in living memory, the Boys have wasted their energies on delayed tactics instead of coming to terms with reality. At one extreme they've been constantly haunted by the recurring success of their old back-catalogue whilst on a more personal level capitalising on Brother Brian's "eccentric genius" myth.

When, around '76, it was reported that Brian Wilson was again well enough to resume his creative function within the group, things turned sour from the start. The therapeutic '15 Big Ones' was plagued by conflict, thus falling short of expectations. Not only did the album

include material dating as far back as 'Sunflower', the Boys have reworked much of the production without Brian's knowledge. Its successor, 'The Beach Boys Love You' was yet another rag-bag, whilst their last album, the disastrous 'M.U.U.' — an obligatory contract filler for Warners — is best forgotten.

In retrospect it can be ascertained that the much-publicised bi-centennial "Brian Is Back" campaign backfired in almost horrendous manner. As events (publicly) demonstrated, Brian was far from being in control of his own actions (never mind the group's shaky career) and — despite their growing popularity as a live attraction — the sales of the two Wilson-produced albums corroborated the fact that The Beach Boys had yet to redeem their credibility.

After being put in charge of the last three albums Brian's contributions to 'LA' are restricted to two old tracks — the pleasant 'Good Timin' and the knockabout 'Shortnin' Bread', both of which have been gathering dust in the vaults for over three years.

But then — as at least half of this album reveals — desperate men make desperate moves and, therefore, mistakes. This album is practically all style and little content. The totally unlistenable efforts from Jardine and Love 'Lady Lynde' and 'Summertime' stretch far beyond its natural limits. The same can be said for the totally incongruous and painfully contrived 'Here Comes The Night' (the original can be located on 'Wild Honey'). Eleven turgid

minutes of self-indulgence which unsuccessfully attempts to hook-up with the present disco craze.

The group is reduced to relying on the work of just two writers — Brothers Dennis and Carl. If this album possesses any real strength, it's in Carl's contributions. 'Full Sail' and 'Angel Come Home' evoke shades of 'Sail On Sailor', but it's Carl's solo showcase, the stunning 'Goin' South', which is the one gem. Backing stripped to bare essentials, Carl croons a romantic and reflective ballad with the kind of inspired commitment one wishes was contagious.

'Light Album' indeed — don't play it with the window open, for the slightest breeze could blow it off the turntable.

Roy Carr

KIM FOWLEY

Sunset Boulevard (Illegal)

When Kim Fowley attempts to make a living he tries to make it mostly off his history, using his latest product merely as an accessory to the Xeroxed novelette which lists what Kim had for tea on the night of March 11, 1967, how Mink DeVille almost (a killer, this) included one of his songs on their latest album, etc.

A shoddy thing, his career highlights were writing and producing 'Nut Rocker' for B. Bumble And The Stingers and composing the B-side of the first Cal Stevens single (always the B-side...). It must wound him that he hasn't been in on any big con, or even one that broke even — The Runaways, his best and most famous baby, never



WILSON — he shoulda stayed in the sandpit.

They play Premier.



Richie Hayward Little Feat
Five drum Resonator outfit



Kenney Jones The Who
Nine drum Elite outfit



Clem Burke Blondie
Five drum Resonator outfit



Darrell Sweet Nazareth
Nine drum Elite outfit

FOWLEY: "eccentric" says it best.



JERRY JEFF WALKER

*Jerry Jeff
(Elektra)*

I guess MCA's loss is Elektra's tax loss — my theory being that Jerry Jeff makes records purely for gazers like myself and the dreaded Tober to con from whatever label J.J. happens to be working.

I mean, just one hit single — 'Mr. Bojangles', which claimed 77th spot in the US charts back in '68 — and that's the whole Walker saga of record success. In the past, his British sales have been so potent that often his albums haven't even been granted a release here.

But that's only half the story. Whatever Jerry Jeff's discs have lacked in sales-graph embellishing ability, they've usually atoned for by means of sheer good-hearted music.

For Walker's got a voice that is rough, abrasive and good-timey — fit only for a trucker's party. His phrasing hangs at will: he - or - won't - he - make - it level, J.J. sometimes desperately alluring in the last couple words in a line just before the band head past him.

And somehow in some crazy, totally illogical way, this works to his advantage. Given a fragile, sensitive love song like Garrard Merrick's 'Follow', he can, by his sheer earthiness, endow it with a warm, arm - round - shoulder affection, achieving this with an ease that would defeat many technically superior singers. And when he embarks on good-natured, brass-bound chuggles such as John D. Loudermilk's 'Bad News', you can practically feel the Texas beer trickling down your throat.

So the voice is great, the songs — by Walker, Lee Clayton, Rodney Crowell and other superior tunesmiths — generally worthy of Jerry Jeff's attentions. And though The Bandito Band, who back Walker on this particular jamboree, maybe lack the good-natured feel of the Original Gonzo's they ably assist Jerry Jeff in his never-ending stagger down that lonesome, song-bedecked road.

Regrettably, maybe I'll prove right and this album won't sell. But it's the kind of record that once provided the Elektra label with a special kind of aura.

I'm sure Jac Holzman would give an approving nod.

Fred Deller

a little lovely whereas 'Black Camels Of Lavender Hill' is an awful Springsteen pastiche that's draggy.

The funniest one about California girls, however, is the title track in which Fowley and co-author Laurie Bell attempt to entice one even further into their cheap illusion like some sleazy tourist board: 'We're from Hollywood, California, U.S.A. don't forget, they keep repeating over their track played backweird, old magic words gone void.

Fowley attempts to semi-exploit as self-defence, to semi-mimic so that he always has his ridicule to fall back on when critics say he is below artistic par. If only he could admit that he is only adequate when parodying a big talent and badly craves a hit record, he could be big fun in the manner of the great Patti Smith gag Wayne County used to do: 'Jim-Morrison-in-a-bath-tub-in-Paris-France-jerking-off!'

Kim's pretence of being the only thinking visionary in the rock'n'roll pleasure dome, though, is almost as ludicrous as it is laughable: I dare say his telescope-up-uss worldview was endearing in the Bel Air bflat he once was, but for a man in his 40s it seems ignorant.

Still, he does seem to care about these certain small things like telling you where to write to him with all your hopes and ex-dreams for the '80s: of course, you have to court the public if they don't like you after all this time.

There is no way that Fowley is a nasty man. He is just an unsuccessful businessman — as rock'n'roll businessmen tend to be — and that's made him a bit... eccentric.

Julie Burchill

touched any chart either here or in their own country.

His main handicap, face aside, is that the cannot write a tune: the reggae joke 'Rubber Rainbow' and his DeVillie-rejected 'North American Man' suffer most obviously from this deformity, though every track is hindered by it.

'Nightingale' starts life as a Dylan parody a la 'In My Garage' (one of the more successful songs here), but is blighted by pride and attempts to turn into something straight halfway.

Fowley songs suffer from too many cooks would-be hooks, I fear; for a man with such faith in himself, he does write songs with an awful lot of people — four credits to one song happens on a third of the album, and never does he chance his luck or talent alone.

Another third of the material Kim tries to prop up by using the book-ends of mythical luscious LA jailbait, a legend that lies likeably limp after England had acquiesced itself fully with the very cute, very talented yet very 'unexotic' Joan Jett. The only thing the girls in Fowley's neighbourhood have more than ours is boredom — yet still Kim trades off being a native of California the way French girls often go to English-speaking countries and live off their sexy accents. In France, Francoise Pascal's gorgeous voice is the norm, and in California the likes of Lou Adler must smile at Fowley-size hustlers.

'Teenage Death Girl' is like some dreary song The Rolling Stones would do to be modern, except they would probably write a tune too: 'Love Is A Game' is a funny, clumsy Springsteen pastiche that somehow manages to be

THE MINCER

Man with Mouli: MAX BELL

DAVID SOUL

Moods (K-Tel)

Fans of the Starsky and Hutch two hit wonder can thrill once again to David's interpretations of 'Don't Give Up On Us', 'Let's Have A Quiet Night In', 'Playing To An Audience Of One' (sic) and 'Seem To Miss So Much (Coal Miners Song)' (sic). The rest of us can only agree that David Soul is a lousy actor and an even worse singer.

VARIOUS

A Taste Of Tower (Capitol)

Various artists are showcased on Capitol's Tower label faster. The label boasts such relatively uninteresting luminaries as Eddie Henderson, Charles Jackson and Peabo Bryson, none of whom are represented at their best. On the other foot you get reasonable selections from Freda Payne, Nancy Wilson and Natalie Cole, all of whom benefit from the limited time available. The record flits uneasily between high grade disco for masochists and diluted crossover jazz for narcissists. A well-intentioned but lousy sampler.

CATHERINE HOWE

Dragonfly Days (Ariola)

A nauseating collection of simpering ballads with titles like 'Quietly And Softly' and 'God Help The Ones', assisted by a few name English sessioners who must have been running for the bucket every other minute. Recommended for wets, weeds and soppy girls. Joan Armatrading this rubbish in for a quid down at Cheapos it ain't.

CHORALE

Chorale (Arista)

Classical rock with the kitchen sink thrown in. Chorale make The Moody Blues sound like Mike Oldfield, what with the tubular bells, syndrums, string synths, etc. The kind of

record they use to test out the speakers in audio shops.

GEORGE BENSON
Live! Inside Your Love (Warner Brothers)

George Benson says it all with his heartfelt liner note. To wit: 'We appreciate the good things of today when we realise that they are part of dreams started yesterday. Recognising this helps us get a better hold on our own dreams and directions. Peace'. Stick it, George old chap, and next time take your guitar with you.

MELANIE HARROLD

Blue Angel (DJM)

Verbose, ill-constructed, tediously played torch ballads sung by a woman with a million stories to tell if you'll only bend an ear. Alas, my sweet, time is too short for this sort of title battle — e'en now main host in The Cumberland Arms is opening his doors and Monly Smith is setting up the first round.

MANDRILL

New Worlds (Arista)

A fair summation of hybrid black music performed by a heavy looking bunch of dudes who make up in gliscle what they lack in soul. The sounds veer from calypso through reggae to disco and Latin American. All seem contrived in spirit but they play with panache and steer clear of indulgences. Almost.

KENNY ROGERS

The Gambler (United Artists)

I liked Kenny Rogers when he sang 'Ruby, Don't Take Your Love To Town', that song about the returning 'Nam veteran who lost his most vital part only to find his woman cheating' on him. I don't like the current Rogers guise, duff C&W aided and abetted by Tony Joe White, Mickey Newbury, Bill 'Righteous Brother' Medley and The Jordanaires. No big deal.

BOBBY BARE

Sleeper Wherever I Fall (CBS)

True grit country with teeth and construction boots. Bare, who got to 'Four Strong Winds' long before Neil and was responsible for the classic 'That's How I Got To Memphis', scores heavily with this solid collection. Notable cuts are Dennis Linde's 'What Did It Get Me' and 'Feel A Whole Lot Better'. One of these rare instances when the excellence of the musicians is reflected in the talent they back.

RALPH MCTELL

Slide Away The Screen (Warner Brothers)

McTell updates a nondescript image by enlisting the British folk mafia (Pegg, Mattocks and the fine Richard Thompson). The songs are par for his course but the playing is merely pleasant. I guess it's time the guy got a break and, while this isn't my *tesse de the*, neither is it fair to hold the past against him.

PETER SARSTEDT

P.S. (Ariola)

Sarstedt always was a prune. There's nothing here to match the sheer bad taste of 'Frozen Orange Juice' or 'Where Do You Go To My Lovely', but Pete's version of 'I'll Be Your Baby Tonight' runs 'em pretty close.

GILBERTO GIL

Nightingale (Elektra)

Pan American culture shock as Brazil's impetuous inside right makes a dash for the charts with this tasty tortilla. The backing suggests that Gil hopes to accumulate thinking jazz fans as well as salsa initiates, and he might be right. The rhythm section — Alex Acuna and Abe Laboriel — is stunning throughout. Sergio Mendes is in attendance — ess posseible you like thees, meester.

MARTIN BEST

Desdemonalisa (EMI)

Precious but accurate delivery, fair welter of classical and folk rock influence. Maddy Prior and Rick Kemp. All in all the sort of record your mother would like you to like. Intelligent MOR for BBC producers to plug that gap with — expect to see Best on the Parkinson yawn-in

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are

"ENLIGHTENED ROGUES"



THE ALLMAN BROTHERS • A NEW ALBUM • 'ENLIGHTENED ROGUES'

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Looking to forward the sunset of my life



JAKE BLOOMER: the gut is proportionate but the nose is all his own work.

MARK-ALMOND Other People's Rooms (Horizon) DUNCAN BROWNE The Wild Places (Logo)

These records about the Good Life — mellow American and decadent English. The American one really lays back and murmurs away to itself good-naturedly; the English one preens and pretends and practices lean looks.

Mark and Almond (all I know about them is that their name is not respected — I think they may be old hippies gone cocktail instead of modern) are almost unbelievably uncomely, with a set of the bushiest whiskers you've ever seen each — yuccchhh! Their accountant gets a straight-faced credit on the sleeve, written out of Carmel — if you please — California.

Still, I like it in a bland kind of way; I can really see myself saving it for my old age.

I wouldn't have liked it two years ago, what with all the movement, the youth and the great music, but I like it now. It's very monied, anonymous Los Angeles, the kind of quiet money that doesn't like to expose itself in mixed (rich and poor) company. It's courteous, but not piffing polite; the songs are from roughly the same class, the quieter the better, eight of them, called things like 'Girl On Table Four'. Then I Have You' and 'You Look Just Like A Girl Again'.

I like it in the timeless haze I like Astrid Gilberto: a hot bathroom, a chiffon scarf across life, a rosy pill, silly '60s films which meant to be serious — you probably won't like it, but you won't be able to blame it for anything either.

Duncan Browne neither. Though his forte is to dilly, dally and prettily dissipation, he's much too fey and failure-type to corrupt anyone but the most low-cul choirboy. Bravely he has striven to construct a career around singing songs of the fates of the girls of the demi-monde — beautiful girls beyond drugs, done it all, shun it all, killing time. Soul-destroying.

These girls have been the basis of many a big man's career only since the early '70s — Roxy Music making the best money and memories out of it — and deserve some kind of recognition. To be one, you need (a) cheekbones that

clearly identify you as coming from another planet; (b) to be, not do, for a living; and (c) — this is the clinch — know, personally, a pretentious pop singer.

Another phase, another laze ... Duncan, the ants still active in his Raj-white pants, stands alone once more and makes a well-bred ass of himself. His songs — written between 1976 and 1978, digging up old stuff a sure sign of surrender — make token concessions to punk (with loaded references to leather and Japan). Would you want to go into the '80s with lines like "One night as I walked out in Japan/I clung to the streets like a drowning man" as your reference?

No, no, Duncan. Make a meal-ticket for yourself and put your popinjay shirt on the career of the colossus in the leopard leotard who creates the only imaginable point for buying your album — the beautiful cover-girl Mary Dobson (a more feline, accessible Jerry Hall).

At least take a tip from the girl and try to earn a living without opening your mouth. Julie Burchill

BLUES BROTHERS Briefcase Full Of Blues (Atlantic)

Back in February, NME's very own blues brother waxed enthusiastic and informative in *Thrills* about this moderately fab platter, when it was hovering about the top of the American album charts. I should therefore only need to add that it's now released in Britain.

However, for the short-memoried among you, a recap:

Blues Brothers are John Joliet Jake Blues' Belushi (lead vocal) and Dan 'Elwood Blues' Aykroyd (harmonics, occasional vocal), two white yankee salarists who graduated from National Lampoon to star in the top-rated *Saturday Night Live* TV show, since when Belushi has also emerged as a major box-office anti-hero via his memorable role as the leading slob of *Animal House*.

Apparently, during the making of the film he belatedly discovered that blues and soul music is where it's at, man, and with the typical zeal of a newly-won convert, immediately set about recording album of

same with his buddy and nine sympathetic musicians.

In the long and dodgy history of white men singing the blues there have been many worse hams than Belushi but I doubt that anyone, least of all himself, would claim that he's a great vocalist. He has rasping power and steam-roller delivery in about equal proportions to the size of his gut but little range or flexibility.

It is the band, arrangers and engineers — including Steve Cropper and Matt Murphy on guitars, Duck Dunn on bass, a great little horn section, lead and arranged by Tom Malone, and several other 'names' whose pedigrees escape me off-hand, all deftly directed by keyboard player Paul Shaffer who are the real stars of the album.

Whether strutting through note-for-note recreations of the '60s Stax sound (as on the 'Can't Turn You Loose' intro-outro and 'Soul Man' track that was also a hit single), ably accompanying slow-rolling blues (notably 'Shot Gun Blues', featuring some splendid licks from Murphy) or rumpin' out the jump-blues tunes that make up the bulk of the set, these guys are as solid an r&b band as ever torked a honk. No small thing when you consider they only all got together for this one-off project and that the whole thing was recorded live in an LA amphitheatre — which is why producer Bob Tischler and his engineers deserve a special mention.

Optimistic bods have been suggesting that the phenomenal success of the album in America may presage a resurgence of r&b-cum-soul music. I wouldn't have thought so myself, except that Monty 'The Man' Smith tells me that Belushi's next film is to be based on the Blues Brothers and will feature many authentic r&b stars.

With that kind of promotion, anything could happen. Cliff White

THE OUTSIDERS Close Up (Raw Edge)

With 'Close Up' The Outsiders — of whom, unfortunately, I know virtually nothing — have come up with a strictly 50/50 effort; a patchy, but promising, collection of love

songs and almost astute social documentaries.

The love songs — mostly set to obvious, and unashamedly appealing fast music — are the best, dealing with the angst of broken romance and basically simple boy/girl relationships. The rest are a different kettle of fish entirely in the main, sprawling and strained attempts at biting (sic) social criticism, inadequately expressed over hopelessly self-conscious and half-hearted 'industrial' rhythms.

The best tracks are 'Vital Hours' and 'Out Of Place'. Both are classic examples of Big Beat Music — steadfastly optimistic riff, presented with maximum panache, underpinning a relatively obvious lyric delivered in a crisp and precise manner. Adrian Borland sings with

I once saw a football team that played a lot of possessive stuff, pretty and precise. When they moved upfield, they did so in methodical manner, each man in his place. In some ways it was impressive — but ultimately one yearned for just one touch of individual brilliance.

something utterly unpremeditated, a move that just didn't come out of the textbook. And eventually that team blew the match — simply because the opposing side possessed a centre-forward who didn't know much about plans but simply had the know-how to dribble his way through a maze of legs and chip the ball over the keeper's head. (Get on with it — Ed.)

Novalla, a bunch of Hamburgers whose latest album is 'Vielleicht Bist Du Ein Clown' (Brain), somehow remind me of that team. They play safety-rock, offering a mite of this and a modicum of that.

If you're an ELP fan, you'll probably find something in there that'll remind you of Emerson's happy Hammond. If you've always astral-taxed along with Yes, it's possible that you too will find somewhere to hang your halo. Welshbone Ash? Yep, Novalla have Dettlef Job and Fred Muhlback dispensing some familiar twin-axe blendings. No one is forgotten and my guess is that the band are working to the best set of Kraut plans since Alfred von Schlieffen last slipped into top

something of both Ray Davis and Jim Morrison in his voice — the latter influence painfully apparent on the heavy-handed 'Conspiracy Of War' — and plays guitar with a somewhat studied, psychedelic undertone that on occasion sounds elegant, but more often that is not just over expressive.

Jan (just Jan) is an unobtrusive drummer, who knows what to hit; how hard and when. Which leaves Bob Lawrence — for my money the star of the show — who plays wonderfully round-sounding bass lines that impress consistently.

A few reservations — but a band with a future.

John Hamblett

CHARLIE MUSSELWHITE The Harmonica According To Charlie Musselwhite (Kicking Mule)

A couple of years younger than Paul Butterfield, Charlie Musselwhite has a similar background — hanging out in black clubs, learning from the masters and ultimately earning their respect. Big Joe Williams rates him "right up there with Sonny Boy Williamson ... he's been my harp player since Sonny Boy got killed."

Dedicated rather than ambitious, Musselwhite conceived this album as an illustration of his forthcoming book on blues harp techniques, but to these ears it sounds a barrel of fun for comb-and-paper merchants everywhere.

'Harpin' On A Riff' is the album's first and last party piece. A dazzling, 'top hat' extravaganza in the spirit of Jeff Beck's 'I Ain't Superstitious' wah-wah orgy.

it also happens to be a snappy, excellent jump blues. The rest are tough, creative performances sharing harp as featured instrument.

Beautifully produced by Kicking Mule co-founder Stefan Grossman, away from his acoustic stamping ground, Musselwhite's British band are superb, featuring veteran boogie pianist Bob Hall and a surefire, non-drag rhythm section in Steve York (bass) and Jeff Rich (drums). But it's guitarist Sam Mitchell who nearly steals the album.

Featured, but not credited, on R. Stewart's 'Gasoline Alley' and 'Every Picture', these days he gigs occasionally at Putney's Half Moon and makes specialist albums for Kicking Mule. Without soloing once, Mitchell excels throughout, kid glove delicate yet steely hard on the wailers.

Except for 'Azul Para Amparo', a camp-fire-in-old-Mexico number that would grace any Western, Musselwhite's tunes are superior blues fare. Two of the others started life as sax features, the harp singing like a cousin to the human voice on 'Tuff' and oozing Chaplinesque pathos on 'Hard Times', cradled by gently rocking wah-wah.

While no Butterfield, Musselwhite's rare vocals are far from inadequate. However, altering 'Pistol Slapper Blues' to 'Pistol In Your Face' and claiming it as your own is Page/Plant behaviour unworthy of both artist and label. Rapped knuckles all round.

But if, like me, you normally consider harp an optional extra, prepare to recant. Played with this degree of skill and imagination, the blues sounds like next year's thing. Harry George

Imports

Everything is just so — the balance of instrumentals to songs, the effectiveness of each hook line on the latter, the neatly adjudged dynamics of each constructed solo. Everything comes with a tick on the checklist — even the sleeve being a calculated eyegrabber, courtesy of our old friends Hipgnosis. In fact, the only thing that would seem to have been missed on the band's slightly dated blueprint is the lack of a vocalist who can sing in English — an essential for any German band seeking world domination.

But, despite it all (to quote a phrase), Novalla lose out simply because they take no chances and offer no surprises. They should try the musical equivalent of an overhead kick sometime — chances are it might work wonders.

The mention of wonders, reminds me that HMV are currently stocking the recent French reissues of such early Little Stevie albums as '12 Year Old Genius', 'Tribute To Uncle Ray', 'The Jazz Soul Of Little Stevie', 'With A Song In My Heart' and 'At The Beach' (all Motown).

Now Stevie Judkins wasn't the first American black kid to make it in Britain by a long chalk. In 1950 a 12 year old singer and pianist named Sugar Shile Robinson crashed into the British best-sellers

(there were no charts!) with 'Christmas Boogie', following this with another hit in 'Numbers Boogie', plus a three week stay as headliner at the London Palladium.

But the multitude of talents displayed on 'Jazz Soul' — where the then 13 year-old Wonder plays organ, bongos, piano, drums and harmonica on material partly penned by himself — amply demonstrates why he survived while others took the short cut to obscurity or, like Frankie Lymon, obtained their latest headlines in the saddest possible way.

Meanwhile, the 'Live At The Budokan' saga continues with two separate albums of that title emanating from the **Jan Gillan Band**. Vol. 1 (Island) includes live versions of such 'Clear Air Turbulence' material as the title track and 'Moneylender'. Vol. 2 (Eastway) containing such Purple prose as 'Child In Time', 'Smoke On The Water' and 'Woman From Tokyo' — both albums being recorded at the same gig in September 1977.

Also available is a studio album titled merely 'Gillan' (Eastway), which — as far as I'm aware — is formed by a number of cuts that have never seen the light of day in Britain. All of which should send Gillan fans into either ecstasy or poverty.

Probably the latter, for the price of these releases is not far short of ten quid a disc!

Fred Dellar

It soon come — fruit soon ripe — fi take we bite
strength soon come — fi fling we might



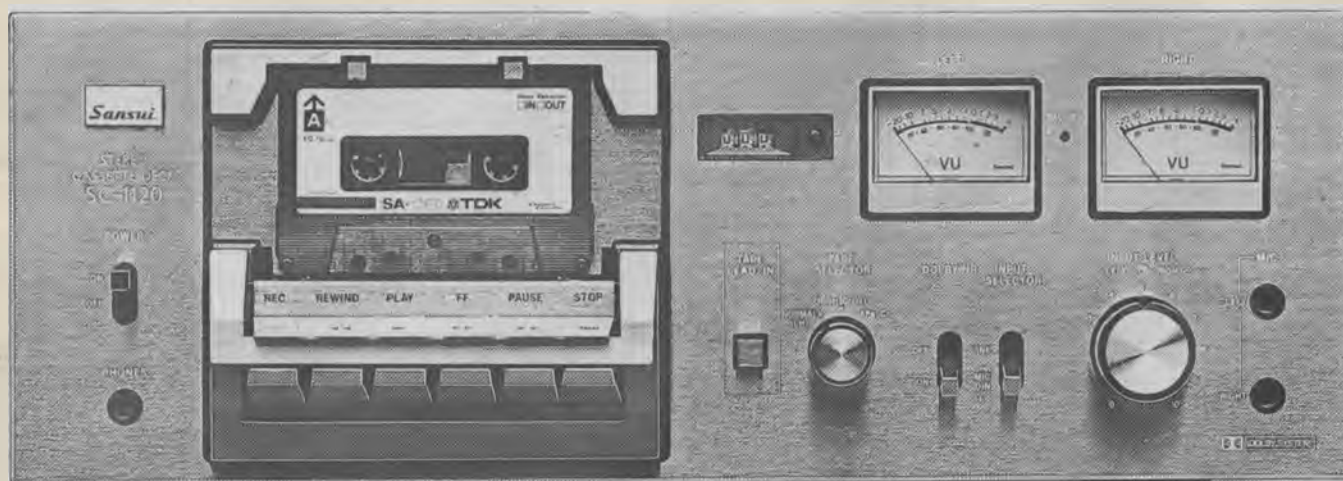
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*You will also find all these features in the 1100 G and 1110 cassette decks. In addition, the SC 1120 is designed to match the G 301 and G 401 receivers in both looks and sound compatibility.

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DON'T TOUCH THAT DIAL!



Great...but then, I'm biased.

IN TRUTH the Aiwa AD-6900K Dolby Cassette Deck should have been included in our cassette deck feature two months ago. However such is the formidable specification of this top-end unit that it would not have been possible to do it justice in the time available. Before we risk whetting appetites, it must be stated here and now that this unit is bloody expensive.

Around £400 is what you'll be asked to shell out.

For that kind of bread you could obtain a reel-to-reel deck with all its natural advantages.

As you would expect the AD-6900K is solidly constructed and has an operational feel that's in the Rolls Royce class. All transport controls engage with the merest touch — a welcome improvement on some of the stiff piano keys more usually on view. The AD-6900K employs a 3 head system, whereby the record and replay heads are separate, so that instantaneous monitoring of the sound and recorded sound is possible with an amp or receiver having that facility. One very valuable feature is that the meters incorporate two pointers. One, the more conventional VU type for the average level readings, and the other a peak indicator for sharp transients. It's possible to "lock" the peak indicator during a passage of music to maximum deflection. This is particularly valuable during complex passages when it's difficult to make sense of a wildly fluctuating needle. The limitations of the cassette medium mean that levels must be set with great care to obtain optimum replay performance and Aiwa's average and peak indicators will certainly help here.

But without question the most valuable attribute of the AD-6900K is variable biasing for each of the three bias switch positions. As we've stated before, some tapes give their best performances with certain tape decks only. This is because different formulations of tape require particular bias current levels. Since there can be considerable fluctuations between the settings on decks, matching can be very much a hit-and-miss affair. What the AD-6900K effectively ensures is that the optimum biasing value for any tape on the market can be readily determined. It's even possible to keep tabs on slight batch variations of the same brand! All that's necessary is to set the machine to "test" and record the two tone signals which are fed separately to the left and right meters. By adjusting the variable fine-bias control so that the reading on the right hand meter matches the left, the

optimum bias level for that tape is achieved.

Another interesting feature is a switchable memory mechanism. This automatically rewinds the tape to the start of a pre-selected passage and either stops the machine or engages replay.

To run through some of the more "conventional" accoutrements of the AD-6900K, there's Dolby noise reduction, an unattended recording system (via a timer clock), a headphone socket and a cue function for easy track selection during high speed replay. Over many protracted listening sessions the AD-6900K gave an exceptionally good account of itself. As stated the three-head system enables instantaneous comparisons to be made between the original and the recorded sound and it was this that served to underline the real quality of this machine. In some cases it was very difficult to distinguish with any certainty which was which — an excellent performance for any cassette deck. It certainly renders all the old chestnuts about sound quality viz clarity and detail etc redundant.

In operation the touch controls were a delight to use and it was even possible to switch from one fast rewind mode straight into the other without the merest suggestion of a hiccup.

There we have it then: an outstanding machine incorporating the very desirable variable biasing feature. If you've got about £400 and you're looking for one of the best cassette decks on the market you owe it to yourself to check out the Aiwa AD-6900K.

HI FI CONNECTIONS

ONE OF the most persistent gripes about the acceptability of hi-fi in the home concerns the plethora of leads between units and power points that can resemble, even on a modest system, a transatlantic telephone cable.

Until recently this was less of a problem because amplifiers and receivers carried useful mains sockets at the back so that ancillary equipment such as a tuner, record or tape deck could all be mains energised from a single source. However new electrical safety legislation (BS415) has prohibited the continued use of these outlets and the only solution has meant the use of bulky and potentially dangerous adapters.

A relatively new British firm, QED of Sunbury on Thames, have addressed themselves to this problem and have produced four- and six-socket mains distribution boxes. By

■ Continues over page

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Ella Fitzgerald

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DON'T TOUCH DAT DIAL

■ From previous page

utilising mini 3-pin plugs and sockets, the size of the six-socket box, is a mere 5 1/4" x 4" x 2" deep. This means that it's compact enough to be hidden out of sight behind virtually any bit of audio hardware.

Both boxes are sturdily constructed and supplied with a generous 8 foot mains cable terminated in a standard 13 amp plug. In practice the mini plugs locked home in a very positive manner and should resist the odd accidental tug.

With a selling price of £9.45 (4 socket) and £12.52 (6 socket) and mini plugs 98p each I can wholeheartedly recommend these QED accessories as a reasonably-priced solution to one of hi-fi's perennial problems.

PIONEER ARE the manufacturers of some of the best value-for-money hi-fi in the world. However, the cost of assembling a complete system, even one from Pioneer, can be pretty daunting. So, in association with the Citibank Trust, Pioneer have recently introduced the Privilege Purchase Plan. When you've found a dealer operating the scheme, you can, after deducting the statutory 20% deposit, purchase Pioneer gear with an outstanding balance exceeding £200. The flat interest rate is a lavish 8%



Insolvent hi-fi fans rushing to take advantage of the Citibank credit plan.

which is equivalent to a true rate of 15.6% over 30 months. This is fixed and you can repay over 12, 18, 24 or 30 months. It's also cheaper than the current Barclaycard and Access rates. Providing you are creditworthy clearance can be arranged pretty swiftly.

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Details from: QED Audio Products, 112 Windmill Road, Sunbury-on-Thames, MX.

Pioneer Privilege Purchase Plan.
Details from: Pioneer House, The Ridgeway, Iwer, Bucks.

THE FALL

■ From page 8

women in the band, so we never got into that. A lot of groups have definitely got into rebelling on that silly piss artist level."

Mark: "Which is just what the Stones did in the '60s—terrorise a few people 'n' pretend you're shaking things up a bit."

It's impossible to end with any kind of definitive statement on The Fall's position, simply because they appear to be such an amorphous conglomeration of diverse influences and bits of ideas. Ian Penman's feature criticised them for having "no purpose" and it's a telling point.

The Fall have no clarity, no

precise goals. They want the music to "progress" though they don't know how. They want to continue "on their own terms" though they can't really define them. They are distressingly vague, and their inability to articulate their aims is limiting and possibly self-defeating.

For all their martial language and stirring talk of the 'rock 'n' roll dream', The Fall seem to be fighting battles that have got to be refought every day and can never be won. They're at war simply to stay how and where they are.

Maybe they named themselves after the wrong Camus book. Maybe they should have called themselves The Myth Of Sisyphus.

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BLAST FURNACE
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WED 11
JAMAICAN SHOWCASE SPECIAL FROM J.A.
PRINCE FAR I. CREATION
REBEL. BIM SHERMAN & PRINCE HAMMER
TUES 10
FROM MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA
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PEGASUS
105 GREEN LANE, N.16
Thursday April 5th 50p
CROOKS
+ Cockywork Toys (ex-Doll)
Friday April 6th 50p
DOGWATCH
Saturday April 7th 75p
BIG CHIEF
featuring Dick Heckstall-Smith
Sunday April 8th 50p
THE BOOKS
Monday April 9th free
STEVE ELGIN & THE FLATBACKERS
+ Charlie Bravo
Tuesday April 10th
SCANDAL
+ The Resistance
Wednesday April 11th free
THE SHOTS
+ Spare Parts

DUKE OF LANCASTER
Approach Road, NEW BARNET (beside 6th New Barnet)
Thursday April 5th
TERRY VISION & THE SCREENS
Friday April 6th
RAM
Saturday April 7th
JOHN GRIMALDI'S CHEAP FLIGHTS
Sunday April 8th
BILLY RANKIN & FRIENDS
Tuesday April 10th
SUCKER

THE NASH VILLE ROOM
FULLERS TRADITIONAL ALES
Thursday April 5th 75p
LITTLE ACRE + Mat Stagger
Friday April 6th £1
CRAZY CAVAN & THE RHYTHM ROCKERS
+ The Stickers
Saturday April 7th £1
WHIRLWIND + Beast
Sunday April 8th 75p
THE SPORTS + Killermeters
Monday April 9th free
INTERVIEW + Trimmer & Jenkins
Tuesday April 10th 75p
LEW LEWIS' REFORMER + The Crooks
Thursday April 12th £1.50
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PAUL KING for OUTLAW CONCERTS presents
MANU DIBANGO
HAMMERSMITH ODEON
SATURDAY 7th APRIL 8.00pm
Tickets: £3.00 £2.50 £2.00
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S.W.1
Fridays April 6th and 13th
WESTERN COUNTIES
PADDINGTON
Tuesday April 10th
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HARROW ROAD
Ring: Nasser — 01-451 2377
Peter — 01-828 9419

THE Venue
160 VICTORIA ST, SW1
(opp Victoria Tube station)
01-834 5500
Doors open 8pm

Friday April 6th £3.00
PERCY SLEDGE
9.00

Saturday April 7th £3.00
KOKOMO
7 thru 'til 3

Monday April 9th & Tuesday April 10th
(just back from Europe)
STEVE HILLAGE
£3.00 (incl free meal)
9.00

Wednesday April 11th £3.00
LONNIE DONEGAN
8.30 & 12

Thursday April 12th £3.75
PATTI LABELLE
8.30 & 12

Friday April 13th £3.00
JIMMY JAMES & THE VAGABONDS
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Live Music every Friday
Friday 6th April at 8pm
Top Recording Stars

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BEAST

Thursday 5th April
SWAN, HAMMERSMITH

Saturday 7th April
NASHVILLE

dog watch

Thursday 5 April
Filming and live recording at
CANNING TOWER, Bridge House,
Friday 6 April

STOKE Newington, Pegasus
Sunday 8 April
EAST HAM, Ruskin Arms
Monday 9 April
MILTON KEYNES, Crawford Hotel

Tuesday 10 April
HARROW ROAD, Windsor Castle
Wednesday 11 April
STEVENAGE, The Swan

Friday 13 April
BASILDON, Double Six
Saturday 14 April
NEW BARNET, Duke of Lan-

caster
Sound Scene Agency
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ROCK WITH THE
CAROLINE
Roadshow
APRIL
Thurs 5 HILKSTONE, Lane Cott Hall, with support "LIVE" "LIVE"
Fri 6 CHILWORTH, Chesham Hall, Market Road
Fri 6 WIMBORNE, Southall College, Regent Walk with support "CANNED ROCK"
Thurs 13 BARNSTON, Corn Exchange
Sat 14 BISHOPS STORTFORD, Rhodes Centre
Thurs 19 BARNSTON, Regent
Fri 20 COLCHESTER, Rhodes Sports Centre, Barnhill Road
Sat 21 STORMBURY, Mid-Suffolk Sports Centre
Thurs 26 BARNSTON, F.C., Lodge Avenue, Barnhill
Fri 27 DUNSTABLE, Gunpowder Hall, Barnhill Place
Mon 30 BARNSTON, Barnhill Club

Sat 7 LONDON GREYHOUND, FULHAM PALACE ROAD
A coach with fun from Chesham. Tickets available at all roadshows and from the Barnhill Club.

CAROLINE ROADSHOW ROCK CONCERT SPINOW GALEMONT
Saturday April 28th, 1979. Admission £2 with LUSH
* Lighthouses supported by Police, P.A.S., J.A.L., J.A.M. and Light Sound System. Lashes by P.A.S.
(Electrical)

ART FAILURE
IN BRITAIN

CHANCELLOR HALL, CHELMSFORD
Sunday, April 8th at 8 pm

THE ENID
+ Support
Tickets £1.50 in advance
Enquiries: Chelmsford (0245) 54964

words words (Barry Clarke) words words words words words
CITY HALL, ST. ALBANS
Saturday, April 14th at 8 pm
JOHN MILES
+ Bandit
Mary Jane Disco, Bar Food
Tickets £1.50
All tickets from Box Office, 37 Chequer Street, St. Albans.
Tel 64511 or available on door.
words words words words words words words



D.O.L.B.Y. are on the road to promote their first album 'Remember' on Automatic Records, and this week finds them at Leeds (Thursday), Burton (Friday), Nottingham (Saturday), Norwich (Sunday), York (Monday) and London (Tuesday).

SILOUSIE & The Banshees are back in action on Saturday, but only for a special one-off charity concert at London Rainbow in aid of the National Society for Mentally Handicapped Children. Supports are The Human League and Rema Rema.

LOU REED returns to Britain next week, at the tail end of a European tour, to play a solitary gig at London Hammersmith Odeon on Tuesday. He'll be previewing his new album 'Beils' (released April 20), and the gig's already sold out!

Thursday

Amphill Folk Club: Jenny Trimos
Birmingham Aston University: The Resis-
lence/The Stickers
Birmingham Hippodrome: Kate Bush
Birmingham Medical Cross: Special Clinic
Birmingham Mr. Sam's: Wide Boys
Birmingham Railway Hotel: Orphan
Birmingham The Bell: The Clerks
Birmingham The Haven: Reno
Bradford & Stile Club: Sten
Bradford St George's Hall: Klaus Wunder-
lich
Bristol Crockers: Eyes
Burnwood Troubadour: The Amazing
Dark Horse
Chesterfield Fusion Top Rank: The Cure
Confort United Social Club: Vesuvius
Crewe: Altagor College: Bram
Tchaikovsky
Dartford Flicks: Light Of The World
Dumfries Technical College: Simple
Minds
Eastleigh Crown Hotel: Thieves Like Us
Fulham Football Club: Matchbox
Gravesend Red Lion: Stunshot
Great Yarmouth Star & Garter: The
Damned
Halifax Civic Theatre: Roger Whitaker
Harlow: The Havelock: The Chevrans
High Wycombe Nag's Head: Warm Jets
Hocknell Miners Welfare Club: Limestone
Kendal Brewery Arts Centre: Al Grey
Leeds City Varieties: Billy Connolly
Leeds Fan Club: Doll By Doll/An Failure
Leeds Florida Green Hotel: The Vye
Leeds Viva Wine Bar: Fumin
Leicester De Montfort Hall: Thin Lizzy
Liverpool Empire Theatre: Motorhead/
Girls School
Liverpool Eric's: Ded Byrds
London Action Space: The Red
Crayole/Laura Logic/Scrim Polotti
London Camden Dingwalls: Soul Yard
London Canning Town Bridge House
Dog Watch
London Chiswick John Bull: Blitzkrieg
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: Big
Seal
London Deptford Albany Empire: The
Psychodetic Furs
London Drury Lane Theatre Royal: Elton
John
London Epping Folk Club: Mary Asquith
London Fulham Greyhound: Noel
McCallie Band
London Hammersmith The Swan: Beast
London Harrow Road Windsor Castle:
Low Lewis Reformer/Rubber Johnny
London Islington Hope & Anchor: Nicky &
The Dots
London Kennington The Cricketers:
Manyana
London Kensington De Villiers Bar: Gold
Dust Twins
London Kensington The Nashville: Little
Acres/Matt Stanger
London Knightsbridge Paza on the Park:
Martin Taylor/Ike Isaacs
London Marquee Club: Zaine Griff
London Maunberry's: Lizzie
London Paddington Western Counties:
The Flexible Dumbbells
London Palladium: Gloria Gaynor & Her
Experience
London Soho Pizza Express: Johnny Par-
ker-Colin Smith Quartet
London Southgate Royalty Ballroom: The
Shades
London St Marks Club: Red Tape
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: The
Crooks/Clockwork Toys
London Tottenham The Spurs: Zich
London Waterloo National Theatre Foyer:
Bob Davenport/The Rakes
Macclesfield Kumbles: Les All Lies
Manchester Russell Club: Exodus
Milton Mowbray Painted Lady: Chaser
Middlesbrough Town Hall: John Miles-
/Bandit
Newcastle Quayside Red House: Ameri-
can Echoes

NATIONWIDE GIG GUIDE

POSTAL DELAYS

If you've sent us gig details for publication, and you find they've not been included, it's probably due to industrial action by Post Office workers which has been delaying mail deliveries in London. Sorry about that — but, on this occasion, we are blameless!

Norton Caines Dog Track Rock Club:
Ocean Boulevard
Norwich Boogie House: Boy Bastin
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: The
Hormones
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: Lap Region
Nottingham Victory Club: Billy Ocean
Poynton Folk Centre: Reynardine/Pat
Ryan
Reading Cap & Gown: Richard Digance
Reading Three Tuns: El Seven
Redruth London Inn: Lipservice
Shrewsbury Music Hall: Ralph McTell
Slough Fulcrum Centre: The Spinners
Southampton Guildhall: Tom Robinson
Band/The Straits
Southampton Joiners Arms: Interference
Southend Scamps: Steve Hooker Band
Swansea Hafod Inn: The Hogs
Willeshal: The Cavalcade: Ocean
Boulevard
Windsor Knight Grange Barn: The Fall
Widbech Isle Ely Technical College: Wild
Horses
York The Revolution: The Accelerators/
The Void

Friday

Bagshot Panties Club: Light Of The
World
Bechworth Red Lion: Richard Digance
Becker Nocturne Club: Stunshot
Birmingham Banet: Bright Eyes
Birmingham Elizabethan Days: Bad Earth
Birmingham (Small Heath): The
Sydenham: The Crack
Bishops Stortford Triad Leisure Centre:
Shader
Blackpool Welcome Inn: Mistress
Bodmin Garland Ox: Joe Heaney
Bradford University: The Resistance/The
Blanks
Branford Technical College: Deep
Throats
Brighton Bombay Bar: Devil's Dykes/The
Parrots/Woody and The Splinters
Brighton Top Rank: Manu Dibango
Bristol Crockers: Eyes
Bristol Turntable Club: Lipservice
Burton 76 Club: Doll By Doll
Cardiff University U.M. Subs/The Skunks
Cartlton M.S. Society: Armpit Jug Band
Chiddingfold Six Bells: The Dots
Cleethorpes Queens Hotel: Chain Of Dots
Coventry Ryton Bridge Hotel: Streetlife
Derby College of Education: Capital Lat-
ters/Neon Hearts
Dudley J.B.'s Club: Gotham City Swing
Band
Eastbourne The Cavalier: Shakedown
Edinburgh Odeon: Frankie Miller's Full
House
Etchingham Arms: John Thomas
Glasgow Apollo Centre: John Miles-
/Bandit
Guildford Civic Hall: Tom Robinson
Band/The Straits
Halifax Shay Club: Al Grey
Hanley Victoria Inn: Roger Whitaker
Harlow Playhouse: Telephone Bill and
The Smooth Operators/Adrian May
Hemsworth United Services Club:
Lighthouse
Horwich Crown Hotel: J.G. Spoils
Inverness: Aviemore Centre: Showad-
dywaddy
Kettering Windmill Club: The Bearshank
Band
Kirkcaldy Birskate: The Buzzards
Kirkcaldy Country Club: The Vye

Leeds Florida Green Hotel: Simple Minds
Leeds Polytechnic: The Jinks/The Toys
Leeds Viva Wine Bar: The Woodley Jets
Leicester De Montfort Hall: Klaus Wun-
derlich
Leicester Westmead Club: Matchbox
Liverpool Empire Theatre: Billy Connolly
Liverpool Eric's: Prince Far I/Bim Sher-
man/Prince Hamner/Creaton Rebel
London Acton Kings Head: Paz
London Archway Tavern: The Passions
London Camden Dingwalls: Fischer
Z/Red Alert
London Camden Dublin Castle: ABC
London Camden Music Machine: The
Young Bucks/Teen Beats
London Camden Southampton Arms: Jel-
lyroll Blues Band
London Canning Town Bridge House:
Warm Jets
London Covent Garden Rock Gardens:
The Vipers
London Drury Lane Theatre Royal: Elton
John
London Fulham Greyhound: Scandal
London Harrow Rd Windsor Castle:
Immigrant/X-Films
London Islington Hope and Anchor: The
Molesters
London Marquee Club: The Psychodetic
School
London Notting Hill Old Swan: East Livin'
London N.W.1 Musicians Collective: The
Inevitable
London Palladium: Gloria Gaynor and Her
Experience
London Putney Star and Garter: Graig
and Nigel's Folk and Blues Night
London Soho Paza Express: Beryl
Bryden/Rod Mason Band
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: Dog
Watch
London Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's Bridge
Connection
London Victoria The Venue: Percy Sledge
Club Eddie and The Hot Rods
Manchester (Stalybridge) Commercial
Hotel: Any Trouble
Molock Baths Pavilion: Mean Street
Dealers
Milton Mowbray Painted Lady Mouth
and Trousers
Newport The Village: The Gang Of Four
Nottingham Club Malibu: The Angels
Upstairs/Award/Crisis: Slip
Hazard
The Buzzards
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: Last
Call
Oxford New Theatre: Kate Bush
Oxford Oranges and Lemons: English
Sublimes
Oxford The Chequers: Spire
Portsmouth Guildhall: Thin Lizzy
Preston Guildhall: David Essex
Reading Caribbean Club: Disturba-
nce/The Duncans
Reford Poncharvo: The Damned/The
Void
Ringwood Elm Tree: Thieves Like Us
Scarborough Penthouse: Wild Horses
Sheffield Limit Club: Low Lewis Reformer
Southampton Gaumont Theatre: The
Spinners
Southend Top Alex: The Purple
Hearts/Low Numbers/Temple Tudor
St Albans City Hall: Ralph McTell
Sunderland Mecca Centre: Co-Star
Tamworth The Chequers: Ocean
Boulevard
Unbridge Unit One: The Bombers
Thornley Working Men's Club: Vesuvius

Watford College: The Cure
Weymouth The Salters: Les All Lies
Wolverhampton Lafayette: Supercharge
York The Revolution: Pressure Shocks

Saturday

Aberdeen Capitol Theatre: John Miles-
/Bandit
Abertillery Six Bells: Snoots
Ascot under: Wychwood Tiddy Hall
Spreckthick
Barking Old Maypole: Matchbox
Basingstoke St Magnus's: Thieves Like
Us
Birmingham Barbarella's: Grand Hotel
Birmingham Barrel Organ: Reno
Birmingham Bogarts: Berlin
Birmingham Fighting Cocks: Wide Boys
Birmingham Hippodrome: Billy Connolly
Birmingham (Kings Heath) Hare &
Hounds: Cocky
Birmingham Odeon: Motorhead/Girls
School
Birmingham Railway Hotel: School
Sports
Bishops Stortford Triad Leisure Centre:
Topaz
Blackpool Wesley Hall: The Activators
Blackpool Welcome Inn: Mistress
Bournemouth Winter Gardens: Thin Lizzy
Bristol Crown Cellar Bar: The Wild Beasts
Bristol Dockland Settlement: Juen Foote
In The Grave
Burton The Galaxy: Mean Street Dealers
Cambridge The Alma: Hops
Cardiff Sophia Gardens: The Angelic
Upstarts/Award/Crisis
Carnshilton St Helier Arms: Vernon & The
G.I.'s
Cheltenham Plough Hotel: Harlowate/Pu-
tie Hearts/Clink
Cheltenham Whitcombe Lodge: Prince
Far I / Bim Sherman / Prince Hamner
Chester Arts Centre: The Young Bucks
Colchester (Capford) The Windmill: Billy
Ocean
Cuckfield Kings Head: Shakedown
Doncaster (Wicotes) Harworth Welfare
Club: The Accelerators
Dudley J.B.'s Club: Low Lewis Reformer
Eastbourne Sundowner Club: Speed
Limit
Ebbw Vale Leisure Centre: Max
Boyce/Telephone Bill & The Smooth
Operators
Farnborough Recreation Centre: The
Spinners
Glasgow Apollo Centre: Frankie Miller's
Full House
Halifax Good Mood Club: The Special
A.K.A.
Hastings Carlisle Tavern: Minotaur
Kinghorn Cuzine Neuk: The Buzzards
Leeds Haddon Hall: The Vye
Leeds Royal Park Hotel: Les All Lies
Leeds Viva Wine Bar: Howard Ellis Band
Liverpool Empire Theatre: Klaus Wun-
derlich
Liverpool Royal Court Theatre: David
Essex
London Bloomsbury Guit & Mouth: Joe
Heaney/Ewan MacColl & Peggy Seeger
London Camden Dingwalls: Parties
/Melody Force
London Canning Town Bridge House:
Ramrod
London Chiswick Keep Rock Club:
Scandal
London Clapham 101 Club: The
Inmates/The Cannibals

London Covent Garden Rock Garden: The
Cruisers
London Drury Lane Theatre Royal: Elton
John
London Hammersmith Odeon: Manu
Dibango
London Hammersmith The Swan: Lon-
don Zoo
London Harrow Rd Windsor Castle:
V.I./The Rapides
London Kensington The Nashville: Beast
London Lewisham Odeon: Tom Robinson
Band/The Straits
London Marquee Club: Angeltan
London Paddington Western Counties:
Too Much
London Palladium: Gloria Gaynor & Her
Experience
London Rainbow Theatre: Siouxsie & The
Banshees/The Human League/Rema
Rema
London Regents Park Cecil Sharp House:
Chris Rohmann
London Soho Pizza Express: Don Harper-
Denny Wright Quartet
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: Big
Chief
London Upstairs at Ronnie Scott's Bridge
Connection
London Victoria The Venue: Commander
Cody
London West Hampstead Moonlight
Club: The Press/Purple Hearts
Manchester Ashtons Spread Eagle:
Zenathus
Manchester The Factory: The Dam-
ned/The Ruts
Milton Mowbray Painted Lady Mouth &
Trousers
Norwich St Andrews Hall: Ralph McTel
Nightingale Whites: Gypp
Nottingham Boat Club: Nutz
Nottingham Club Malibu: Bram
Tchaikovsky
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: Out-
ward Band
Nottingham Sandpiper: Doll By Doll
Oxford College of Further Education: The
Only Ones
Oxford Oranges & Lemons: Quasar
Reading Target Club: Double Exposure
Rochdale Technical College: Steroid
Kiddies
Royston Meldreth Manor School: George
Melly & The Feathermills
Runcorn Cherry Tree Hotel: Dave Barry &
The Cruisers
Seahouses The Dolphin: Co-Star
Sheffield Tinsley Club: Strange Days
Southampton Gaumont Theatre: Kate
Bush
St Albans Horn of Plenty: Zich
Sunderland The Old 29: Vesuvius
Taunton Fagin's Kitchen: Interference
Walsall Pelai Community Centre:
Drowsy Maggie/Bill Coddick
Wellborough The Cromwell: Isaws
West Bromwich Coach & Horses: Ocean
Boulevard
Wishaw Crown Hotel (Lunchtime): The
Pests
York The Revolution: Neon Hearts

Sunday

Birmingham Shirley Red Lion: The Crack
Birmingham Town Hall: Klaus Wun-
derlich
Bishops Stortford Triad Leisure Centre:
Tracks (lunchtime)/Jobida (evening)
Brighton Alhambra: The Piranhas
Bristol Colston Hall: Thin Lizzy
Bristol Hippodrome: Billy Connolly
Bromley The Northover (lunchtime): Bill
Scott & Ian Ellis
Cambridge Guildhall: Ralph McTel
Cardiff New Theatre: The Spinners
Cheltenham New Victory Club: Tundra
Coventry The Pilot: Ocean Boulevard
Derby Old Ball Hotel: Strange Days
Glasgow Saints & Sinners: Underhand
Jones
CONTINUES OVER

GIG GUIDE CONTINUED



THE DAMNED whose Captain Sensible is pictured above, have a major London concert on Sunday. Other tour dates this week: *Gloucester (Thursday), Retford (Friday), Manchester (Saturday), Chester (Monday), Birmingham (Tuesday) and Torquay (Wednesday).*

Witney Folk Club: Tundra
Wolverhampton Lsytene: Sigm
York Pop Club: Daft By Dolt

Tuesday

Birmingham Barbarella's: The Damned
/The Ruts
Birmingham Crown & Cushion: The Kidds Band / Streetlife

Wednesday

Aldingham Bowden Vale Club: Ed Banger/Zenathus
Birmingham Barral Organ: Brujo
Birmingham Bogans: Brooklyn
Birmingham Railway Hotel: Rainmaker

Huddersfield Amsterdam Bar: Dave Barry & The Cruisers (for a week)
Jacksdale Grey Topper: Grand Hotel
Leeds Grand Theatre: David Essex
Leeds Victoria Hotel (lunchtime) Best Friends
Leeds Vins Wine Bar: Juggernaut
Leicester De Montfort Hall: Motorhead / Girls School
Llanelli Glen Ballroom: Rock Against Racism / Musical Entertainment Tour
London Action King's Head: Strange Fruit
London Battersea Nags Head: Jugular Vain
London Camden Dingwalls: Blast Furnace & The Legal Matter
London Canning Town Bridge House: Remus Down Boulevard
London Charing Cross Duke of Buckingham: The Invisibles (for four days)
London Charing X Rd: Astoria Theatre: "Oh Boy!" with Alvin Stardust / Joe Brown / Les Gray / Shakin' Stevens / Freddie Fingers / Lee etc.
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: Skin Deep
London East Hem Ruskin Arms Dog Watch
London Fenchley Torrington: The Innmates
London Harrow Rd Windsor Castle: The Soul Boys
London Islington Hope & Anchor: The Vipers
London Marquee Club: Law Lewis Reformer
London Peckham Montpelier (lunchtime): Blue Moon
London Soho Pizza Express: Monty Worlock
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: The Books
London Strand Lyceum Ballroom: The Damned / U.K. Subs / The Specials
London Tooting The Castle: Zileh
London Victoria The Venue: Commander Cody
London Westside Queens Arms: The Injections
London W1 Portman Hotel: Beryl Bryden / Rod Mason Band
Manchester Apollo Theatre: Dusty Springfield
Newbridge Memorial Hall: Simple Minds
Newcastle City Hall: John Miles/Bandit
Newquay Central Hotel: The Winners
Norwich Beogee House: Doll By Doll
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: Medium Medium
Oldham Birch Hill Hotel: Al Grey
Ponsonby Centre Hotel: Richard O'Grada
Poynton Folk Centre: Brian Dewhurst / Barry & Peter/Bedlam
Preston Guildhall: Roger Whittaker
Redcar Coatham Bowl: Frankie Miller's Full House
Sheffield Wordsworth Tavern: Neil Fryer's Cotton Crushes
Stratfordbridge Commercial Hotel: Zenathus
Stratford-Avon Entington Park: Orphan Weisall Dirty Duck (lunchtime): The Amazing Dark Horse
Watford Max's Palace: The Notion/Crush Biston Band
Wollaton Nags Head: Atlas

Wolverhampton Civic Hall: Tom Robinson Band/The Straits

Monday

Birkenhead Hamilton Club: Frankie Miller's Full House / The Flies
Birmingham Barrel Organ: Fashion
Birmingham Crown & Cushion: Ocean Boulevard
Birmingham Drakes Drum: Streetlife
Birmingham Marcat Cross: Orphan
Birmingham Odeon: Dusty Springfield
Birmingham Railway Hotel: Video
Birmingham Town Hall: Klaus Wunderlich
Brighton Alhambra: Dirty Weekend/The Return
Brighton Dome: Elton John
Bristol Colston Hall: Thin Lizzy
Bristol Hippodrome: Kate Bush
Bristol Locarno: Glaxo Babies
Cardiff New Theatre: Max Boyce/Telephone Bill & The Smooth Operators (for a week)
Chester Smartly: The Damned/Amsterdam
Croydon The Carlton: John Thomas
Hanley Victoria Hall: Motorhead/Girls School
Hull Romeo & Juliet: Supagress/The Void
Hull Cauldwell Hotel: Original East Side Stompers
Leeds Vins Wine Bar: Plus Support
Liverpool's Eric's: Supercharge
Liverpool The Crown: The Clerks
London Camden Dingwalls: Double Exposure/The Q.T.s/Tot & The Girls in Room 419
London Canning Town Bridge House: Wild Kats
London Covent Garden Rock Garden: Stan's Blues Band
London Drury Lane Theatre Royal: Billy Connolly
London Harrow Rd Windsor Castle: Cuddly Toys
London Iford Odeon: Tom Robinson Band/The Straits
London Kensington The Nashville: Interview
London Marquee Club: Purple Hearts
London Old Brompton Rd Troubadour: Tom & Lynne
London Putney Half Moon: John Kirkpatrick & Sue Harris
London Putney Star & Garter: Penny Royal
London Stoke Newington Pegasus: Steve Elgin & The Flatbeaters/Charlie Bravo
London Victoria The Venue: Steve Hillage
London West Hampstead: Moonlight Club: Crazz/The Boys & Girls
Manchester Apollo Theatre: John Miles/Bandit
Newcastle Jazz NorthEast: Al Grey
Nottingham Hearty Good Fellow: The Party
Nottingham Imperial Hotel: Gwahir
Salicots Banks & Brass: Underhand Jones

WATERHOUSE

■ From page 20

country is of any inspired leaders. "Nobody in politics," says Waterhouse, "thinks in any kind of philosophical way. I mean, what is the philosophy of the Labour Party? I know a lot of people have a lot of ideas on what should be the winning hand of the Labour Party, but they're all talking about the survival of the Party as if that is some kind of end in itself."

"The only guy who thinks seriously about politics is Tony Benn. He's popularly regarded as a lunatic, Callaghan is an excellent politician. He's a very good survivor. I don't see what he's for. I don't see his purpose. I'm told he has his finger on the pulse, if that's the pulse. I find it rather depressing."

"I think that in many ways Callaghan is dangerous because the image he projects is of a middle-aged country with pipe and slippers. We shouldn't be that kind of country at all. There is a kind of national feeling and the national feeling is this kind of take-it-easy feeling."

Although Waterhouse has in the past worked for the Labour Party, he has never actually taken up membership. He is adamant that journalists shouldn't belong to things because in the end they're bound to be compromised.

And yet he's a member of the Anti-Nazi League. "That's a bit of an exception, because that's something I felt very strongly about. Martin Webster (National Front supremo) is the nearest thing to a pig a human being can be. I mean, the physical resemblance is frightening. So much so that I'm tempted to poke him in the face."

His past affiliations with the Labour Party didn't prevent him from voting Communist in his last local election either, so much does he despise the Labour-controlled Islington Council.

WATERHOUSE'S latest novel *Office Life* touches on themes he has written about in the *Mirror*: bureaucracy

gone berserk and a government whose sole aim is to keep the unemployment figures looking good, regardless of whether those employed are actually manufacturing anything. The work of the company in *Office Life*, the government-run British Albion, is devoted entirely to its own internal administration. Its central character Clement Gryce is a pathetic humanoid who lives for the office.

"It's hard to say how long it took to write *Office Life*, because I tend to keep a novel on the boil for two or three years. I let it gestate until I know the story and I know the people and it's simply a matter of writing it. Then I really bash away at it. I wrote most of it between Christmas and April last year. So over a period of four months I wrote about 60,000 words."

A new Waterhouse novel is currently "on the boil". Unusually for him it's about a woman: "I don't know how to describe it in one sentence. She is a sort of a scrubber. She puts herself about. I'm trying to get inside her mind and present her sympathetically. What I want to do is the same kind of thing I tried to do in *Jubb*. And that is to get into the mind of someone who seems an unappealing sort of person and is an unappealing sort of person, but explain them."

When he writes does he feel he becomes the character? "It's difficult to answer that question because I have a part of my mind which is this character. I have a voice because, even when I'm writing in the third person, I always tend to use the voice of the character."

"So what I do is I appear to develop a sort of character in my head and when I'm looking at something as myself I can also be looking at it and describing it as this character would describe it. It's practice, I suppose. I would say things to myself that this character would say in any situation, nothing to do with the book, while I'm

writing the book. So while I'm going on I have two vocabularies."

Are his 'heroes' based on people he knows or has known? "Yes, but not one person. They're all pretty well amalgamations. I can't say I consciously take people's characteristics and bundle them together, but when I visualise *Jubb* I see a particular person."



And how much of him is there in his characters? "I'm always being asked about *Billy Liar* and the reply I always give is that if I was any of these characters I'd be doing 15 years by now. I should think there's something of *Jubb* in me rather than something of me in *Jubb*. I'm sure we've all got that man in the mac brooding somewhere in the back of our minds. Gryce I see as a foreigner because his whole philosophy is foreign to mine. If I were Gryce, I'd hang myself."

"I suppose *Billy Liar* is how I could have turned out if I hadn't done anything."

I could visualise myself working in something like local government and making a complete hash of it. A lot of that is in fact based on a friend of mine — still a good friend of mine — who I was at school with and who could never do anything very well."

"He was a jazz musician and he was an artist, but he wasn't a good enough jazz musician and he wasn't a good enough artist. He in fact finished up in The Docks and Waterways Board, which he reduced to total bedlam; the fact was that he only had sufficient organised talent to be a clerk, but all his temperament was totally against that kind of mundane work."

So who are Waterhouse's favourite writers? "I tend to go back and re-read people, which is a rather idle and despicable habit. I like Amis, Kingsley, not Martin. There's a sort of set of writers and I cannot think of a single bloody name."

After a moment's thinking, he says that he likes the American school of new journalism in general, though loathes it when it becomes pretentious. He also mentions Tom Wolfe's *The Painted Word*: As a sustained piece of polemic, that was absolutely brilliant. "His favourite book of all time is, however, a Victorian novel, *The Diary Of A Nobody* by George and Weedon Grossmith, a book that lampoons the suburban lifestyle."

But his favourite writer is, unsurprisingly, George Orwell. "I'm always reading something of Orwell's. I'm a total disciple."

There's a strong Orwell influence in my writing, particularly in the knowledge of statistics. Most journalists don't understand statistics at all. I do. Papers nearly always get them wrong, define them wrong and reach wrong conclusions from them."

"That's a bit of Orwell training. It's remarkable how many things that Orwell, a man with a trained mind, got wrong himself. I mean, *Wigan Pier* is packed with misconceptions. But it's still a brilliant book. Orwell's a king as regards journalism, the essay, so to speak. Technically he's a terrible novelist. The construction of *Keep The Aspidochelone* is a shambles, although the content is beautiful."

What are his thoughts on Orwell's 1984? "I haven't read Anthony Burgess's 1985, but it's his idea that what in fact Orwell was really talking about in 1984 was 1948; he was simply observing life as it then was. Most of the things he describes are not predictions. They were there at the time."

"There's always been a thought police in various countries. There's now more torture in more nations than at that time. There are now fewer democratic nations than at that time. I think democracy is in a frightening minority. I think there's only about 40 countries in the world where you can go out and elect somebody."

"The interesting thing about 1984 is that Orwell never bothered to think about the way physical life would change. They were still living in Victorian streets. The most 1984 thing of all is the tower block but, except for the offices, there aren't any tower blocks in the book."

Some have in fact described Waterhouse as a modern day Orwell. There are indeed similarities. Both writers are positively nostalgic, avid social democrats and deeply distrustful of the modern world. But Waterhouse is also a great humourist, as anyone who reads his contributions to *Punch* or either of the *Liar* books will be aware.

If you haven't read him, then you should. Immediately.

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RUFUS
Numbers (ABC)
DOBBIE GRAY
Midnight Diamond
(Infinity)

The soul machine grinds on. Rufus are functional funk. Without the distinctive voice of Chaka Kahn, just another competent, discountable boogie 'n' ballad bland-out outfit. There are neat frills — the guitar on one track, the horns on another — but nothing of real substance. The vocals are uninteresting; the instrumental track less than that.

Why anyone should bother with Rufus while The Isleys, James Brown, Funkadelic and numerous disco singles (for example) do the same thing at a far higher level of excellence is beyond me.

There's marginally more reason to bother with Dobie Gray, but not enough to warrant expenditure. He has one of those warm, floating voices which can croon on effortlessly and often does. His music still retains the flavour of his Southern roots, though often camouflaged — as on this album — by indiscreet strings and prettified arrangements.

His trouble has been finding strong songs and there are precious few here. A couple of stabs at disco and a wailer of romantic dross — "You'll be as fresh as the sweet morning dew/Oh, how it thrills me waking up next to you" warbles Dobie on one song, as if addressing a bottle of distilled water.

I mean. Really.

Graham Lock

MEATLOAF
Featuring Stoney and Meatloaf (Prodigal).

Meatloaf gourmets should beware these stale left-overs. They date back to the days when Mr Loaf was strictly corned beef.

The mountainous one is arguably the most successful

operatic-style tenor since Gene Pitney and Harry Secombe, but it's not simply the way he sings that makes his music effective.

Principally, it's what he sings. On 'Bat Out Of Hell' he had the witty, melodic songs of Jim Steinman, who provided epic arrangements to match the Meatloaf voice.

On this re-release, recorded eight years ago for Motown, there's simply nothing in the same universe. Loaf tries a variety of styles, all to little avail.

Mainstream Motown with 'It Takes All Kinds Of People.' Dalaney and Bonnie while soul on 'What You See Is What You Get.' The ponderous schmaltz of 'She Waits By The Window.'

Unfortunately, the heaviest thing on the album is the sleeve picture of our hero. Proof that competence by itself is no guarantee of success.

Bob Edmunds.

VARIOUS ARTISTS
One Big Happy Family
(Island)

Number 2: That of 'Various Artists' manoeuvre. Eight reggae acts, here — Third World, Inner Circle, Bob Marley, Steel Pulse, Burning Spear, Toots & The Maytals, Zap Pow, I Jah Man — low priced, pretty graphics; very appetizing.

Penamunde: Do you think there might be some ... political reason?

Number 2 (shaking his head): I just don't know, Ian. Ever since that incident —

Penamunde: You mean — Number 2: Yes, it's the 'We're all so happy and homogenous here in this romantic ghetto' tactic; inoffensive

middle range, mix it in there with the Schrieber wall units and spot lamps —

Penamunde: Meaning? Number 2: Little or no spiritual, political, or social dimension — nothing beyond the ... Coffee Table.

Penamunde: You can't be implying ...

Ian Penman



TANYA TUCKER
TNT (MCA)

Dishy Tanya Tucker seems full of Western Promise as she poses on the cover oh-so-provocatively with a mike-lead buried in her crotch, but whatever musical talent she has to offer is obscured by the exquisitely boring MOR studio over-production.

'TNT' is a collection of safe, tried and tested middleweight country and rock ballads (e.g. 'Heartbreak Hotel', 'Brown Eyed Handsome Man', 'Texas') — which sells Ms Tucker as a Kentucky-fried conservative Lulu in a lumberjack shirt.

You can do better than this, Tanya, can't you?

Rick Joseph

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ON THE TOWN

Ever fallen in love with a drummer you shouldn't have?

**Buzzcocks
Patrik
Fitzgerald
Ludus**

Hammersmith Odeon

Du-di, it's the weekend. Dum-dum, I've got the flu. Saturday night and I wish I was home in bed but instead I'm at the Odeon having my toes trampled by pogoing punkettes. Ah, but this is rock 'n' roll; this is the romance of pop.

But who are this strange group that open the gig?

"We're Ludas and this is our last song," says Linder to ironic cheers. Ludas don't go down very well. I thought them impressive in a tight, heavy, doomy boring kind of way. Imagine Siouxsie Sioux backed by The Voids (they do 'Love Comes In Spurts'). I didn't enjoy them, but I'm sure they'll be very successful ... later.

Next on was Patrik Fitzgerald in baggy red trousers, striped T-shirt and grey trilby. He read a story, chatted to the audience, recited a poem, failed to find a few others and strummed his way through a dozen songs.

His bumbling was irritating, his habit of repeating a phrase at the end of every song annoying, and he didn't sing very well. But somehow he carried it all off.

Highlights were a beautifully timed 'But Not Any More' and a poem 'God On Palydor', which told the sad tale of how the Almighty failed to make commercial songs and was dropped by the label. He ended with 'Hammersmith Odeons'.

Presumably an irony. I thought it was a cop-out he was there at all after recording that song. I guess Pat's just a boy who can't say no.

And so, smoothly and efficiently, to Buzzcocks.

I smiled and bopped at the beginning when they played 'I Don't Mind', 'Ever Fallen In Love' and 'Sixteen Again'. I managed a grin and a jerk at their final stick thrash through 'Promises', 'Orgasm Addict' and 'What Do I Get'. But in the middle I frowned, shuffled my feet and got a headache.

The trouble is that Buzzcocks' solo method of 'experimenting' — of opening their songs — is to throw in a lot of quick-fire guitar chords and much heavy drumming by John Maher, who is not exactly a subtle player. He got through 20 sticks and a snare drum and on one of his interminable thump-thump interludes, his 'solo' consisted of the very same riff he'd been hammering throughout the rest of the song. A lot of the time he sounded like he was playing with clubs.

Even at the close, when the group took the easy option of exiting on a string of hit singles, they just seemed to be banging it out and the

backing some dude they've never heard of.

To all but their intrepid leader, these three dates by the hastily-assembled Misfits are just a flash in the pan. Mark Ambler (once of TRB) is on keyboards, John Brown (one of Wreckless Eric's Four Rough Men) is playing bass and Rich Kids Midge Ure and Rusty Egan supply guitar and drums respectively. No expectations, no frills — it's just straight drinking man's rock music; an excuse to sink a few pints.

But for Kelvin Blacklock, whose past excursions with Mont The Hoople, London SS, Tuff Darts and White Cats have denied him any recognition, it's another story altogether.

A mere two minutes into the set his compelling revival of mid-70s rockstar routines confirms he's been the victim of rough justice. Flashes of Jagger bombard the observer. He not only looks like Jagger, he sings and moves like him. The effortless ease with which he leans into the mike stand, flings it skywards and arches his gangling frame, can only result from an unhealthy fascination with full-length mirrors.

Comparisons with the Stones don't end there as the set is a close approximation of their early dirty-sounding rock. And the band stoutly brave the absurd lay-out of the Bridge House, which is three times as wide as it is long, with its PA stacks kept poles apart.

Out of The Misfits' usual contexts, they all play with refreshing enthusiasm and spontaneity. Midge Ure, snappily dressed in sack-like plastic trousers, adds perfect vocal harmonies and some exquisitely tasty solos. Rusty Egan is also on ferocious form, belting through a thinly rehearsed set with amazing authority. As Mark Ambler's end of the stage has a different area code, most of his contributions are

completely out of earshot.

They reel off 12 numbers, stop, apologise, giggle goofishly and start the whole set again. It's a fair selection from the Blacklock back catalogue: 'Shotgun Lovers' (White Cats), 'Always A Loser' (Mott), 'Wild In The Streets' (first recorded by Chris Spedding), 'Fun City' (Tuff Darts), and even the old Herd number 'Don't Want Our Loving Today'.

The rest, again mostly self-penned, are all welded with the same abrasive force, shamelessly outdated music, but delivered with a stylish conviction.

Exit The Misfits, back to the real world. And Blacklock? There are some people who always seem destined to miss the bus. They're usually the ones who least deserve it.

Mark Ellen



Who's the Jagger of them all? BLACKLOCK. Pic DAVID CORIO

And they thought that denim was finished...

Thin Lizzy

Oxford

These dreaming spires won't get much sleep tonight...

The second show of the Lizzy tour sees them in Oxford town delivering the kind of classic act that's won them the major-league heavyweight status for which Phil Lynott has worked so long and hard.

The snag with classics of any kind, of course, is that their perfection is preserved in aspic: magnificent, maybe, but static all the same. TL's act is whole and complete in itself, but it's without the inspiration of uncertainty, the possibilities and potential of the best of their more modern and fallible counterparts.

Progress is out to lunch — will simple power serve in its place?

Well, Oxford says yes. Ever wondered if there really was a market for all those ads at the

back of this paper? The denim loons and Sabbath patches, Rush badges and Quo logos? Wonder no more, it's all here this evening and banging heads like they're going out of style.

Swarming forward in kamikaze waves, crashing, crushing stagewards they pile themselves onto collapsing mountains of humanity, thrashing and sweat-soaked, a maelstrom of clenched-fisted delirium.

Mind you, they livened up once the band came on.

Indeed the rapport was total, intensified by the relative intimacy of the venue. Lynott seems to straddle the stage, filling half the hall with his grin alone. Pinned to his chest is a Sid Vicious badge and he sports a black armband which, on closer inspection (oh ho-ho, the sly old dog), appears to be a frilly garter.

Swaggering and laughing, he comes on like a regular superstar and yet can carry the whole act off with humour and humanity that transcend the standards of the dumb brain-crushers who can pass for heavy-metal heroes. And the best of his songs, 'Still In Love With You', 'Emerald' and 'Rosalie' are works of unimpeachable stylishness, flowing with life and character that shame the drip-dry romanticism of his rivals.

No doubt about it, Phil Lynott is one of our finest rock 'n' rollers.

Meanwhile the ever-elegant Scott Gorham and the pugnacious Gary Moore provide the perfect counterweights to their frontman; their scalding guitar-work connecting beautifully, swirling around Lynott's bass and the tough propulsion of Brian Downey's drums. It's probably the most satisfactorily-balanced line-up that Lizzy have had to date.

'Don't Believe A Word' and 'Baby Drives Me Crazy' stood out as examples of the high-grade hard-rock they invariably produce with ease and excellence.

Okay, fine. Time to wheel in the big gun...

Thin Lizzy still entertain, give value for money, come up with the goods every time; but it's a long time since they came up with any surprises.

'Waiting For An Alibi', for instance, is pure stereotype and Lynott's most disappointing effort so far — not the staggered-chorus device lifted from his one great song, 'The Boys Are Back In Town'.

Their career has brought them to the point where, given the HM audience's chronic insistence on familiarity, a little originality becomes a dangerous thing, an unnecessary risk. Lizzy really need do no more than keep on keepin' on for success to be assured. But it would be sad to see the band petrify into just another rock 'n' roll institution.

Only four new numbers were ventured tonight: 'Get Out Of Here' and 'Do Anything You Wanna', both standard Lizzy, no better or worse; 'Got To Give It Up', a tragic-comical tale of the demon alcohol; and the more interesting 'Black Rose' — a long and rolling folk-epic that incorporates the American song 'Shenandoah' and some lovely electric-Celtic passages.

Such innovations were rare touches in a set that was geared to matching expectations, and doing so with complete success.

And the best goes on, but nowhere in particular.

Paul Du Noyer

The Misfits

Bridge House

A sizeable but strangely reserved crowd have parted with half a quid to see four new wave 'name' musicians



Duetting BUZZCOCKS DIGGLE and SHELLEY. Pic CHRIS HORLER.

'Toothless' Tom bites back

TRB The Straits

Belfast

At the Ulster Hall The Straits are pooling their effervescent post-glam tack in an unsuccessful battle against an abysmal PA, the odd stream of mucous and their own roughshod musicianship. They play too fast, occasionally out of tune and the words are unintelligible. It's a refreshingly enterprising idea to give a small group like this billing on a prestigious nationwide tour, but judging by this performance they still have a long way to go.

After releasing an album and EP of some of the proudest and strongest music to come from any of the groups to emerge since 1976, The Tom Robinson Band have started '79 with a less than average LP. And as they search for balance in their set tonight, the group's choice of material highlights their weaknesses (for the most part songwriting), instead of their obvious strengths.

Perfunctory stompers such as 'All Right All Night' and 'Black Angel' fill valuable space which would have been best used to incorporate the powerful and evocative 'Long Hot Summer', or the seething vengeance of 'Days Of Rage', the highlight of the new set.

Throughout the set TRB show they've overcome the various line-up changes and can still attack with cohesive economy. It's unfortunate then that such qualities should be wasted on poorly chosen material. It's only with the closing *four de force* of 'Glad To Be Gay', 'Don't Take No For An Answer', 'Ain't Gonna Take It' and '2-4-6-8 Motorway' that content

blends with performance to give a palpable urgency. These songs more than any others show the full range of TRB's spectrum: 'Gay' is chilling in its brutal anger; 'Don't Take No' a sublimely structured, punchy and dynamic slab of traditional rock; 'Ain't Gonna' an irrefutable declaration of pride; and 'Motorway' is an anglo 'Roadrunner'.

While the more lighthearted numbers are clearly meant to engender a slapstick atmosphere, 'Martin' is one of the few that works. Pianist Ian Parker's solo on 'Law And Order' borders on the ludicrous, and the idea of an extended rap by the hysterical authoritarian figure on 'Power In The Darkness' (Robinson complete with grotesque mask) is unnecessary and embarrassing.

It's a leaning towards satirical theatrics used to slightly better effect on 'Sorry Mr Harris' when Tom appears with his hair tucked under a beret, wearing shades and an army jumper that would be best forgotten.

For the most part, presentation is kept clean, precise and simple.

Bathed in bright white light, Danny Kustow and Robinson obviously tap up their roles as ebullient frontmen, often acknowledging their fans with friendly gestures. The criticism that TRB is condescending and preaches to his audience is pure bullshit. His approach is unmistakably amiable and sincere, and if he does become cloying it's just the common man attempting to work with honesty in a genre where condescension is a way of life.

His style of delivery is preferable to most of rock's strutting breast-beating studs.

And it's as equally ridiculous to say that the message is 'shoved down the audience's throats'; you listen and discard or digest at will.

At their best TRB deliver righteous, cogent rock songs brimming with conviction. Their widespread appeal is underlined by the motley audience they attract at Belfast. From the very young to the over 40s, and from the long-haired to the chains-and-pins contingent, its scope is a tribute to the catholic nature of the music.

It is all the more regrettable therefore that room should be given to the reggaefied interpretation of 'I Shall Be Released' (ethnic emasculation fit to make McCartney's 'C-Moon' blush), the inferior 'Black Angel' (where the ecappella harmonies went haywire) and the watery, plodding 'Bully For You'.

But to call Robinson 'a crusader without teeth' is fatuous.

The burden put on the band's shoulders demanded nothing but maximum achievement on their second LP. It didn't come, but the group is still in its infancy, musically their potential is great and their importance must not be underestimated.

Gavin Martin

The Pretenders

Liverpool

Eric's is an innovative club where the headliners appear first; ideal for those who prefer to watch the band they've paid to see and then leave, but unfortunate for the support who find their audience greatly depleted.

Another bonus is the matinee for the 15 to 18 year olds. After all, isn't the main part of today's music aimed at

the kids who can't always get into the clubs to hear it?

For The Pretenders' early show there were only 40 to 50 people. Perhaps this group appeal to an older audience, because even at the second show there wasn't the capacity crowd one might have expected for such a hotly-tipped combo. But at least the punters showed willing; doubtless a *Top Of The Pops* appearance had played its part.

Opening with 'The Wait', the B-side of their surprisingly small hit, the fourpiece belie the claim they're merely Chrissie Hynde's new backing band.

In ubiquitous black leather and bassist Pete Farndon nattily quiffed and gloriously mean and moody, the band's greaser ambience is marred only by guitarist James Honeyman-Scott's incongruous sports jacket. The lanky Ms Hynde defiantly prowls the stage: an androgynous figure pulling all the classic guitar poses, her mannerisms swagger from Patti Smith to Phil Lynott and she exudes a certain intangible sexuality.

All the songs are relatively distinctive, slickly performed, sometimes bluesy and often with a poppy flavour that would appeal to a palate dulled by too much mainstream rock. And all this is embellished by Chrissie's sensual vocals.

'Stop Your Sobbing' injects a little lean romance, and The Mysterians' 'I Need Somebody' is handled with punchy conviction.

Throughout, a particularly placid crowd watch with avid interest but not the enthusiasm of their London cousins. The band are politely requested back onstage and not ordered.



Up yours... ROBINSON, pic AL JOHNSON

The encore 'Sabre Dance', with credit to Honeyman-Scott's guitar work, is performed very much like Love Sculpture and a close look was needed to make sure Dave Edmunds hadn't slipped on. Chrissie is Sandie Shaw on 'Girl Don't Come', and that's your lot.

Even if Liverpool didn't witness 'the future of rock 'n' roll', it certainly sampled the delights of a better-than-average rock band. But as for immortality...

Susan Fletcher

The Ramones

New York

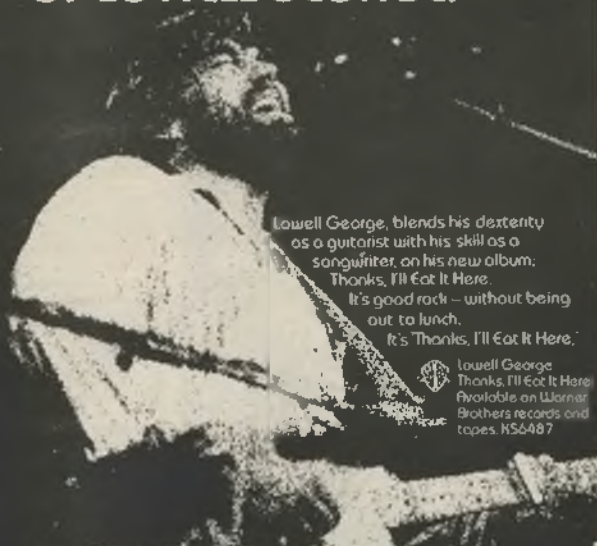
They seemed to have decided to host a Battle of the Bands

for the Titans of Punk at the Palladium, for just three weeks after The Clash knocked us out in the very same hall, here were our hometown boys The Ramones back from movie-making in Hollywood.

Although the closeness of these gigs invited comparisons, there were few to be made.

The Clash are defiant, concerned with problems of social order — Johnny may scowl angrily, but The Ramones are fun-loving and safe. The Clash are a realist documentary — The Ramones are a cartoon. The Clash show jarred our psyches and moved

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BE TRUE?
KING OF SKIFFLE MAKING
A COME BACK?

Plus!

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CRYSTAL GAYLE,
EDDIE RABBITT AND
GRAHAM PARSONS!!

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Ramalam veterans on parade



Watch what you're doing with those fingers... DEE DEE RAMONE — pic CHALKIE DAVIES

our minds — The Ramones made our bodies jump in the air.

The Ramones have now developed their performance to a state of awesome perfection. Song follows song in a nonstop onslaught that is both numbing and exhilarating. Dee Dee still does his patented "one-two-three-four" countdowns, but

frequently they dispense with even those. They are a hi-speed train that can't be derailed.

The best moments of fun came with their return to the less personalised, headbanging teen-trash anthems of the earlier albums, and they also unveiled the title song of their movie *Rock 'n' Roll High School*: "I just want

to get some chicks / I just want to have some kicks / Rock, rock, rock 'n' roll high school".

Joey's blue jeans looked like they had extra holes in them for the occasion (dressing flash for the big gig?); Dee Dee was leaping higher than ever; and the set was long, up to 90 minutes — a big jump for a band that started out doing 20 minutes 'cos that was all the songs they knew.

The boys are also making the militaristic aspects of their performance even more explicit. They began with pre-recorded marching drums; the stage backdrop

was their American eagle symbol with the rallying cry "Hey ho, let's go". They're harmless highschool cheerleaders, but they could just as easily be battlefield sergeants as their lockstep performance is more disciplined than a military drill.

Of course the whacked-out eccentricity of their presentation — Joey's goofy-guy persona and their emersion in an eternal teenage world of "piling in the back seat" and "hitching a ride to Rockaway Beach" — belies any *aminous* tones.

So The Ramones are great Americans; but zey are gut

Germans too.

Dee Dee has developed into a fluid and inventive bass player, and Johnny's strumming is more confident and aggressive. New drummer Marky was bent over his kit as if hiding, but he is up to "pounding out that beat". The real surprise is Joey's singing, which has acquired a new eloquence.

But while Joey finds room to experiment, the band sacrifice much of the subtlety they developed on *Road To Ruin* to achieve a gale-force power. And, despite Joey's best efforts, the characters of the LP's songs are overrun by the demands of The Ramones' rhythmic steamroller.

Innocence is a delicate thing, easily lost. When they allowed the elements of pathos to seep into the portrayals of divine dumbness on their recent record, they were recognising the process of growing older and more reflective. Eventually they will have to find a way to embrace these advances in their stage act.

The Fabulous Poodles, who opened the show, seemed to be out for laughs, but failed to deliver.

Lead singer Tony de Meur affects a Ray Davies style accusatory pose, but his targets are all easy shots and his songs lack the incisive observations that made good Kinks' satire.

On record the essential crudeness of a song like "Tit Photographer Blues" can be obscured by a catchy melody and clever vocal counterpoints. But live these elements break down and the song degenerates into a one word joke with the word "tit" repeated to the point of nausea. On 'B Movies' the band tried a country groove

but missed the swing. Even "Mirror Star", which sounds great on the radio, came off flat.

In the studio this band wear their multi-track adornments like cute little ribbons; live they sounded pretty shaggy.

Richard Grabel

Writz

Middlesex Poly

Wanderlust brought your roving rockit to page six of the *A-Z* to catch a fleeting glimpse of the wriious Writz. Since they formed last November, this wacky sextet have *son-et-lumiere* around the polytechnics of southern Britain, and tonight they display their Dadaistic doodlings to a sizeable gathering of trainee farmers.

For influences they draw heavily on Salvador Dali and Billy Smart's. Decked out in cheetah skin threads and day-glo orthopaedic macho costumes, they come on like an avant-garde Muppet Show. A cluttered pot-pourri of Disco, cool-jazz and popsicle rock was geared to incite a gala of wally-dancing abandon.

Fronted by the yummy Beverley Sage, a versatile singer given to Dietrichian gotho-vamping and pizzicato squeals, and the bubbling Grouchesque Steve Fairnie, Writz pumped an infectious mirth and moxie into the corporate corpuses of punters present. They embellished their act with a boffo pastiche of The Osmonds, and a portentous solo on a Rickembacker which turned out to be made of latex rubber.

The lucky ones died laughing first.

Rick Joseph

And up yours... HYNDE pic KEVIN CUMMINS

to get some chicks / I just want to have some kicks / Rock, rock, rock 'n' roll high school".

Joey's blue jeans looked like they had extra holes in them for the occasion (dressing flash for the big gig?); Dee Dee was leaping higher than ever; and the set was long, up to 90 minutes — a big jump for a band that started out doing 20 minutes 'cos that was all the songs they knew.

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So The Ramones are great Americans; but zey are gut

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Elton John

Glasgow

This is hardly a 'comeback' tour for Elton John but his re-emergence, and the atmosphere is decidedly lowkey.

Apart from one grand and an electric piano, the black waxed stage holds only a small drinks table, a few potted plants and a large orange and chrome art deco screen. For Elton himself it's a plain clothes affair — canary yellow trousers, black jacket and grey flat cap. No silly specs, no outrageous costumes; a simple man, in fact.

The first half features Elton on his own. It's an impressive reminder of the depth and strength of his songwriting repertoire that he can start his performance with a potential showstopper like 'Your Song'.

After such an opening it would be easy to fall into a cabaret run of greatest hits, but Elton accepts the challenge. Interest is sustained by juxtaposing less familiar items like 'Sixty Years On', 'Skyline Pigeon' (as moving now as when 'Empty Sky' was first released) and 'Roy Rogers' with the inevitable crowd favourites of

'Daniel', 'Rocket Man' and 'Candle In The Wind'.

They're all reminders of just how good a singer and pianist Elton John is, as strong a performer as he is a writer.

There are also two brief interludes in the show. The first is unplanned when Elton takes his life in his hands during a power-failure by telling jokes to a Saturday night Glasgow audience — and carries it off. The second is for a couple of non-originals: Jim Reeves' 'He'll Have To Go' — the first number Elton ever played as a pub performer — and a long, whooped-up 'Heard It Through The Grapevine'.

So far so good, but so restrained.

The second part of the evening begins when the art deco screen is removed to reveal Ray Cooper, showman supreme, presiding like a benign mad professor over a battery of percussive instruments. Coaxing, cajoling and conducting, Cooper finally brings the rather subdued audience to life and the whole show lifts off.

Musically, the same pattern as before is followed with the rarer items — special praise for a superb 'Idol' from the vastly underrated 'Blue



A hat-raising experience... ELTON JOHN — pic VALERIE CLENDENING.

Moves' — mingling with the better known compositions. Aided and abetted by the extrovert but respectful Cooper, Elton goes full steam with a long drawn out 'Crazy Water' rocker before finishing

a two hour set with a generous helping of encores.

Great show, great show! My very first review for this paper was Elton's 'retirement' concert two and half years ago, when I concluded that

those in a hurry to write off Elton John were in for a big disappointment and a long wait. Nice to be proved right once in a while, and I'll go for the same again this time.

Ian Cranra

and baggy togs, give or take 18 guitars.

Apart from full-throated Freddie, the attention focused on Winston (Chalkie) Oddoye who stalked the stage with black beret on black head looking like a black panther (the animal) and laying down matching prowling bass lines.

I'm willing to bet that The (Scottish) Monos will translate well into vinyl and that you'll be boppin' to them at some future shindig.

Elisse Van Poznak

David Essex

Hammersmith Odeon

Hordes of screaming, weeping schoolgirls wet their knickers as the cockney rebel breezed onstage, cool as a cucumber, though nowhere near as green.

This bloke's an actor, his part well-rehearsed: the cool, careless pose, studiously sultry expression and slightly raised eyebrow constitute one big patronising ego trip.

Most of the songs were from his new album 'Imperial Wizard' — a steady stream of bland MOR pop/rock requiring no great brainstorm to compose, but enough to make him smile on the way to the bank. His best number was Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber's 'Oh What A Circus', significantly the only track Essex didn't write. And 'Twenty Flights Up' brought attention to drummer Trevor Morris: afro afrow, he saved the bands face with skilful, rebellious rhythm domination.

Other than that there was nothing to keep you awake, bar near-hysterical third-formers and trendy young mums throwing gifts onstage to be swept up afterwards.

'If I Could', a lullaby from 'All The Fun Of The Fair' was simple self-indulgence; David crooned dreamily, gushing puerile, simpering lyrics accompanied only by guitars and keyboards. 'This song has a special meaning for me,' he said in a sad, low voice that made you want to retch all over him. But the kids believed him. It was followed by 'Stay With Me', a beautiful, heart-rending love song that stretched his vocal chords to the limit, producing an acceptable version of a song performed ten times better by Lorraine Ellison.

'Rock On', his first hit, is still a part of the set, technically much improved six years on; as is 'Lamplight' which adheres closely to the first's 'successful' structure.

Of the original David Essex Band only sexist Alan Wakeman remains and the rest are experienced, competent pros with little enthusiasm and few original ideas. Arrangements consist of guitar/trumpet/sax/drums mix with a sprinkling of maracas which constitutes an efficient, economical sound, ideal for those who have little time or incentive to shop around.

Essex finished with 'Goodbye First Love', another heartbreaker aptly save till last and guaranteed to send most of the Odeon audience sobbing to their beds, emotionally destroyed because it was all over and only the memories remained.

Someone wolf-whistled as darling David presented his best profile to the cameras. 'Yeah, 'e sin't 'alf pretty in 'e'

Deanne Pearson

Scottish Monos

Golden Lion

Success came to The Monos when they won the title of 'Edinburgh's Best Local Band' last year on their very first gig. Since then, demand for them in Scotland has been great.

But in the south they have to compete with the ('inferior brand') Monos and Monochrome Set for the 'Mono' moniker market. Getting critically mauled by Paul Du Noyer on a 'bad' night during their last London outing didn't help either.

PDM's criticism was reserved for frontman, Freddie King — a Dury clone, too heavy on stage presence. It's true he has Duryesque head-movements but beyond that, comparisons are unfounded and unfair and I found him highly personable. With his Russian-West Africa parentage, King must contend with Phil Lynott for ethnic credibility.

The band play on the multi-racial aspect of their lineup but stop at spiffy black and white clothes, effective lighting, elaborate graphic handouts and equally contrasting pure pop and reggae-infused rock which they call 'Power Calypso'. With none of Bethnal's heavy-handed social self-consciousness, this is fun music with silly lyrics but generally zappy songs.

A layered guitar-echo sound, featured on the perilously pseudo-punky titled 'Sick Of You', could be their distinctive mark as it recurs throughout the set. 'Talking Pictures', their forthcoming single, and 'Nasty (x8) Habits' are also zingy swingers; but 'Swimming Pool' is ridiculous, attempting an 'aural Hockney'.

Writer-guitarist Jamie Watson liberally borrows from The Ramones, and the entire chord sequence of 'Highland Rock' is Petty's 'American Girl'. Otherwise he knows how to construct a nifty tune aided by drummer Brian O'Donnell and lead guitarists Dave Buchanan who resembles Rick Nielson in cap



Bring back MONOS...

pic JUSTIN THOMAS

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Eddie And The Hot Rods The Members

Rainbow

"The high posing macho, the costumes, the lights... the lights changing in time to the music! I consider that to be an insult to peoples' intelligence." — Tina Weymouth, NME, July 1978.

Eddie And The Hot Rods have plenty of big bulbs stacked behind their amps these days. Flashing, dazzling red, blue and orange, a row of blinding white floodlights — and they all change in time to the music! Rainbow a go-go! How impressive!

By the end of their show there is enough wattage being burned onstage to take Blue Oyster Cult through the recording of two dozen triple five sets, enough pretty colours to fill Old Trafford with Rasla album sleeves.

But, sadly, Eddie And The Hot Rods themselves are not a very bright or particularly colourful aural proposition these days. And no amount of gloss can disguise that this was a pitifully perfunctory rock 'n' roll show, played out by a band of artistically redundant dinosaurs. It was remarkable only in its sheer, numbing mediocrity.

What was once greasy R&B is now no more than bludgeoning bombast.

The Hot Rods tread wearily through awfully affected, overblown originals ('Media Messiahs' and 'Power And The Glory') and then ruin great songs like 'Gloria' and 'The Kids Are Alright'; totally swamping the original, reflective brilliance of the latter, for instance.

Barrie Masters' renowned gymnastic frontman antics have much the same effect as the light show — they do absolutely nothing to relieve the boredom. Besides, someone who has to rely on mucho macho cockrock postures is never going to be the new Olga Korbut.

And I used to queue regularly outside the Marquee only three years back to lap up this same band.

In 1976, the Hot Rods, more than any other band at the time, first lured me away from the suburban disco-floor to rock gigs in the capital. But times change, values too, and Eddie And The Hot Rods were always doomed to be too short sighted a proposition for these ears.

Take it or leave it? The Rods should knock it on the head.

The Members, by way of contrast, were great.

They played a truncated support set and seemed all the stronger for it, highlighting the best tracks from the album along with 'Offshore Banking Business', reggae that is left not fashioned, and the spirited here-comes-the-weekend thrash of 'Goodbye To The Job' before finishing up in Larry Wallis' 'Police Car' with X-Ray Spexer Rudi Thompson on searing sax.

With The Members, though, it is not so much the songs, crisply evocative thumbnail sketches that they are; it's the way they sing 'em. Make no mistake, the kinetic, feisty Members — when a few strictly personal internal problems have been resolved are going to be enormous, and deservedly so.



JOURNEY in the past...

pic CHRIS HORLER.

Dinosaurs don't die



Mucho macho MASTERS. Pic: CHRIS HORLER

Then their only problem will be whether to become tax exiles or stick with inshore banking business.

Adrian Thrills

Journey Pat Travers Band Glasgow

Maybe I'm judging this by the wrong standards...

Journey are another American platinum album band. The various members have played with Santana, Focus, Steve Miller and others, mainly at times when those bands were achieving some acclaim. They're still obviously fine musicians, yet I can think of nothing complimentary to say about Journey's music.

An average Journey song starts quietly with a husky vocal, piano or acoustic guitar: the kind of sham-sincere thing Queen do. Soon Neal Schon commences the grinding dirge riff. The band crash in, sounding as tuneful and enjoyable to me as The Slits must sound to a Bo Hansson fan.

John Perry's voice wails over this din like a pterodactyl calling for its mate during a primeval electric storm. Animals in a two-mile radius whimper pitifully. Rats head for the exits. 'Woe Oahoh Woe Oh', he sings. Schon steps forward for the low-fretboard guitar solos which sounds like *Star Wars*' battle scene sound effects played at 500 rpm.

Perhaps the proper approach is just to let the sound bleach your brain's painful memories of the working week, then unselfconsciously latch onto whatever fantasy drifts into the vacuum. We may never know for sure, but that's an amateur prognosis of the HM fans playing imaginary guitars. If all they want from music is a palliative, then all the aspiring new wave social engineers may as well admit they're preaching to the converted.

The flash and arrogance of lead guitarists is better represented in special guests, the Pat Travers Band.

These strutting studs in tight white trousers may have been the personification of the rock 'n' roll spirit ten years ago, but in more enlightened times such things are completely unacceptable.

The band that time forgot,

Travers is as much of an anachronism as Whirlwind. He's a sort of Canadian Rory Gallagher who grew up with Deep Purple and secondhand blues. His music is relatively unpretentious, includes

occasional evidence of subtlety and taste and will probably have a sizeable audience for as long as he cares to make it.

As far as I'm concerned both of these bands play the

kind of music which forced me to the bargain bins in search of exciting obscurities, pre-'76. On reacquaintance, Travers made me think it wasn't as bad as I had remembered. Journey convinced me I was right the first time.

Glenn Gibson.

Soulyard

Rock Garden

Soul fans — if you want fun, if you want dancing, if you want real soul music played with fervour and affection — your prayers are answered.

Soulyard are back in town!

After residencies at the Hope and Anchor and the Pegasus last year, the group look several weeks off to rehearse new songs. The changes work. At the Rock Garden they played the funkier, most commercial, absolutely best gig of theirs I've yet seen.

The place was packed. The people sweated and swayed. The band blew up a storm. Glorious, exhilarating music you wished would go on forever! 'Move On Up' as celebratory funk; a marvellous vocals/sax duet on 'Shoorah Shoorah'; the hard, shimmering 'Love Rights'. And beside the

classics their own songs were just as good: the bright bop bounce of 'Roller Coaster', and the deliciously insidious swoops of 'Love's Demand'.

Soulyard are six people. Ruthie Smith, Benni Lees and Laka Koc share lead vocals and harmonies and play sax, bass and keyboards respectively. Linda Malone (congas) and Nobby Clarke (drums) complete the rhythm section. John Jamieson contributes spare, telling guitar. They work together beautifully, their empathy and enjoyment spilling over into the audience — they don't pose or 'perform', they just play and everybody jumps aboard.

Look, I know it's deemed uncool to rave about a little-known band, but Soulyard are just *gorrrreatt* and to suggest less would do them a disservice. I've now seen them more times than any other group and I still go home with an ear-to-ear grin of stone bliss fixed on my face. Every gig has that get-down party atmosphere — I just can't remember when I last felt such simple and direct pleasure in music.

Soul is alive, well and having a ball in your own back yard. Get out there and get on your good foot! Yeeeah!

Graham Lock



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Information CITY

EDITED BY FRED DELLAR

Why is Jerry Lee smiling?

I HAVE just purchased a copy of the Sun Records' single entitled 'Save The Last Dance For Me', credited to 'Jerry Lee Lewis And Friends'. But the vocal is definitely Elvis Presley! I also think the guitar is Carl Perkins but I'm not sure. Do you know if this record is part of the legendary Million Dollar Quartet tapes? If so, when can we expect an album? — JOHN ALEXANDER, Perivale, Middx.

Frankly, the only geazer who really knows who's on the Jerry Lee item is producer Shelby Singleton and, shrewdly that he is, he's not letting on. After all, if he says it's Elvis then RCA slap another writ on him — and if he claims it's someone else, then sales will take a nose-dive. Just for the record, Roy Carr, who's just completely a tome on Presley, reckons it is El though the whole thing's far too Proby-like from my point of view.

Since this letter was penned, Charly Records have come up with a Sun album titled 'Jerry Lee Lewis — Duets', which again, may or may not be formed from the Million Dollar Quartet tapes. Says a spokesman for the record company, a proper Charly: "Shelby won't even tell us who's on the disc and just keeps saying 'Ask Jerry Lee'. He's still fighting various court cases — he's had five fights with RCA so far, winning three, and it'll be at least a year before any Million Dollar Quartet tapes, featuring Lewis, Cash, Presley and Perkins, will legally be able to be released."

Meanwhile, Todd Slaughter, president of the Elvis fan club, claims that El can be heard on two or three of the album cuts, though another Presley authority opined that the whole thing was a giant con, overdubs being grafted onto Jerry Lee originals by various unknowns, the Elvis-like portions being provided by one Jimmy Ellis.

Next week, we discuss the mystery of the Marie Celeste, while investigations into Uri Geller, Pyramid Power, the disappearance of Glenn Miller, and the loss of form of Manchester City, all continue.

A postscript to David Midgley's letter in your December 2 issue concerning the member of Gracious.

I was the keyboard player and co-writer with Sandy Davis in the band and am now working for CBS here in Los Angeles. Alan Cowderoy was in fact the lead guitarist rather than the drummer (the loves insults though). Rob Lipson, who played drums, is now successful in the rag trade in London. The band broke up in 1971 and there weren't many spin-offs to speak of, though Tim Wheatley, who played bass, did form a band called Taggett, who made a couple of albums, I think for UA, about a year later. — MARTIN KITKAT, Los Angeles, California.

Criley — do you mean that wooden box with strings attached is not a drum? So that's where we've been going wrong all these years! Nevertheless, ta nicely for

tidying up the loose ends on Gracious, though to set the record as straight as I can on Taggett, they had album released on two labels, an LP called 'Taggett' appearing on UA 29783 in '72, this being followed by an album of the same title on EMI EMC 3015. However, I have a sneaking feeling the latter may have been just a re-release of the UA item — maybe someone

could put me right on this. Guess this means yet another letter — perhaps from Colin Horton-Jennings (guitar), Terry Fogg (drums), Tim Wheatley (bass) or Pete Arnesen (keyboards), the four some who comprised Taggett at the time of their UA recording contract. This bloomin' column is getting to be more like James Burke's *Connections* all the time!

I HAVE been an ardent Bee Gees fan since 1972. Unfortunately, no music magazine covers any aspect of their careers these days. Could you tell me exactly what the Brothers Gibb are doing these days — whether they are recording or on the road etc? — KANAN B, Singapore 9.

Whaaaatt! Excuse me while I indulge in a touch of the soporifics. Ah! Now I see it all. The date on the letter... December, 1975. I guess it must have got caught at the back of the filing cabinet. Makes you think though — I wonder what did happen to the Bee Gees?

ARE J. J. Cale's 'Really' and 'Okie' albums still available on the A&M label in this country?



ANSWER: he knows the owner of the mystery voice (but isn't letting on...).

If they are, could you supply the catalogue numbers? — P. A. MORRIS, Dudley, West Midlands.

Since Shelter and A&M did a Rod'n'Britt and went their separate ways, Cale's four Shelter albums have been released here on Island. All

are still available, the catalogue numbers being — 'Troubadour' (ISA 5001), 'Really' (ISA 5002), 'Naturally' (ISA 5003) and 'Okie' (ISA 5004). You asked for two numbers, we gave you four. Remember folks, you get double value with NME '79!



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C809	○	PHILIPS	●	SANYO	▲
C819	○	N 7212	●	M 2327	●
GRUNDIG	N 2215	●	RD 6078	○	PC 1030
CN 830	○	N 2218	●	RD 6266	○
CN 930	○	N 2213	●	RD 6130	▲
CN1600	○	N 2224	●	RD 6390 2	○
CNE750	●	N 2201	○	RD 6390	○
CNE800	●	N 2511	○	RD 6600	▲
CNE250	●	N 2515	○	SONY	●
HARMON KARDON	N 2320	○	TC 158D	○	C 1740
HK 1500	▲	N 2321	○	TC 2A-3R	○
HK 2500	▲	N 2534	○	TCX 1	○
HK 3500	○	N 2538	○	TCU 2	○
HYTACHI	N 2541	○	TCX 4	○	TC 320
D 229	▲	N 2542	○	TCX 5	○
D 440	▲	A11 970	▲	TCX 6	○
D 550	▲	A11 979	▲	TCX 60	○

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Naturally we feel that our cassette tapes are the best. After all, we invented the compact cassette. But this has not led to complacency. There are five Philips cassettes available from your audio dealer, and the chart above shows which

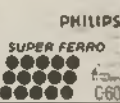
one is best suited to each selected machine.

But don't take our word for it. Try a Philips cassette in your machine, and draw your own conclusions.

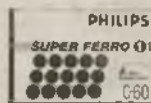
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Of course the whole thing was finished as soon as those loose horses careered across the leaders bringing down Godfrey Secundus with my 40 pance on its rotten nose! And I didn't even hear Churchtown Boy when it went! If you ask me the whole thing I...

Oh, oh — started have we? Alright, just give us one second to straighten up here... alright... OK...

The spirit of Ethel Merman beats still in the breast of today's troopers! By the wonder of modern travel we are in Cork where at the climax of his set John Cooper Clarke got a foot entangled with some stage wiring and tumbled headlong from the boards — what we doctors are wont to call the Pattiola Smithuss syndrome. Anyrate, JCC clambered up and behind stage with his hand and wrist wracking him with severe gyp, yet fought off the torture to complete two encores before rushing to hospital to have the extremity diagnosed as broken and get it heavily strapped. "I was in agony," frothed the nasal one.

And while on the JC line, let it be known that those hoary old hams **Chas & Dave** can be heard supplying the business behind a brace of ads for John Courage Best Bitter. They have bent the words to both 'I'm In Trouble' and 'Gertcha' to fall in line with the product in question...

Warm natured, lovable **Chuck Berry** reveals in *Gallery* — a men's stroke book — that in all his life he has only ever purchased six albums, two of which were his own product. Without revealing the mystery four others, Chuck opines that should he hear a cut to tickle his fancy he's satisfied to merely take a tape from the radio. It's our suspicion that at least two of the dark quartet were Jobiath epees, and possibly a copy of 'The Great Fatsby'...

That other great fashioner of '70s rock'n'roll, **Aerosmith's Steve Tyler**, celebrated his 31st birthday by visiting his money in its Boston bank — and that's a fact... but when you hear that the *Kiss* solo albums are being returned to Casablanca in figures not unadjacent to a million dollars you begin to think that maybe Steve's got the nod from somewhere and went down to his branch of Barclays to make secure his wads with a tarpaulin and rope. Sooner or later me old china's, sooner or later...

Mind you, don't wait up or nothing. We receive news of **Rod Stewart** selling out Madison Square Garden for his four night concerts in June...

Now back to Earth, and they don't come earthier than **Sham 69**. After the showing of the *Arena* documentary the **Jimatollah Puri** cornered our own saturnine **Paul Rambali** and, in his usual softspoken manner, outlined the next step in his UK domination scheme. It seems that a studio knockabout which resulted in a clever, if not subtle, version of **Public Image's** eponymous waxing — called 'Public Pistake' by **Joe Public** and digging **Mr Lydon** out on several points, Seditionaries, THAT LP etc — has inspired the Hershman hollerer to draw up plans for a film that'll concern itself with the difficulties of staying true/alive with your audience — a scheme Pursey first whipped out during his emotional burst into an *NME* staff editorial a couple of weeks back...

Currently James is under the influence of *The Deer Hunter* and expressed to our covering scout a whim to create his own proposed magic lantern in the same mould. An acquaintance writes: "Nothing can stop the Jimatollah now..."

While in the realms of fallen arches we can wave in the immense size 12s of the Towering Inferno **Mr Joe Jackson**. Joe was clubbing it

T-ZERS

TAKES A LESSON IN UNSUCCESSFUL CLONING



So some bright spark at A&M Records has this bright idea to promote Joe Jackson on his inaugural trip Stateside: 'Let's have a JJ Lookalike contest' he declares (press office faint with delight, chairman raises salary etc). So in Washington DC up turn the 'lookalikes' — men with moustaches, men without ties, girls with flaming heads of hair... so what is it with these yanks, asks T-ZERS, are they blind or dumb or what? Joe judged the, er, 'lookalikes' as they mimed to 'Got The Time' (see inset for reaction) and awarded the \$250 cash prize to **Lyel Lloyd** (he's the one in the trilby on Joe's left). We presume the bright spark at A&M lost it from his salary.

prese time his success was unknown... Beat this! Essex DJ **Mickie Gee** not only claimed a new world record for his 1,500 hour non-stop disc jockeying session — in Reykjavik, Iceland — but the grand chap landed £7,000 for handicapped children.

Those sons of fun **Village People** are to plunk it all on the table in a photospread for *Playgirl* — a female stroke mag. Plus they replace **John Travolta** as **Olivia Newton OBE's** leading hunks in her new picture, which as of now is kind of titled, sort of, *Hot New Yorkish*. And remember you read that here first...

We apologise for any readers experiencing 'the

bends' during the sharp change of matter between the following item and the preceding ones: At Dingwalls, **The Members' Nicky Tesco** leapt 'pon stage to cut himself a slice of **Local Operators** action.

And some things never change. San Francisco 'punk' band **The Nuns** have gone into the studio to play down their masterplan for Yank anarchy. At the controls will be **Peter Frampton**. Oooh, you wicked, naughty boys...

The mutual kiss-kiss continues. **Al Green** was so cuffed at **Talking Heads'** rendering of his stalwart 'Take Me To The River' that he is currently getting a lug around some of the **Heads'** material.

with a view to buy... You wouldn't know this but at regular intervals throughout this thesis of the trivial, T-Zers has received some very sharp blows from a long pointed stick.

Accompanying this spiteful act have been a chorus of whispered messages hissed through clenched teeth. This is a typical exchange: (Poke) "For God's Sake give a mention to the **Eurovision Song Contest**." (Poke) We're a music paper for Chrissake!

Just slip something in, we can't just ignore it! We'll be accused of being snobs! (Poke, Poke) Just mention that Israel won it on their home turf and we blundered into something like sixth. OK? Yes, well I was watching **Pantera** and the **Marx Bros** too, but give the impression we had somebody on the case — make a joke out of it — anything for crying out... Naturally T-Zers will not be provoked by any of this baiting...

And so onto the last business of the day. Ladies and Gentlemen, our employee of some seven summers, **Mr Steven Clarke**, has jacked it in. Steve joined the paper in 1972 as editor and forged a path of blood, sweat and tears that led to his dismissal as our messenger last Friday. There were many times when lesser men might have quit, but above all Steve had that quality that sets apart all great men, that something special that made us realise what a rock he could be. His writing? No. His wit? Nope. His optimistic disposition? His boulder-like attitude in the face of increasing odds? Nah. Come on chaps, let's face his desk and salute this behemoth. Let's face it. Steve could make coffee like a sonuvabitch.

'Gbye of 'pall And at the White Hart last Friday we drank Steve Clarke's good health. Some of us a little more vigorously than others. **Nail Spencer** is 73.



BETTER BADGES

TOP TEN

This week	Last week
1. Stiff Little Fingers	(2)
2. The Skids	(3)
3. Clash Police	(1)
4. Gang of Four	(4)
5. PIL	(5)
6. Members	(6)
7. Mekons	(7)
8. 999	(8)
9. Jam (Red)	(9)
10. Smirks Against Travolta	(10)

NEW RELEASES: 25p. Destroy All Monsters, D.D.A., The Pretenders, T.V. Parsonakies, Dodgers, Bette Bright, The Fall, 20p. Scars, Stiff Little Fingers, Nicky and the Dots, Teen Beats, Throbbing Gristle, ATV Viking, Les Feles.

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Election: Latest odds

David Bowie 7-1
Malcolm McLaren 34-1
Sprag Vec 9-4
Jimmy Shamallaghan 69-1
Lunche Bunsworth 4-6 FAV
Brian B 1,000-1
Jeremy Bunnies 1,000,000-1
Milk Snatcher 2,000,000-1



“Well I'm six foot nothing
of muscle and bone
With my colt 45
I weigh seventeen stone
Got a stetson hat
and a big cigar
And I clean up trouble
with my little tin star”

LEA AND OWEN

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5th SOUTHAMPTON, Gaiety
6th OXFORD, Civic Hall
7th LEITCHAM, Odeon
8th WOLVERHAMPTON, Civic Hall
9th ILFORD, Odeon
10th IPSWICH, Gaumont

**TRB
TWO**

The new Tom Robinson Band album
produced by Todd Rundgren